



HELIOS
Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection

PROJECT REGULATIONS HANDBOOK



Funded by the
Asylum, Migration and
Integration Fund of the
European Union



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HELIOS IS A PILOT INTEGRATION PROJECT THAT AIMS TO SUPPORT **BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION** (REFUGEES AND BENEFICIARIES OF SUBSIDIARY PROTECTION) TO **INTEGRATE IN THE GREEK SOCIETY**. THE PROJECT OFFERS SERVICES PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LIVING, INCLUDING RENTAL SUBSIDIES, INTEGRATION COURSES, EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT AND INTEGRATION MONITORING.

HELIOS is implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and its Partners with the support of the Greek Government and is funded by the Directorate-General of the European Commission for Migration and Home Affairs.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to enroll in the HELIOS project, beneficiaries must meet **ALL** the following criteria:

1. Be a beneficiary of international protection (refugee or beneficiary of subsidiary protection);
2. Have been recognized as beneficiary of international protection after 01/01/2018;
3. Be officially registered and reside in an Open Accommodation Center, Reception and Identification Center (RIC), a hotel of the IOM FILOXENIA project or in the ESTIA program.

ENROLLMENT

In order to enroll in HELIOS, beneficiaries must sign the *Declaration of Participation* in the HELIOS project, which states that they understand and accept the rights and obligations resulting from their enrollment in the project. The date of signature of the *Declaration of Participation* initiates the enrolment of beneficiaries in the project.

All adult members of each household need to sign the *Declaration of Participation*. In the framework of the HELIOS project, households are understood as follows:

- Adults (18 years of age and above) living alone;
- Any members of a nuclear family living together. A nuclear family consists of (a) parent(s) and the dependent children, all living together; second-degree relatives such as aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and others are not considered part of a nuclear family;
- In case of a nuclear family with adult dependents, the latter are to be enrolled in HELIOS separately and as one distinct household; this further includes their spouse and children, if applicable.

CAN I SIGN THE DECLARATION OF PARTICIPATION AND THEN DECIDE TO RETREAT FROM HELIOS?

Yes, signing the Declaration of Participation does not bind you to do anything but solely ensures that you will be in a position to benefit from the HELIOS services. However, in order to benefit from these services, you need to comply with the HELIOS regulations as described below.

Beneficiaries eligible to be enrolled in the HELIOS project are invited to attend information sessions where they have the opportunity to learn more about it and, should they wish to enroll in the project, sign the *Declaration of Participation*. The information sessions take place on a regular basis in all Open Accommodation Centers, in the Integration Learning Centers (ILCs) that are operating in the framework of HELIOS and in additional locations that are communicated to the beneficiaries by HELIOS staff upon need.

SERVICES OFFERED IN HELIOS

SUPPORT IN INDEPENDENT LIVING AND RENTAL SUBSIDIES

Beneficiaries of the HELIOS project receive information, assistance and financial support aiming at supporting and promoting independent living. Specifically, HELIOS beneficiaries are offered support to find an apartment and sign in their name a lease agreement directly with the apartment owner. This process is facilitated through:

- Specialized workshops and one-to-one sessions which provide information about the procedures and requirements for renting an apartment in Greece;
- Interpretation during apartment visits or translation of housing-related documents;
- Facilitation of contacts with apartment owners interested in renting their apartment;
- Matching with other beneficiaries interested in sharing an apartment;
- Transportation of beneficiaries and their belongings when moving to the newly-leased apartment.

The duration of each lease agreement is a matter of agreement between the beneficiary and the apartment owner (e.g. the lease agreement can be signed for a duration of one, two or three years or for any duration agreed between the parties), yet only lease agreements with a duration of more than six (6) months will be accepted in the framework of the project. HELIOS beneficiaries have the possibility and are strongly encouraged to consider cohabitation so as to share the cost of the rent and all related expenses with friends or relatives. **In order to receive rental subsidies, each head of household needs to electronically accept and have his/her name clearly stated in the lease agreement and in the respective TaxisNet printout.**

CAN I SHOW MY COPY OF THE *DECLARATION OF PARTICIPATION* TO THE APARTMENT OWNER TO FACILITATE THE SIGNING OF THE LEASE AGREEMENT?

Yes, you can show the apartment owner the signed *Declaration of participation* and explain that you will be receiving financial support towards the rental costs of the apartment if he/she agrees to sign the lease agreement.

