

Arriving in Greece
Seek help <
Applying for asylum <
For Ukrainians
Children and Youth
Living In Greece <
Rights and Obligations <
Data Protection
Assisted Voluntary Return
Complaints Procedure <
COVID-19 in Greece ▾
Vaccination against COVID19
Athens
Thessaloniki
Lesvos
Podcasts
UNHCR in Greece
Common Questions and Answers
Contact us

COVID-19



The National Vaccination Campaign for COVID-19 has begun. The vaccination is free of charge for all and the vaccine will become gradually available to all, in priority groups.

For information on how to access the vaccination, [click here](#).

How do COVID-19 vaccines work?

The function of vaccines is based on the appropriate preparation of the individual's immune system (the body's natural defense) to recognize a specific disease and to become protected against it.

Building immunity: Most research on COVID-19 vaccines involves provoking a response against a protein (either whole or in part) that is found only in the virus that causes COVID-19. When a person is vaccinated, an immune response is generated. Most COVID-19 vaccines require two doses to build immunity.

If the person becomes infected with the virus after being vaccinated, the immune system is able to recognize the virus and is already prepared to attack it.

More information on how the vaccine works is available here (in Greek only) <https://emvolio.gov.gr/plirofories>.

What are the benefits of getting vaccinated?

Vaccination is a simple, safe, and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases. COVID-19 vaccines protect us against the disease by developing an immune response to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19; this immunity helps you fight the virus if you are exposed. It also means that you protect people around you. If you are vaccinated, your risk of infecting other people around you is dramatically reduced. This is particularly important for people at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, such as healthcare providers, elderly adults, and people with underlying medical conditions.

After vaccination, immunity against COVID-19 will last at least 6-8 months based on what we currently know. There is still a small possibility to get COVID-19 even when vaccinated; no vaccine is 100% protective. So, it is important to continue taking all public health measures, such as physical distancing, masks, and frequent handwashing. When a big part of the population is vaccinated (approximately 70-85%), immunity against COVID-19 will develop within the community.

Who should/should not be vaccinated?

The objective of the Greek National Campaign for COVID-19 vaccination is currently to

vaccinate everyone above 18 years old. Medical professionals can best advise individuals on whether or not they should receive a COVID-19 vaccine. The individuals with a history of thrombosis or severe allergies should speak to a physician first.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccine has any effect on your chances of becoming pregnant. There is no need to avoid pregnancy after vaccination.

Based on available evidence, people with severe allergic reactions to any ingredients of the COVID-19 vaccine, should generally be excluded from COVID-19 vaccination to avoid possible adverse effects. In case you have any allergies to medication, report it to the medical staff before you are vaccinated. If you are currently sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, you can get vaccinated once your primary symptoms have disappeared.

Should I be vaccinated if I have had COVID-19?

Even if you have already had COVID-19, you should be vaccinated when it is offered to you. The protection that someone gains from having COVID-19 will vary from person to person, and it is not clear how long immunity from natural infection might last. More information (in Greek) can be found

here: https://emvolio.gov.gr/sites/default/files/attachments/nosoyntes_uptodate_ioynios_2021.pdf

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and will help protect you against developing severe COVID-19 disease, including hospitalization and death. There are strict protections in place to help ensure the safety of *all* COVID-19 vaccines. The safety requirements for COVID-19 vaccines are the same as for any other vaccine in the European Union. The safety and effectiveness procedures were not bypassed with the rapid roll-out of the Covid-19 vaccines. Before being approved by international, European Union (EU) as well as national medical authorities, every type of vaccine that is provided to you will have gone through very stringent clinical research to be sure that it is **safe and effective and suitable to vaccinate everyone**.

So far, more than three million people have been given a COVID-19 vaccine in Greece and a billion have received the first dose world-wide, and reports of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions or clotting problems, have been very rare. We all have risk of covid infection, that exceeds the risk of these very rare events. As with all vaccines, the use of COVID-19 vaccines continues to be controlled closely so that it remains safe for all who receive them.

