



MIGRATION

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Developments and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Eda GEMI & Bledar FETA



March 2026
Working Paper #136/2026

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

ELIAMEP | Working Paper # 136/2026

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Copyright © 2026 | All Rights Reserved
HELLENIC FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN & FOREIGN POLICY (ELIAMEP)
49 Vasilissis Sofias Ave., 10676, Athens, Greece
Tel.: +30 210 7257 110 | www.eliamep.gr | eliamep@eliamep.gr

ELIAMEP encourages open, pluralistic dialogue based on arguments and facts. The views expressed by associates of ELIAMEP are entirely their own and are not binding on the Institution.

Report prepared for the OECD International Migration Outlook, 2025

Cover photo: Pixabay

Eda GEMI

Research Associate, Migration Programme, ELIAMEP
Associate Professor, Head of the Law Department, UNYT

Bledar FETA

Research Fellow, Wider Europe Programme, ELIAMEP

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	5
2. Introduction.....	6
3. Major developments in migration and integration policy.....	7
3.1 Legislation regulating entry, stay and work of foreigners for different purposes.....	8
3.2 Naturalisation policy	10
3.3 Integration policies	11
3.3.1 Integration of Ukrainians	13
3.4 Anti-discrimination policies and diversity programmes	14
3.5 Bilateral agreements on the recruitment of foreign workers	15
3.6 International agreements regarding readmission and/or the return of foreigners	15
3.7 Asylum and refugee policy.....	16
3.8 International migration in the public debate.....	18
4. Migration Statistics 2024 – 2025	20
4.1 The Migrant Population in Greece	20
4.2 Composition of the Immigrant Population	23
4.3 Immigrant Labour Market Participation	26
4.4 Asylum Seekers and Refugee Status	28
4.4.1 Asylum Applications	32
4.4.2 Unaccompanied Minors.....	35
4.4.3 Dublin Cases & Relocation	36
4.4.4 Transfers to the Mainland.....	36
4.5 Irregular Migration Flows, Return and Readmissions.....	37
4.5.1 Returns and Deportations.....	38
4.6 Ukrainian Refugees	38
4.7 Reception System and Accommodation	40
4.8 Citizenship Acquisition	42
5. Concluding Remarks	44

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Figures

Figure 1: Stock of foreign population in Greece (TCN and EU citizens), 2015-2025 (as of October)	21
Figure 2: Stay permits by purpose (October 2024 – October 2025).....	24
Figure 3: Top 10 ethnicities with Golden Visas, October 2025	26
Figure 4: Rate of participation in labour market (%), 3rd Quarters of 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025	27
Figure 5: Lodged Asylum Applications, 2016 – October 2025	33
Figure 6: TCNs resident in RICs, January 2024 – October 2025	40

Tables

Table 1: Resident population by sex, age, and citizenship, 2021	20
Table 2: Stock of foreign population in Greece (as of October 2025).....	22
Table 3: Valid resident permits for third-country nationals by gender, 2016-2025	22
Table 4: National composition of the migrant population (top 10 nationalities).....	23
Table 5: Permanent residence permits for investment 2023-2025 (as of October 2025)	23
Table 6: Arrival Flows, January 2024 - October 2025	28
Table 7: Residents on the Islands (October 2024 – October 2025)	29
Table 8: Transfers from the Islands to the mainland October 2024 – October 2025	30
Table 9: Recognition of refugee status 1st and 2nd Instances, 2016-2025 (as of October).....	30
Table 10: Recognition of Subsidiary Protection Status, 2016-2025 (as of October)	31
Table 11: Pending decisions 1st and 2nd Instances, January 2024 – October 2025	31
Table 12: Asylum applications by country of origin, October 2024 & 2025 (as of October)	33
Table 13: Asylum applications by country of origin, 2024 & 2025 (as of October)	34
Table 14: Pending asylum decisions from January 2024 to October 2025	35
Table 15: TCNs apprehended for irregular stays and employment, 2024	37
Table 16: Returns by Category, January 2024 & 2025 (as of October)	38
Table 17: Ukrainian Displacement in Greece (as of 31 October 2025)	39
Table 18: Temporary Protection Cards Issued by Age Group and Gender	39
Table 19: Distribution of migrants and asylum seekers by region, October 2024 and October 2025.....	41
Table 20: Acquisition of Greek Citizenship by category (2020-2024)	43

1. Executive Summary

The period 2024-2025 reflects a structural recalibration of Greece's migration governance, combining moderated inflows, administrative modernisation and selective legal expansion with intensified enforcement and growing rights-based concerns.

Migration flows and asylum trends: arrivals increased significantly in 2024, reaching 56,066 (+21.6% compared to 2023), before moderating in 2025 (39,495 arrivals, Jan–Oct 2025; -11.3% compared to the same period in 2024). Asylum applications in 2025 declined by approximately 10% year-on-year, yet procedural backlogs remain high and recognition rates have decreased. Returns continue to lag substantially behind arrivals (first nine months of 2025: 5,740 departures compared to 39,495 arrivals), highlighting persistent structural imbalances. The reporting period was marked by intensified scrutiny over border practices, including allegations of pushbacks, and by the temporary suspension of access to asylum procedures for specific categories of new arrivals, signalling a shift toward deterrence-oriented governance.

Legal residence and long-term settlement: the legally residing migrant population continued to grow, reaching 916,697 persons (8.75% of the total population) in October 2025, up from 851,072 in October 2024 (+7.7%). Naturalisation increased to 14,896 in 2024 (from 13,875 in 2023), with second-generation applicants forming the majority, confirming consolidation of long-term settlement patterns. However, administrative delays in residence permit renewals and reliance on temporary certificates have increased precariousness for long-term residents, affecting legal certainty and socio-economic stability.

Labour market and integration: migrant labour market participation remains significant, while unemployment among foreign nationals declined to 9.7% in Q3 2025, indicating gradual integration despite sectoral vulnerabilities. Integration policy shows institutional consolidation, particularly for unaccompanied minors, but increasingly links protection and residence to labour market participation, reflecting a shift toward conditional inclusion.

Reception and enforcement: island reception centre populations decreased sharply from 11,136 in October 2024 to 6,117 in October 2025 (-45%), indicating decongestion. At the same time, apprehensions for irregular stay fell from 16,606 in 2023 to 12,349 in 2024, though enforcement efforts intensified in return policy.

Greece's migration governance during 2024-2025 is characterised by a dual trajectory: quantitative moderation of inflows and administrative consolidation coexist with heightened securitisation, asylum restrictions and growing precariousness in long-term residence status. The sustainability of this model will depend on its ability to reconcile control-oriented measures with procedural safeguards, legal certainty and socio-economic integration.

2. Introduction

This report provides a critical and evidence-based assessment of migration and integration developments in Greece during 2024–2025, examining legislative reforms, administrative practice and statistical trends across migration flows, legal residence, asylum, integration, labour market participation and citizenship acquisition. The period reflects a transition from post-crisis stabilisation toward a more selective and securitised governance model. Although arrivals increased significantly in 2024 compared to 2023 and moderated in 2025, policy responses have increasingly prioritised control and deterrence.

The reporting period has been marked by intensified public and international scrutiny, including allegations of pushbacks at the borders and concerns regarding compliance with fundamental rights obligations. A particularly consequential development has been the temporary suspension of access to asylum procedures for certain categories of new arrivals, raising legal and normative questions regarding procedural safeguards and international protection standards.

At the same time, structural vulnerabilities within the legal residence framework persist. Delays in residence permit renewals and the issuance of short-term permits pending long-term decisions have contributed to heightened precariousness among long-term residents, undermining legal certainty and affecting access to employment and social rights. These administrative bottlenecks coexist with efforts to expand legal and economic migration pathways and accelerate digitalisation of procedures.

Integration governance shows further institutional consolidation, particularly in relation to vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied minors. However, integration measures increasingly emphasise labour market participation and conditionality, reflecting a broader recalibration from protection-oriented reception toward economically driven inclusion.

Methodologically, the report combines legislative analysis with statistical evaluation in order to capture both quantitative developments and qualitative policy shifts within their broader demographic, economic and geopolitical context. It is structured around two analytical components: the first examines major policy and institutional developments in migration and integration; the second presents a systematic statistical assessment of migration flows, residence patterns, asylum trends, labour market participation, reception capacity, temporary protection and citizenship acquisition, with comparative reference to previous years.

3. Major developments in migration and integration policy

Policy reforms implemented during 2024-2025 reflect Greece's attempt to recalibrate its migration, asylum, and investment-based residence policies. These reforms aimed to balance labour market needs with enhanced protections for vulnerable populations, particularly unaccompanied minors, refugees, and second-generation migrants, while simultaneously reshaping the Golden Visa programme to prioritise sustainable investment and curb speculative real-estate practices. However, the durability of these recalibrations remained contingent on political and institutional continuity.¹

Against this backdrop, by the end of November 2024, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum announced the launch of a centralised electronic submission system for employer requests to recruit third-country nationals. Through the Ministry's digital portal, employers may submit applications across five employment categories: highly skilled (E1), intra-corporate transfers (E2), special purpose (E3), dependent employment (E4), and seasonal work (E5). The system became operational for highly skilled (E1) applications on 30 October 2024, marking a concrete step towards the digitisation of legal labour migration procedures.²

Yet, as these administrative reforms carried over into 2024-2025, they did so against a backdrop of continued leadership changes within the Ministry, contributing to limited policy continuity and shifting strategic priorities. Over this period, ministerial agendas alternated between migration deterrence and border control, administrative modernisation and digitalisation, the expansion of legal migration pathways, and a renewed emphasis on regional distribution and integration measures. By mid-2025, a marked shift towards a more restrictive policy orientation became evident. The most recent policy phase has been characterised by the abolition of the HELIOS+ housing subsidy for recognised refugees, significant reductions in financial assistance for asylum seekers, and the adoption of a non-acceptance approach towards asylum applications originating from North African countries. Public discourse linking refugee accommodation to Athens' housing crisis has generated criticism for reinforcing stigmatizing narratives and raising concerns regarding social cohesion and respect for fundamental rights.

The framework governing residence permits for exceptional reasons was revised through Article 29 of Law 5226/2025, which amended Article 134(5) of the Migration Code concerning parents of minor Greek citizens. The reform removed the previous requirement of seven years of continuous residence, granting a one-time, three-year permit with access to the labour market based solely on proof of a parental relationship. Upon expiry, beneficiaries may apply for a change of residence permit category pursuant to Article 12. Submission of the application suspends any return decision until final determination. This legislative adjustment followed a

¹A notable legislative development occurred in December 2023 with the adoption of a regularisation scheme granting three-year residence and work permits to undocumented migrants meeting minimum residence criteria. This measure, operational until the end of 2024, signaled a pragmatic shift towards addressing structural labour shortages while partially formalising long-standing irregular stays. The implementation of this scheme extended into 2024, directly informing labour migration governance during the following period.

²You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

period of heightened public debate. An initial proposal by the Minister of Migration and Asylum, Thanos Plevris, to abolish this permit category altogether raised significant concerns among civil society organisations, legal practitioners, and affected communities, given the risk of leaving parents of Greek minors without a viable pathway to regularisation. In response to these reactions, the proposal was ultimately withdrawn during the parliamentary process, resulting in the preservation of the permit with limited modifications.³

Finally, in response to the sustained emigration of Greek nationals and the associated brain drain, Greece has introduced targeted measures to re-engage its diaspora. In 2024, the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Public Employment Service (DYPA) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation aimed at strengthening links with Greeks living abroad. The initiative focuses on providing information about employment opportunities in Greece and on developing incentives, such as employment placement, entrepreneurship support, and training programmes, to facilitate return migration. Within this framework, DYPA's Career Days initiative has been expanded beyond Greece's borders to reach the global Greek community and international talent, with the objective of enhancing the attractiveness of the Greek labour market for professionals abroad.⁴

3.1 Legislation regulating entry, stay and work of foreigners for different purposes

The Immigration Code (Law 5038/2023) introduced a comprehensive reform of Greece's entry and residence regime for third-country nationals, with the dual objective of streamlining administrative procedures and aligning national law with EU migration acquis, notably Directive (EU) 2021/1883.⁵ Although formally scheduled to enter into force on 1 January 2024, the implementation of certain provisions was phased in to accommodate administrative and digital adjustments. Central to the reform was the validation of electronic submission and renewal procedures through the Ministry's digital platform, allowing applicants to receive a temporary digital certificate pending a final decision.

The Code significantly restructured residence permits for work and investment purposes. It allows legally residing third-country nationals to change residence permit categories, abolishes residence permit for business executives, and replaces it with a residence permit for investment purposes, while largely preserving the Golden Visa scheme. It also strengthened the rights of second-generation immigrants by extending residence permit validity to ten years and broadening eligibility for young adults educated in Greece. In parallel, the former permit for financially independent persons was redefined as a residence permit for third-country nationals with sufficient resources, valid for three years and renewable as of April 2024.

Investment-based residence policies were recalibrated in 2024, following announcements at the 88th Thessaloniki International Fair and subsequent codification through Law 5100/2024. This

³The relevant law is available here: https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/nomos_5226_2025.pdf.

