



**Women's Refugee Commission**  
Research. Rethink. Resolve.



# **EU-Turkey Agreement Failing Refugee Women and Girls**

August 2016



WOMEN'S  
REFUGEE  
COMMISSION

## Research. Rethink. Resolve.

The Women's Refugee Commission improves the lives and protects the rights of women, children and youth displaced by conflict and crisis. We research their needs, identify solutions and advocate for programs and policies to strengthen their resilience and drive change in humanitarian practice.

The Women's Refugee Commission is deeply grateful to the refugees and displaced persons who shared their valuable time, perspectives, and ideas for change.

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## Acronyms & Abbreviations

EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ECHO	Europe's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Office
EU	European Union
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
MEP	Members of the European Parliament
MISP	Minimum Initial Services Package for Reproductive Health
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2015, more than one million refugees<sup>1</sup> and migrants fleeing war, persecution, gender-based violence and other crises arrived in Europe in search of safety and asylum. Some 240,000 have arrived in 2016, so far. Most of them made the perilous voyage across the Aegean Sea from Turkey to Greece, traveling onward toward Western Europe. While all of these refugees face risks, women and girls especially have experienced sexual assault, extortion, exploitation and rights violations at every stage of their traumatic journey. They include single women traveling alone, female-headed households, pregnant women, adolescent girls, unaccompanied minors and women with disabilities.

Throughout this mass migration to and through Europe, there have been significant and alarming gaps in protection and services for refugee women and girls. At every point where risk could have been mitigated, the humanitarian response has been woefully inadequate.

The situation for refugees has become even more complex and precarious since March 20, 2016, when the European Union and Turkey launched a highly politicized plan to reduce the flow of refugees into Europe. A key part of the deal centers on detaining new arrivals in Greece and containing refugees already there, as determinations are made as to whether refugees are given asylum in Greece, sent back to Turkey or resettled in an accepting European country.

While urgent action was needed to better manage the crisis, the Women's Refugee Commission finds the deal short-sighted, discriminatory and legally-dubious, with profound and distressing ramifications for refugees seeking asylum and family reunification in Europe, particularly women and girls.

After the deal was announced, Greece was forced to turn its reception centers into detention centers almost overnight. Dilapidated factories, warehouses and other sites unfit for human habitation were quickly converted into camps for more than 50,000 refugees now stranded there. Half of these refugees in Greece are women and children and many are attempting to reunite with husbands, fathers and other relatives who traveled ahead to other countries in Europe.

The sites set up for refugees are congested, unsanitary and lack adequate food supplies, water, toilets and showers. Some treat residents like prisoners and restrict their mobility. Little consideration has been given to the safety and protection needs of women and girls in site design or the response as a whole, including measures to reduce risks of gender-based violence (GBV). Scant assistance is

available for GBV survivors or other vulnerable refugees, including pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and children. Many experienced and ready-to-assist local and international aid groups on the ground have been sidelined.

The absence of a clear and sufficiently-resourced and staffed legal protection system in Greece only compounds refugees' misery and anxiety. Refugee families are in the dark about their options, status and rights due to poor access to information, legal counsel and basic help, as the Greek asylum system struggles to scale up. Aid and legal help are often limited to those of certain nationalities, leaving out many others in desperate need of assistance and protection.

The EU-Turkey agreement stipulates that Turkey will take back a large number of migrants from Greece despite serious concerns that Turkey may not be a safe third country under EU and international law and policies. Recent political insecurity deepens these concerns. While there have only been a small number of returns to date to Turkey, these refugees are being placed into detention centers with distressingly little access to medical, psychosocial, legal and other critical services.

While the EU-Turkey plan has slowed boat crossings, thereby curbing the flow of asylum seekers into Western Europe as intended, it is nothing short of a protection and legal disaster for refugees, particularly women and girls. It is time for Europe's politics of exclusion to end. The European Union must finally step up and provide meaningful protection to asylum seekers, now and in the future. The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) asserts the following for refugees of all nationalities:

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **The European Union and Member States should:**

- 1) End policies that result in discrimination of refugees by nationality and unequal access to legal protections such as asylum, family reunification and relocation.
- 2) Expedite family reunification cases and ensure legal protection mechanisms and policies that are gender-sensitive and respect family ties.
- 3) Increase existing financial, material and human resources to help the Greek and Turkish asylum systems to fairly and expeditiously adjudicate legal claims and deliver needed humanitarian services.
- 4) Boost financial, material and human resources to safeguard female asylum seekers and improve their access to reproductive health, psychosocial care, aid for GBV survivors and safe spaces.

- 5) Increase oversight over current and future assistance to ensure that Greece and Turkey respect the rights and meet the needs of refugees, regardless of nationality or other status.
- 6) Adhere to international and EU laws that bar the return of refugees to unsafe countries.
- 7) Clarify processes and rapidly increase the timely and fair acceptance and relocation of refugees.
- 8) Invest in, establish, implement and enforce comprehensive, effective and rights-respecting EU-wide asylum and integration policies.

**The Greek Government should:**

- 1) Establish maternal, newborn, reproductive health, child health and mental health services in all refugee sites and deploy cultural mediators and interpreters there and in referral hospitals.
- 2) Ensure GBV survivors have access to specialized medical and psychosocial support, safe spaces and women's shelters.
- 3) Vastly increase the availability and accessibility of health, psychosocial, legal support, women's protection and information point persons at all sites, ensuring proper identification of cases and referrals, with consideration of cultural and linguistic needs.
- 4) Coordinate closely with UNHCR and humanitarian organizations on the improvement, designation and coordination of sites and services available at them, ensuring that all refugees, particularly vulnerable women and girls, can access the assistance they need.
- 5) Close or upgrade sites that do not meet minimum security standards, in coordination with UN agencies and NGOs. All sites should be built or adapted for compliance with IASC Guidelines on GBV Interventions in Humanitarian Settings and the Sphere Standards.
- 6) Build the capacity and resources of the Greek Asylum Service to ensure the timely and fair review of asylum claims as well as requests for family reunification or relocation. Ensure refugees have information about legal options and processes in a language they understand.
- 7) Simplify and streamline administrative requirements and decision-making processes to reduce bureaucratic delays.
- 8) Establish alternatives to detention that respect social and economic rights. No asylum seekers should be detained unless the government can demonstrate that an individual poses a risk to public safety.

### The Turkish Government should:

- 1) Implement rights-respecting laws and policies that ensure refugees have equal access to legal protection, regardless of nationality.
- 2) Facilitate access to legal information and assistance, including to medical services, education, and other social support.
- 3) Cease detaining refugees. No asylum seekers should be detained unless the government can demonstrate that an individual poses a risk to public safety.





## INTRODUCTION

The Women's Refugee Commission has carried out a series of assessments to understand the needs of refugee women and girls seeking asylum in Europe and the barriers they face in accessing aid and legal protection, with a goal of developing practical recommendations to improve conditions and responses.

The first mission, to Greece and Macedonia, was undertaken with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) in November 2015. The WRC subsequently conducted an assessment in Serbia and Slovenia in December 2015 and a third assessment in Germany and Sweden in February 2016.

Across these assessments, WRC noted significant gaps in the protection of women and girls, difficulties in accessing basic services and legal protection and policies and practices that perpetuate risks to women and girls, particularly sexual violence and exploitation.