Do Covid-19 vaccines cause side effects?

Like any vaccine, COVID-19 vaccines may cause side effects, most of which are mild or moderate and go away within a few days. Some people experience no side effects. Others have reported common [side effects](#) like: swelling, redness and pain around the injection, fever, headache, tiredness, muscle pain, chills, and nausea. You will be asked to wait 15-30 minutes after being vaccinated by medical staff to check your reaction.

Experiencing side effects after getting vaccinated means the vaccine is building protection in your body (immunity) and is working. If the symptoms worsen or there is concern, it is advised to consult a physician or medical staff for an evaluation. Vaccine effects are continually checked by expert authorities worldwide to identify any recurring or new side effects. It is important to note the very low risk of side-effects against the benefit of protection against covid-19 virus.

Long-term side effects

Side effects usually happen within the first few days of getting a Covid-19 vaccine. Serious side effects that cause long-term health problems are very unlikely. Every vaccine, including every COVID-19 vaccine is clinically tested for side effects during an extended period before the vaccine is further tested and approved for wider distribution.

Which vaccine should I take?

You should take the vaccine you are offered. Every vaccine distributed has met the safety and effectiveness standards.

Can we stop taking precautions after being vaccinated?

Full protection from COVID-19 from the vaccine is provided around 21 days after the second dose (for most vaccines) or single dose (Johnson & Johnson vaccine only). Before this period, it is still possible to catch the virus, so it is important to adhere to social distancing measures in between vaccines and after you have been vaccinated.

Even after the 21 days, the COVID-19 vaccine should protect you from becoming sick, but it won't necessarily stop you from infecting other people. It may take some time before everyone is vaccinated, so, it is important that you continue to follow COVID-19 prevention measures (masks, hygiene, social distancing). During the winter when people tend to spend more time indoors, it is a good idea to have a flow of air, for example by opening windows frequently.

How can I access the vaccine?

1. For persons **not** living in official State sites (living in urban areas, self-accommodated)

The national vaccination plan is to vaccinate everyone above 5 ~~4~~-years of age. The vaccines are free for all. **For people 60 and above, the vaccination is now mandatory.** For people under 60 years old, the vaccination is optional but is considered essential for the protection of individual and public health.

The National Operational Vaccination Plan against COVID-19 is available here (in Greek only) <https://emvolio.gov.gr/diadikasia-emvoliasmou>.

How to check if you belong to the groups that are already open for vaccination:

- By entering your AMKA (Social Security Number) and your AFM (Tax Identification Number) or Surname in [this link](#).
- You can also contact the nearest KEP or pharmacies to check if you are eligible for vaccination.
- You can check via SMS if you belong to the population group that can be vaccinated currently, by sending a text message (SMS) with AMKA (space) Surname at 13034.

How to schedule an appointment:

The primary way to get vaccinated in Greece is by scheduling an appointment at a Citizens' Service Centre (KEP) or a pharmacy, or through the government vaccination platform here <https://emvolio.gov.gr/>. You will not need to pay as the Covid-19 vaccine is free for all in Greece.

- If you have an AMKA or a PAAYPA, you can book an appointment in a **pharmacy** or **KEP**. You only need to bring your AMKA or PAAYPA number.
- If you have AMKA or PAAYPA, a Tax Identification Number (AFM), as well as TAXISnet username and password, you can schedule your appointment for vaccination using the platform <https://emvolio.gov.gr/>.
- If you don't have an AMKA or PAAYPA you will be able to get a temporary AMKA number (PAMKA) to get vaccinated. Please visit the website <https://www.amka.gr/AMKAGR/#>, follow the instructions and find out if your PAMKA has been issued (for the moment the website is only in Greek). In order to apply for PAMKA you can visit a KEP or KEM (Migrant Integration Center) or Municipality Youth Center and apply for the issuance of a PAMKA. You can do this or by yourself or through representation of an NGO that participates in the national vaccination campaign and is officially collaborating with the Ministry of Health. Any document, even if expired, is accepted for the issuance of PAMKA, both issued in Greece or in the your country of origin. If you need assistance, you can send a message to the Refugee Info Facebook page or approach METAdrasi Vaccination Helpdesk Service (see below: "Where can I get more information/assistance?"). Further information on PAMKA can be found here: <https://migration.gov.gr/en/echo-p-a-m-k-a/>

