

Temporary Protection Greece

2023 Update

This annex on temporary protection complements and should be read together with the [AIDA Country Report on Greece](#).

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Official data and information on beneficiaries of temporary protection and on the implementation of the law on temporary protection in Greece are very limited. Thus, comments made on practice and implementation of the law on temporary protection are based on GCR's experience and exchanges with other relevant NGOs in the field.

Temporary Protection Procedure

A. General

Legislative acts on temporary protection

Title (EN)	Original Title (XX)	Web Link
<p>Presidential Decree (P.D.) 80/2006 on the “Provision of temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced foreigners”</p> <p>Abolished by: Article 108 (b) L. 4939/2022 (i.e., Asylum Code)</p>	<p>Προεδρικό Διάταγμα Υπ’ Αριθμ. 80/2006 (ΦΕΚ 82/Α/14.4.2006), αναφορικά με την «Παροχή προσωρινής προστασίας σε περίπτωση μαζικής εισροής εκτοπισθέντων αλλοδαπών»</p> <p>Κατάργηση με: Άρθρο 108 (β) Ν. 4939/2022</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/3TA7Suj (GR)</p> <p>https://bit.ly/3VgU88J (GR)</p>
<p>Asylum Code, Part 6 (articles 119-146) on the “Provision Of Temporary Protection in the Event of Mass Influx of Displaced Foreigners”</p> <p>In force</p>	<p>Ν. 4939/2022, Μέρος έκτο (άρθρα 119-146) αναφορικά με την «Παροχή Προσωρινής Προστασίας επί Μαζικής Εισροής Εκτοπισθέντων Αλλοδαπών»</p> <p>Σε ισχύ</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/3VgU88J (GR)</p>

Implementing decrees on temporary protection

<p>Ministerial Decision (M.D.) 131035/4.3.2022 on the “Implementation of temporary protection of P.D. 80/2006 due to mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine”</p>	<p>Υπουργική Απόφαση (Υ.Α.) 131035/4.3.2022 αναφορικά με την «Εφαρμογή προσωρινής προστασίας του Π.Δ. 80/2006 λόγω μαζικής εισροής εκτοπισθέντων από Ουκρανία»</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/4abCWpG (GR)</p>
<p>M.D. 172172/2022 (Gov. Gazette 1462/B/28-3-2022) on the “Procedure for granting a Temporary Protection Residence Permit to beneficiaries of temporary protection”</p>	<p>Υ.Α. 172172/2022 (ΦΕΚ. 1462/B/28-3-2022) αναφορικά με την «Διαδικασία χορήγησης Άδειας Διαμονής Προσωρινής Προστασίας στους δικαιούχους προσωρινής προστασίας»</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/3Tz14Nk (GR)</p>
<p>M.D. 81645/8.2.2023 on the “Extension of the ministerial decision no. 131035/4.3.2022 “Implementation of the temporary protection of Decree 80/2006 due to the mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine”</p> <p>Extends duration of temporary protection for a six-month period (4 March 2023 – 4 September 2023)</p>	<p>Υ.Α. 81645/8.2.2023 αναφορικά με την «Παράταση ισχύος της υπ’ αρ. 131035/4.3.2022 υπουργικής απόφασης «Εφαρμογή προσωρινής προστασίας του Π.Δ. 80/2006 λόγω μαζικής εισροής εκτοπισθέντων από Ουκρανία»</p> <p>Παράταση ισχύος Προσωρινής Προστασίας για διάστημα 6 μηνών (4 Μαρτίου 2023 – 4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2024)</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/4a631Gq (GR)</p>

<p>M.D. 392634/20.08.2023 on the "Extension of the Ministerial Decision No. 131035/04.03.2022 "Implementation of the temporary protection of Decree 80/2006 due to mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine"</p> <p>Extends duration of temporary protection for a six-month period (4 September 2023 – 4 March 2024)</p>	<p>Υ.Α. 392634/20.08.2023 αναφορικά με την «Παράταση ισχύος της υπ' αρ. 131035/04.03.2022 υπουργικής απόφασης «Εφαρμογή προσωρινής προστασίας του π.δ. 80/2006 λόγω μαζικής εισροής εκτοπισθέντων από Ουκρανία»</p> <p>Παράταση ισχύος Προσωρινής Προστασίας για διάστημα 6 μηνών (4 Σεπτεμβρίου 2023 – 4 Μαρτίου 2024)</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/3wJWiUb (GR)</p>
<p>M.D. 64419/21.2.2024 on the "Extension of the validity of Decision no. 131035/04.03.2022 of the Minister of Migration and Asylum regarding the 'Implementation of temporary protection of P.D. 80/2006 due to mass influx of displaced persons from Ukraine'."</p> <p>Extends duration of temporary protection for a period of one year, up to 4 March 2025</p>	<p>Υ.Α. 64419/21.2.2024 αναφορικά με την «Παράταση ισχύος της υπ' αρ. 131035/04.03.2022 Απόφασης του Υπουργού Μετανάστευσης και Ασύλου «Εφαρμογή προσωρινής προστασίας του π.δ. 80/2006 λόγω μαζικής εισροής εκτοπισθέντων από Ουκρανία»</p> <p>Παράταση ισχύος Προσωρινής Προστασίας για διάστημα ενός έτους, έως τις 4 Μαρτίου 2025</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/3TzUjtF (GR)</p>

The Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) was introduced in the national legal framework by Presidential Decree 80/2006 (Gov. Gazette 82/A/14-4-2006). The Decree was abolished by the Asylum Code (article 148), which codifies TPD provisions under articles 119-146 (Part 6).

Temporary Protection in Greece was activated in accordance with [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2022/382](#) (04/03/2022) via [M.D. 131035/4.3.2022](#). It covers persons that were legally residing in Ukraine before 24 February 2022, and namely Ukrainian nationals, third country nationals or stateless persons granted international protection or equivalent national protection status in Ukraine before 24 February 2022, as well as the family members of the aforementioned groups of beneficiaries.

There were no significant numbers of people who were displaced - directly or indirectly - by the war present in the country but beyond the scope of TPD. During 2022, 118 non-Ukrainian third country nationals were granted TP, among which 101 Russians. Relevant data is not available in 2023.

As in 2022,¹ official data on beneficiaries of temporary protection continued to be very limited in 2023 and no data on the total number of individuals present in Greece, who were potentially entitled to temporary protection throughout the year, has been published. Yet, in a February 2023 article,² the former Secretary General for Reception of the MoMA noted that up to August 2022, more than 75,000 Ukrainian nationals had arrived in Greece, with the very low number of pre-registrations for temporary protection (19,000 at the time), confirming, as per the former S.G., Ukrainians' "*high expectation that they would soon return to their homeland*".

From the implementation of the TPD and up to 31 December 2023, a total of 27,573 applications for temporary protection were pre-registered by the Asylum Service, most of which in the broader region of

¹ AIDA, *Country Report: Greece, Temporary Protection Annex, 2022*, available at: <https://bit.ly/4c7xB4x>.

² ΕΘΝΟΣ, *Περισσότερους από 75.000 Ουκρανούς φιλοξένησε η Ελλάδα - Πώς αντιμετωπίσαμε την κρίση*, 24 February 2023, available in Greek at: <https://bit.ly/45NoB16>.

Attica (15,760),³ followed by Thessaloniki (8,032) and Crete (2,072). During the same time interval, a total of 26,848 people were granted temporary protection/received temporary protection cards, the vast majority of whom were women (68.9%). The majority of beneficiaries were between the age of 35-64 (10,439), followed by those aged 18-34 (6,924) and those aged between 0-13 (5,760). Slightly more than 1 in 4 beneficiaries (26.6%) was a minor.⁴

B. Qualification for temporary protection

In Greece, temporary protection applies to Ukrainian nationals, as well as stateless persons and beneficiaries of international protection or beneficiaries of equivalent national protection in Ukraine, and the family members of the categories of persons mentioned above.

People from the above categories who have been displaced from 24 February 2022 onwards are eligible for temporary protection in Greece, yet in a welcome practice of the Greek Asylum Service, pursuant to article 3(5) [Directive 2001/55/EC](#) on more favourable conditions, temporary protection has also been applied in cases of persons who had left the Ukraine from 26 November 2021 onwards.⁵ The Ministerial Decision (MD) in Greece copied the Council Decision without adding or removing any categories of displaced persons.

According to the MD family members are:

- ❖ the spouse of a person eligible for temporary protection or the person with whom they live in a free union within the framework of a stable relationship duly proven,
- ❖ the minor unmarried children of a person eligible for temporary protection or of their spouse, without distinction as to whether they were born within or outside marriage or adopted,
- ❖ other close relatives who were living together as part of the family unit at the time of the circumstances surrounding the mass influx and who are wholly or mainly dependent on a person eligible for temporary protection.

The initial MD, issued in March 2022, granted temporary protection for 12 months. Consecutive MDs have since extended the duration of temporary protection by an additional period of 2 years, up to 4 March 2025.