The situation for thousands of refugee women and girls has grown even more concerning after the closure of the Balkans route in March 2016 and subsequent implementation of the EU-Turkey agreement. As a result of these changes in the geopolitical landscape and avenues to accessing legal protection, WRC decided to undertake a fourth mission—returning to Greece to analyze the impact of the EU-Turkey deal on refugee women and girls and visiting Turkey to research the situation for refugee women and girls returned there from Greece. Visits were undertaken in May and June, 2016. Due to the small number of refugees returned to Turkey so far and restricted access to sites where they are detained or housed, this report focuses on our findings in Greece, but also includes reflections on the troubling implications of the agreement for the rights and protection of refugee women and girls who have or may be returned or deported to Turkey.

## METHODOLOGY

A small assessment team, supported by Arabic and Farsi interpreters, traveled to Athens, Greece where they visited four refugee sites: Port Piraeus, Victoria Square, Eleonas and Elliniko. On the island of Lesbos, the team visited Kara Tepe and met with refugees living in Moria Detention Center. The team was not given direct access to any detention center. In northern Greece, they visited three settlements: EKO Gas Station, Alexandria and Diavata. In Turkey, the team traveled to Izmir and Ankara to meet with refugees and humanitarian, legal and social service providers.<sup>2</sup> WRC's

requests to visit “removal centers” in Turkey where returned refugees are taken upon arrival were denied by government authorities.

In all, WRC interviewed over 25 refugee women, individually or with their families, at varying locations in Greece and Turkey. The vast majority of the interviews took place in Greece. All interviews were conducted with consent of participants and all names have been changed in this report to protect their identity. The team also met with many representatives of local and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international NGOs, UN agencies and government officials. The report is based on a combination of the findings from the assessment mission and substantial desk research.

## EU-TURKEY AGREEMENT: WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

Following months of debate among European Union members on how to stem the influx of smuggled migrants and asylum seekers into Europe, the EU and Turkey announced a new plan in late March. The deal took effect on March 20, 2016. Core elements include:

- 1) Refugees of all nationalities arriving in Greece via irregular routes after March 20 are to be sent back to Turkey. Greek authorities were required to set up new, expedited processes to receive, review and assess claims.<sup>3</sup>
- 2) A one-to-one resettlement scheme aimed at stepping up European resettlement of only Syrian refugees: for every Syrian refugee returned to Turkey by Greece, one Syrian refugee in Turkey will be formally granted asylum in an EU member state, with Turkey determining criteria and overseeing the selection process.
- 3) An additional €3 billion of aid for Turkey, to supplement €3 billion previously promised, to help the country cope with its existing refugee population, plus a host of political concessions.

## THE EU-TURKEY AGREEMENT – IS IT LEGAL AND JUST?

WRC agrees with widespread criticism of the pact, that it ignores obligations under international law to ensure refugees have meaningful access to asylum and protection.<sup>4</sup> The “one-to-one” scheme as well as other legal and procedural provisions have created first and second class refugees, with a privileged route to resettlement for Syrians only, fast-tracked registration and prioritized aid deliveries.

Other nationalities may easily languish in legal limbo if returned to Turkey and may not be deemed eligible for international protection under Europe's relocation schemes.<sup>5</sup> On the ground, this tiered system plays out in the day-to-day discriminatory treatment of non-Syrian refugees.

The pact allows for the detention of refugees in prison-like facilities in both Greece and Turkey. WRC strongly objects to the detention of refugees who are entitled to dignity and protection under international law.<sup>6</sup>

The deal also puts under-resourced and under-staffed Greece under pressure to quickly process claims and deport or return refugees to Turkey in order to discourage more boat crossings. As designed, it gives officials inadequate time to fully assess the substance of individual asylum claims or whether Turkey is a safe third country for that individual to pursue an asylum claim, per EU and international law.<sup>7</sup> WRC has serious concerns over the superficial nature of such expedited determinations, as well as whether those returned to Turkey will be safe and able to meaningfully access international legal protection mechanisms. So far, there have been fewer deportations than anticipated under the deal, in part because Greek asylum officials are gradually weighing claims and ruling that Turkey does not meet the standard of a safe third country for many asylum seekers.

## FINDINGS IN GREECE

### Implementation and Impact of the EU-Turkey Agreement

The EU-Turkey agreement placed Greece in an extremely difficult position. Greece had already been on the frontlines of the refugee influx for nearly a year, demonstrating generosity and humanity, even while facing a crippling economic crisis. Just before the deal was hatched, Macedonia closed its border with Greece and like dominoes, every other country along the Balkan route followed suit. Some 50,000 refugees in Greece at the time were suddenly stranded and the EU-Turkey deal virtually assured that most would be stuck there for many months.

Of those refugees trapped in Greece, about half are women and children. The closure of the borders and provisions of the EU-Turkey deal have crushed hope for many that they would be able to reunite soon with loved ones already in asylum countries in Western Europe.

**"We have husbands and sons in Germany. We feel so hopeless about the possibility of going there now. In Syria, we were so far away. Now we are so close but we cannot reach them."** Asha,<sup>8</sup> from Syria, living in the Eloneas refugee site since February 2016 with her cousin.

Almost overnight, Greece was forced to shift from being a transit country, where the vast majority of refugees stayed only a few days, to a host country of 50,000 refugees. Aid agencies in Greece relayed to WRC that municipal and national authorities and others in the Ministry of Interior, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and the Greek military have felt poorly equipped to implement the EU-Turkey pact, manage a fast growing humanitarian crisis or offer legal protection on such a scale.



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In response to the dire situation, there was an infusion of aid and offers of help. Europe's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection office (ECHO)<sup>9</sup> quickly dispatched €83 million and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) provided technical and staffing support to assist with adjudication of protection claims.<sup>10</sup> Experienced UN and non-governmental agencies on the ground offered support in all facets of refugee assistance, processing, and resettlement.

The opportunity was there to set up a more effective and protective response. Despite humanitarian organizations' readiness and funding to assist, Greek authorities established and run sub-standard sites, services, and systems for refugees almost

unilaterally. For NGOs that eventually gained permission to work in refugee sites, red tape, bureaucratic delays and poor coordination has made service delivery extremely challenging. Other veteran groups with already-secured funding have offered key technical support, but attained no access at all. All of this has had negative outcomes for refugees, especially vulnerable ones.

### Where Refugees Live

The EU-Turkey deal led to the designation of two types of sites where refugees can be housed, depending on their arrival date. Those arriving after March 20, 2016 must remain on the islands. They are required to live in former reception centers, some of which, like on Lesbos and Chios, have been converted into detention centers. Refugees are interned in these centers for at least 25 days, including pregnant women, unaccompanied children, GBV survivors and other vulnerable populations. After 25 days, the refugees are no longer confined to the facilities around the clock, but must stay there at night.

Those who arrived before March 20, 2016, many of whom had already moved from the islands to mainland Greece when the agreement was announced, stay in formal or informal “open sites.” They are able to come and go as they await registration and review of their claims. Open sites vary enormously in structure. Some sites are converted warehouses or other vacant buildings. Others look more like makeshift camps or fenced-in compounds, including one that was erected at an abandoned gas station on the side of a highway. Many refugees live in groupings of tents or containers of various quality and size, while others camp out in small spaces separated only by blankets for privacy. Greece hastily created more than 40 new open sites on its mainland to accommodate the thousands of newly stranded refugees in the country.

### Inhumane Conditions at Island Detention Centers

The structures now used as detention centers to house refugees for months (for those who arrive after March 20, 2016) were already insufficient when they were used for people in transit (prior to the deal) who would only stay for hours or at the most days. WRC was not granted access to these facilities for monitoring or interviewing purposes. However, on the island of Lesbos, WRC was able to meet with refugees living in Moria Detention Center who had already been held for the requisite 25 days and were permitted to leave the premises. WRC researchers also met with refugees transferred from Moria to other sites. Uniformly, they described frightening, filthy and degrading conditions at the site, inconsistent and limited services and frequently unhelpful, unknowledgeable, discriminatory, insensitive and at times ruthless site managers and police officers.