IMPORTANT: There will be no criminal or administrative sanction for undocumented individuals engaging in the vaccination process (e.g. applying for issuance of PAMKA, getting the vaccination, obtaining issuance of the vaccination certificate).

- For children 5 -17 (born until 31.12.2005) the registration can be done through emvolio.gov.gr with the Taxisnet code of any of the parents belonging to the same family group of the child, while the appointment can be booked both electronically and through KEP or pharmacies. Children must come to the vaccination appointment accompanied by their parent or guardian.

Detailed instructions for booking an appointment can be found here:

https://help.unhcr.org/greece/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2021/06/emvolio_platform_presentation_vfinal_word_english.docx

On the day of the scheduled appointment, you should arrange for your timely arrival at the Vaccination Center (at least 15 minutes before the appointment time), in order to facilitate the smooth flow of the vaccination process and to avoid any delays. More information about the day of the scheduled appointment is available here: <https://emvolio.gov.gr/instructions>.

2. For persons living in official State sites (such as Reception and Identification Centers (RIC) on the islands and Evros, open reception facilities/sites on the mainland)

The national vaccination plan is to vaccinate everyone above 5 years of age. In Reception and Identification Centers (RICs) on the islands and Evros as well as in Open Reception Facilities/sites in the mainland the vaccinations are taking place inside the site by EODY. Reach out to EODY teams in order to have more information.

[Private doctors participating to the vaccination](#)

Private doctors/paediatricians and private medical centers are now participating in the vaccination process. Contact details of private doctors and private clinics who have received vaccines and are vaccinating with J&J and Pfizer vaccines can be found here: <https://emvolio.gov.gr/stoiheia-epikoinonias-idioton-giatron-kai-idiotikon-polyiatreion-poy-ehoyn-paralavei-emvolia-kai>

Registration of vaccination doses abroad

Citizens can now register the vaccinations they performed abroad through the website: <https://anagnorisi.emvolio.gov.gr/#/>, or by visiting a KEP. The website is so far available only in Greek. You can find the detailed procedure (in Greek) here: <https://emvolio.gov.gr/sites/default/files/attachments/selfsubmanual.pdf>

Home Vaccinations

Home vaccinations can take place for those who are not able to reach a vaccination center due to a medical condition.

What do I need to do in order to register to the home vaccination?

You need to contact your doctor and request to be registered for the home vaccination program.

If the doctor is registered in the program then the doctor can immediately schedule your appointment for vaccination.

If not, you can ask the doctor to apply for you to take the vaccination at home and you will be waiting for a call from the project "Eleftheria" to schedule an appointment for the vaccination.

Is it necessary to have an AMKA?

Yes. The vaccination recording system and the operation of the platform is done

through the citizen's AMKA. In any other case the citizen must proceed to procedures for issuing an AMKA or temporary AMKA and then proceed to enroll to the programme Home Vaccinations.

Booster Dose

All citizens over the age of 18 are entitled to the booster dose.

- For people who have completed their vaccination with Pfizer, Moderna or AstraZeneca vaccines, booster dose will be with Pfizer vaccine or half dose of Moderna, after 3 months.
- For people who have completed their vaccination with Johnson & Johnson vaccine, the booster dose will be carried out with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, Pfizer or the half-dose Moderna vaccine, after 2 months.
- For people who have had a first dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine and a second dose of Johnson & Johnson, it is recommended not to carry out a booster dose.

