



# GREECE

## INFOPACK - RECOGNITION OF LEARNING PERIODS ABROAD IN GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

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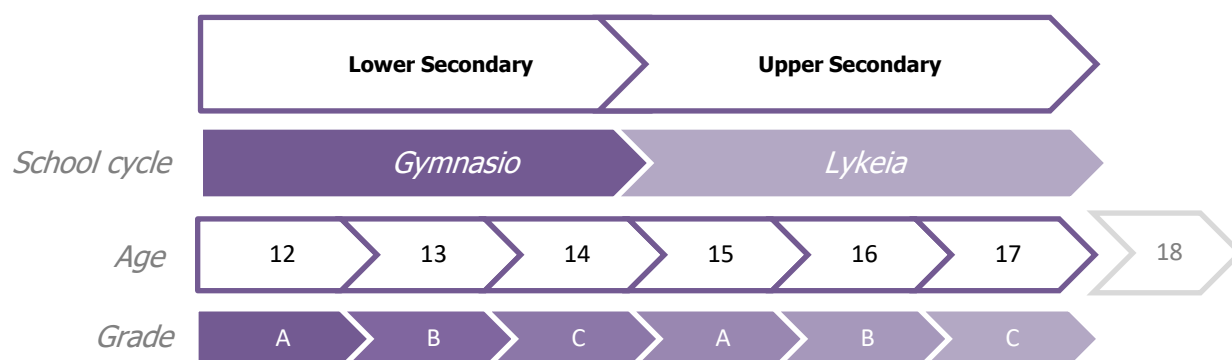
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The information below gives an overview of procedures<sup>1</sup> for the recognition of learning periods abroad in general secondary school. It can be consulted by pupils, as well as their families and teachers, who are or plan to be involved in long-term individual pupil mobility programmes abroad. Please note that this general overview does not include specificities of different programme types (which may be run by governmental agencies, civil society organisations, private companies or schools themselves) and such information can be obtained directly with the provider of the respective mobility programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on data gathered in February 2021.

## GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM



Education is compulsory until 15 years of age. In the second year of general upper secondary education (*Imerisia genika Lykeia*), pupils must choose between two orientation groups (*Ομάδες Προσανατολισμού*), namely Humanities or Sciences. In the third year they choose one out of three orientation groups: Human studies, Sciences and Health studies, Economic and Computer studies. Based on the orientation selected, pupils study the required subjects to complete their group. Graduating pupils are eligible to take Pan-Hellenic examinations in four subjects of their chosen third-year orientation group.

In addition to attending public school, most pupils attend extracurricular classes or one-to-one tuition at private centres called *frontistiria*. These centres are essential to prepare pupils for the Pan-Hellenic examinations and therefore their entrance in higher education.

### Graduation and Certification

The *Lykeio* graduation certificate is awarded to pupils who pass the Pan-Hellenic examinations, which are based on questions drafted at central level<sup>2</sup>. The examination is based on the orientation groups requiring an advanced level in four different subjects, depending on the group.

Holders of the upper secondary school certificate can apply to university based on their orientation and performance at the Pan-Hellenic exams<sup>3</sup>. In fact, the choice of orientation group influences and limits the type of universities pupils can apply to. According to the recently announced reform<sup>4</sup>, the final result refers to the average of all marks obtained in each of the three years of upper secondary education, and not just to the marks obtained in the subjects of the chosen orientation groups.

For more information on the structure and features of the different national education systems in Europe please see the Eurydice overview: National Education Systems | Eurydice (europa.eu).

<sup>2</sup> The questions are listed in the Classified Difficulty Exams Bank (*Τράπεζα Θεμάτων*), which is a bank of exam questions per course.

<sup>3</sup> Eurydice, National Education systems, Greece, Organisation of General Upper Secondary Education  
[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/organisation-general-upper-secondary-education-23\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/organisation-general-upper-secondary-education-23_en)

<sup>4</sup> Reforms announced in July 2020, <https://www.minedu.gov.gr/news/45796-15-07-20-ksekinontas-apo-ti-vasi-tis-ekpaideftikis-pyramidas-metarrythmiseis-se-10-vimata-2>

## INFORMATION FOR PUPILS GOING ABROAD FROM GREECE

### Age and grade

Pupils enrol in individual pupil mobility programmes at the age of 15/16, in the first year of *Lykeio*.

