**The two sides of refugees’ education in Greece**

[November 25, 2016](http://www.europeanyouthvoice.eu/2016/11/the-two-sides-of-refugees-education-in-greece/)  [Efi Rapti](http://www.europeanyouthvoice.eu/author/efi-rapti/" \o "View all posts by Efi Rapti)

“Today me and Katerina went to the refugees’ camp for our lesson and almost half the class was missing. We should have noticed what have happened because of the silence that was all over the room and the students’ faces that were sad. ” *Where are the other guys*” I asked “d*id they miss school again?*” and someone answered the obvious answer that they were deported. Our smiles were gone “*this is the end!*” I said and it was a stupid reaction. We will not see our students again.” This is a confession of a volunteer teacher.

Teachers and students of a school in Thessaloniki were expecting the refugees students and when they got into the school everyone started clapping to encourage them in their first day of school. Students in Crete were peacefully demonstrating for open education for refugees and were against xenophobic reactions.

The parents of a school in Oraiokastro, that is near Thessaloniki, decided that they do not want refugees in their school, otherwise they are going to conquest the school. The same reactions had some parents in schools all over the country. They were demonstrating outside the school and saying that they do not want refugees in their school but they were not giving any reason about their decision.

Those were different reactions of parents, students and teachers all over Greece about refugees’ education. Governments have decided that refugees are going to school in the evening not in the morning. That is for  all the other students. The students were equipped with bags, books, notebooks, pens and pencil so they were ready just like every other student in school. The evening schools are for this year. They are preparing them for the next year in order to be absorbed in morning schools just like every other student in Greece.

The question is “why do they not want them in our schools?”. The reactions against refugees comes from the parents, not their kids. Actually many kids do not have problem with the refugees, they do not notice the differences when they want to play. They are friends and having fun together but parents have different opinions. The difference may come from different points of view. They are not open minded and see the refugees as a danger since they are afraid of the unknown. If you ask them why you do not want them, they do not have an answer. They just do not want them near their kids. In my point of view education is for everyone, and should be free as it is for everyone in Greece. The government’s decision about refugees getting in our schools is the right one. They are attending evening schools so there will be no problem with the school program and the daily life. The kids should get close to the refugees and get to know them, notice their differences and their similarities that are more. Everyone is just a person with rights, especially in education. They did not choose to leave their country, they were forced, they want a better future and a normal daily life without causing any problem. So why do we isolate them and do not want them in our society? Maybe we are not as broadminded as we think we are!