**“Moria is a catastrophe. The police are in charge here, but it’s not safe for women. We are harassed every day and told to go back to Turkey. How can they keep people in prison who have asked for international protection?”** Colette fled the Democratic Republic of Congo after being jailed and raped by guards for participating in opposition politics. She is traveling alone, in search of a “safe and calm” place to live.

Moria is ringed with barbed wire for security, but the single women and mothers inside described a complete lack of protection for women and girls and fear of sexual assaults. Men often loiter outside the toilets and showers, leaving women feeling exposed and unsafe, or needing to ask men to escort them.

**“It’s filthy here. The toilets are so dirty and we have no privacy so you have to shower with men watching you. We are afraid of being taken by men when we go to the toilet.”** Colette has applied for asylum in Greece. After two months of waiting she has heard nothing about an interview and is losing hope.

Tents and containers are congested and dirty in Moria and shared between men and women of numerous nationalities who do not speak common languages. Colette shares a tent with 20 people—Afghans, Nepalese, Pakistanis and other nationalities. There is no separate accommodation for single women. WRC heard many stories about drunk, frustrated and angry men in the detention center starting fights. When that happens, women and children tend to stay confined to their tents for safety. Police rarely intervene.

**“We were afraid all the time. Men start fighting. We would see blood everywhere. Life in Iraq is very scary because of mafia and violence, but conditions in Moria are awful. It is a prison.”** Alya is a former Iraqi journalist and fled after a targeted knife attack by ISIS. She and her daughter (23) were held at Moria Detention Center before being transferred to a safer site.

All those interviewed complained that the food is insufficient and what was available was of poor quality and nutritional value. Everyone is forced to wait in long lines, sometimes for hours, to receive their portion. There are no exceptions for the sick, elderly, disabled or mothers caring for children. African refugees in particular said they are often made to stand at the end of the line and that food often runs out. But refugees of all nationalities said getting enough food is a challenge and some described going three to four days without eating.

**“My daughter has become malnourished and is no longer producing milk for her baby. We constantly ask for milk. Sometimes you have to stand in line for two hours for milk. Sometimes it’s unavailable. Sometimes we can get two diapers at a time. Sometimes none.”** Layla is traveling with 8 children, one grandchild, 2 sisters and their children. The entourage of 19 fled Syria, arrived on Lesbos March 29 and were put in detention. They applied for reunification with relatives in Germany and are waiting.

Not one detained or previously detained refugee with whom WRC spoke had been able to speak to a legal counsellor about asylum applications or claims. Humanitarian service providers confirmed to WRC that the lack of meaningful legal aid in all detention centers is a pressing concern. Layla told WRC that whenever she asks authorities about family reunification and how to check on her application, all they say is “I don’t know.”

Conditions at Moria are not unique. Indeed, very similar conditions have been documented at detention centers on other Greek islands, such as Chios and Samos.<sup>12</sup> Days after the EU-Turkey deal was reached, UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies withdrew from providing services at these detention centers, protesting the use of mandatory detention and poor conditions inside.<sup>13</sup>

WRC strongly disagrees with the blanket detention of people seeking asylum or family reunification, based on an arrival date. There should be no refugee automatically detained without an individualized determination of the need to detain.<sup>14</sup> The Greek government must urgently develop alternatives to detention in consultation with humanitarian actors.

### Grim and Sub-standard Conditions at Open Sites

There are now formal and informal open sites<sup>15</sup> sheltering tens of thousands of refugees on mainland Greece who were already in-country at the time the EU-Turkey deal was finalized. Even though these refugees in open sites are free to move about, which sets them apart from those in detention centers, their living conditions are also dishearteningly grim.

In the early days of EU-Turkey deal and after, UNHCR and other humanitarian actors urged Greek authorities to include them in site selection and design and offered guidance on best practices in delivering aid and services to the people who would inhabit them. In late May 2016, the notoriously dreadful site, Idomeni, was closed and



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Greek authorities rushed to set up alternate sites for those who had been staying there without consulting experts on the ground.



UNHCR had this to say about the condition of these new sites:

***“Some of the refugees and migrants who had been living in Idomeni have been moved into derelict warehouses and factories, inside of which tents have been placed too tightly together. The air circulation is poor, and supplies of food, water, toilets, showers, and electricity are insufficient. Poor conditions at these sites are compounding the already high level of distress of refugee families, fueling tensions within refugee populations and complicating efforts to provide required assistance and protection.”***<sup>16</sup>

Due to significant and alarming protection and service gaps, nearly all of the visited sites fail to meet the Sphere Standards for humanitarian aid settings and the *Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action*.<sup>17</sup>

WRC found security to be deficient at every site and that’s especially concerning for women and girls. There is no security at the entrances of some sites, allowing anyone to enter without showing identification. There has also been no consideration of where individuals and families are placed within each site to improve their safety. Some sites, like Diavata, have numerous holes in the fences around the perimeter. Single women and female-headed households with tents close to the fences told us that men often enter the sites through these holes at night.

WRC was informed about a pregnant GBV survivor who requested to be moved to a different site with her young twins for protection from her violent partner. In response, the military officer in charge agreed, but offered the survivor a tent in a remote, unlit section of another settlement next to a damaged fence—a space that offered her no security. Ultimately, the survivor chose to stay with her abusive partner rather than be exposed to the additional risks she faced by moving.

In every site WRC visited, toilets and showers for men and women were not in separate locations. Men used all of the facilities indiscriminately. Refugee women living in the sites universally told WRC that the toilet and shower areas are unsafe for women and girls.

**“This camp is not safe. I won’t even go to the toilet by myself. I always wait for someone to go with me. We don’t want a lot. We just want a safe place, to have a normal life again.”** Nahla arrived in Greece by boat in early March with her husband, parents and 2 toddlers to escape constant bombings of their neighborhood in Aleppo, Syria.

Separating men's and women's latrines and showers is an easy and inexpensive intervention to reduce risks for women, particularly as latrines in most sites are portable, chemical toilets. Greek authorities can and should address this issue immediately.

There were many mentions of snakes and rats by unnerved refugees. One Iraqi woman in Kara Tepe estimated seeing more than 100 snakes since she moved to the site two months earlier. An Afghan woman at the Elleniko site said children are getting snake bites every day.

As with the detention centers, nearly all of refugees WRC interviewed in open sites complained about the quality and quantity of food and reported unequal access depending on nationality, with Syrians prioritized over others. We heard of large bouts of food poisoning and diarrhea from the food provided. Milk for babies is often unavailable. Afghan mothers at the Eleonas site told WRC that when they have to buy milk from local merchants, they are often charged €12 for a bottle, a sign that refugees are being extorted by the host community. Officials are currently considering a shift away from distributing meals in some sites to creating communal kitchens and allowing refugees to cook for themselves with food provided. If done in an equitable manner, this would be a welcome development.

Refugees with disabilities face a range of challenges in attaining basic services and face added risk of abuse and exploitation when relying on others to collect their supplies for them.<sup>18</sup> A young Afghan woman born with physical disabilities explained that her brother tries to collect food and other goods for both of them because she can't stand in line and there are no facilities for people like her at the Eleonas site. She virtually never leaves her assigned container. Reasonable accommodations must be made to ensure that those with disabilities can access basic services and that protection monitoring mechanisms are in place to mitigate added risks.