Upon signing a lease agreement in their name, beneficiaries receive rental subsidies which are paid on their personal Greek bank account. The rental subsidies consist of:

- A **contribution to start-up of independent living**, a standard amount (see Table 1 below) which is paid one-off and is foreseen to contribute to the payment of the rental guarantee and the first settling-in expenses (e.g. purchase of household equipment, furniture).
- A **contribution to the rental costs**, a standard amount (see Table 1 below) which is paid on a monthly basis and contributes towards the costs of renting a house and the expenses associated to basic utility costs;

The amounts of the rental subsidies are provided according to the size of each household and are specified in Table 1 below.

Table 1

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	CONTRIBUTION FOR START-UP OF INDEPENDENT LIVING	CONTRIBUTION TO THE RENTAL COSTS
	DISBURSEMENT ONE-OFF	MONTHLY DISBURSEMENT
1	440 €	162 €
2	830 €	309 €
3	980 €	396 €
4 to 5	1.172 €	504 €
6+	1.490 €	630 €

In order to receive rental subsidies, beneficiaries must meet **ALL** the following preconditions:

1. Be enrolled in HELIOS by having signed the *Declaration of Participation*;
2. Provide HELIOS staff with:
 - a. Proof of the *Taxisnet* submission of rental contract in the portal of AADE, **accepted** by all parties– rental contracts with a duration of less than six (6) months will not be accepted;
 - b. For each of the household members, a document proving their status as beneficiaries of international protection – namely the Asylum Seeker’s Card stamped with “*Pending Issuance of Residence Permit*”, or the Greek Residence Permit;
 - c. A document presenting the details of the personal Greek bank account of the beneficiary to which the rental subsidies will be transferred – this must clearly indicate the IBAN number and the name of the head of household. The rental subsidy **cannot** be transferred to the card where beneficiaries receive the ESTIA cash assistance for basic needs;
 - d. Provide HELIOS staff with a banking printout verifying the landlord’s IBAN account;
3. In order to receive each monthly disbursement, provide **on a monthly basis** HELIOS staff with proofs that payment for rent of the previous month was executed to the declared IBAN of the landlord. Documents that will be accepted as proofs of payment are:
 - a. certified confirmation of bank transaction printed upon the beneficiary’s request from an officer at a banking branch clearly indicating rental contractual details (beneficiary name, name of landlord, contract number),
 - b. e-banking payment confirmation printed by the beneficiary, clearly indicating rental contractual details (beneficiary name, name of landlord, contract number) in the “notes” field of the online transaction.
4. Attend regularly the mandatory integration courses without exceeding the limit of permitted absences;
5. Comply with the instructions received by UNHCR, RIS and/or the Site Management Support actors concerning the requested exit from the accommodation places in Open Accommodation Centers, RICs, hotels of the IOM FILOXENIA project or in the ESTIA program, whenever this will be requested.

IMPORTANT 1: PAYMENTS TO THE LANDLORDS IN CASH ARE NOT ACCEPTED.

IMPORTANT 2: Based on the date of notification of the decision granting international protection, the below provisions apply to eligible HELIOS beneficiaries:

Table 2

DATE OF NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION GRANTING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION	DEADLINE TO PROVIDE HELIOS STAFF WITH A SIGNED LEASE AGREEMENT	DURATION OF RENTAL SUBSIDIES
UNTIL 31/1/2019	SIX (6) MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF 1 ST REQUESTED EXIT FROM THE ACCOMMODATION SCHEME, REGARDLESS OF ANY EXTENSION GRANTED	SIX (6) MONTHS
BETWEEN 1/2/2019 AND 30/9/2019	SIX (6) MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF ENROLLMENT¹ IN THE HELIOS PROJECT	MINIMUM SIX (6) MONTHS , MAXIMUM TWELVE (12) MONTHS DEPENDING ON THE TIME SPENT IN THE PREVIOUS ACCOMMODATION PLACE
AFTER 1/10/2019	RESIDENTS OF ESTIA UNTIL THE END OF ATTENDANCE TO THE INTEGRATION COURSES.	MINIMUM SIX (6) MONTHS , MAXIMUM TWELVE (12) MONTHS DEPENDING ON THE TIME SPENT IN THE PREVIOUS ACCOMMODATION PLACE ²
	RESIDENTS OF OPEN ACCOMMODATION CENTERS, RICS OR FILOXENIA HOTELS FIVE (5) MONTHS FROM THE ENROLLMENT¹ IN HELIOS.	