⁴Further information is available here: <https://www.keptalkinggreece.com/2024/09/05/greek-govt-keen-to-reverse-ongoing-brain-drain-into-brain-gain/>.

⁵The Migration Code is available here: <https://migration.gov.gr/en/nomothesia-1-2/kodikas-metanasteysis/>.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

law introduces a distinct residence permit category (Type B.6) for third-country nationals investing in Greek startups, and sets out the eligibility criteria, application procedure, and permit issuance process (Articles 40 and 42). Recognising the entrepreneurial nature of startup investment, B.6 permit holders are exempt from the unified residence permit for employment (Article 41). The reforms granted a five-year residence permit for a minimum investment of €250,000 in Greek startups. Complementing this, Joint Ministerial Decision No. 34693/1136/2025, adopted pursuant to Article 176(44) of the Code, establishes the procedural framework for granting residence permits for investment purposes, including application timelines, eligibility criteria, monitoring of compliance with investment obligations, and procedural flexibility through in-country or remote applications via notarised power of attorney.⁶ Article 43 of Law 5162/2024 amends Article 95(2) of the Migration Code to explicitly extend family reunification rights to holders of the Type B.6 residence permit. By clarifying the eligibility of B.6 permit holders to sponsor family members, the amendment ensures that spouses and minor children may obtain residence permits under the family reunification scheme. This reform aligns the B.6 permit with other investment-based residence categories and strengthens its appeal as a pathway for long-term residence and settlement.⁷

At the same time, the minimum real estate investment threshold under the Golden Visa scheme was increased to €800,000 in high-demand areas, including Attica, Thessaloniki, and popular islands, while properties acquired through the scheme were explicitly excluded from short-term rental use, such as Airbnb,⁸ thereby reinforcing their intended long-term residential or commercial use.⁹ These measures aimed to redirect investment towards productive sectors and mitigate speculative pressures in urban and tourist markets. The legislative framework was further operationalised through a series of implementing acts.

Addressing persistent labour shortages, particularly in sectors reliant on seasonal employment, the Code introduced a streamlined entry and residence procedure for seasonal workers in the agricultural and tourism sectors.¹⁰ The maximum permitted stay was extended to nine months within a twelve-month period, while employers were made explicitly responsible for guaranteeing adequate living conditions and substantiating employment arrangements. Complementing this effort, Joint Ministerial Decision No. 41835/2024 introduces binding health and safety standards for accommodation provided to third-country nationals employed in seasonal work in Greece. Implemented in accordance with the Migration Code and Directive 2014/36/EU, the decision defines employer obligations and establishes inspection and sanctioning mechanisms, thereby reinforcing minimum living standards and regulatory compliance across distinct categories of migrant workers.¹¹ While standard supporting

⁶You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

⁷The relevant law is available here:

https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/nomos_5162_2024.pdf

⁸You can access the details of this article by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

⁹Further information is available here:

<https://greekresidency.com/news/the-new-greek-golden-visa-law-updated-september-2024/>

¹⁰You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

¹¹You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

documents apply to agricultural employment, tourism-related positions are subject to additional safeguards, including proof of the relevance of the worker's specialty to the business activity and evidence of the employer's financial capacity. This must be demonstrated through tax documentation indicating a minimum gross income of €22,000 per worker (or an average over the preceding three years), alongside a formal declaration by legal entities attesting to the accuracy of submitted financial data. In all cases, employers must substantiate their ability to meet the wage obligations stipulated in the employment contract.¹²

This decision 133226/2024 specifies the documentation required for the admission of third-country nationals for highly skilled employment under Article 27 of Law 5038/2023. Employers applying for a national visa and residence permit for highly skilled workers under the EU Blue Card scheme must demonstrate their financial capacity to meet wage obligations. This includes the submission of tax declarations, evidencing a minimum annual gross income of €60,000 per employee. These requirements apply equally where the third-country national is already lawfully residing in Greece.¹³

Further regulatory adjustments in 2024 targeted specific categories of residence and employment. Joint Ministerial Decision No. 95391/20.03.2024 clarified eligibility requirements for digital nomads, requiring proof of remote employment and sufficient financial resources.

Regarding long-term resident status, third-country nationals must demonstrate a stable annual net income at least equivalent to the statutory minimum wage multiplied by fourteen months, with adjustments where applicable. Income contributions from family members, as well as regular unemployment benefits, may be considered. Applicants must provide documentary evidence of income stability, including proof of compliance with tax and social security obligations during the year preceding the application.¹⁴ Finally, Joint Ministerial Decision No. 133692/2024 establishes minimum coverage standards for private health insurance policies submitted by third-country nationals applying for or renewing residence permits under Law 5038/2023. Policies must cover permanent disability (€15,000 per year), medical expenses (€1,500 per year), and hospital care (€10,000 per year), with a maximum co-payment of 20%. Insurance contracts must be free of exclusions or special clauses and remain valid for the entire duration of the beneficiary's stay in Greece.¹⁵

3.2 Naturalisation policy

The Greek government has introduced several decisions regulating the naturalization process for foreign nationals, defining requirement, examination procedures, and institutional adjustments. A central component of this framework is Decision No. 192/2023, which established the examination procedure for the Certificate of Adequacy of Knowledge for Naturalisation (PEGP). As a mandatory prerequisite, the certificate assesses applicants' lawful residence, Greek

¹²You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

¹³You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

¹⁴You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

¹⁵You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

language proficiency, and degree of social integration, thereby introducing a standardised evaluative threshold for naturalisation.¹⁶

This framework was further specified by Decision No. 4555/2024 of the Secretary General for Citizenship, which set out the detailed parameters of the PEGP examination for third-country nationals.¹⁷ The decision regulates examination content and format, as well as practical aspects such as venues, registration, and administrative logistics.¹⁸ Subsequent institutional adjustments were introduced through Decision No. 978/2024, which revised the composition and responsibilities of the committee tasked with organising and supervising the examinations.¹⁹

Beyond the examination system, legislative amendments have addressed distinct pathways to citizenship. Article 56 of Law 5143/2024 amends Article 26(1) of the Greek Citizenship Code (Law 3284/2004), clarifying the procedure for the formal recognition of Greek citizenship in cases where parents acquired Greek nationality by birth after the child's birth. The provision applies to children born within marriage or civil partnership, as well as to children born out of wedlock to a mother who later became a Greek citizen.²⁰

Finally, Article 95 of Law 5225/2025 revises the naturalisation regime for minors and young adults by simplifying procedures and clarifying eligibility conditions. It allows foreign minors who have completed nine years of schooling in Greece, or six years of secondary education, to acquire citizenship through declaration and application. Graduates of Greek universities holding a Greek secondary diploma may apply within three years of graduation. Applications are submitted to the Regional Directorate of Citizenship, with citizenship granted upon publication in the Government Gazette. The law also provides for the acquisition of citizenship by minor children of newly naturalised parents, permits the Hellenisation of names, and sets an application fee of €100.²¹

3.3 Integration policies

Integration measures during 2024–2025 demonstrate a continued consolidation of institutional protection mechanisms for unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and beneficiaries of international protection, alongside an emerging shift toward labour-market-oriented inclusion.

The institutional framework underpinning current integration policies builds on the establishment of the General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection (Presidential Decree 77/2023), which continues to play a central coordinating role in 2024–

¹⁶Further information is available here: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/apof192-20230918.pdf>.

¹⁷Further information is available here: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/eggr398-05092024.pdf>.

¹⁸Further information is available here: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/apof384-20240726.pdf>

¹⁹Further information is available here: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/eggr398-05092024.pdf>

²⁰Further information is available here: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/nomos5143-fek-A161-20241011.pdf>

²¹Further information is available here: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/n5225-FEKA152-20250100152.pdf>

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

2025.²² The Secretariat is responsible for implementing the National Strategy for the protection of UAMs and other vulnerable third-country nationals and stateless persons, overseeing accommodation placements, and coordinating referrals to appropriate housing schemes. Its operational consolidation became particularly visible during 2024.²³

Regulatory refinement advanced significantly in 2024 with the adoption of two key Joint Ministerial Decisions. Joint Ministerial Decision No. 111204 (ΦΕΚ Β' 2118/07.04.2024) introduced standardized operating rules for supervised apartments supporting the semi-autonomous living of older unaccompanied minors.²⁴ Shortly thereafter, Joint Ministerial Decision No. 137051 (ΦΕΚ Β' 2667/02.05.2024) updated the licensing and operational standards for accommodation centres hosting UAMs.²⁵ These measures strengthened regulatory oversight by setting detailed requirements on infrastructure, staffing, service provision, and monitoring, while reinforcing access to education, healthcare, and psychosocial support. Together, they signal a move toward greater standardization and quality control within child protection structures.

This institutional strengthening was further reflected in the 2024 Annual Report of the General Secretariat, published in July 2025. The report highlights the operational launch of the National Guardianship System, the reinforcement of the Emergency Response Mechanism (EMEA), and the processing of over 4,500 housing requests for unaccompanied minors.²⁶ It also documents the development of the National Strategy for the Protection of Vulnerable Persons and Greece's preparatory work for implementing the EU New Pact on Migration and Asylum. These developments indicate a deepening of administrative capacity and coordination mechanisms in the field of child protection and vulnerability assessment.

Integration measures for beneficiaries of international protection were also addressed in Law 5226/2025. Article 31 introduced procedural safeguards concerning the renewal of residence permits, providing legal certainty during renewal procedures. Recognized refugees are granted three-year residence permits, while beneficiaries of subsidiary protection receive renewable one-year permits. The mandatory issuance of a certificate confirming submission of a renewal application ensures continuity of lawful stay and associated rights during the pending decision period, reducing the risk of administrative gaps.

At the policy level, a notable shift emerged in October 2025 with the presentation of the draft "New Legal Migration Framework." While primarily focused on labour migration, the proposal has clear integration implications. It introduces a requirement for asylum beneficiaries to actively seek employment in order to maintain access to certain integration support measures, reflecting an increasing linkage between protection status and labour market participation. The draft also

²²Further information is available here: <https://migration.gov.gr/en/grammateies/geniki-grammateia-evaloton-politon-kai-thesmikis-prostasias/>

²³You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

²⁴Further information is available here: https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/6_FEK-2024-Tefxos-B-02118-07-04-24.pdf

²⁵You can access the respective decision by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

²⁶Further information is available here: <https://www.scribd.com/document/885785772/Entypo-Eualwtwn-GR-Web>

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

formalizes the role of Temporary Employment Agencies in recruitment processes and introduces streamlined legal migration channels aligned with labour market needs.²⁷

Overall, developments in 2024–2025 reveal a dual trend in integration policy. On the one hand, there has been continued institutional consolidation and regulatory standardization in the protection of unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups. On the other, integration policy is increasingly framed through the lens of economic participation, signaling a gradual reorientation toward conditional, labour-market-based inclusion.

3.3.1 Integration of Ukrainians

Temporary protection for displaced persons from Ukraine in Greece continues to be implemented under Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/382 and the relevant national framework.²⁸ The key developments in 2024–2025 concern successive extensions of protection status and adjustments to integration measures.²⁹

In February 2024, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum adopted a Ministerial Decision extending temporary protection until 4 March 2025. In January 2025, a further decision extended the regime to 4 March 2026. As a result, all residence permits for temporary protection expiring in March 2023, September 2023, March 2024, or March 2025 were automatically prolonged until March 2026, without requiring additional action from beneficiaries. The status continues to grant legal residence, access to the labour market, healthcare, and social services in accordance with the Migration Code.³⁰

A specific legislative provision (Article 55) introduced in this period allows ethnic Greeks holding Ukrainian citizenship who arrived after 24 February 2022 to apply for Greek citizenship under a simplified procedure, provided they hold a valid temporary protection residence permit.³¹

Integration support has also been reinforced. Beneficiaries of temporary protection have access to the HELIOS integration programme, including housing support, employment counselling, and

²⁷Further information is available here: <https://en.protothema.gr/2025/10/07/migration-anyone-granted-asylum-will-be-required-to-work-how-temporary-employment-agencies-will-operate/>.

²⁸Further information is available here: <https://migration.gov.gr/energopoieitai-to-kathestos-prosorinis-prostasias-ektopismenon-atomon-apo-tin-oykrania%E1%BF%BC/>.

²⁹Electronic pre-registration for temporary protection of displaced Ukrainians is available on the website of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum since March 2022. The platform provides Ukrainian citizens residing in Ukraine the opportunity to declare their basic personal data and receive a special appointment in person at the Regional Offices of the Asylum Service, to receive temporary status protection. See here for more information: <https://migration.gov.gr/diathesimi-apo-simera-stin-istoselida-toy-ypoyrgeioy-metanasteysis-kai-asyloy-ston-eidiko-syndesmo-apps-migration-gov-gr-temporary-protection-i-ilektroniki-platforma-pro-katagrafis-ektopisthent/>.