More information can be found here (in

Greek): https://emvolio.gov.gr/sites/default/files/attachments/odigies_emvoliasmoy_5.12.pdf

Procedure and reasons for the exemption from the obligatory vaccination

Excluded from the application of the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination measure are those citizens who have proven health reasons that prevent the vaccine from being carried out, in particular:

- Severe allergic reaction
- Diagnosed allergy
- Thrombosis syndrome in thrombocytopenia
- History of thrombocytopenia
- Diagnosis of pericarditis or myocarditis

More information can be found here (in

Greek): https://emvolio.gov.gr/sites/default/files/attachments/diadikasia_kai_logoi_apallagis_apo_tin_vpohreotikotita_toy_emvoliasmoy_v2.pdf

Vaccination Certificate and Recovery Certificate

Vaccination certificates expire after seven (7) months since the full vaccination and will be valid again if people have their third booster shot.

The **certificate of recovery** from COVID-19, is issued 15 days after a positive PCR test and is valid up to 3 months after the test. For fully vaccinated people the certificate can also be issued after a positive Rapid antigen test.

Where I can I get more information/assistance?

Information on COVID-19 and vaccinations is available through various sources, most of which are listed below:

- Websites:
 - National Public Health Organization <https://eody.gov.gr/en/covid-19/> | Available in Greek and English
 - National Campaign for Vaccination <https://emvolio.gov.gr/>
 - UNHCR Help website: <https://help.unhcr.org/greece/>
 - Refugee.Info: <https://www.refugee.info/greece/> | Available in English, French, Arabic, Farsi, Urdu
- Helplines:
 - National Public Health Organization (EODY): +30 2105212000, or 1135 | Available in Greek and English 24/7.
 - METAdrasi's Vaccination Helpdesk Service: open on a daily basis to support refugees and migrants with vaccination procedures; those interested should send a message with their name and the language they speak via Viber or WhatsApp at +30 6908091492, or via email to

- covid19vaccine@metadrasi.org.
- o Refugee.Info Facebook Messenger <https://www.refugee.info/greece> | Available in English, French, Arabic, Farsi, Urdu
 - o Hellenic Red Cross (HRC) – [Multifunctional Center \(MFC\)](#): +302105140440 (landline) or +306934724893 (Whats App/ Viber), Mon.-Fri. 9am – 8pm| Available in Greek, English, Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Pashto, Russian, French, Swahilli, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Turkish, Urdu, Mandingo, Malinke, Susu, Fula and Kissi.
 - o Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) Helpline: see here for the schedule https://www.gcr.gr/media/k2/attachments/GCR_HELPLINE_ENGLISH.pdf
 - In-person:
 - o In Athens, Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) runs a sensitization project for vulnerable refugees, migrants and undocumented people living in the urban area of Athens for the vaccination against COVID-19. MSF provides information and helps people to register for their vaccination.
 - o Open Accommodation Sites and RICs: NPHO (EODY) field staff.
 - o You can always ask your doctor, or any specialized doctor available near your place of residence.

How to address misinformation and rumours?

There are a lot of rumors and myths around vaccines and COVID-19. Before considering vaccine information on the Internet, check that the information comes from a trustworthy source and is updated on a regular basis. To help you find them, The World Health Organisation (WHO) has reviewed and certified many websites across the world that only provide information based on reliable scientific evidence and independent reviews by leading technical experts. These websites are all members of the [Vaccine Safety Net](#).

^[1] WHO Benefits of getting vaccinated, [https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-\(covid-19\)-vaccines](https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-(covid-19)-vaccines)

^[2] See <https://emvolio.gov.gr/syxnes-erotiseis>

^[3] WHO. Should I be vaccinated if I get COVID-19 [https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-\(covid-19\)-vaccines](https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-(covid-19)-vaccines)

^[4] You can always ask your doctor, or any specialized doctor available near your place of residence.

Last update: 08/02/2022

Share :      

[Privacy Policy](#) [Change Country](#) | [unhcr.org](https://www.unhcr.org)