### Who is in charge?

The hierarchy of which government agency manages and has authority of the open sites is unclear and results in numerous bureaucratic hurdles to improving conditions. The Ministry of Migration Policy has jurisdiction over sites, but many are managed by the Greek military. While numerous well-intentioned military officers have been trying their best to help and many are, they generally lack any expertise in humanitarian aid, human rights, protection for women and girls and site management.

While there appears to be broad recognition that there are too few operational partners working in the sites, Greek bureaucracy makes collaboration and program support difficult and slow and ultimately prevents many humanitarian agencies from providing

guidance or services at them. This is directly tied to the poor state of management and services in the sites and women and girls are suffering as a result.

Site managers have an essential role to play in women's protection and should be selected and trained accordingly. International humanitarian organizations are prepared to support this process and improve protection outcomes for refugee women and girls, if given appropriate access.

### Gender-based Violence: "No options for survivors"

In WRC's three previous assessments, researchers found and reported that gender-based violence has been a feature of the European migration crisis, although vastly underreported as refugees moved quickly through countries and found limited services and specialists en route. However, through interviews and observations, rape, sexual harassment, physical assault, transactional sex and other forms of GBV were identified as occurring during their journeys, and as a reason for leaving countries of origin and first asylum in the first place.<sup>19</sup>

During this mission in Greece, GBV specialists interviewed by WRC noted an increase in accounts of gender-based violence—attributing them in part to the fact that refugees are remaining in Greece for months rather than a few days, giving survivors more time to seek help.



In addition, most refugee women are living in sites not designed or staffed to prevent GBV risks or respond to incidents when they happen. These gaps in security expose women and girls to numerous threats, including GBV, trafficking and even kidnapping of children.

**“The port is not safe for women and children. We hear about rapes here so we try to stay together for safety.”** Zara, a Syrian Kurd, and her four children live in a tent at a port building turned settlement at Port Piraeus.

**“In Syria we were afraid of men if we left our house. Here we are afraid of men if we leave our tent.”** Nahla and her family, from Aleppo, Syria, live at the EKO Gas Station site. They are considering a return to Turkey.

A family tent is not always a safe space for refugee women and girls. Prolonged stays in Greece are being associated with a spike in domestic violence, which service providers say is the most common form of GBV currently being reported. They explain that desperation, displacement, depleted finances, terrible living conditions, uncertainty about their future and the agonizing lack of information are boiling over into domestic disputes. Men are feeling powerless and frustrated and their outlet is violence.

WRC also heard a concerning number of accounts of transactional sex and forced prostitution<sup>20</sup> and the exploitation and abuse of minors.<sup>21</sup> Drug and alcohol usage is also increasing according to many women we interviewed, which often contributes to GBV.

Despite the overwhelming need, GBV response services are few and far between, with few processes in place to identify and support survivors. There are myriad concerns and problems in addition to those cited in previous sections:

- Sites on the mainland tend to be in remote areas where there are limited GBV services for the host community. Hospitals, shelters and other facilities are unprepared to meet the needs refugee survivors.
- For survivors able to access services, public hospitals and other medical facilities tend to lack post-rape care medications and medical staff have had little to no training in the clinical management of rape or delivery of specialized psychosocial support.
- Few local women's organizations with the skills and capacity to respond to GBV cases have been engaged by Greek authorities in the refugee response and international organizations with expertise have largely been sidelined in their attempts to set up services at open sites.
- The movement of refugees into military sites and detention centers means

- NGOs are not allowed to provide aid, or won't for ethical reasons.
- Obtaining documents to be in the country legally and make asylum claims is extraordinarily complex and difficult, yet necessary to access most services. Without proper papers, medical facilities, shelters and even humanitarian actors have been unable to help GBV survivors. It is unlikely that women would have such papers while fleeing an attack or an abusive partner or feel comfortable returning to a crowded tent to claim documents, often held by male relatives.
  - There is a dearth of female translators or dedicated GBV staff who speak Arabic and Farsi to ensure survivors are understood, whether they are speaking to law enforcement or physicians.
  - Greek law states that all GBV crimes must be reported to police to get post-rape medical care. However, refugee women are reluctant to do so because of fear, language and cultural barriers, uncertain legal status, and in the case of domestic violence, concern it would jeopardize a partner's asylum claim or result in arrest when the goal of seeking help is physical protection. Training to sensitize police and military officers to GBV and refugee issues is needed.
  - Greek women's shelters are in principle, available to refugee women and girls, but are often filled to capacity. Even when there's space, admission is not permitted on nights and weekends, when WRC was told there are the greatest number of cases. Lack of interpreters hinders proper care, leading to deteriorating mental health outcomes.

The daunting number of obstacles at every stage of providing GBV survivors with lifesaving aid led one women's protection group to lament, "there are no options for survivors".

One encouraging development is that some humanitarian organizations have been allowed to establish women's safe spaces, which refugee women praise as an important measure to increase their safety. This promising practice should be standardized in all sites.

The Greek government urgently needs to collaborate with national and international agencies with GBV expertise to ensure there are dedicated and appropriately staffed safe spaces and shelters for GBV survivors at all sites. Referral mechanisms must be put in place, aligning medical, psychological, legal and judicial response services. Female point persons, trained in basic GBV support and care who speak key languages of the refugee population must be positioned at sites and women must be able to obtain lifesaving aid, regardless of their legal documentation.

### Inadequate Healthcare for Refugee Women and Girls

An estimated 10% of refugee women in Greece are pregnant,<sup>22</sup> yet services for neonatal and postpartum mothers and their children are negligible at refugee sites. Options for available care elsewhere are often unknown and inconsistent.



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Pregnant women interviewed by WRC were unsure of where they could give birth and whether they could access a hospital. One women's health group explained to WRC that refugee women can deliver in public hospitals but often lack support in doing so. When refugee women have delivered in public facilities, many have been returned to their tents prematurely and no postnatal support was provided.

**“My 15-day-old baby was killed in an airstrike and that’s when we decided to flee with our three surviving children. I am pregnant again and was very afraid when our boat to Greece almost went down. After, I fell down hard and had a big bruise on my belly, but no hospital in Greece would accept me. How will I give birth here? No one has explained anything. What will happen to my children here? I lost a baby because of Assad. There are no clothes. No medical attention. My children are sick. How can we live here any longer?”** Nour, from Dara, Syria, told WRC that she has also asked to see a psychologist.

In rare cases, accommodations are made for vulnerable individuals and families, but logistical issues can get in the way. WRC spoke extensively with Farah, a 30-year-old Afghan who is pregnant, having complications, is malnourished, yet unable to access appropriate medical services at or near the site where she lives on Lesbos. She and her family technically have no right to leave the island, but because they have contacts in Athens, she was granted permission to travel there to give birth. However, despite multiple requests, authorities won’t allow her husband to travel with her. She is afraid of becoming separated from her family if she goes to Athens and fears losing the baby if she does not.

Pregnant and postpartum mothers told WRC that they receive no specialized food and infant formula is not routinely available in the sites, putting infants and young children at increased risk.

**“For four days I had no milk for my baby and she just kept crying. I am so tired and I don’t know how we are going to make it. I’ve started yelling at my children all the time.”** Zainab’s husband fled a spate of targeted kidnappings in Iraq and made it to Austria last year. She set off to meet him with their 5 children.

Sexual and reproductive healthcare (SRH) for adults and for adolescents is also not available in sites, nor are comprehensive family planning services. One service provider told WRC that as women realize that they may be stuck in camps for many months, they are asking for long-term family planning options, as they do not want to have a baby in such an unstable situation. It is critical the humanitarian actors are able to help families plan their reproduction thoughtfully in these circumstances.