³⁰Further information is available here: <https://migration.gov.gr/paratasi-tis-prosorinis-prostasias-gia-toys-ektopisthentes-apo-tin-oykrania/> and here:

<https://diavgeia.gov.gr/doc/90%CE%99346%CE%9C%CE%94%CE%A8%CE%9F-89%CE%92?inline=true>

³¹Further information is available here: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/nomos5143-fek-A161-20241011.pdf>

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

language courses. In 2024, housing subsidies under HELIOS increased by 30%, and the duration of rental support was extended to 12 months for all beneficiaries.³²

In practice, many Ukrainian families have settled in Attica and Thessaloniki, supported by EU-funded accommodation schemes and NGO networks. Over 15,000 Ukrainian children are enrolled in Greek schools, benefitting from language and psychosocial support programmes.

Despite legal access to the labour market, employment integration remains a challenge. Surveys indicate persistently high unemployment among Ukrainian refugees, particularly among women, largely due to language barriers and difficulties in credential recognition.³³ Targeted employment and vocational initiatives have expanded, but structural obstacles remain.³⁴

3.4 Anti-discrimination policies and diversity programmes

In April 2024, the Racist Violence Recording Network (RVRN) published its annual report documenting incidents recorded in 2023, providing a detailed overview of racist violence in Greece.³⁵ Based on 158 recorded cases collected through victim testimonies, the report confirmed that migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers remain the most targeted group, accounting for 89 incidents. These cases included physical assaults, verbal abuse, discriminatory treatment, and instances of organized attacks, often linked to national origin, religion, or skin colour. LGBTQI+ individuals were also significantly affected, while nearly one in three incidents involved minors, either as victims or perpetrators.

The 2024 findings highlighted persistent patterns of systemic racism, including conduct attributed to state representatives, as well as incidents occurring in schools and community settings. Particular concern was raised regarding border regions, where refugees and migrants face heightened vulnerability. The report underscored serious obstacles to reporting racist crimes, noting that many victims refrain from filing complaints due to fear of retaliation, psychological trauma, and distrust of authorities. This reluctance contributes to the underreporting of hate crimes and limits access to justice.

The RVRN called for strengthened institutional safeguards, including more effective victim-support mechanisms, improved law enforcement and judicial responses, activation of the National Council against Racism and Intolerance, and the adoption of a comprehensive national Action Plan against Racism. It also emphasized the importance of education and awareness initiatives to address discriminatory attitudes within schools and public institutions.

In July 2025, the Network issued further findings expressing concern over a deteriorating public climate toward refugees and migrants. The 2025 update identified a growing normalization of hate speech in political and public discourse, warning that xenophobic narratives increasingly

³² [Homes for Ukrainian refugees via HELIOS | Ministry of Migration and Asylum.](#)

³³ UNHCR surveys show that 64% of Ukrainian refugees in Greece were not working in recent months, with women's unemployment particularly high (82%) due to language barriers and credential recognition issues.

³⁴ You may find additional information here: <https://innopolis.org/ukrainian-refugees-together-in-greece/>

³⁵ You may find additional information here: <https://rvrn.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/RVRN-2023-report-fnl.pdf>.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

frame migrants as threats to social cohesion. According to RVRN, this shift has contributed to a rise in orchestrated attacks and the normalization of low-intensity racist violence embedded in everyday interactions. The Network stressed the direct link between hostile rhetoric and violent incidents, reiterating that persistent trauma and lack of trust in authorities continue to discourage victims from seeking protection.³⁶

In parallel, institutional developments have sought to address fundamental rights concerns. The Ministry of Migration and Asylum introduced a formal Complaints Mechanism,³⁷ overseen by a Fundamental Rights Officer, to allow third-country nationals to report alleged violations occurring during entry, reception, and asylum procedures.³⁸ While this initiative signals recognition of accountability gaps, civil society actors continue to stress the need for consistent implementation and broader structural reforms to effectively combat racist violence and safeguard vulnerable communities.

3.5 Bilateral agreements on the recruitment of foreign workers

To address persistent labour shortages, particularly in the agricultural sector, Greece has prioritized the implementation of bilateral labour mobility agreements.³⁹ In this context, the Bilateral Agreement between Greece and Egypt on the entry and residence of Egyptian nationals for seasonal agricultural employment has entered its operational phase.⁴⁰

Circular No. 8/18.06.2024 formally announced the launch of a dedicated electronic platform, activated on 10 June 2024 and hosted on the website of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum. The platform enables Greek employers to submit applications for the recruitment of Egyptian seasonal workers, thereby facilitating a streamlined and transparent procedure.

The Agreement, ratified by Law 5009/2023, provides for the admission of up to 5,000 Egyptian seasonal workers during its first year of implementation. Admissions are carried out in accordance with national migration legislation and the relevant Ministerial Decisions (95391/2024 and 133226/2024). The digital platform constitutes a key administrative tool supporting the structured, regulated, and need-based implementation of the bilateral framework.

3.6 International agreements regarding readmission and/or the return of foreigners

Law 5226/2025 (Official Gazette A' 154/08.09.2025), introduced by the Minister of Migration and Asylum, represents a significant recalibration of Greece's migration and return policy and has generated substantial debate among civil society actors and legal scholars. The law revises the

³⁶Further information is available here: <https://rvrn.org/el/sovair-anisihia-gia-tis-epitheseis-kata-prosfygwn/> and here: <https://rvrn.org/el/anisihia-klima-politiko-dimosio-logo/>

³⁷Further information is available here: <https://migration.gov.gr/fro-complaints/>.

³⁸Further information is available here: <https://migration.gov.gr/enarxi-leitoyrgias-toy-michanismoy-kataggelion/>.

³⁹Law 5009/2023 ratifies the agreement between Greece and Egypt for the recruitment of seasonal agricultural workers. For more information see here: <https://www.forin.gr/laws/law/4228/n-5009-2023>

⁴⁰You can access the respective circular by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

national framework governing the return of third-country nationals in alignment with EU Directive 2008/115/EC, introducing stricter procedures for removal and entry bans, reinforced penalties for irregular entry, exit, and stay, and revised provisions concerning voluntary departure, unaccompanied minors, and emergency situations.

In addition, the legislation is amending key sections of the Migration Code relating to residence permits and the status and rights of beneficiaries of international protection. While the government presents the reform as enhancing administrative efficiency and strengthening compliance with EU standards, critics contend that certain provisions risk weakening procedural safeguards, particularly for vulnerable groups. Human rights organizations have expressed concern over the adequacy of guarantees, proportionality in enforcement, and the potential adverse impact on asylum seekers and undocumented migrants. As implementation unfolds, debate persists regarding the law's legal coherence, humanitarian implications, and operational feasibility.⁴¹

3.7 Asylum and refugee policy

During 2024–2025, Greece's asylum and refugee policy framework underwent a significant transformation, combining procedural streamlining with a marked shift toward enforcement-oriented migration management. While authorities emphasized efficiency and alignment with EU standards, developments unfolded in the context of sustained scrutiny regarding border practices and return operations.

In 2024, reform efforts initially focused on strengthening the institutional functioning of the asylum system. Joint Ministerial Decision No. 109288 (ΦΕΚ Β' 2602/01.05.2024) determined the number of Independent Appeals Panels operating within the Appeals Authority of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, with the stated aim of reducing backlogs and accelerating the examination of appeals.⁴² This was followed by Joint Ministerial Decision No. 205912 (ΦΕΚ Υ.Ο.Δ.Δ. 870/12.08.2024), which regulated the formation and composition of the Independent Appeals Committees, clarifying qualifications and ensuring adequate staffing.⁴³ Together, these measures were presented as reinforcing procedural efficiency and strengthening compliance with EU asylum standards.

However, these institutional adjustments took place against the backdrop of persistent concerns regarding informal returns and border enforcement practices. The Second Annual Report of the National Commission for Human Rights' Recording Mechanism of Informal and Forced Returns, published in June 2024⁴⁴ and covering incidents recorded in 2023, documented 45 cases affecting 1,438 individuals, including women and children. The report described coordinated operations and pointed to systemic patterns, calling for enhanced transparency, accountability, and

⁴¹Further information is available here: https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/nomos_5226_2025.pdf

⁴²You can access the respective circular by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

⁴³You can access the respective circular by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

⁴⁴Further information is available here: https://nchr.gr/images/pdf/nea_epikairothta/deltia_tupou/2024/2023.pdf.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

adherence to fundamental rights obligations. Although referring to the previous year, its findings directly shaped the 2024–2025 policy debate.

This debate was rooted in earlier developments. In March 2023, Frontex and the Greek authorities agreed to expand operational cooperation on returns, an initiative framed as strengthening implementation of EU return procedures.⁴⁵ At the same time, international bodies had raised serious concerns about pushback practices. In 2022, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants characterized pushbacks as a “de facto general policy”⁴⁶ and the European Court of Human Rights found that Greece had failed to fulfil its duty to protect life and to conduct an effective investigation in a fatal maritime incident involving asylum seekers.⁴⁷ The Pylos shipwreck in June 2023, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of migrants, further intensified calls for accountability and oversight.⁴⁸ These developments provided the broader context within which subsequent legislative reforms unfolded.⁴⁹

A decisive shift became visible in July 2025, when Article 79 of Law 5218/2025 temporarily suspended access to asylum procedures for individuals arriving from Northern Africa, particularly those reaching Crete and Gavdos. The measure authorized a three-month halt to asylum registration and enabled deportations without individual assessment. Asylum seekers were transferred to Pre-Removal Detention Centres without access to reception conditions, legal assistance, or vulnerability screening. The decision prompted strong reactions from civil society organizations, legal experts, UNHCR, and the Council of Europe, who warned of potential risks of refoulement and incompatibility with EU and international protection obligations. The suspension marked a clear move toward emergency-driven governance centered on deterrence.⁵⁰

This enforcement-oriented trajectory was further consolidated with the adoption of Law 5226/2025 (Official Gazette A’ 154/08.09.2025), which restructured Greece’s return framework in line with Directive 2008/115/EC.⁵¹ The law integrates return decisions into asylum and residence rejection rulings, clarifies recognition of residence permits issued by other EU Member States, and establishes a structured system for voluntary departure.⁵² A default departure period of seven to fourteen days is provided, extendable under specific circumstances, while authorities may impose monitoring measures to prevent absconding. Importantly, the law introduces

⁴⁵Further information is available here:

<https://www.frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/frontex-executive-director-and-greek-officials-agree-on-cooperation-on-returns-iNUJcF>.

⁴⁶Further information is available here: https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AIDA-GR_2022-Update.pdf.

⁴⁷European Court Slams Greece Over Deadly Migrant Pushback, available at:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/07/08/european-court-slams-greece-over-deadly-migrant-pushback?fbclid=IwAR1Hlqcwox3tJQuiPg4sEHBwJaxE4rO64SLYptwpMrymQ-EnOpnAqEXNIGs>.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹European Court of Human Rights rules against Greece in landmark migrant rights case - JURIST - News

⁵⁰Further information is available here: <http://elib.aade.gr/elib/view?d=/gr/act/2025/5218/>

⁵¹You can access the respective law by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

⁵²You can access the respective law by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

criminal penalties of two to five years' imprisonment for third-country nationals who remain in Greece following final rejection of asylum or residence claims, unless they opt for voluntary return.⁵³ Widely debated, this provision signals a turn toward deterrence-based enforcement and raises questions regarding proportionality and fundamental rights safeguards.

Safeguards in return procedures for UAMs were clarified through Article 11 of Law 5226/2025, adopted in September 2025. The provision requires a best-interests assessment prior to any return decision and mandates verification that appropriate reception arrangements exist in the country of return. By aligning national practice with Article 10 of Directive 2008/115/EC, the law integrates child-specific guarantees within the broader return framework.⁵⁴

Overall, developments in 2024–2025 reveal a dual but tension-filled trajectory in Greece's asylum governance. On the one hand, procedural mechanisms have been refined and institutional capacity reinforced; on the other, legislative reforms have prioritized return enforcement and deterrence, reshaping the balance between administrative efficiency, border control, and the protection of fundamental rights.

3.8 International migration in the public debate

Between 2023 and 2025, Greece's Golden Visa programme experienced rapid expansion, reflecting not only increased investor demand but also significant growth in family-based migration linked to the scheme. During this period, the combined number of first issuances and renewals rose by 76.8%. Notably, residence permits granted to family members consistently outnumbered those issued directly to primary investors, indicating that the programme has evolved from a narrowly targeted investment instrument into a broader channel for long-term residence and settlement.

This quantitative growth appears to be shaped by wider geopolitical and economic dynamics. Strengthened strategic partnerships, particularly Greece's expanding defence and energy cooperation with Israel, as well as targeted post-Brexit outreach to UK investors, have contributed to sustained demand. At the same time, the increasing share of permits granted to nationals from Western and Middle Eastern countries suggests that participation patterns are influenced by diplomatic relations, regional instability, and capital mobility trends. Conversely, applications from nationals of sanctioned or politically isolated states have declined, reflecting the impact of international regulatory and compliance frameworks.