C. Access to temporary protection and registration

1. Admission to territory

There were no reports of people fleeing from Ukraine refused entry at the border, including for people who returned to Ukraine and sought to re-enter Greece.

2. Freedom of movement

There were no known issues for individuals entitled to temporary protection not holding a biometric passport or biometric travel document in moving within the country's territory or while attempting to continue their journey towards other European countries.

³ Includes the regional asylum offices of Attica and Alimos.

⁴ MoMA, *Statistics, Consolidated Reports - Overview: December 2023 - International Protection | Appendix A*, available at: <https://bit.ly/3TxX9jL>, tables 19 and 20.

⁵ GCR, Oxfam & Save the Children, *Greece: A two-tier refugee system*, May 2022 available at: <https://bit.ly/3ThvZfB>, p.3. See also MoMA, *Temporary Protection: Frequent Questions*, 18 April 2022, available in Greek at: <https://tinyurl.com/2ycfx3rn>, p. 2.

3. Registration under temporary protection

The Asylum Service is responsible for registering applications for temporary protection. Five Regional Offices are available for the temporary protection procedure (Attica (2), Thessaloniki, Crete, Patras). Applicants have to include the following in their application: e-mail address, personal details, the type and number of identification document, level of education, the field of professional activity, any need for housing, the collection point of the allocated Temporary Protection Beneficiary card.

Filling out the application can be done online (migration.gov.gr) and then an appointment is booked for one of the Asylum Regional Offices.

The application has to be submitted within 90 days of arrival (Schengen Visa rules) but there are no consequences in case of non-compliance, according to the Ministry of Migration guidelines.

Passports (biometrical and non-biometrical), residence permits and asylum cards can all be used to prove that a person falls under the scope of temporary protection.

The Ministry of Migration provides beneficiaries of temporary protection with a Temporary Protection Beneficiary card (within 90 days).

In practice delays are observed due to the lack of staff but these are not significant.

4. Legal assistance

There is no specific legal assistance foreseen for beneficiaries of temporary protection, nor is it actually needed in practice for the completion of the procedure.

5. Information provision and access to NGOs

According to the law (article 125 Asylum Code), beneficiaries of temporary protection are provided with written information with regards to their rights and obligations in a language they understand (whether that be online, flyers, etc). The information is to be provided by the Greek Asylum Service under the Ministry of Migration, while a [dedicated webpage](#), also available in Ukrainian, is available on the MoMA's website. NGOs, migrant and refugee communities also provide information (info sessions, online, flyers, etc). Information is provided at border-crossing points on how to apply for temporary protection, but interpretation is a challenge.

D. Guarantees for vulnerable groups

With the exception of checks, at the stage of registration, of indicators of trafficking in human beings, there was no specific procedure introduced for the identification of vulnerable applicants or beneficiaries. In what concerns unaccompanied minors, the General Secretariat of Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection, along with the Public Prosecutor, are informed in detail and immediately after registration of separated, and in very rare cases, unaccompanied children, from Ukraine.

There was no specific programme to address the needs of individuals fleeing from Ukraine suffering from mental health problems, including torture survivors. In practice, some NGOs provided assistance.

Content of Temporary Protection

A. Status and residence

1. Residence permit

Indicators: Residence permit

1. What is the duration of residence permits granted to beneficiaries of temporary protection?
Initial duration of up to 12 months, renewed for an additional 6 + 6 months by the end of 2023 and for an additional 12-month period up to 4 March 2025
2. How many residence permits were issued to beneficiaries from the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive until 31 December 2023?
26,848⁶

After registration, the regional Asylum Offices deliver a Temporary Protection Beneficiary card within 90 days. The initial Ministerial Decision (131035/2022) included protection for a 12-month period, which has since been twice renewed for periods of 6 months via relevant MDs in February and July 2023, and for an additional 12-month period, up to 4 March 2025, via a February 2024 MD.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection have access to the labour market and healthcare in accordance with Directive 2001/55.

There can be only one application request. If someone requests temporary protection in another EU Member State, their request in Greece is automatically cancelled.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection can also apply, until 4/3/2025, through an electronic platform, for any residence permit of the new Migration Code (L. 5038/2023) without the requirement of a valid visa.

2. Access to asylum

Beneficiaries of temporary protection can also apply for international protection whenever they wish, without having their temporary protection residence permit withdrawn.

B. Family reunification

There are no specific provisions on family reunification for beneficiaries of temporary protection in Greece. According to article 131 (Preserving family unity) of the Asylum Code, 'in cases of families which existed in the country of origin and were separated due to the circumstances of the mass influx, the following shall be considered as part of the family of the resident:

(a) the spouse of the resident, the minor unmarried children of the resident or his/her spouse, without distinction as to whether they were born in or out of wedlock or by adoption.