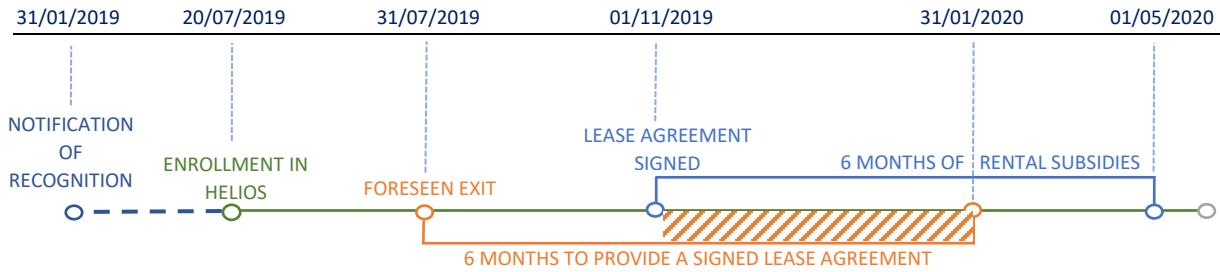
Should beneficiaries fail to provide HELIOS staff with the signed lease agreement within the timeframe defined above, their entitlement to receive rental subsidies ceases. In addition, should beneficiaries fail to timely provide HELIOS staff with proofs of payment for the rent of the previous month, they automatically lose the entitlement to receive rental subsidies from that moment onwards. IOM maintains the right to perform monitoring visits to the rented apartments.

¹ For this purpose, as *date of enrolment* is considered the last day of the calendar month in which the Declaration of Participation is signed.

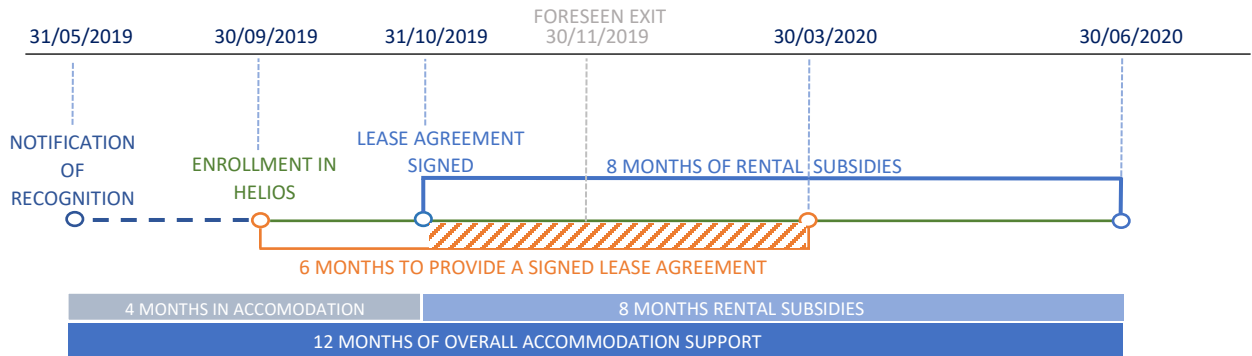
² Beneficiaries are entitled to receive a minimum of six (6) months of subsidies and a maximum of twelve (12) months depending on the time spent in the current accommodation place. For example, if a beneficiary provides HELIOS staff with a lease agreement three months after the notification of the recognition of their status as a beneficiary of international protection, then they will receive nine (9) months of rental subsidies.