However, it is precisely this rapid expansion and its broader socio-economic spillovers that have intensified political and public contestation. As the programme has grown in scale and visibility, it has shifted from being perceived primarily as a post-crisis recovery tool to becoming a focal point of debate about inequality, transparency, and housing pressures. The main opposition party has called for the programme's abolition, arguing that it disproportionately benefits wealthy foreign investors while offering limited tangible gains to the wider Greek population.

⁵³You can access the respective law by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

⁵⁴You can access the respective law by clicking [here](#), which will take you directly to the official document.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Concerns have also been raised regarding due diligence procedures, with critics warning that insufficiently robust vetting could expose the system to misuse by politically exposed or financially questionable individuals seeking EU access through real estate investments. Although official rejection rates remain low, opposition actors argue that this may indicate procedural leniency rather than administrative efficiency.

The housing market has become central to the controversy. A recent study by the Athens University of Economics and Business linked Golden Visa demand to rising housing costs and declining affordability, particularly in Athens, Thessaloniki, and popular island destinations.⁵⁵ This finding has been seized upon in political discourse, with critics arguing that the programme incentivizes luxury construction and short-term rental expansion, thereby exacerbating pressures on local residents. As housing affordability becomes a salient public concern, the Golden Visa programme is increasingly framed as contributing to urban displacement and social inequality.

Overall, the Golden Visa debate illustrates how investment-based migration has moved from the margins of economic policy to the centre of public discussion. While the government continues to emphasize its role in attracting capital and supporting economic growth, public opinion has become more ambivalent, reflecting broader tensions between economic liberalization, social cohesion, and equitable access to housing.

⁵⁵Further information is available here: <https://news.gtp.gr/2025/07/30/study-links-golden-visa-to-greeces-housing-crisis-businesses-disagree/> and here: <https://www.ot.gr/2025/07/25/english-edition/golden-visa-boom-reshapes-greek-housing-market-fuels-price-surge/>

4. Migration Statistics 2024 – 2025

4.1 The Migrant Population in Greece

The 2021 Census underscores a notable decline in Greece's population, primarily driven by lower birth rates among Greek women, increased mortality, and emigration of Greek citizens.⁵⁶ While emigration remained below 100,000 (Table 1), its impact was still significant. Specifically, the Greek population saw a decrease of 422,007, largely due to a natural decline of 326,658 and emigration totaling 95,349. In contrast, the foreign population expanded by 38,202, as a natural increase of 99,192 that surpassed emigration figures of 60,990.

Looking at the broader picture, between 2011 and 2021, Greece's permanent population shrank by 383,805, a result of both natural decline (-227,466) and net emigration (-156,339).

Table 1: Resident population by sex, age, and citizenship, 2021

CITIZENSHIP	Total	SEX		AGE GROUPS			
		Male	Female	0-24	25-49	50-74	75+
GREECE TOTAL	10,482,487	5,125,977	5,356,510	2,467,326	3,385,106	3,423,531	1,206,524
Greek	9,716,889	4,736,290	4,980,599	2,295,945	3,007,737	3,219,132	1,194,075
EU countries except Greece	116,669	41,776	74,893	19,588	50,852	42,156	4,073
European countries outside EU	439,254	216,022	223,232	98,643	216,386	118,484	5,741
Countries of Africa	33,471	21,667	11,804	9,592	18,086	5,589	204
Countries of the Caribbean, South or Central America	3,565	1,125	2,440	394	1,846	1,244	81
Countries of North America	5,607	2,511	3,096	593	1,941	2,407	666
Countries of Asia	158,530	102,075	56,455	39,530	85,718	32,228	1,054
Countries of Oceania	1,494	641	853	138	483	720	153
Foreigners with undeclared citizenship	3,265	1,751	1,514	610	1,249	1,070	336
Stateless or unspecified citizenship	3,743	2,119	1,624	2,293	808	501	141

Source: 2021 Population Census, [ELSTAT](#)

At the same time, migration flow data from the 2021 National Census reveal that Greece is home to 765,598 individuals with foreign citizenship, representing a portion of the country's total population of 10,482,487, according to the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT).⁵⁷

As of October 2025, the number of third-country nationals residing in Greece was 518,094, reflecting an increase of 7.27% compared to September 2024 (482,982) (Figure 1). However,

⁵⁶See the Census Results of Population and Housing 2021 here: [Booklet Αποτελέσματα Πληθυσμού 2023 II EN_FINAL2_WEB.pdf \(statistics.gr\)](#)

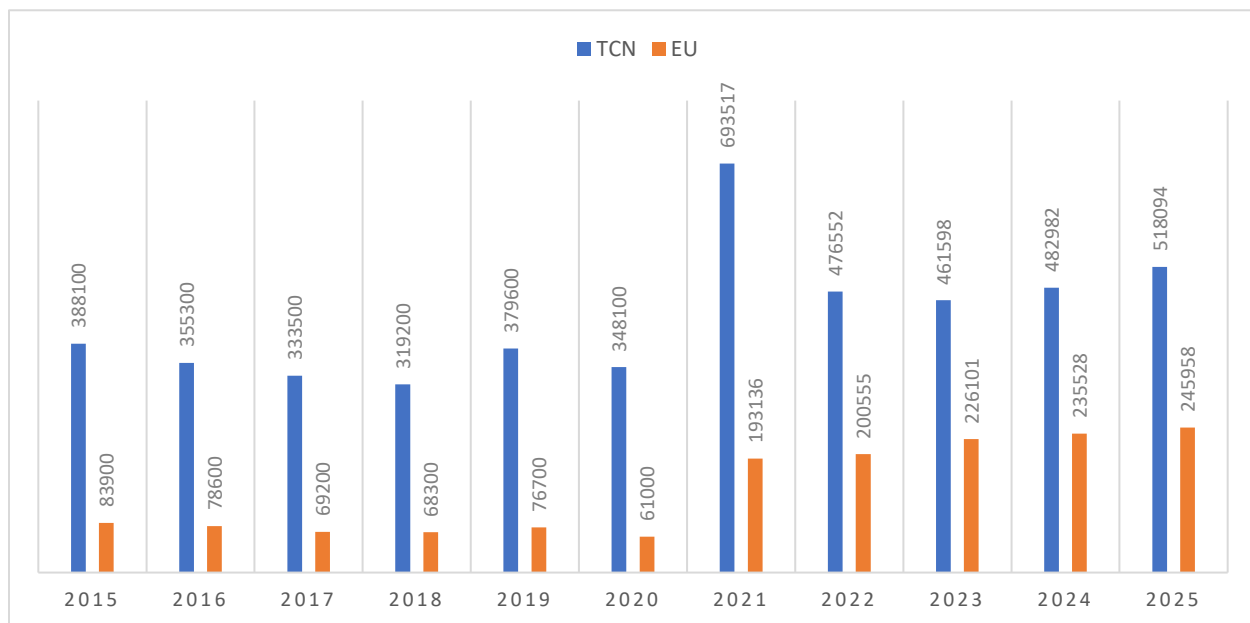
⁵⁷[Census Results of Population and Housing 2021](#), Hellenic Statistical Authority, August 2023.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

when including 94,130 beneficiaries of international protection, 245,958 EU citizens, 20,831 co-ethnics, and 37,684 holders of special types of residence permits (individuals displaced by war or humanitarian crises, such as Ukrainians), the total number of legally residing immigrants in the country is estimated at 916,697, representing 8.75% of the country's total population. Additionally, between January and October 2025, 52,397 asylum applications were submitted,⁵⁸ marking a 10.44% decrease from the 58,505 applications filed during the same period in 2024.⁵⁹

Between 2015 and 2025, the stock of the foreign population in Greece shows a consistent predominance of third country Nationals (TCNs) over EU citizens, with TCNs more than doubling EU numbers throughout the period. From 2015 to 2020, both groups experienced a gradual decline or stagnation, but a sharp demographic shift occurred in 2021, likely due to geopolitical events and the activation of temporary protection mechanisms, particularly following the Ukraine crisis. In that year, the number of TCNs rose sharply to over 693,000, while EU citizens exceeded 193,000. Although TCNs figures declined slightly in 2022 and 2023, they subsequently resumed a steady upward trajectory, reaching 518,094 in 2025. The number of EU citizens continued to increase more gradually, peaking at 245,958 in the same year. This trend indicates a shift from emergency-driven arrivals toward more stable and structured patterns of residence and integration, with Greece progressively adjusting its migration and residence policies to address both humanitarian obligations and intra-EU labour mobility.

Figure 1: Stock of foreign population in Greece (TCN and EU citizens), 2015-2025 (as of October)



Source: [Information Note on Migration October 2025, Ministry of Migration and Asylum](#)

According to migration and migrant population statistics published by Eurostat in February 2025, the non-national population residing in Greece as of January 2024 stood at 1,147,800 persons,

⁵⁸[Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), page 5, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁵⁹[Information Note on Asylum October 2024](#), page 5, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

accounting for 11% of the country's total population.⁶⁰ Of these, 913,400 individuals (8.8%) were nationals of non-EU countries, while 234,400 (2.3%) were citizens of EU Member States. These figures illustrate the internally differentiated composition of Greece's foreign resident population, shaped by both extra-EU migration and intra-EU mobility.

Data from the 2025 Labour Force Survey (3rd Quarter) indicates a 44.42% decrease in the foreign population aged 15 and over, with 171,300 foreign citizens recorded in the third quarter of 2025,⁶¹ compared to 308,200 in the corresponding quarter of 2024.⁶² Despite this decline in the working-age segment captured by the survey, the total foreign resident population, including both TCNs and EU-27 citizens, amounted to 916,697 persons in October 2025 (Table 2), representing 8.75% of Greece's total resident population. This corresponds to a 7.71% increase compared to October 2024, when the foreign population stood at 851,072.⁶³

Table 2: Stock of foreign population in Greece, 2025 (as of October)

	Size of immigrant stock	% of total resident population
Total TCN population	518,094	4.94
Total EU27 countries' citizens (non-Greek)	245,958	2.35
Total recognized refugees	94,130	0.90
Total expatriates	20,831	0.20
Total Residence Permits of Temporary Protection	37,684	0.36
Total immigrant stock	916,697	8.75
Total population in Greece	10,482,487*	100.00

Sources: [Monthly Information Note October 2025 – Ministry of Migration and Asylum](#) /*2021 Population Census Data published in August 2023

A closer examination of valid residence permits issued to TCNs, as reported in the September 2025 bulletin of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum (Table 3), indicates a steady increase of 6.62%, rising from 482,982 in September 2024 to 514,982 in September 2025.⁶⁴

Table 3: Valid resident permits for third-country nationals by gender, 2016-2025

Valid resident permits TCNs	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Men	303,289	291,785	286,774	286,886	282,426	n/a	n/a	n/a	266,799	278,818
Women	276,447	264,801	257,669	260,045	255,466	n/a	n/a	n/a	229,308	236,144
Total	579,736	556,586	544,430	546,931	508,452	693,517	472,213	468,038	496,107	514,962

Sources:, Data for 2016-2025 are available online provided by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum. Note: Data refer to 31 December of each year. Data for 2025 refer to October 2025.

⁶⁰ [Migration and migrant population statistics](#), Eurostat, February 2026.

⁶¹ [Labour Force Quarterly Data, 3rd Quarter 2025](#), Hellenic Statistical Authority

⁶² [Labour Force Quarterly Data, 3rd Quarter 2024](#), Hellenic Statistical Authority.

⁶³ [Monthly Information Note October 2024](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁶⁴ [Monthly Information Note September 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

This upward trajectory is further confirmed by a 7.56% growth in the total number of valid residence permits recorded in October 2025 (518,094), compared to 481,679 during the same period in the previous year.⁶⁵ Between 2016 and 2020 (Table 3), the number of valid residence permits issued to TCNs in Greece declined steadily, falling from 579,736 to 508,452. This contraction affected men and women almost equally, although men consistently constituted a slightly larger share of the total. In 2021, however, the number of permits rose sharply to 693,517, likely reflecting the extension of temporary protection schemes and broader emergency migration responses.⁶⁶

In 2022 and 2023, the total number of permits decreased again, suggesting the expiration of short-term statuses or a restructuring of residence categories. From 2024 onwards, the figures began to recover, reaching 514,962 in 2025, with men accounting for 278,818 permits and women for 236,144. This renewed upward trend may point to further regularisation processes or the gradual stabilisation of migration flows. At the same time, the persistent gender gap indicates a relatively stable demographic composition among TCNs residing in Greece.

4.2 Composition of the Immigrant Population

In terms of the composition of the migrant population, Albanians constitute the largest group, accounting for an estimated 51.7% of Greece's foreign population. Chinese nationals represent the second-largest group, comprising 8.4% of the total (Table 4). In recent years, the Chinese presence in Greece has grown steadily, with China moving from third place in 2021 (3.9%) to second place in 2022 (4.9%), 2023 (5.7%), and 2024 (6.0%), reaching 8.4% by October 2025, a 2.2 percentage-point increase compared to the previous year.

