



Monitoring Immigration Detention

Quarterly Report December - March 2015

March 2015



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A. MEETINGS-CONTACTS

1 / Meetings with the competent authorities

- Thessaloniki Aliens Police Directorate

2 / Meetings /contacts with institutional actors

- Ombudsman

3 / Meeting with Greek and international civil society organizations

- Asylum Campaign
- Afghan Community
- Praxis
- European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
- Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)
- International Detention Coalition (IDC)

B. MONITORING VISITS TO DETENTION CENTERS – INVESTIGATION OF CASES - FINDINGS

1 / Visits to Detention Centers

- Visit to the detention center of Thessaloniki Aliens Police Directorate
- Visit to Illegal Migration Police Station of Thessaloniki
- Visit to Illegal Migration Police Station of Agios Athanasios
- Visit to Illegal Migration Police Station of Mygdonia
- Visit to the Police Station of Nafplion
- 2 visits to the Pre-removal Detention Center of Korinth
- Visit to the Pre-removal Detention Center of Drama
- Visit to the Pre-removal Detention Center of Xanthi

2 / Investigation of detainees' cases

- In Thessaloniki Aliens Police Directorate
- In the Regional Asylum Office of Thessaloniki
- In the Security Department of Nafplion
- In the Pre-removal Detention Center of Korinthos

- In the Pre-removal Detention Center of Drama
- In the Pre-removal Detention Center of Xanthi
- In the Regional Asylum Office of South Evros

3 / Access to detention facilities

We were provided with full access to the following areas:

- Police station of Nafplion
- Pre-removal Detention Center of Korinth

We were not given full access to the following areas:

- Detention center of Thessaloniki Aliens Police Directorate
- Illegal Migration Police Station of Thessaloniki
- Illegal Migration Police Station of Agios Athanasios
- Illegal Migration Police Station of Mygdonia
- Pre-removal Detention Center of Drama
- Pre-removal Detention Center of Xanthi

4 / Findings-facts regarding detention

General Findings

There is an increase in the overall number of detainees: According to the data released by the authorities on March 4, 2016 1,204 people were held in Pre-removal detention centers. However the total number of detainees is bigger than the above, as the data don't include people detained in other detention facilities (police stations, detention centers in Police Divisions), whose number is unknown.

There is an increase in the number of detainees readmitted to Turkey. However, the first reception and administrative detention procedures don't ensure the identification of people in need of protection and vulnerable people: According to the data released by the Hellenic Police on March 17, 2016, 608 people have been readmitted to Turkey. However, as we noted, the procedures implemented at entry points, as well as at Police Headquarters of the mainland and at detention centers, do not guarantee the identification of individuals in need of protection. Therefore there is a risk that people in need of protection will be readmitted to Turkey in violation of the non-refoulement principle. Moreover, identification of vulnerable people in need of special care is not guaranteed and there is an additional risk of those also being readmitted to Turkey.

We identified a significant number of people who claimed being minors and were detained as adults: The absence and/or inappropriate implementation of first reception procedures and especially the fact that the age assessment procedure provided for the First Reception Centers is not applied in a large scale, resulting in many minors being registered inaccurately as adults which has a direct impact on the care they receive.

Particular findings

Serious problems are still identified in the following areas:

a. The implemented procedures by the competent authorities regarding administrative detention:

- There is lack of an individualized approach to the characteristics, the situation and the needs of foreign nationals who are under arrest.
- Alternatives to detention are not applied.
- Legally uncertain and unjustified detention on the ground of public order.
- Detention of individuals whose removal violates the principle of *non-refoulement* (including asylum seekers).
- Detention over six months despite the government's announcements that this limit would not be exceeded.
- Detention of people with serious health problems.

b. The conditions of detention:

- Use of detention areas that the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment has deemed inappropriate for more than a few days' detention (e.g. Police Stations) or that have not complied to the recommendations of the Committee (e.g. Thessaloniki Aliens Police Directorate)
- Inadequate health care
- Lack of support by social workers and psychologists
- Inadequate and poor feeding
- Inadequate heating

- Inadequate provision of recreational activities and a lack of educational activities
- Lack of provisions in clothes, shoes and personal hygiene items
- Lack of interpretation services
- Lack of information to the detainees regarding:
 - their legal status;
 - the operational regulations of the detention centers
- Lack of free legal aid

We noted satisfying material conditions of detention and good practices in the services provided to prisoners regarding recreation activities in the Pre-removal Detention Centers of Xanthi and Drama.

C. RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS – REPORTS

Reports

- Report of the Committee of the Council of Europe for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (in relation to the visit conducted in April 2015)

<http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/grc/2016-04-inf-eng.pdf>

- Ombudsman

Prevention of Torture and Ill-treatment, Special Report 2015 (in Greek)

http://www.synigoros.gr/?i=kdet.el.ehtisies_ektheseis_documents.356667

Return of Migrants, Special Report 2015 (in Greek)

http://www.synigoros.gr/?i=kdet.el.ehtisies_ektheseis_documents.356672

Press Releases (in Greek)

Greek Council for Refugees: Dramatic situation regarding the feeding of detainees in the Pre-Removal Detention Centers all over Greece.

<http://www.gcr.gr/index.php/el/news/press-releases-announcements/item/515-dramatiki-katastasi-me-ti-sitisi-kratoumenon-se-proanaxorisiaka-kentra-kratisis-ana-tin-ellada>

Group of Lawyers for the defense of migrants and refugee rights -“traveling light”

(Thessaloniki): Press Release of February 9, 2016

<http://tinyurl.com/j7h5oy4>

Articles (in Greek)

Efimerida ton Syntakton: The return of the prisons of shame

<http://www.efsyn.gr/arthro/epistrefoyn-oi-fylakes-tis-ntropis>

To Vima: Measures for the detention conditions in the Pre-removal Detention Center of Korinth

<http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=769585>

Greek Radio: Protest in Moria regarding deportations of migrants. Another transfer of 50

Pakistanis was conducted today

<http://www.era-aegean.gr/?p=8768>



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