EXAMPLES

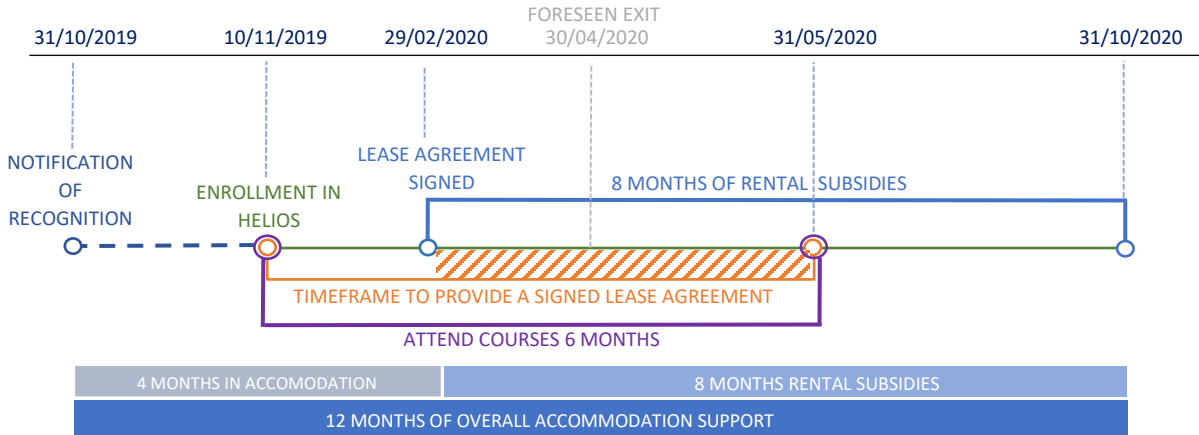
- BENEFICIARIES NOTIFIED OF THE DECISION GRANTING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION UNTIL 31/1/2019



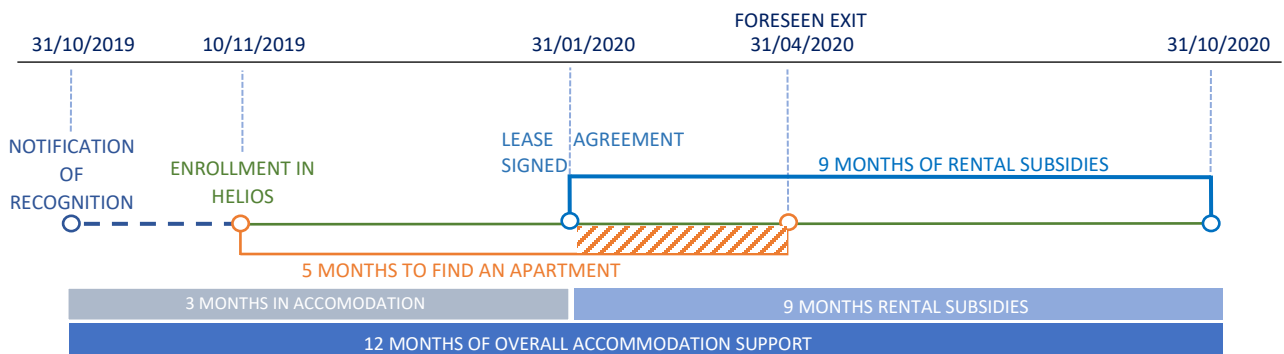
- BENEFICIARIES NOTIFIED OF THE DECISION GRANTING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION BETWEEN 1/02/2019 AND 30/09/2019



- BENEFICIARIES NOTIFIED OF THE DECISION GRANTING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AFTER 1/10/2019 and residing in ESTIA



- BENEFICIARIES NOTIFIED OF THE DECISION GRANTING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AFTER 1/10/2019 and residing in OPEN ACCOMMODATION CENTERS, RICS OR FILOXENIA HOTELS



PROVISION OF INTEGRATION COURSES

In the framework of the HELIOS project, mandatory integration courses are offered in Integration Learning Centers (ILCs) operating across mainland Greece and Crete island. Each course cycle consists of 360 teaching hours for a period of **six (6) months**, during which beneficiaries attend three (3) hours of classes per day, five (5) days a week.

In order for each household to organize their schedule and childcare according to their needs, the Integration Learning Centers offer courses in up to three (3) shifts of classes per day and have Child Friendly Spaces to host children aged 2 to 6/7 years old while the parents attend the courses.

Specifically, the integration courses consist of the following Modules:

- **Greek Language Module:** For a total of 280 hours, beneficiaries are exposed to the basics of the Greek language by experienced educators without the presence of interpreters. The classes are established taking into consideration the literacy rate of the beneficiaries.
- **Soft Skills Module:** For a total of 80 hours, beneficiaries attend courses related to Cultural Orientation, Life Skills and Job Readiness by experienced teachers alongside cultural mediators. Outdoor activities are also carried out (e.g. visits to museums) as part of the courses, so as for beneficiaries to have the opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills. In particular, this Module consists of the following components:
 - Cultural Orientation: Notions concerning Greek culture, history, tradition and contemporary customs;
 - Life Skills: Classes dedicated to improving the communication and collaboration with others; personal and social responsibility; practical matters necessary for the beneficiaries' everyday life in Greece (e.g. how to use public transport, how to open a bank account, which public service to refer to for any needed matter);
 - Job Readiness: Information on job search from different sources, such as the Manpower and Employment Agency (OAED), the Internet, through networking or in the newspaper; practical matters on preparing for a job application (e.g. drafting a resume, attending a job interview); soft skills on oral communication, problem-solving, teamwork and interpersonal skills.