Pakistani, Georgian, and Bangladeshi nationals follow as the third, fourth, and fifth-largest communities, accounting for 5.3%, 3.8%, and 3.3% of the foreign population, respectively. As highlighted in the October 2025 report of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, these patterns reflect the increasingly diversified composition of Greece's migrant population, shaped by both longstanding migration corridors and emerging investment and labour-driven mobility trends.⁶⁷

Table 4: National Composition of the Migrant Population (top 10 nationalities)

Country of Origin	Population		TCN valid permits 2024 -2025			
	Census 2011	Census 2021	on 31.10.2024		on 30.10.2025	
	Number	Number	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Albania	480,851	374,296	275,630	57.2	267,761	51.7
China	n/a	n/a	29,137	6.0	43,345	8.4
Pakistan	34,178	35,309	22,465	4.7	27,669	5.3
Georgia	27,407	26,083	19,862	4.1	19,920	3.8

⁶⁵ [Monthly Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁶⁶ Gender-disaggregated data for that year are not available.

⁶⁷ [Information Note on Legal Migration October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum (p.2, table no. 3).

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Bangladesh	11,333	17,189	15,381	3.2	16,945	3.3
Russia	13,809	13,415	14,464	3.0	14,556	2.8
Ukraine	17,008	16,408	13,680	2.8	13,565	2.6
Egypt	10,455	n/a	10,813	2.2	13,310	2.6
Turkey	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12,472	2.4
Philippines	9,807	n/a	8,471	1.8	11,851	2.3

Sources: [Information Note October 2024](#), [Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum, & [National Census 2021](#), data published in August 2023.

Against this backdrop of increasing diversification in the migrant population, recent administrative data further illustrate the scale and structure of legal residence in Greece. As of October 2025, the total number of valid residence permits stood at 518,094, marking a 7.56% increase compared to October 2024 (481,679).

A breakdown of permits by purpose, according to data from the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum, shows that the largest category falls under “other,” accounting for 236,420 permits. Family reunification constitutes the second-largest category, with 156,908 permits, followed by employment-related permits, which amount to 123,011 (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Stay permits by purpose (October 2024 – October 2025)



Source: [Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

This distribution suggests that residence patterns are not driven solely by labour migration but also by protection-related statuses, humanitarian grounds, and family-based mobility, reflecting the multidimensional character of migrant settlement in Greece.

The distribution of valid residence permits for third-country nationals (TCNs) in Greece between October 2024 and October 2025 shows a consistent increase across all major categories. Employment-related permits rose from 114,534 in 2024 to 123,011 in 2025 (+8,477), pointing to a continued consolidation of labour-driven migration and potentially reflecting the impact of targeted labour market policies.

The “other” category, which generally encompasses long-term, humanitarian, protection-based, and exceptional residence statuses, recorded the largest numerical increase, growing from

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

217,813 to 236,420 (+18,607). Family-related permits also expanded, rising from 147,930 to 156,908, indicating ongoing household stabilisation and sustained family reunification trends. Finally, although comparatively limited in absolute terms, study-related permits increased from 1,402 to 1,755, suggesting a modest but discernible rise in educational mobility (Figure 2).

Within this broader expansion of residence permits, the Golden Visa programme represents a particularly dynamic component. Between 2023 and 2025 (as of October), the number of permanent residence permits issued under the scheme increased markedly, reflecting sustained investor interest alongside continued family-based migration. In 2023, a total of 33,646 first-time permits were granted, with family members accounting for nearly two-thirds of the total. This figure rose moderately to 36,852 in 2024 before surging to 56,545 by October 2025, a 53.5% year-on-year increase.

Table 5: Permanent residence permits for investment 2023-2025 (as of October 2025)

Type of resident permit	2023			2024			2025 (as of October)		
	Permanent Investor	Family Member	TOTAL	Permanent Investor	Family Member	TOTAL	Permanent Investor	Family Member	TOTAL
Permanent residence permits for investment (Golden Visa) – FIRST ISSUANCE	12,126	21,520	33,646	12,928	23,924	36,852	19,147	37,398	56,545
Permanent residence permits for investment (Golden Visa) – RENEWAL	3,035	4,461	7,496	4,527	6,670	11,197	6,553	9,627	16,180

Sources: [Information Note December 2023](#), [Information Note December 2024](#) & [Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

Renewals followed a similarly upward trajectory, rising from 7,496 in 2023 to 11,197 in 2024, and reaching 16,180 in 2025, representing a 116% increase over the three-year period. Across both first issuances and renewals, permits granted to family members consistently exceeded those issued directly to investors, highlighting the programme's growing function not only as an investment mechanism but also as a channel for family reunification and longer-term settlement.

Taken together, the combined total of first issuances and renewals expanded from 41,142 in 2023 to 72,725 in 2025, a 76.8% increase, underscoring the accelerating role of investment-linked residence pathways within Greece's evolving migration landscape.

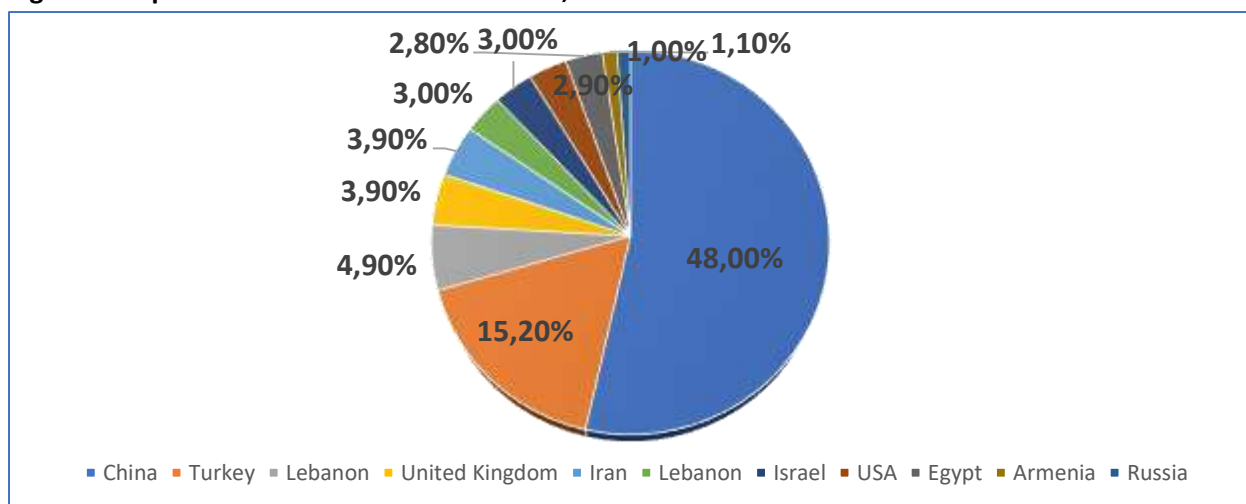
In terms of nationalities, Chinese nationals constituted the largest group of beneficiaries under the Golden Visa scheme in October 2025, with 9,198 permits (48% men and 52% women), marking a substantial increase of 41.05% compared to October 2024 (6,521). China was followed by Turkey with 2,913 beneficiaries and Lebanon with 947. As illustrated in Figure 3, Chinese investors accounted for nearly 48% of all valid initial Golden Visa permits in Greece as of October 2025.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Between October 2024 and October 2025, however, the profile of the leading nationalities holding valid initial Golden Visa permits shifted in ways that reflect broader geopolitical developments and evolving bilateral relations. While China remained the dominant source country, its share declined slightly from 51.8% (6,521 permits) in 2024 to 48.0% (9,198 permits) in 2025, indicating gradual diversification within the programme. Russia recorded a noticeable decrease, from 232 permits (1.8%) to 190 (1.0%), a decline likely linked to Greece's alignment with EU sanctions and its firm position regarding the war in Ukraine, which has limited Russian access to European residency schemes.

By contrast, permits granted to nationals from Israel increased significantly, from 301 (2.4%) to 567 (3.0%), while the United States rose from 369 (2.9%) to 546 (2.9%), and the United Kingdom reached 750 permits (3.9%), maintaining a relatively stable share. These upward trends may be associated with strengthened strategic partnerships, including Greece's expanding defence and energy cooperation with Israel, as well as its post-Brexit engagement with UK investors.

Figure 3: Top 10 ethnicities with Golden Visas, October 2025



Source: [Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

4.3 Immigrant Labour Market Participation

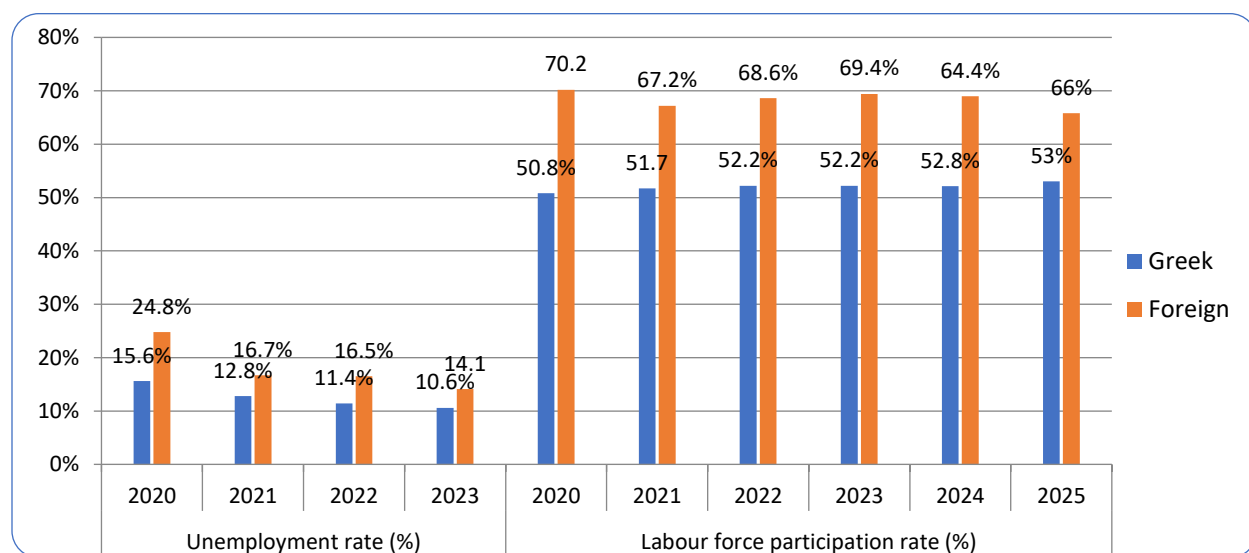
In Greece, the labour force participation rate among the foreign population stood at 69.0% in 2024, significantly higher than the 52.1% recorded for the Greek population. By the third quarter of 2025, participation among foreign nationals had declined to 65.8%, marking a decrease of 3.2 percentage points. This contraction reduced the differential between Greek and foreign labour force participation rates by approximately 13% (Figure 4), indicating a partial convergence in labour market engagement between the two groups.⁶⁸

⁶⁸Labour Force Survey, [3rd Quarter 2025](#), Hellenic Statistical Authority.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

The composition of foreign labour market participation in the third quarter of 2025 reveals important structural characteristics. According to the Labour Force Survey, the highest participation rate was recorded among foreign men aged 30–44, confirming that engagement remains strongest among individuals of prime working age.⁶⁹ In terms of employment status, the majority of economically active foreign nationals were wage earners (72.5%), while 17.3% were self-employed, reflecting a sustained entrepreneurial presence within migrant communities. Part-time employment accounted for 5% of total employment and temporary work for 10.6%. Compared to the third quarter of 2024, part-time employment declined by 1.3%, suggesting a modest shift toward more stable forms of labour market integration.⁷⁰

Figure 4: Rate of participation in labour market (%), 3rd Quarters of 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025



Sources: Graph compiled by the author on the basis of the Hellenic Statistical Authority (EL.STAT.) Labour Force Survey, 3rd Quarter of [2020](#), [2021](#), [2022](#), [2023](#), [2024](#) and [2025](#)

Turning to overall unemployment, Greece recorded a rate of 9.6% in June 2024, remaining the second highest in the European Union after Spain (11.5%).⁷¹ By July 2025, unemployment had declined further to 8%, reflecting a steady downward trajectory over the previous two years.⁷² While this improvement signals continued labour market recovery, partly supported by post-pandemic stabilisation and strong tourism performance, Greece remains among the higher-ranking Member States in terms of unemployment.⁷³

⁶⁹Labour Force Survey: [3rd Quarter 2025](#), Hellenic Statistical Authority.

⁷⁰Labour Force Survey: [3rd Quarter 2024](#), Hellenic Statistical Authority.

⁷¹Unemployment rate in EU member states in June 2024, Statista.com, available at:

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1115276/unemployment-in-europe-by-country/>

⁷²Unemployment rate in the European Union and Europe as of July 2025, available at:

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1115276/unemployment-in-europe-by-country/>

⁷³In comparative perspective, Spain continues to record the highest rate (10.4%), followed by Finland (10%) and Sweden (8.8%). Greece's unemployment rate remains significantly above the EU average of 5.9% and exceeds that

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Seasonally adjusted data reinforces this positive trend. The unemployment rate declined from 10% in September 2023 to 9.3% in September 2024,⁷⁴ although it remained well above the euro area average of 6.3%, underscoring the persistent gap between Greece and broader European labour market conditions.