There is an urgent need to extend and improve the provision of the Minimum Initial Services Package for Reproductive Health (MISP) in sites, while working in coordination with the Greek Ministry of Health to strengthen public services in public medical facilities and refugees’ access to them. This is critical to preventing maternal and newborn illness and death and ensuring SRH services for women and adolescent

girls.

WRC also heard of overwhelming mental health concerns and service providers said there have been a number of suicide attempts at refugee sites. Nour was among a number of women WRC interviewed who expressed suicidal ideation. For many refugees, their extreme levels of anxiety, frustration, desperation and depression due to their current situation are compounded by older traumas stemming from the horrors they left behind and the treacherous journey to Greece that many barely survived.

There is an unacceptable dearth of psychological aid and support for refugees. Officials must work with humanitarian actors to increase the availability and accessibility of mental health and psychosocial support service points, ensuring proper identification of cases and referrals, with consideration of cultural and linguistic needs.

### Access to Legal Protection Fraught with Challenges

Although systems for refugee registration and asylum processes vary widely for refugees who arrived before and after the March 20 EU-Turkey deal, both are fraught with practical and protection concerns. Government authorities, police, legal organizations and national and international humanitarian actors all lack clarity on the specifics of the processes and timelines. Legal aid groups are overwhelmed and refugees and aid workers told WRC that access to counsel is virtually non-existent. All this leaves thousands of refugees in limbo, unable to understand and access legal options and desperate for basic information to inform their future.

The key authority with jurisdiction over adjudication of asylum, relocation and family reunification applications is the Greek Asylum Service, which is overwhelmed by the volume of cases to process. Prior to the EU-Turkey deal and the closing of borders, relatively few refugees making their way to Europe remained in Greece to seek asylum or stayed there to apply for relocation elsewhere. The Greek Asylum Service suddenly saw its caseload increase to more than 50,000. At the time of WRC's visit, they had just 260 employees and were trying to quickly hire, train, and add more caseworkers to assist with protection claims. EASO sent support staff to assist.<sup>23</sup>

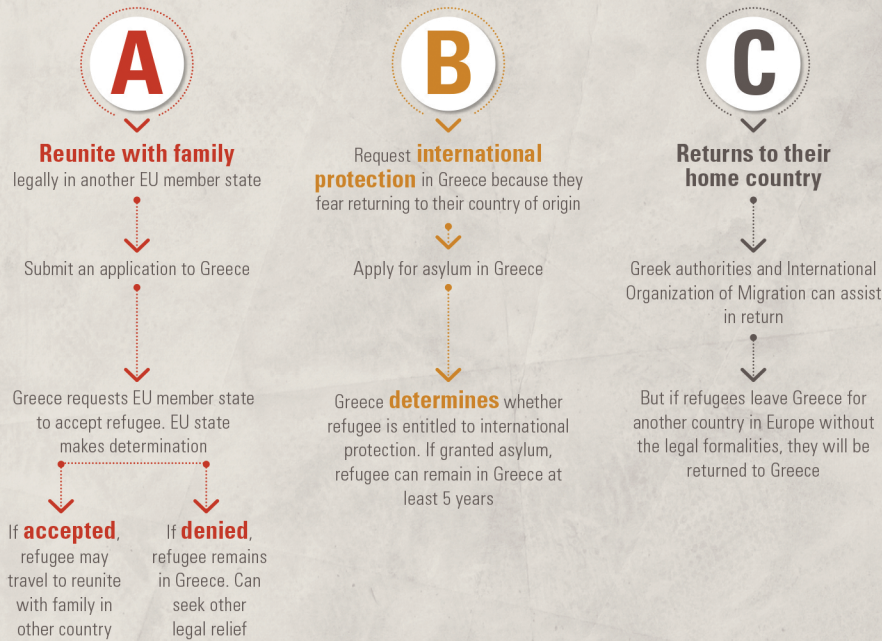


# ASYLUM PROCEDURE in GREECE

## for refugees WHO ARRIVED from TURKEY

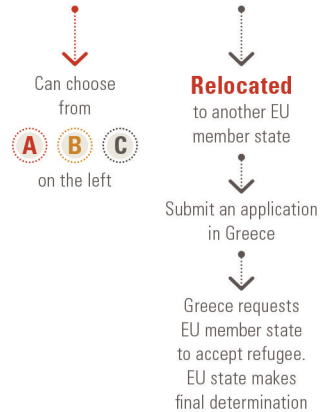
before March 20, 2016 EU-Turkey Deal

### Options for refugees of all nationalities



### Special option for Syrians and Iraqis

Under EU policy, refugees are rated by nationality to determine whether they are eligible for asylum in Europe. Syrians and Iraqis have recognition rates of **75% or more**, and therefore have these options:



# ASYLUM PROCEDURE in GREECE

## for refugees WHO ARRIVE from TURKEY

after March 20, 2016 EU-Turkey Deal

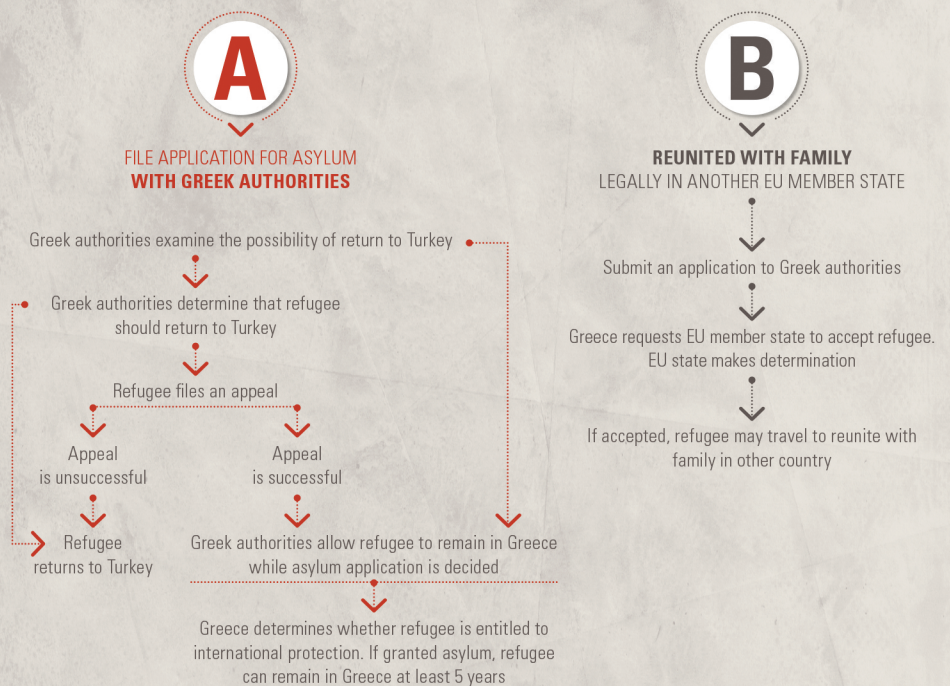
### Where can refugees go?



Refugees arriving on islands are generally **transferred to detention centers**. There, Greek authorities register personal information and take fingerprints

Refugees **may** be **detained for 25 days**. After this they **may** have the possibility to leave the detention center, but rarely leave the island

### How can refugees access protection?



## A Documentation Nightmare

The registration and asylum application processes for refugees have been a nightmare. Refugees have had to obtain a “police note” upon arrival in Greece to be in the country legally and lodge a claim. Syrians and Iraqis were granted police notes valid for six months. The notes for other nationalities, including Afghans, were only valid for 30 days. This may have been fine before March when refugees passed through Greece quickly, but not anymore. The police note is not renewable. Once it expires, refugees can be arrested, held by local authorities and unable to access basic services—an especially troubling situation for pregnant women and GBV survivors.