(b) Other first and second-degree relatives by blood or marriage who were living together as part of the family at the time of the events leading to the mass influx and who were fully or mainly supported by the resident at that time.

In cases where the separated family members of the first subparagraph of the previous paragraph enjoy temporary protection in another EU Member State, the Asylum Service of the Ministry of Immigration and Asylum shall take the necessary steps towards the competent authority of the state concerned to achieve family unity of these persons with the persons residing in Greece, after taking into account the wishes of the aforementioned family members.

⁶ MoMA, *Statistics, Consolidated Reports - Overview: December 2023 - International Protection | Appendix A*, available at: <https://bit.ly/3TxX9jL>, table 20.

The Asylum Service shall take the same actions as above for the achievement of family unity of persons residing in Greece with the separated members of the family referred to in paragraph a' of Para. 1, who are not residing in another EU Member State and who are in need of protection.

The family unity may also be achieved for the family members of other first and second degree relatives by blood or marriage who were living together as part of the family at the time of the events leading to the mass influx and who were fully or mainly supported by the resident at that time, taking into account the adverse consequences that may arise for the family members if reunification does not take place.

The choice of the Member State of the European Union in which family reunification is to take place shall also take into account the provisions of Articles 141 and 142 Asylum Code.

Family members who enter the country in the context of maintaining family unity shall be granted a residence permit in accordance with the provisions of para. 1 of Article 124. The transfer of family members of the resident to the territory of another EU Member State for the purpose of maintaining family unity entails the withdrawal of residence permits issued by the Greek authorities, as well as the termination of Greece's obligations with regard to the temporary protection of these persons.

For the implementation of the provisions on family unity, Greece cooperates with the competent international organisations, where necessary.

C. Movement and mobility

Beneficiaries of temporary protection are free to move within the Greek territory and have freedom of movement towards other EU Member States once registered.

D. Housing

Indicators: Housing

1. For how long are temporary protection beneficiaries entitled to stay in reception centres?	There is no time limit
2. Number of beneficiaries staying in reception centres as of 12/23	121 ⁷
3. Number of beneficiaries staying in private accommodation as of 12/23	No data provided

The main forms of accommodation provided to beneficiaries of temporary protection is in reception centres and specifically the camps of Sintiki, designated for the temporary accommodation of beneficiaries, and the camps of Serres and Elefsina, designated for long-term accommodation. Beneficiaries of temporary protection are also eligible to access the HELIOS integration programme (implemented by IOM Greece in collaboration with the Ministry of Migration and Asylum), aimed to support the successful integration of beneficiaries of international protection and temporary protection in Greece, by offering accommodation support, Greek language courses and employability support.

According to Article 129 Asylum Code:

1. Persons enjoying temporary protection reside in special accommodation centres operated under the care and responsibility of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁷ MoMA, *Statistics, Consolidated Reports - Overview: December 2023 - International Protection | Appendix A*, available at: <https://bit.ly/3TxX9jL>, table 18.

2. The persons accommodated under the preceding paragraph shall be provided with the necessary medical care, including the necessary treatment of illnesses, first aid and at least one medical examination.
3. In case the aforementioned guests in the accommodation centres do not have sufficient resources for their maintenance, the Ministry of Immigration and Asylum shall provide them with food, clothing and any other possible social assistance.
4. Cases of persons with special needs, such as infants, elderly persons, unaccompanied minors, sick persons, injured persons, as well as persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of mental, physical or sexual violence, shall be treated as a matter of priority.
5. Where persons enjoying temporary protection are engaged in gainful or independent activity, their capacity to contribute to their needs shall be taken into account when determining the level of assistance provided.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection are entitled to stay in reception centres for as long as they benefit from temporary protection. The State offers accommodation in camps, even though in practice, temporary protection beneficiaries do not seem to be willing to remain there, or alternatively supports independent living efforts, via rent subsidies provided to those eligible under the HELIOS integration programme, implemented through IOM.

Regarding camps, though there is no data on the total number of places in reception centres dedicated to temporary protection beneficiaries, as of 31 December 2023, a total of 121 Ukrainian nationals, most of whom women (59) and children (34), were reported by the MoMA as residing in Serres and Elefsina camps.⁸

Regarding independent living, beneficiaries of temporary protection living in private accommodation frequently stay with relatives, friends, compatriots, etc., and thus relevant data are not available.