Between May 2024 and May 2025, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell from 10.5% (approximately 499,000 unemployed persons) to 7.9%, the lowest level recorded in the observed period. This represents a year-on-year reduction of 2.6 percentage points and nearly 130,000 fewer unemployed individuals. The sharpest monthly improvement occurred between March and April 2025, when unemployment declined from 9.5% to 8.3%, likely reflecting seasonal labour demand in tourism and services alongside employment-support measures.

Youth unemployment followed a similar, though structurally higher, trajectory. The rate fell from 19.4% in September 2023 to 16.3% in September 2024, yet remained above the EU average of 14.3%. On a seasonally adjusted basis, youth unemployment declined more substantially between May 2024 and May 2025, from 25.2% to 19.9%, with the number of unemployed young people decreasing from approximately 66,000 to 52,000.⁷⁵ Despite this progress, youth unemployment continues to exceed overall unemployment levels, indicating ongoing structural vulnerabilities for younger cohorts entering the labour market.

Finally, migrant unemployment stood at 9.7% in the third quarter of 2025, representing a decrease of 2.7 percentage points compared to the same quarter in 2024. This decline suggests improving labour market integration outcomes for foreign nationals, broadly aligned with the overall downward trend in unemployment.⁷⁶

4.4 Asylum Seekers and Refugee Status

In 2024, Greece recorded 56,066 arrivals, representing a 21.63% increase compared to 2023. However, flows moderated in 2025. Between January and October 2025, arrivals reached 39,495, reflecting an 11.28% decrease compared to the same period in 2024 (44,515) (Table 6).⁷⁷

Table 6: Arrival Flows, January 2024 - October 2025

Year	KOS	LESVOS	SAMOS	CHIOS	LEROS	OTHER ISLANDS	FYLAKIO EVROS	CRETE	TOTAL
Total 2024	3,394	11,065	8,770	4,388	1,251	19,611	7,587	n/a	56,066

of major Western economies such as France (7.6%), Italy (6%), and Belgium (5.8%). It is also higher than rates observed in several Baltic and Nordic countries, including Estonia (7.2%), Lithuania (7.1%), and Denmark, Latvia, and Luxembourg (each at 6.6%).

⁷⁴See here: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/17791746/3-03112023-AP-EN.pdf/7de0add9-2fd1-b656-b90d-63aaa97f72ff> and for 2024 data here: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-euro-indicators/w/3-31102024-bp>.

⁷⁵See here: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-euro-indicators/w/3-02072025-ap>

⁷⁶ Labour Force Survey: [3rd Quarter 2024](#) and [3rd Quarter 2025](#).

⁷⁷[Information Note A October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Total 2025 (as per October)	914	2,864	3,807	2,478	182	7,646	5,555	15,130	39,495
-----------------------------	-----	-------	-------	-------	-----	-------	-------	--------	--------

Sources: [Information Note December 2024](#) and [Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum statistics.

According to UNHCR data, as of 7 December 2025, total arrivals stood at 43,602 (37,769 by sea and 5,833 by land), lower than 2024 levels but still elevated compared to previous years. A notable slowdown was observed in August 2025 (3,555 arrivals) compared to August 2024 (6,934).⁷⁸

In terms of nationality profiles, the majority of sea arrivals in 2025 originated from Afghanistan (25.6%), Sudan (21.3%), and Egypt (20.2%), jointly accounting for nearly 70% of arrivals highlighting the Eastern Mediterranean route's role in hosting displaced populations from Asia and North Africa. Other significant nationalities included Syrians, Somalis, Eritreans, Yemenis, Palestinians, and Iranians, underscoring the continued role of Greece as an entry point for displaced populations from conflict-affected regions. Demographically, 58% of arrivals were men between the ages of 18 and 39, while women (16%) and children (26%) comprised a substantial proportion.⁷⁹ Among children, 17% were registered as unaccompanied or separated mainly from Somalia, Afghanistan and Syria.

Geographically, Crete hosted the largest migrant population (17,201 persons), although it is not traditionally a first-entry point. the Dodecanese islands, accounting for 39% of the total, followed Lesvos at 20%, Samos at 14%, Chios at 10%, and other Islands at 17%.⁸⁰ Despite continued inflows, the number of residents in island reception facilities decreased significantly in September 2024 compared to September 2023, with Lesvos and Kos experiencing the sharpest reductions (Table 7).

Table 7: Residents on the Islands (October 2024 – October 2025)

TOTAL RESIDENTS	KOS	LESVOS	SAMOS	CHIOS	LEROS	TOTAL + OTHER ISLANDS
October-24	1,168	1,956	4,105	1,019	3,034	11,136
November-24	1,558	3,477	4,170	1,067	2,020	12,359
December-24	1,530	3,996	4,139	1,037	1,691	12,407
January-25	1,115	3,086	3,937	1,118	1,762	11,031
February-25	772	2,431	3,340	1,118	1,338	9,005
March-25	719	2,299	3,192	1,064	1,269	8,552
April-25	717	1,764	3,101	684	1,078	7,346
May-25	889	1,267	2,392	511	959	6,044
June-25	791	1,301	2,550	634	1,122	6,407
July-25	859	1,153	2,678	823	1,127	6,643

⁷⁸UNHCR Data, available here: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/europe-sea-arrivals/location/24489>

⁷⁹UNHCR Sea Arrivals Dashboard, August 2024.

⁸⁰Ibid.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

August-25	730	951	1,950	857	1,074	5,567
September-25	810	868	1,890	890	987	5,452
October-25	647	1,213	2,034	953	1,267	6,117
Difference from Oct. 2024	-67.12%	-37.99%	-50.45%	-6.48%	-58.24%	-45.07%

Source: [Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

Transfers of asylum seekers from the islands to the mainland also declined markedly, falling by 80.34% in September 2025 compared to September 2024 (Table 8).⁸¹

Table 8: Transfers from the Islands to the mainland October 2024 – October 2025

	KOS	LESVOS	SAMOS	CHIOS	LEROS	OTHER ISLANDS	TOTAL
October 2024	1,277	104	1,002	587	802	292	4,064
October 2025	128	57	225	209	122	58	799

Source: [Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum Statistics

Regarding asylum procedures, 39,823 applications were accepted in 2024. In the first ten months of 2025, 52,397 applications (first and second instance combined) were accepted, marking a 10.44% decrease compared to the same period in 2024 (58,505) (Table 9). During October 2024–October 2025, 91.83% of applications were first-time requests.⁸² The positive recognition rate at first instance in 2025 stood at 38.11%, lower than the 56.13% recorded in October 2024, indicating a downward shift in approval rates.⁸³

Table 9: Recognition of refugee status 1st and 2nd Instances, 2016-2025 (as of October)

TOTAL DECISIONS ON REFUGEE STATUS ISSUED IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS		
YEAR	Recognition of Refugee Status (1 st Instance)	Recognition of Refugee Status (2 nd Instance)
2016	2.451	6
2017	9.298	80
2018	12.616	180
2019	13.522	312
2020	26.333	480
2021	13,040	730
2022	18,718	665
2023	24,323	652
2024	39,260	563

⁸¹[Information Note A October 2025](#).

⁸²[Information Note October 2024](#) and [Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁸³[Information Note October 2025](#), Annex A, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

2025 (as of October)	19,967	279
TOTAL	179,515	3,947
TOTAL FOR BOTH INSTANCES	183,462	

Sources: [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

Subsidiary protection decisions increased substantially in 2025. In 2024, 403 such decisions were issued, whereas in the first ten months of 2025 the number reached 1,864, marking an increase of 362.53% (Table 10).⁸⁴

Table 10: Recognition of Subsidiary Protection Status, 2016-2025 (as of October)

TOTAL DECISIONS OF SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION STATUS ISSUED THE LAST FIVE YEARS		
YEAR	Protection Status (1st Instance)	Protection Status (2nd Instance)
2016	249	1
2017	1,045	43
2018	2,573	94
2019	3,843	311
2020	7,943	565
2021	3,528	1,133
2022	514	394
2023	590	221
2024	296	107
2025 (as of October)	1,759	105
TOTAL	22,344	2,974
TOTAL FOR BOTH INSTANCES	25,318	

Source: [Information Note on October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

At the same time, pending cases rose significantly, increasing by 41.53% between October 2024 and October 2025, with both first- and second-instance backlogs expanding (Table 11).⁸⁵ Finally, between October 2024 and October 2025, refugee or subsidiary protection status was granted to 381 unaccompanied minors out of 4,353 applications submitted during that period.⁸⁶

Table 11: Pending decisions 1st and 2nd Instances, January 2024 – October 2025

MONTH	PENDING DECISIONS, A' INSTANCE	PENDING DECISIONS B' INSTANCE	PENDING DECISIONS – TOTAL	DIFFERENCE (%)	DECISIONS A' INSTANCE	DECISIONS B' INSTANCE
Jan-24	29,066	2,960	32,026		7,386	1,008
Feb-24	28,915	2,633	31,548	-1.49%	6,203	1,461
March-24	27,362	2,731	30,093	-4.61%	5,777	1,076

⁸⁴[Information Note December 2024](#), Annex A & [Information Note October 2025](#), Annex A.

⁸⁵[Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁸⁶[Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

April-24	22,645	2,906	25,551	-15.09%	9,110	1,153
May-24	19,431	4,476	21,907	-14.26%	6,735	1,050
June-24	18,265	2,643	20,908	-4.56%	6,346	1,019
July-24	17,885	3,160	21,045	0.66%	6,845	1,098
Aug-24	18,208	3,622	21,830	3.73%	6,555	857
Sep-24	18,441	3,184	21,625	-0.94%	6,966	1,468
Oct-24	21,505	2,411	23,916	10.59%	5,437	1,458
Nov-24	24,516	1,759	26,275	9.86%	5,481	1,062
Dec-24	26,623	1,641	28,264	7.57%	4,532	595
Jan-25	27,365	1,599	28,964	2.48%	5,276	497
Feb-25	27,269	1,787	29,056	0.32%	4,876	735
Mar-25	27,955	2,261	30,216	3.99%	3,947	929
Apr-25	28,006	2,524	30,530	1.04%	3,607	845
May-25	27,559	2,858	30,417	-0.37%	4,031	837
Jun-25	27,496	2,675	30,171	-0.81%	4,802	1,164
Jul-25	27,015	2,859	29,874	-0.98%	5,917	878
Aug-25	29,930	2,945	32,875	10.05%	4,383	635
Sep-25	30,837	2,831	33,668	2.41%	5,072	1,155
Oct-25	30,928	2,920	33,848	0.53%	6,612	1,036

Source: [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

In sum, while arrival flows began to stabilize in 2025 following the sharp rise in 2024, pressures on the asylum system remain substantial, as reflected in rising backlogs, changing recognition rates, and continued administrative strain.

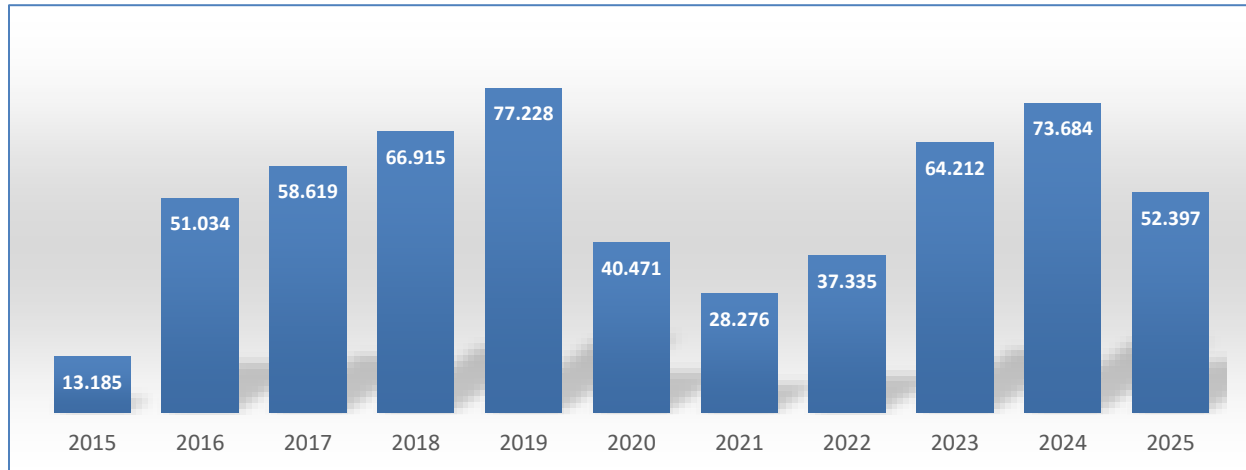
4.4.1 Asylum Applications

The developments outlined above are reflected in asylum application trends. As shown in Figure 5, asylum applications decreased by 10.44% in October 2025 (52,397) compared to the same period in 2024 (58,505).⁸⁷