### Registration in the sending school

Interruptions of schooling are only allowed for a full school year, and during the period abroad you are not enrolled in your school in Greece. In fact, school registration takes place in September and all pupils present on that date are expected to fulfil their school year in their school in Greece.

If you wish to interrupt your education, you must therefore apply for permission before September. This also means that you cannot take part in semester or trimester exchange programmes.

Permission to carry out mobility in the context of school-to-school partnerships – including those within the Erasmus+ programme – is issued by the respective elected Regional Director of Primary and Secondary Education<sup>5</sup>. Private organisations that organise individual pupil exchanges do not need such permits, but they need a permission from the Ministry of Education for their operations.

### Funding for the sending school

As pupils are not enrolled during their exchange abroad, they are not counted for towards funding for the school.

## RECOGNITION OF LEARNING PERIODS ABROAD

The following information addresses learning periods abroad lasting either less than a full school year or a full school year. *It should be noted that in the case of a school-to-school partnership (e.g. Erasmus+) the procedure described below for being readmitted to school after a period abroad of a full school year applies, in addition to a possible learning agreement between sending and host school for the purpose of recognition of learning outcomes.*

### Periods shorter than a full school year

Long-term mobility programmes shorter than a full school year are not recognised, therefore these types of programmes are not offered, even in the context of school-to-school partnerships.

### A full school year

In Greece there is no recognition of outcomes of learning periods abroad in secondary education outside of governmental level bilateral agreements<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Eurydice, National Education systems, Greece, Mobility in Early Childhood and School Education  
[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/mobility-early-childhood-and-school-education-27\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/mobility-early-childhood-and-school-education-27_en)

<sup>6</sup> In 2021 the Greek government decided to recognise the outcomes of a full school year abroad for pupils who enrol in the exchange programme FLEX to the US, managed by the US Embassy.

However, upon return exchange pupils need to follow a procedure to be readmitted in their sending school, according to the Law 155/78 (article 11, par. 2.).

As a returning exchange pupil, you need to submit to the Secondary school regional office the following documents: a certificate of attendance signed and stamped by the host school with apostille<sup>7</sup>, together with an official translation of both documents by a Greek authority or a lawyer/notary approved by the Greek Embassy based in that country.

Based on the evaluation of these documents, the Secondary school regional office re-admits you in your sending school and allows you to repeat the school year. There is no possibility for partial recognition.

University admission through the Pan-Hellenic exams in June may be difficult if you spend the last year of secondary school abroad. However, there is no requirement stating that you must have attended the last 2 years of upper secondary school in Greece in order to be allowed to sit the Pan-Hellenic exams. You can decide to sit the exams or take them the following year.

## INFORMATION FOR PUPILS HOSTED IN GREECE

### Registration in the host school

The law foresees that, as an exchange pupil, you are enrolled with the specific status of exchange pupil and school principals are obliged to accept you in their school. In order to enrol, you need to provide proof of the last grade completed in your home country. In addition, you are placed in grades depending on the courses you have studied in your home school, and their correspondence to the curriculum in Greece. However, you cannot be placed in the last year of upper secondary school.

### Funding for the host school

The school does not receive funding from the State for an exchange pupil.

### Certification for hosted pupils

There is no applicable legislation for certifying the studies of hosted exchange pupils, and there is not enough practice of hosting exchange pupils to provide information.

### Possibility of graduating in the host country during the exchange

You are not allowed to receive a Greek upper secondary school leaving certificate with only one year of studies in Greece. This partly explains why as a hosted pupil you cannot be placed in the last year of upper secondary education.

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<sup>7</sup> Apostille is still needed to legalize school certificates within the EU, as this type of document does not fall under the Regulation (EU) 2016/1191 on promoting the free movement of citizens by simplifying the requirements for presenting certain public documents in the EU.