WILL I RECEIVE A CERTIFICATION OF MY GREEK LANGUAGE LEVEL WHEN I COMPLETE THE COURSE?

Based on your performance, your teachers will assess the competences you have acquired and refer you for the official exam for the Greek language certifications. The exam fees will be covered by the project.

In order to enroll in the integration courses, beneficiaries must meet **ALL** the following preconditions:

1. Be enrolled in HELIOS by having signed the *Declaration of Participation*;
2. Be above 16 years of age.

Although beneficiaries can start attending the integration courses as soon as they enroll in HELIOS, in order to continue attending them they must comply with the instructions received by UNHCR, RIS and/or the Site Management Support actors concerning the requested exit from the accommodation places in Open Accommodation Centers, RICs, hotels of the IOM FILOXENIA project or in the ESTIA program, whenever this will be requested.

The attendance to the courses is **mandatory** for all beneficiaries who meet the above eligibility criteria, **unless** they fall into one of the following categories for which the attendance is **optional**:

1. Women in a state of pregnancy over 7 months and mothers up to 6 months postnatal;
2. Beneficiaries with disabilities or incurable/serious disease;
3. Beneficiaries over 65 years old;
4. Beneficiaries having identified through the HELIOS project an apartment whose location prevents access to the integration courses (e.g. the time of travel needed to reach the Integration Learning Center is more than 1 hour and/or there is no public transport). The feasibility to attend the courses is determined upon assessment of HELIOS staff;
5. Beneficiaries attending a formal education program (e.g. public school, university).

IMPORTANT: Based on the date of notification of the decision granting international protection, the below provisions apply to eligible HELIOS beneficiaries:

Table 3

DATE OF NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION GRANTING INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION	DEADLINE TO ENROL IN THE INTEGRATION COURSES	DURATION OF THE INTEGRATION COURSES
UNTIL 31/1/2019	UP TO TWO (2) WEEKS AFTER THE PROVISION OF THE SIGNED LEASE AGREEMENT TO HELIOS STAFF	SIX (6) MONTHS
BETWEEN 1/2/2019 AND 30/9/2019	UP TO TWO (2) WEEKS AFTER THE PROVISION OF THE SIGNED LEASE AGREEMENT TO HELIOS STAFF	SIX (6) MONTHS
AFTER 1/10/2019	RESIDENTS OF ESTIA UP TO TWO (2) WEEKS AFTER THE ENROLMENT IN THE PROJECT	SIX (6) MONTHS
	RESIDENTS OF OPEN ACCOMMODATION CENTERS, RICS OR FILOXENIA HOTELS	
	UP TO TWO (2) WEEKS AFTER THE PROVISION OF THE SIGNED LEASE AGREEMENT TO HELIOS STAFF	

Beneficiaries need to present themselves in the Integration Learning Centers in accordance to the timeframe specified in the above table. Should beneficiaries not comply with this requirement, they are automatically excluded from all the benefits of the HELIOS project. In addition, upon individual outreach of HELIOS staff, beneficiaries might be invited to refer to an Integration Learning Center before the abovementioned deadline for individualized assessments and support. Upon beneficiaries presenting themselves to an Integration Learning Center, they are requested to undertake a placement test to define the class level they are to be enrolled in and receive specific information about the available classes.

Beneficiaries are entitled to *justified* and *unjustified* absences throughout the implementation of the integration courses. Specifically, beneficiaries can abstain from courses for a total of **72 hours** (no more than 36 unjustified absences) throughout the duration of 6 months. However, within one calendar month, beneficiaries must **not** exceed **6 hours** of *unjustified* absences. *Justified absences* are defined as absences linked to exceptional private matters, such as health, appointments with the Greek public services and job-related issues. Therefore, an absence is considered *justified* only in the following cases:

1. Illness and sicknesses when proven by relevant doctor's note;
2. Court or law enforcement custody when proven by court verification;
3. Bereavement, family emergencies;
4. A religious holiday observance (major religious holiday of the country of origin);
5. Short-term Employment when proven by employment contract;
6. Job Interview;
7. Strike of public transportation means (no documentation needed).