⁸⁷ [Information Note on Asylum October 2024](#) & [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Figure 5: Lodged Asylum Applications, 2016 – October 2025



Source: [Information Note on Asylum, October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

Of the 52,397 applications lodged by September 2025, 33% were submitted on the islands and 67% on the mainland, indicating a continued geographical shift toward mainland processing.⁸⁸ Nationality profiles have also evolved. In 2024, the majority of applications were lodged by Syrians (30.3%), followed by Afghans (21.1%) and Egyptians (10.2%) (Table 12). By October 2025, Afghans (24.7%) and Egyptians (15.9%) ranked first, followed by Sudanese (12.4%), Syrians (6.1%), and Bangladeshis (4.3%). This shift highlights the emergence of Sudan among the top nationalities and a relative decline in Syrian applications, alongside increased Egyptian applications and fewer Turkish applicants compared to 2024.⁸⁹

Table 12: Asylum applications by country of origin, October 2024 & 2025 (as of October)

Country of origin	2024	Country of Origin	2025 (as of October)
Syria	22,302 (30.3%)	Afghanistan	12,965 (24.7%)
Afghanistan	15,528 (21.1%)	Egypt	8,309 (15.9%)
Egypt	7,549 (10.2%)	Sudan	6,523 (12.4%)
Turkey	4,276 (5.8%)	Syria	3,171 (6.1%)
Palestine	2,579 (3.5%)	Bangladesh	2,276 (4.3%)
Iraq	2,450 (3.3%)	Iraq	2,115 (4.0%)
Eritrea	2,297 (3.1%)	Pakistan	1,884 (3.6%)
Pakistan	2,101 (2.9%)	Somalia	1,463 (2.8%)
Yemen	1,580 (2.1%)	Nepal	1,462 (2.8%)

⁸⁸[Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁸⁹Ibid.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Somalia	1,577 (2.1%)	Turkey	1,412 (2.7%)
Other	11,448 (15.5%)	Other	10,817 (20.6%)
Total	73,687	Total	52,397

Sources: [Information Note on Asylum December 2024](#) & [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#)

In a broader perspective, nationality patterns have fluctuated over recent years. Between 2019 and 2022, Afghans consistently topped the list of asylum applicants, whereas in 2023 and 2024 Syrians again became the largest group. These changes reflect evolving regional conflicts and policy dynamics, including the application of the “safe third country” concept.

Regarding decision-making, 77,392 first-instance decisions were issued in 2024, compared to 48,523 decisions in the first ten months of 2025.⁹⁰ Recognition rates show a downward trend. In September 2023, positive decisions represented 62.2% of applications lodged during the first seven months of that year.⁹¹ In September 2024, the rate declined to 48.8% (Table 13).⁹²

Table 13: Asylum applications by country of origin, 2024 & 2025 (as of October)

TOTAL DECISIONS ON REFUGEE STATUS ISSUED OVER THE LAST SEVEN YEARS		
YEAR	Recognition of Refugee Status (1st Instance)	Recognition of Refugee Status (2nd Instance)
2016	2,451	6
2017	9,298	80
2018	12,616	180
2019	13,520	312
2020	16,333	480
2021	13,036	730
2022	18,711	665
2023	24,323	652
2024	39,260	563
2025 (as of October)	19,967	279
TOTAL	179,515	3,947
TOTAL FOR BOTH DEGREES	183,462	

Source: [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum (Table 11a)

By October 2025, positive decisions accounted for 38.11% of applications lodged in the first nine months of 2025 (21,726 positive decisions, including refugee status and subsidiary protection). A year-to-date comparison further indicates that first-instance decisions in the first ten months of 2025 exceeded those in the corresponding period of 2024, suggesting accelerated case processing despite lower recognition rates.

⁹⁰Information Note on Asylum December 2024 (Table 8a) & [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#) (Table 8a), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁹¹Information Note on Asylum September 2023, Ministry of Migration and Asylum (Table 9a).

⁹²Information Note on Asylum September 2024, Ministry of Migration and Asylum (Table 8a).

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

At the same time, the backlog has increased. Pending asylum decisions (first and second instance combined) rose to 33,848 in October 2025, compared to 23,916 in October 2024, an increase of 9,932 cases (Table 14). This rise underscores the continuing structural pressure on Greece's asylum system despite fluctuations in application volumes.

Table 14: Pending asylum decisions from January 2024 to October 2025

MONTH	PENDING DECISIONS 1st INSTANCE	PENDING DECISIONS 2nd INSTANCE	PENDING DECISIONS – TOTAL	DIFFERENCE (%)
Jan-24	29,066	2,960	32,026	
Feb-24	28,915	2,633	31,548	-1,49%
March-24	27,362	2,731	30,093	-4,61%
April-24	22,645	2,906	25,551	-15,09%
May-24	19,431	2,476	21,907	-14,26
June-24	18,265	2,643	20,908	-4.56%
July-24	17,885	3,160	21,045	0.66%
Aug-24	18,208	3,622	21,830	3.73%
Sep-24	18,441	3,184	21,625	-0.94%
Oct-24	21,505	2,411	23,916	10.59%
Nov-24	24,516	1,759	26,275	9.86%
Dec-24	26,623	1,641	28,264	7.57%
Jan-25	27,365	1,599	28,964	2.48%
Feb-25	27,269	1,787	29,056	0,32%
Mar-25	27,955	2,261	30,216	3.99%
Apr-25	28,006	2,524	30,530	1.04%
May-25	27,559	2,858	30,417	-0.37%
Jun-25	27,496	2,675	30,171	-0.81%
Jul-25	27,015	2,859	29,874	-0,98%
Aug-25	29,930	2,945	32,875	10,05%
Sep-25	30,837	2,831	33,668	2.41%
Oct-25	30,928	2,920	33,848	0.53%

Source: [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

4.4.2 Unaccompanied Minors

According to data from the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, 2,414 unaccompanied minors (UAMs) were recorded in Greece in December 2024, of whom 89% were boys and 11% girls.⁹³ By

⁹³Data published by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, December 2024, available at: https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/SGVP_Statistics-December_EN.pdf

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

October 2025, the total number had declined to 1,795, indicating a notable reduction over the ten-month period.⁹⁴

As of 1 October 2025, UAMs were predominantly Egyptian (56%), followed by Afghans (12%), Syrians (9%), Somalis (7%), Sudanese (2%), and 11% from other nationalities. Compared to 1 October 2024, the proportion of Egyptian UAMs increased significantly, from 45% to 56%, while the share of Syrian minors declined sharply, from 18% to 9%.⁹⁵

These shifts reflect a changing nationality profile among unaccompanied minors in Greece in 2025, with Egyptian nationals becoming the dominant group while Syrian representation has substantially decreased.

4.4.3 Dublin Cases & Relocation

In 2023, 121 Dublin transfers from Greece to other EU Member States were implemented under the Dublin Regulation, marking a significant decrease compared to 2022. This restrictive trend continued into 2024, with only 103 transfers recorded during the first nine months of the year.⁹⁶

Obstacles to family reunification under the Dublin framework persisted throughout 2023 and 2024, partly due to increasingly restrictive administrative practices both in Greece and in receiving Member States, raising concerns regarding the effective protection of the right to family life.⁹⁷ A notable increase was recorded in 2025, with 851 Dublin transfers carried out during the first ten months of the year, indicating a partial reactivation of the mechanism.⁹⁸

Regarding the EU relocation scheme, 690 individuals were relocated from Greece in 2023, including 55 unaccompanied minors (UAMs). During the first nine months of 2024, relocations increased to 970 people. However, in the first ten months of 2025, only 243 individuals were relocated, none of whom were UAMs.⁹⁹ This confirms a significant downward trend compared to 2021 and 2022, when 3,571 individuals were relocated under the same framework, suggesting a reduced use of solidarity-based mechanisms in recent years.

4.4.4 Transfers to the Mainland

In October 2025, a total of 799 asylum seekers were transferred from the islands to the Greek mainland, representing a sharp decline compared to 4,064 transfers in October 2024.¹⁰⁰ Despite

⁹⁴Data published by the Ministry of migration and Asylum, October 2025, available at: https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/SGVP_Statistics-October_EN.pdf

⁹⁵Data published by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, October 2024, available at: https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/SGVP_Statistics-Oktober_EN.pdf

⁹⁶Such as requirements for official translations of documents proving family links, sometimes unnecessary DNA tests, age assessments of unaccompanied children to be conducted according to the requested state's methods.

⁹⁷Asylum Report 2023, available here: https://www.euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/2023-07/2023_Asylum_Report_EN_0.pdf

⁹⁸[Information Note October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰[Information Note October 2025](#), Annex A, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

this significant monthly decrease, cumulative transfers during the first ten months of 2025 reached 14,202, indicating that while monthly movements have slowed, mainland decongestion measures continued throughout the year.

4.5 Irregular Migration Flows, Return and Readmissions

According to Hellenic Police statistics, 12,349 third-country nationals (TCNs) were apprehended in 2024 for irregular stay and employment in Greece, of whom 12,257 were detained for irregular stay and 92 for irregular employment (Table 15).

This represents a decrease compared to 2023, when 16,606 individuals were apprehended (16,561 for irregular stay and 45 for irregular employment), indicating a downward trend in enforcement-related apprehensions.¹⁰¹

Table 15: TCNs apprehended for irregular stays and employment, 2024

Month	Irregular Stay	Irregular Employment	TOTAL
January	924	3	927
February	1,078	1	1,079
March	810	0	810
April	859	49	908
May	757	4	758
June	1,040	2	1,042
July	1,158	7	1,165
August	1,142	0	1,142
September	1,635	2	1,637
October	1,202	17	1,219
November	990	1	991
December	662	9	671
TOTAL	12,257	92	12,349

Source: Greek Police Database, December 2025¹⁰²

The total number of apprehensions in 2024 is lower than in 2023, when 16,606 individuals were detained (16,561 for irregular stay and 45 for irregular employment),¹⁰³ indicating a reduction in enforcement-related cases year-on-year.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹No disaggregated data are currently available regarding the nationalities of TCNs apprehended in 2024 and 2025.

¹⁰²Yearly Report for 2024 published by the Greek Police, Table 43, available at:

<https://www.astynomia.gr/file/2025/04/epetirida2024.pdf>

¹⁰³ Yearly Report for 2023 published by the Greek Police, Table 43, available at:

<https://www.astynomia.gr/file/2024/04/epetirida2023.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ At present, no disaggregated data are available concerning the nationalities of the third-country nationals apprehended by the Greek Police in 2024 and 2025.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

4.5.1 Returns and Deportations

Regarding inflows, arrivals during the first ten months of 2025 reached 39,495, representing an 18% decrease compared to the same period in 2024 (48,415).¹⁰⁵ Despite the slowdown, a considerable proportion of arrivals subsequently exited the country through expulsions, returns, or relocation mechanisms.

Overall, during the first nine months of 2025, 5,740 departures were recorded, compared to 39,495 arrivals by October 2025. In the corresponding period of 2024, 6,031 departures were registered against 44,515 arrivals, indicating that departures remain significantly lower than inflows in both years.¹⁰⁶

More specifically, 1,537 IOM-assisted returns were recorded in the first nine months of 2025, compared to 2,371 in 2024, a decrease of 35.18%. By contrast, voluntary departures following return decisions increased to 1,043 in October 2025, compared to 944 in 2024, marking a 10.49% rise).¹⁰⁷

According to Ministry of Migration and Asylum statistics, Greece carried out 5,865 returns of irregularly staying persons in 2024 (Table 16), including both third-country nationals and EU citizens. Of these, 2,550 were forced returns implemented under bilateral or EU readmission agreements, 944 were voluntary departures following a return decision, and 2,371 were assisted voluntary returns organised by the International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Table 16: Returns by Category, January 2024 & 2025 (as of October)

Year	Forced Return	Voluntary Return	IOM	Total
Total for 2024	2,550	944	2,371	5,865
Total for 2025 (as of October)	2,066	1,043	1,537	4,646

Sources: [Information Note on Asylum December 2024](#) & [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

In the first ten months of 2025, Greece recorded 4,646 returns of irregularly staying persons. Of these, 2,066 were forced returns implemented under bilateral or EU readmission agreements, 1,043 were voluntary departures following the issuance of a return decision, and 1,537 were assisted voluntary returns organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).¹⁰⁸

4.6 Ukrainian Refugees

During 2024–2025, Greece continued to implement and extend the temporary protection regime for displaced persons from Ukraine.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵[Information Note A October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

¹⁰⁶[Information Note A October 2024](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸[Information Note October 2025](#), Annex A, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

¹⁰⁹By the end of 2022, pursuant to the Joint Ministerial Decision of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Migration and Asylum (708368/25.11.2022), Ukraine was removed from the list of safe countries of origin. For more

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

By September 2024, a total of 31,781 temporary protection residence cards had been issued, of which 22,222 were granted to women and 9,559 to men.¹¹⁰ By 31 October 2025, online pre-registrations reached 38,270, while 37,684 temporary protection cards had been issued, indicating continued though moderated registration activity.

