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EUAA shifts operational support in Greece to focus on vulnerable applicants



The EUAA will adapt its operational support to the Greek authorities to increase focus on vulnerable applicants, in light of the changing needs in the country. The Agency's amended operational support to Greece will also provide support with registering and processing the increased number of applications.

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) and the Ministry for Migration and Asylum of Greece have signed an updated Operational Plan. The plan was signed by the Executive Director of the EUAA, **Nina GREGORI**, and the Greek Minister of Migration and Asylum, **Dimitris KAIRIDIS** on the margins of the Ministerial Conference on the Operationalisation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, organised by the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in Ghent, Belgium.

With the updated Operational Plan, the Agency will focus its efforts in Greece on:

- **Supporting vulnerable applicants and unaccompanied children**: The Agency will assist the General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection (GSVP) implement an

expanded mandate, including by enhancing the **institutional framework for vulnerable persons, managing accommodation** and **placement** requests, maintaining the highly-successful **Mentorship Programme**, and **strengthening support** to victims of human trafficking.
- **Prioritising resources for processing new arrivals and registering applications**: Given a sharp increase in arrivals since July 2023, including of Palestinians, the EUAA will adjust personnel deployments to support the Reception and Identification Service (RIS) on the Greek islands with registrations, as well as the Greek Asylum Service (GAS) with on information provision, conducting interviews and drafting opinions.

Background

Since July 2023, the number of asylum applications in Greece has seen **a notable increase to the highest level seen since 2019**. In fact, of the 64 000 asylum applications in 2023, over 70 % were lodged in the 2nd half of the year. At the end of January 2024, there were **over 31 000 applicants in the Greek reception system**. In 2023, **over half of all Palestinian applications in the EU+** were lodged in Greece.

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