For refugees in Greece prior to the March 20 deal, another dysfunctional system was set up that required refugees to contact the Greek Asylum Service via Skype to register a claim for asylum, relocation or family reunification. Only then could they get an appointment to pursue their claim. The program was a failure, in large part because refugees didn’t have the technology that was required and on the receiving end, it was staffed by two people who could never possibly process 50,000+ applicants.

**“No one is able to register, the police give no information, so we don’t know what to do next. We can’t see our future. We just want to be someone again, to have an identity.”** Amena and her family arrived in Greece in February after a frightening journey from Syria. They shelter at the Alexandria site.

UNHCR, the Greek Asylum Service and EASO started rolling out a new system for these refugees in June. Refugees are screened in person, rather than by Skype, to receive asylum seeker cards valid for one year allowing them to legally stay in Greece, access services and pre-register the type of claim they wish to lodge, followed by an appointment to officially apply for asylum or relocation. The new system has reached 10,620 people as of June 29, 2016.<sup>24</sup> The system also allows for identification of refugees with vulnerabilities and risk factors that may need attention, like GBV survivors and unaccompanied minors. It’s an important improvement, but WRC still has concerns about the length of time it will take to reach and obtain official claims from all refugees, particularly those in informal camps.

## Delays, Discrimination and Despair

For refugees who arrived after March 20 and are detained on the islands, asylum and relocation requests are meant to be taken and adjudicated in a very short time frame, with the vast majority to be returned to Turkey. However, WRC found that most refugees living in the detention centers have been there for months and have been given little to no information about their rights or options for asylum or relocation. For

small numbers who have been able to lodge applications, the speed with which they are processed generates profound concerns over the quality of the screening and whether the EU and Greece are complying with obligations under international law.<sup>25</sup>



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Individuals may appeal negative asylum decisions to a Greek appeals authority. Many appeal decisions have indeed been favorable toward refugees by overturning initial findings of inadmissibility.<sup>26</sup> In response, and to accelerate returns to Turkey, the Greek government has voted to replace two of the three members of the appeals authority who were seen as too favorable toward refugees.<sup>27</sup>

EU member states have been very slow to accept refugees under current relocation schemes. According to the last quarterly report, only 2,280 refugees (1,503 from Greece, and the rest from Italy) had been relocated from Greece as of mid-June, 2016 out of a monthly goal of 6,000 slots.<sup>28</sup> According to Greek asylum officials and international specialists interviewed by WRC, it can take months for a country to decide whether to accept a single refugee or family for relocation and the decisions appear completely arbitrary rather than based on the needs and merits of a case.

Refugees' rights and ability to access protection in Europe vary dramatically depending on nationality.<sup>29</sup> WRC believes policies linked to nationality create an unofficial and unfair hierarchy among refugees—impacting everything from protection options to the ability to access services. Such discriminatory policies are also in contradiction of the concept and tradition of due process and individualized determinations.<sup>30</sup>

Those awaiting family reunification face lengthy and agonizing delays and shifting reunification laws. WRC is concerned that additional hurdles will needlessly prolong family separation. The team heard repeatedly that refugees, desperate to reunite with family members in Western Europe, are increasingly seeking and using smugglers to continue the journey via Italy or by land through Bulgaria, where there is a demonstrated record of refugee rights violations.<sup>31</sup>

The system set up in the wake of the EU-Turkey deal to expedite asylum and resettlement procedures remains a mystery to the thousands of refugees it aimed to quickly adjudicate. Communication channels are failing at every level and far too many refugees are unable to access the legal protection they have a right to. Their anxiety and desperation was intensely palpable to the WRC team.

**“You are the first group that has come to talk to me. No one talks to us about anything. How are we going to get through the asylum process? I want to see my husband again. And my children ask about their daddy whenever a plane passes over us. They ask me, ‘When are we going to see Daddy?’”** Zainab says she heard it could take another 1.5 years to reunite with her husband in Austria.

**“A long time ago someone came and took our information, but they never came back. We don’t know our status. Living without knowing what will happen, without basic information is a situation without hope. It makes us very upset. It is our biggest concern.”** Habib and her family fled Herat, Afghanistan over a year ago. They’ve been staying at the Elliniko camp since March.

While no refugees have adequate access to legal information, WRC found women to be the least informed. When legal aid groups do come into the sites, they say men tend to come forward while women stay in their tents for safety. It is essential that the Greek authorities and all service providers vastly increase and improve their channels of communication to refugees and target messages and approaches in order to meet the needs and capture the perspectives of vulnerable populations, particularly women, adolescents and refugees with disabilities.

## Next steps for EU in Greece

The EU-Turkey deal created a humanitarian nightmare in Greece, prioritizing deterrence and the externalization of borders over the rights, safety and well-being of refugees of all nationalities. ECHO, which provided the majority of the funding for the Greece humanitarian response, describes its approach to protection in humanitarian situations this way:

***“Ensuring protection of populations is a core objective of humanitarian action. In humanitarian crises, people need material assistance, such as food, water, shelter and medical assistance, as well as physical integrity, psychological wellbeing and dignity... the European Commission aims to ensure that the projects it funds look beyond the mere material needs to the broader issues of personal safety and dignity.”<sup>32</sup>***

Based on WRC’s site visits and interviews with refugees, it’s clear that material and other basic needs are not being met and broader issues of personal safety and dignity have been neglected or overlooked. There is still an opportunity for ECHO to provide much better oversight and demand far greater accountability to ensure that its funds are supporting a humanitarian response in Greece that addresses the critical needs of refugee women and girls. WRC urges ECHO to do so.

## FINDINGS IN TURKEY

### Implementation and Impact of the EU-Turkey Agreement

Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees in the world—some 2.7 million who are in a state of protracted displacement. Many have been there for years. That the country has accepted so many refugees demonstrates, in many ways, far greater generosity than most EU member states and others.

In this migration crisis, nearly all refugees have passed through Turkey on their way to Greece, with the hope of ultimately reaching Western Europe. The EU-Turkey agreement, plus the Balkan border closures, dramatically slowed the flow of refugees from Turkey to Greece. It is expected that those who continue to brave the trip, as well as new arrivals to Greece since March 20, will be sent back to Turkey under terms of the EU-Turkey deal. In the meantime, the influx of refugees to Turkey from the world’s crisis zones has not decreased. All this puts great demands on Turkish systems, especially its asylum system, which does not have the infrastructure to handle the numbers and the claims.

WRC's original objective for its visit to Turkey was to understand conditions facing refugees returned under the EU-Turkey agreement, with a focus on women and girls. However, by early June, when the WRC team was on the ground, there had been fewer than 500 returns from Greece to Turkey—a small number relative to the total number of refugees arrivals in Greece via irregular routes and far fewer than what had initially been expected under the deal.<sup>33</sup>

Some of those individuals were said to have returned voluntarily. Others decided not to make protection claims in Greece. And a number of others, WRC understands, were returned erroneously without ever having been given the opportunity to seek asylum in the first place. Regardless, the early days of the return program were chaotic,<sup>34</sup> and as detailed in previous sections, the process continues to be hampered by inadequate structures to ensure fair hearings.<sup>35</sup> The conditions refugees face upon return are concerning, with reports that many are taken directly to detention centers for varied periods of time, with limited mobility and access to needed services.<sup>36</sup>

The 1:1 resettlement scheme under the EU-Turkey deal, in which for every Syrian refugee returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian will be accepted for resettlement from Turkey by an EU member state, is moving at a snail's pace. By late June, only 511 refugees had been accepted by a European country under the EU-Turkey arrangement.