The number of temporary protection beneficiaries receiving rent subsidies/accommodation support under the Helios programme is also not known, as relevant [factsheets](#) do not include a relevant disaggregation. Nevertheless, as per the last available data on Helios for 2023 (November),⁹ from a total of 45,221 persons that have enrolled into Helios since the programme first started operating in 2019, 14.1% have been Ukrainian nationals. In November 2023, a total of 3,721 individuals were also receiving rent subsidies/accommodation support under the programme, yet as already mentioned, their nationalities are not specified.

E. Employment and education

1. Access to the labour market

According to Article 128 Asylum Code the following applies on employment and vocational training:

‘1. A residence permit issued to a person enjoying temporary protection shall also have the status of a work permit valid for the county in which his/her residence has been established throughout the period of temporary protection. This work permit shall confer the right to engage in an economic activity as an employed or self-employed person, in accordance with the provisions in force, as well as the right to participate in adult education, vocational training or work experience programmes. The above rights shall be exercised provided that the posts are not filled by EU citizens or citizens of States bound by the Agreement on the European Economic Area, as well as by legally resident citizens of third countries who are in receipt of unemployment benefits.

2. The legislation in force concerning remuneration, access to social security schemes, and the conditions or special conditions relating to employment or self-employment shall also apply to persons enjoying temporary protection.’

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ MoMA & IOM, *Helios factsheets: November 2023*, available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4y4x92z5>.

There are, however, no specific measures in place to facilitate access to the labour market for temporary protection beneficiaries and to date there is no data on the numbers of beneficiaries who had accessed the labour market by the end of 2023.

2. Access to education

Going to school is mandatory for children aged six to fifteen years old. According to Article 130 Asylum Code, '[b]eneficiaries of temporary protection who are under 18 years of age shall be granted the right of access to public schools in which reception classes or tutorial classes are in operation or are planned to be in operation.'

Temporary protection beneficiaries are entitled to education under the same conditions as nationals.

There is no data on the number of child beneficiaries of temporary protection who had accessed the education system by the end of 2023. This is largely on account of the fact that data connected to the residence status of children attending school are not kept, given that irrespective of their legal status, which can also change dynamically during the school year, all children benefit from the right to access public education and can frequently enrol to it with incomplete supporting documents.¹⁰

The language barrier is an important challenge. Accommodation in camps also poses an issue as camps are remote without appropriate options for commuting and so access to school is problematic. The HELIOS project requires beneficiaries to rent apartments on their own.

It has been pointed out that in some cases small school units are unable to accommodate all children because of lack of capacity. The phenomenon of schools being reluctant to accommodate refugee children does not apply to children from Ukraine.

There are only limited places in specific areas for children with special needs.

According to Article 128 Asylum Code on employment and vocational training:

1. 'A residence permit issued to a person enjoying temporary protection shall also have the status of a work permit valid for the county in which his/her residence has been established throughout the period of temporary protection. This work permit shall confer the right to engage in an economic activity as an employed or self-employed person, in accordance with the provisions in force, as well as the right to participate in adult education, vocational training or work experience programmes. The above rights shall be exercised provided that the posts are not filled by EU citizens or citizens of States bound by the Agreement on the European Economic Area, as well as by legally resident citizens of third countries who are in receipt of unemployment benefits.
2. The legislation in force concerning remuneration, access to social security schemes, and the conditions or special conditions relating to employment or self-employment shall also apply to persons enjoying temporary protection.'

It is not possible to access the higher educational system except after passing the national exam, which takes place once a year.

Language barriers and the distance of the accommodation facilities may also be a challenge to accessing vocational training but there is no data in order to have a definitive conclusion.

¹⁰ As per information provided by the Autonomous Department for the Coordination of Refugee Education of the Ministry of Education on 27 February 2024.

F. Social welfare

Social welfare is provided for beneficiaries of temporary protection (article 129 Asylum Code). For example, in case beneficiaries in the accommodation centres do not have sufficient resources for their maintenance, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum shall provide them with food, clothing and any other possible social assistance.

The Ministry of Migration and Asylum coordinates social assistance and it is not tied to a requirement to reside in any specific place or region. However, if beneficiaries do not stay in the designated special facilities, they do not benefit from the Ministry's practical assistance.

There is no data on the number of beneficiaries of temporary protection who had accessed different forms of social welfare by 31 December 2023.

G. Health care

According to Article 129 (paragraph 2) Asylum Code, '[t]emporary protection beneficiaries shall be provided with necessary medical care, including any necessary treatment of illnesses, first aid and at least one medical examination.'

Thus, they are not entitled to the same health care as nationals, or as legally residing third-country nationals.

Language is a practical obstacle, as are staff availability and the limited capacity of the health system.