Additional conditions can be determined on a case-by-case basis.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I EXCEED THE NUMBER OF ABSENCES?

Beneficiaries exceeding the threshold of overall absences (72 hours in 6 months) or of *unjustified* absences (6 hours per calendar month) will be excluded from the benefits of the HELIOS project. In the case of families, the family member(s) who exceeded the set threshold are excluded from the benefits of the project and the amount of rental subsidies for the family will be reduced by the amounts corresponding to the number of members who have exceeded the limit of absences.

In case that no official documentation can be issued, all absences that are to be considered *justified* must be supported through a solemn declaration (*υπεύθυνη δήλωση*) by the beneficiary. Beneficiaries exceeding the threshold of *justified* absences due to exceptional reasons (e.g. hospitalization) have to re-enroll in the integration courses in order to continue enjoying the benefits of the HELIOS project. In this case, HELIOS staff will determine the conditions of the re-enrollment (e.g. if beneficiaries need to start anew the integration course or if they can be enrolled in classes already running).

JOB COUNSELLING SESSIONS AND OTHER EMPLOYABILITY-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Beneficiaries of the HELIOS project have the opportunity to benefit from employability support in order to become familiar with the Greek labor market and job research modalities and, in parallel, acquire increased awareness of their professional profile. In this framework, HELIOS beneficiaries are offered five (5) individual job counselling sessions of a duration of one (1) hour each with job counsellors who help them develop a career plan by assessing their interests and abilities and by guiding them through resources on career information and job search. Upon need, beneficiaries are also informed on the possibilities available to them so as to widen their educational profile.

The individual job counselling sessions take place in the Integration Learning Centers and are mandatory in order to benefit from further employability-related activities. As a matter of fact, beneficiaries with relevant education and/or experience have the opportunity to access official certifications (e.g. driving licenses, ECDL certifications, foreign language certifications) in order to increase their employment potential. Any costs related to the official certifications and to any other documentation needed for employability purposes (e.g. official translation of documents, urgent medical exams) are covered by the HELIOS project upon assessment of HELIOS staff. The eligibility of each beneficiary is assessed in the job counselling sessions, the attendance of which is a prerequisite in order to have access to this service.

WILL HELIOS STAFF FIND ME A JOB?

No. Nevertheless, HELIOS staff will offer support to facilitate your integration into the labor market.

In order to benefit from employability-related activities, beneficiaries must meet **ALL** the following preconditions:

1. Be enrolled in HELIOS by having signed the *Declaration of Participation*;
2. Regularly attend the integration courses;
3. Comply with the instructions received by UNHCR, RIS and/or the Site Management Support actors concerning the requested exit from the accommodation places in Open Accommodation Centers, RICs, hotels of the IOM FILOXENIA project or in the ESTIA program, whenever this will be requested.

INTEGRATION MONITORING

HELIOS beneficiaries are assisted by dedicated Integration Monitoring teams consisting of social workers and interpreters who are responsible to monitor their integration progress and support them with any integration-related needs. Throughout this process, beneficiaries are supported to develop links with the host community, become acquainted with public services and bureaucratic procedures and ultimately be in a position to confidently navigate through the Greek public service providers upon their graduation from the project.

Specifically, the Integration Monitoring teams focus on assessing the beneficiaries' inclusion within the host community by providing advice on bureaucratic obligations and services offered at local level. Integration monitoring activities refer also to the progress made by the beneficiaries in relation to the services offered by the HELIOS project, including the integration courses and the potential and ability of beneficiaries for independent living. Any protection-related issue identified by the Integration Monitoring teams is referred to the relevant local service providers.

WILL THE INTEGRATION MONITORING TEAMS ACCOMPANY ME TO THE GREEK PUBLIC SERVICES?

No. Nevertheless, the teams will provide any needed advice and support about your bureaucratic obligations with the Greek public services.

Meetings with the beneficiaries are scheduled regularly in the Integration Learning Centers on a monthly or bimonthly basis depending on their needs as assessed by HELIOS staff in order to ensure systematic assessments. During these meetings, the beneficiaries have the possibility to discuss about any challenges they face in relation to their integration process and to provide feedback on the HELIOS project activities.



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CONTACT US!

For further questions on the HELIOS project, do not hesitate to contact us at iom_helios_info@iom.int.
Everyone can write in their own language.