Representatives of NGOs, UN agencies and some government officials in Turkey interviewed by WRC had no clear sense of any systematic procedures or plans for returned refugees, or for determining the criteria for how Syrian refugees are being selected for resettlement. What is clear is that Turkey is overseeing all of these processes in a manner that lacks transparency.

### What Happens to Refugees Returned to Turkey?

Returned refugees arrive in Turkey most often by boat or sometimes by air, and according to most reports, are then transported to one of two "removal centers". Non-Syrians are largely sent to a center in the Kırklareli area near the Bulgarian border and Syrian refugees to the Düziçi center, a remote site in southern Turkey.

Turkey describes removal centers as temporary accommodation while background checks and the registration process unfolds, but the external reporting, both before and after the agreement, characterizes the facilities as detention centers.<sup>38</sup> Freedom of movement is limited at these sites and individuals can't leave the premises. Possessions are said to be confiscated and specialized medical care, legal counsel and other needed services are reportedly not available. WRC heard of varying lengths of stay for returned refugees with some released after registration and others

detained longer.<sup>39</sup> Existing reports<sup>40</sup> describe dire conditions at the sites that preclude meaningful due process and the ability to access legal aid.

Very few NGOs, external monitors, foreign officials or journalists have been given the chance to visit and document conditions in Turkish removal centers and WRC was also denied access to the centers in Kirklareli or Düziçi.

In May 2016, Members of the European Parliament (MEP) were given access to several removal centers. In a subsequent report, delegates said they “documented violations of fundamental rights” and cases of “inhumane and degrading treatment.” Here are some of their key findings:

***People deported from Greece have, until now, had no opportunity to ask for asylum, neither in Greece nor in Turkey. All said they did not know what will happen to them, and had received no information since they had arrived in Turkey. Detention is under a prison-style regime, including for children. The delegation witnessed overcrowded bedrooms, for example 20 people in a room with 12 beds. People, including families, were locked in bedrooms. The delegation identified unaccompanied minors who had not been identified as unaccompanied minors and had been put in the same bedrooms as adult men.***<sup>41</sup>

The MEP report as well as others also indicate that some returnees are sent to removal centers that also intern refugees who never left Turkey and have been detained for seemingly arbitrary reasons.<sup>42</sup> Reports indicate many of these refugees have had no access to counsel and no clear sense of why they are detained or for how long.<sup>43</sup>

One MEP delegate is quoted in the report as saying, “Deporting refugees to a place where they face such conditions is a disgrace. I cannot see how an agreement such as the EU-Turkey deal, which builds upon such deportations, can be legitimate or legal in any way.”<sup>44</sup>

WRC understands that UNHCR has been granted permission by the Turkish government to conduct monitoring visits of some Turkish detention centers, which WRC believes will positively contribute to oversight, accountability and improvement of services. However, WRC remains concerned that detention will continue to be used inappropriately for all refugees, especially women, children and other vulnerable individuals.<sup>45</sup>

### **Safety, Protection and Legal Concerns**

The alarming conditions that returned refugees face casts further doubt on the legality of the EU-Turkey deal, which is premised on the idea that Turkey is a safe country of asylum for people fleeing violent conflict and oppression.<sup>46</sup> Turkey should only be

considered a 'safe third country' for return by the EU if substantive and procedural conditions are met in accordance with EU and international principles, and these conditions are not met in Turkey.<sup>47</sup>

For example, EU law states that a third country can only be considered safe if "it has ratified the provisions of the Geneva Convention without any geographical limitations."<sup>48</sup> Although Turkey ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and subsequent protocols, it added a geographical limitation. This excludes from protection anyone not originally from a European country. Those fleeing from violence or persecution in any non-European country, like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, may not be fully recognized as refugees or granted asylum in Turkey.

Furthermore, although Turkey has since modified its laws and incorporated the principle of non-refoulement into its domestic law, little has changed in practice.<sup>49</sup> Human rights organizations continue to document push-backs and deportations, as well the killing of Syrians as they are crossing the border into Turkey. These demonstrate real *refoulement* risks for refugees, and a violation of their rights under international law.<sup>50</sup>

While this report does not focus on the challenges to accessing basic social services and protection for the nearly three million refugees already living in Turkey, these challenges have been well documented. Key issues facing women and girls include access to safe housing, legal protection, primary health care, sexual and reproductive health services and education. High levels of GBV have also been documented, with little in the way of prevention and response interventions. WRC remains concerned that returned refugee women and girls will suffer from similar protection and service gaps.

### Next Steps for EU in Turkey

Europe's strategy to deter asylum seekers is based on the false notion that Turkey is a safe and rights-respecting country that can accommodate increased numbers of refugees. Turkey should be lauded for its ongoing efforts to shelter an enormous number of refugees, even in the midst of its own growing security crisis. But the country faces immense challenges in hosting, aiding and protecting its existing refugee population and cannot and must not serve as a facilitator and receptacle for the EU in stemming the tide of migrants.

In the absence of a meaningful, fair and effective asylum system in Europe, the EU and the broader international community must at least work to ensure that refugees' rights are respected and their protection space expanded while they are in Turkey. EU assurances that Turkey is taking steps to facilitate access to legal protection and streamline services for refugees are welcome. But far more oversight from EU authorities is required to ensure such measures are fulfilled and monitored.



## CONCLUSION

Refugee women and girls are in urgent need of protection as they seek safety in Turkey, Greece and in destination countries in Western Europe. Yet, in all four of its assessments since November 2015, the WRC has found that the response to the migration crisis has been consistently indifferent to critical needs and rights of women, girls and other vulnerable refugees.



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The EU-Turkey deal has forced a situation in Greece in which tens of thousands of refugees are detained or trapped in abysmal conditions in a country that lacked the asylum and humanitarian infrastructure necessary to manage such a caseload. Women and girls are now re-exposed to GBV in sites lacking in the safety and services they need the most. Poorly developed and executed asylum procedures are perpetuating family separation and desperation and delaying legal protection.

The deal encourages the hasty deportation and return of asylum-seekers to Turkey,

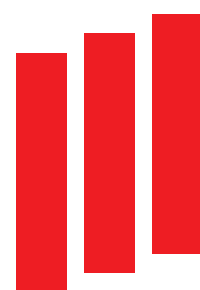
already host to the world's largest refugee population, even though it may not be safe, legal or in the interest of the refugees, and without meaningful review and hearing of their claims. What happens next is uncertain, as returned refugees face legal limbo, troubling living conditions and a dearth of information and services.

WRC notes that in June 2016, UNHCR released its updated Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Europe (RMRP), which among other things, outlines critical humanitarian needs and strategies to protect and assist refugees. WRC agrees with the identified refugee protection gaps in Greece and Turkey and is pleased to see that the regional protection strategy includes robust and meaningful consideration of women and girls' needs in the form of humanitarian services and access to legal protection. WRC urges donors to fully fund the RMRP without delay.

WRC also urges the European Union to overhaul its humanitarian and political policies to fairly and humanely respond to the needs of all refugees seeking safety, protection and resumption of a normal life. Current policies, culminating in the EU-Turkey agreement, are failing them.

