Finland to take 130 refugees, mostly children from Greece

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Tens of thousands of refugees and migrants including thousands of unaccompanied children are living in squalid conditions in overcrowded camps on several Greek islands after arriving from the nearby Turkish coast.

Migrants and refugees, who say that they seek to travel onward to northern Europe sleep outside a camp in the town of Diavata, Greece, April 5, 2019. (REUTERS/Alexandros Avramidis)

Athens: Greece's migration ministry says Finland has agreed to take in 100 unaccompanied refugee children and 30 adults expanding the number of European countries which have begun taking in young asylum seekers from Greece.

Greece's Migration and Asylum ministry said Thursday the agreement came in a call between deputy minister Giorgos Koumoutsakos and senior Finnish Interior Ministry official OlliPoika Parviainen adviser to Interior Minister Maria Ohisalo.

In February the Finnish Interior Ministry said it would take up to 175 asylum seekers from camps in Cyprus Greece Italy and Malta to alleviate the humanitarian situation of refugees in the Mediterranean members of the European Union.

The children and the adults who will be reunited with family members already in Finland will be relocated in the coming weeks by the end of May. Greece's ministry said adding this was a decision of practical solidarity by the Nordic country.

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The government has reached out to other EU countries to help share the burden and in recent weeks 12 children were flown to Luxembourg and 47 to Germany.

Greece is seeking to have 1600 unaccompanied children relocated to other EU countries.

- AP