The geographical distribution in 2025 confirms strong urban concentration. Attica remains the primary hub, accounting for the majority of registrations (over 20,000 at the central office alone), followed by Thessaloniki (10,165). Smaller clusters are recorded in Crete, Western Greece, and Rhodes (Table 17). The pattern demonstrates that Ukrainian displacement in Greece is predominantly urban-based, aligned with administrative capacity, labour market access, and community networks.

Table 17: Ukrainian Displacement in Greece (as of 31 October 2025)¹¹¹

Regional Office	Pre-Registrations
Attica	20,465
Alimos (Attica)	1,344
Thessaloniki	10,165
Crete	3,076
Western Greece	2,649
Rhodes	571
Total	38,270

Source: *Information Note October 2025*, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

The demographic profile in 2025 shows a clear gendered and working-age structure (Table 18). Women represent 70.4% of beneficiaries. The largest age group is 35–64 (42.1%), followed by 18–34-year-olds (28.5%), confirming that most beneficiaries are of working age. Children (0–17) account for approximately 22% of the total, while persons aged 65+ represent 7.6%.

Table 18: Temporary Protection Cards Issued by Age Group and Gender

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
0–13	3,296	3,210	6,506
14–17	880	838	1,718
18–34	2,561	8,177	10,738
35–64	3,715	12,150	15,865
65+	709	2,148	2,857
Total	11,161	26,523	37,684

Source: *Information Note October 2025*, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

information see: [EMN country factsheet 2022: Greece \(europa.eu\)](#). The Presidential Decree 80/2006 on the temporary protection has been activated by the recently (March 2022) issued Ministerial Decision (Protocol No. 131035).

¹¹⁰[Information Note on Asylum September 2024](#), Table 19, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

¹¹¹Online Pre-Registrations by Regional Office.

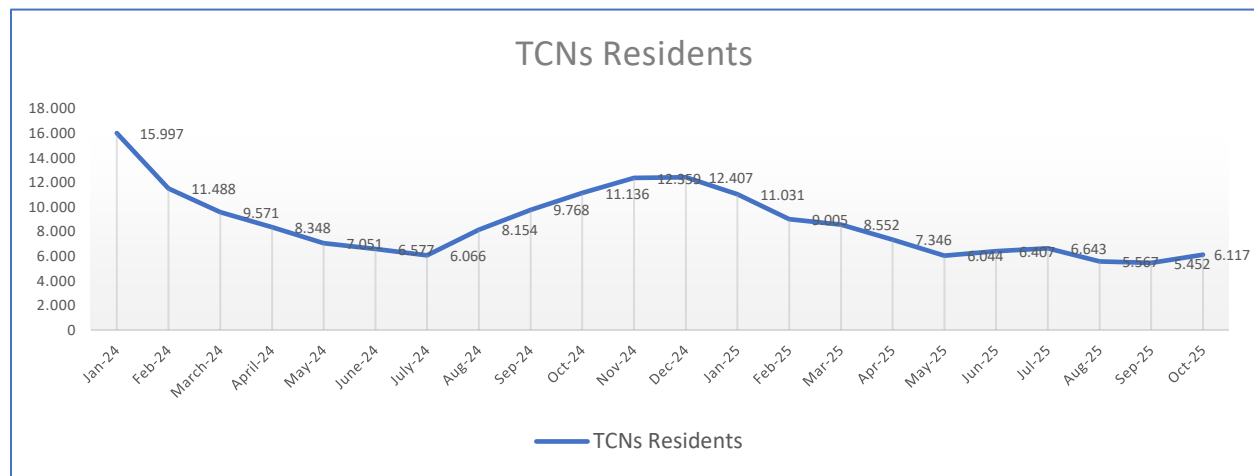
Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

In sum, in 2024-2025 the data indicate stabilisation rather than expansion of the beneficiary population, with sustained urban concentration and a predominantly female, working-age demographic profile.

4.7 Reception System and Accommodation

In October 2025, a total of 6,117 migrants and asylum seekers were accommodated in Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) across the Greek islands, a notable decrease of 45.07% comparing to October 2024 (11,136) (Figure 6).¹¹²

Figure 6: TCNs resident in RICs, January 2024 – October 2025



Source: [Information Note A on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

Regarding the distribution of migrants and asylum seekers by region, there was a significant decrease in most regions in the period September 2024 - October 2025. In October 2025, 22,427 TCNs residents were distributed across thirteen regional units of Greece, compared with 30,535 TCNs in the period September 2023-September 2024.¹¹³ In September 2024, there were 22,578 TCNs resident distributed across the thirteen regional units of Greece, with North Aegean regional unit accommodating the largest number of migrants and asylum seekers (Table 19).

¹¹² [Information Note on October 2025](#) (p.2, table 3), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

¹¹³ [Information Note on Asylum September 2024](#) (p. 2, table 4), Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Table 19: Distribution of migrants and asylum seekers by region, October 2024 and October 2025

Regional Unit	TCNs Resident 2025 (as of October)	% of total population	TCNs Resident 2024 (as of September)	% of total population
NORTH AEGEAN	4,016	2.07%	5,726	2.95%
SOUTH AEGEAN	1,863	0.57%	3,802	1.17%
EPIRUS	1,739	0.54%	1,156	0.36%
MAINLAND GREECE	2,589	0.51%	2,216	0.44%
CENTRAL MACEDONIA	5,313	0.30%	4,013	0.22%
EAST MACEDONIA AND THRACE	1,967	0.35%	1,343	0.24%
PELOPONNESE	648	0.12%	507	0.09%
ATTICA	2,578	0.07%	3,269	0.09%
WEST GREECE	460	0.07%	310	0.05%
THESSALY	1,254	0.18%	236	0.03%
WEST MACEDONIA	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
IOANIAN ISLANDS	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
CRETE	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
TOTAL	22,427	0.21%	22,578	0.22%

Sources: [Information Note on Asylum September 2024](#) & [Information Note on Asylum October 2025](#), Ministry of Migration and Asylum

The HELIOS integration programme expanded significantly in 2024, following already high registration levels in 2023. In the first three quarters of 2024, total registrations reached 141,287, with quarterly figures consistently exceeding 46,000 beneficiaries. This confirms the programme's central role in supporting recognised beneficiaries of international protection during 2024.

However, a sharp contraction occurred in 2025. Registrations dropped dramatically to 238 in the first quarter, 566 in the second, and 473 in the third quarter (as of September 2025), indicating either a restructuring, suspension, or significant scaling-down of the programme.

In terms of nationality composition (2024-2025), 45% of registered beneficiaries were Ukrainian nationals, followed by Palestinians (13%), Syrians (12%), and Afghans (7%), reflecting the changing protection landscape and the impact of temporary protection flows.¹¹⁴

Regarding accommodation schemes, beneficiaries of the rent housing programme decreased substantially in 2024. After reaching 2,013 in November 2023,¹¹⁵ the number fell by 62.44% during the first three quarters of 2024 (756 beneficiaries in total).¹¹⁶ By contrast, beneficiaries of the rent subsidy scheme slightly increased in 2024: 24,510 third-country nationals benefited during the first three quarters of 2024, representing a 5.07% rise compared to the same period in 2023 (23,327).¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴Information Note October 2025, Ministry of Migration and Asylum (Table 14).

¹¹⁵Information Note on the Helios Program, Ministry of Migration and Asylum, November 2023, available at: https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/HELIOS-Factsheet-November-2023-BW2_Greek.pdf.

¹¹⁶Information Note on the beneficiaries of the rent housing programme, September 2023.

¹¹⁷Information Note on the beneficiaries of the rent housing programme, September 2024.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

As of 1 October 2025, Greece operated 59 Unaccompanied Minors (UAM) accommodation facilities with a total capacity of 1,507 places, alongside 60 semi-independent living apartments (238 places) and 4 emergency accommodation facilities (156 places).¹¹⁸

At the same time, out of 1,795 unaccompanied minors present in the country (92% boys, 8% girls, and 12.7% under 15 years old), the majority were accommodated within the protection system:

- 1,250 in long-term or temporary accommodation facilities,
- 172 in semi-autonomous living apartments,
- 120 in emergency facilities,
- 239 in Reception and Identification Centres (RICs), and
- 14 in controlled accommodation facilities for asylum seekers.¹¹⁹

These figures indicate that, in 2025, most UAMs were placed in structured accommodation schemes, though a portion remained in reception facilities.

In the preceding operational year, the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors managed 5,051 accommodation requests and ensured a maximum occupancy of 4,009 places. In parallel, voluntary relocation mechanisms continued to operate, with over 1,368 children transferred to 12 European countries under solidarity-based schemes.¹²⁰

4.8 Citizenship Acquisition

In 2024, a total of 14,896 foreign nationals acquired Greek citizenship through naturalisation, marking an increase from 13,875 in 2023. The second-generation category, individuals granted citizenship on the basis of birth or schooling in Greece, accounted for 54.46% of all naturalisations in 2024, up from 50.84% in 2023 (Table 20). Although this confirms the continued prominence of second-generation cases, their share remains below the peak recorded in 2020 (66%), indicating a gradual normalization of the distribution across categories in subsequent years.

¹¹⁸Updated Data on Unaccompanied Minors October 2025, Ministry of Migration and Asylum, available at: https://migration.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/SGVP_Statistics-October_EN.pdf.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Report of Actions 2023 General Secretariat of Vulnerable Citizens and Institutional Protection, Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Migration Trends in Greece: Key Development and Challenges in 2024 – 2025

Table 20: Acquisition of Greek Citizenship by category (2020-2024)

Category	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Naturalisations of co-ethnics	15,791	8,563	7,476	3,726	2,937	1,117	1,463	1,198	1,158	1,433	1,514
Naturalisations of other nationalities	2,019	1,487	3,624	3,486	2,530	1,882	1,817	2,843	3,150	3,515	3,555
Birth or study in Greece	0,000	0,305	19,367	25,528	21,559	12,868	9,099	5,154	6,867	7,054	8,113
Other provisions	2,029	1,529	1,183	0,978	0,883	0,382	876	623	723	674	622
Under-age children of naturalised adults (parents)	1,990	2,294	1,837	1,096	0,501	0,585	547	777	1,136	1,199	1,092
Co-ethnics from countries of the former Soviet Union	-	-	-	13	190	100	71	9	225	-	-
Total	21,829	14,178	33,487	34,814	28,410	16,834	13,873	10,604	13,259	13,875	14,896

Source: [Ministry of Interior, Special Secretariat for Citizenship, Statistics 2024](#)¹²¹

With regard to country of origin, Albanian nationals continued to represent the largest group of successful applicants in 2024, accounting for approximately 73% of all naturalisations (around 10,900 individuals). This dominance is consistent with trends observed in previous years. In 2023, Albanians constituted 29.67% of Greek co-ethnics naturalised, 25.01% of foreign nationals naturalised, and 78.87% of second-generation applicants granted citizenship, confirming the long-standing centrality of the Albanian-origin population in Greece's naturalisation landscape.¹²²

In conclusion, 2024 reflects both a steady increase in total naturalisations and the sustained structural weight of second-generation applicants and Albanian nationals within the Greek citizenship framework.

¹²¹2012-2023 Statistics, Ministry of Interior, Special Secretariat for Citizenship, available at: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/20240801-Stats-Category-2014-2023.pdf>

¹²²2022 Statistics, Ministry of Interior, Special Secretariat for Citizenship, available at: <https://www.ypes.gr/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/20240801-StatistikaStoixeia2023.pdf>.

5. Concluding Remarks

The analysis presented in this report indicates that 2024–2025 constitutes a transitional yet tension-filled phase in Greece’s migration governance. Although arrivals moderated in 2025 following the marked increase recorded in 2024, pressures on the asylum system remain significant, as reflected in expanding backlogs, declining first-instance recognition rates, and continued disparities between arrivals and effective returns.

Policy developments reveal a dual trajectory. On the one hand, administrative digitalisation, procedural streamlining and the expansion of selected legal and investment-based migration pathways signal efforts toward institutional consolidation and alignment with EU standards. On the other, the period has been characterised by a more restrictive and securitised orientation, including the temporary suspension of access to asylum procedures for specific categories of arrivals and the reinforcement of return enforcement mechanisms. These measures have intensified public and international scrutiny, particularly considering allegations of pushbacks and broader concerns regarding compliance with fundamental rights obligations.

The legal residence framework has expanded in quantitative terms, with growth in valid permits and continued consolidation of long-term settlement patterns. Nevertheless, persistent delays in residence permit renewals and the reliance on short-term certificates pending final decisions have contributed to heightened precariousness among long-term residents, undermining legal certainty and stable socio-economic integration.

Integration governance demonstrates further institutional strengthening, especially regarding unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups. Yet, the increasing linkage between protection status and labour market participation reflects a recalibration toward conditional, economically driven inclusion.

In conclusion, developments during 2024–2025 point to a structural rebalancing of Greece’s migration model: administrative modernisation and selective openness coexist with intensified enforcement and deterrence. The long-term sustainability of this approach will depend on its capacity to reconcile control objectives with procedural safeguards, social cohesion and the protection of fundamental rights