1. WRC uses the term refugee to refer to all those in Greece who arrived with the goal of seeking legal protection in Greece or other European countries, including asylum, family reunification and relocation.
2. Readers should note that this report covers the WRC's mission to Turkey in early June. It does not address recent circumstances related to the July 15, 2016 coup attempt.
3. "People who do not have a right to international protection will be immediately returned to Turkey. The legal framework for these returns is the bilateral readmission agreement between Greece and Turkey. From 1 June 2016, this will be succeeded by the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement, following the entry into force of the provisions on readmission of third country nationals of this agreement." "EU-Turkey Agreement: Questions and Answers," European Commission: Press Release Database (March 19, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1XEOgyZ>
4. See Amnesty International, "Trapped in Greece: An Unavoidable Refugee Crisis," (London, 2016). <http://bit.ly/29ZPRN5>, Human Rights Watch, "EU: Don't Send Syrians Back to Turkey," (June 20, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1W8aKe2>, Amnesty International, "No Safe Refuge: Asylum-Seekers and Refugees Denied Effective Protection in Turkey," (London, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1srk5b5>, UNHCR, "UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants concludes his follow up country visit to Greece," (May 16, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2aFQmXP>, Human Rights Watch, "Q&A: The EU-Turkey Deal on Migration and Refugees," (March 3, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1LO9VDS>, and Harriet Salem, "Why the New EU-Turkey Deal on Migrants Won't Work," *Vice* (March 31, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1RN43Hk>
5. Only nationalities with an EU-average recognition rate for international protection of 75% or more are eligible for relocation, and the list of eligible nationalities is updated on a quarterly basis. European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council," (March 16, 2016). <http://bit.ly/29XpgVI>
6. For a detailed discussion of international legal frameworks governing the detention of asylum seekers and migrants, see: International Detention Coalition, "Legal frameworks relating to the detention of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants: A Guide," (2011). <http://bit.ly/2ai12Bq>
7. Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection (recast). Available here: <http://bit.ly/2an4y1f>. See also: Dutch Council for Refugees and European Council on Refugees and Exiles, "The DCR/ECRE desk research on applications of a safe third country and a first country of asylum concepts to Turkey," (May 2016). <http://bit.ly/1svJXfv>
8. All names in this report have been changed. Interview notes on file with authors.
9. European Commission, "EU Provides 83 Million Euros to Improve Conditions for Refugees in Greece," (April 19, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2a4ZV8k>
10. European Commission, "Fact Sheet. EU-Turkey Agreement: Questions and Answers," (Brussels, March 19, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1XEOgyZ>
11. WRC was not granted permission by the Greek authorities to visit Moria or other hotspot facilities. The descriptions of the conditions are based on the testimony of current and former Moria residents WRC interviewed, along with the data from UNHCR and other humanitarian actors working in the hotspots.
12. Human Rights Watch, "Greece: Refugee 'Hotspots' Unsafe, Unsanitary," (May 19, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1OAGq4B>
13. UNHCR, "UNHCR redefines role in Greece as EU-Turkey deal comes into effect," (March 22, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2ahBeZc>
14. For a detailed discussion of international legal frameworks governing the detention of asylum seekers and migrants, see: International Detention Coalition, "Legal frameworks relating to the detention of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants: A Guide," (2011). <http://bit.ly/2ai12Bq>
15. <http://bit.ly/2aKHF4V>
16. Melissa Fleming, "Greece: UNHCR concerned at conditions in new refugee sites and urges that alternatives be found." UNHCR (May 27, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2aaaNIG>
17. See more on these guidelines at [sphereproject.org](http://sphereproject.org) and [gbvguidelines.org](http://gbvguidelines.org)
18. Women's Refugee Commission, "I see that it is possible: Building capacity for disability inclusion in gender-based violence programming in humanitarian settings," (May 2015). <http://bit.ly/2aw5NfC>
19. UNFPA, UNHCR, and WRC, "Protection Risks for Women and Girls in the European Refugee and Migrant Crisis: An Initial Assessment," (November 2015). <http://bit.ly/2aw6VQi>
20. It is important to note that refugees engaging in sex work or sexual exploitation and abuse may not identify as GBV survivors and seek out response services.
21. Service providers reported sexual exploitation and abuse as a concern in all camps, although the most notorious examples of the phenomenon were in Idomeni. See: Jina Moore, "Trapped on Europe's Doorstep," (May 28, 2016). <http://bzfd.it/2aadjsZ>
22. Liza Ramrayka, "The Quiet Crisis of Europe's Pregnant Refugees," *Huffington Post* (June 13, 2016). <http://huff.to/1Ueipoz>
23. European Commission, "Fact Sheet. EU-Turkey Agreement: Questions and Answers," (Brussels, March 19, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1XEOgyZ>
24. See European Asylum Support Office, "Joint Press Release: The pre-registration of asylum seekers in the Greek mainland is starting today," (June 8, 2016). <http://bit.ly/24BWL0a>, See also: UNHCR, "Weekly Report, Regional Europe Bureau," (June 29, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2aKJcb9>
25. Although some particularly vulnerable refugees may be exempt from fast track asylum review procedures, from WRC's research it was unclear whether these exceptions are being consistently applied or meaningfully implemented. For more on the new Greek asylum legislation, see: <http://bit.ly/1qq4ZLY>; <http://bit.ly/2ac2Q49>
26. By June 12, 2016, the appeals body had overturned inadmissibility findings in 70 initial asylum decisions. European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, and the Council. Second Report on the progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement," (June 15, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2auR7f2>
27. Nektaria Stamouli, "Greece Shakes Up Asylum Appeals Board," *Wall Street Journal* (June 16, 2016). <http://on.wsj.com/1rrV6Nz>
28. European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council: Fourth Report on Relocation and Resettlement," (June 15, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2aKJILP>
29. *Supra* note 3. The categorical exclusion of certain nationalities, like Afghans, from relocation disregards any individualized analysis

- of their protection claims when determining whether they could qualify to have their claims heard in another country in the way that Syrians, Iraqis, or others may.
30. See: Jina Moore, "Trapped on Europe's Doorstep," (May 28, 2016). <http://bzfd.it/2aadjsZ>
  31. See Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, "Grounds for Detention: Bulgaria," Asylum Information Database (January 2016). <http://bit.ly/2ahRaHN> and Oxfam International, "Refugees crossing into Europe tell of abuse at hands of Bulgarian police," (November 13, 2015). <http://bit.ly/1QzOOoH>
  32. DG ECHO, "Thematic Policy Document n. 8: Humanitarian protection. Improving protection Outcomes to Reduce Risks for People in Humanitarian Crises," European Commission. Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (May 2016). <http://bit.ly/2axEAc3>
  33. European Commission, "Managing the Refugee Crisis: Commission reports on progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement," (June 15, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1tvRqMZ>
  34. Human Rights Watch, "EU/Greece: First Turkey Deportations Riddled With Abuse," (April 19, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1qCDVsk>
  35. See Patrick Kingsley, "Non-Syrians denied asylum claims under EU-Turkey deal – MEPs," The Guardian (May 10, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2af9e7K> and GUE/NGL, "Delegation to Turkey. What Merkel, Tusk and Timmermans should have seen during their visit to Turkey," (May 2-4, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2axtNhW>
  36. See Patrick Kingsley, "Syrians returned to Turkey under EU deal have had no access to lawyers," The Guardian (May 16, 2016). <http://bit.ly/1TVSqli> and GUE/NGL, "Delegation to Turkey. What Merkel, Tusk and Timmermans should have seen during their visit to Turkey," (May 2-4, 2016). <http://bit.ly/2axtNhW>
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