

(A) Summary

- A year after the start of operations of the new Asylum Service, substantial progress has been made in the quality of the procedure which is inter alia reflected on recognition rates referring to the granting of international protection. The continuation of political support as well as further reinforcement is needed in order for the Asylum Service to deal with a series of challenges. On the other hand, immediate action is required to remedy persistent deficiencies in the implementation of the old asylum procedure.
- The operation of the First Reception Service has signalled the introduction of a change towards the right direction compared to the way arrivals at the borders used to be managed in the past. However, this first attempt needs to receive greater support from the State in order to become sustainable in the long term and have a positive influence over other administrative procedures that follow registration and needs assessment of new arrivals.
- The shift in the pattern of new arrivals of mixed migration groups to the highly dangerous sea crossing creates increased challenges for the protection of human life as well as the safe transit of refugees, especially when the majority of the new arrivals include persons with refugee profiles, such as Syrians, Somalis, Eritreans and Palestinians.
- The practice of generalized administrative detention combined with the duration and conditions of detention raise serious concerns from a human rights as well as a refugee protection point of view while the adopted policies and practices need to be revisited.
- The field of reception of asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors (open reception centers) is still characterized by systemic deficiencies, the most important of all being the lack of strategic planning and effective coordination of the Authorities involved.
- The absence of integration measures and policies in conjunction with the economic crisis, limit the possibility of beneficiaries of international protection to enjoy their rights, while creating additional risks of social exclusion and marginalization.
- The upsurge of racist violence in 2013, has activated, albeit with some delay, the reflexes of the State at institutional level. The recent adoption of measures for the protection of racist violence victims, even in the form of a Ministerial Decision, is a first positive step towards encouraging victims to report hate crimes and pursue the prosecution of perpetrators of such crimes.

## (B) An outline of the current situation

### Asylum

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The start of operations of the new Asylum Service represents the most significant development since the last World Refugee Day. The progress made towards a fair and efficient asylum procedure is clearly reflected on the adoption of a legislative framework in compliance with EU legislation standards, the quality of the adjudication of asylum claims at first and second instance (including interpretation), the quality features of decisions (with sufficient reasoning), the duration of the examination procedure from submission to final decision, as well as in the increase of recognition rates of refugee status and subsidiary protection in relation to the profiles of claims examined. During the period from 7/6/2013 to 31/5/2014 (one year of operation) the recognition rates at first instance reached 14% for refugee status and 6.1% for subsidiary protection while at second instance they reached 9.8% for refugee status and 4.1% for subsidiary protection. UNHCR considers the successful transition from the old and extremely problematic asylum system to the new one, a positive development of particular significance.

A challenge for the near future is the widening of the possibility of access to the asylum procedure for all those interested in applying through further operationalization of Regional Asylum Offices and filling of all vacant positions in the Asylum Service as foreseen in Law 3907/2011. Furthermore, the proper implementation of legislation regarding detention of asylum seekers as well as the required individual assessment of grounds allowing for their exceptional detention, constitute significant challenges. Finally, the adoption of the necessary regulatory administrative acts for issuing residence permits and travel documents for beneficiaries of international protection, are matters calling for immediate action by the competent authorities.

With regard to the examination of accumulated administrative appeals (backlog) in the old asylum procedure (41.000 in May 2014) substantial steps have been taken which are reflected on the clearance of a significant number of long pending appeal cases, the quality features of the adjudication procedure and the decisions issued as well as the increased recognition rates which correspond to the profiles of cases examined. However, significant obstacles limiting progress in the examination of accumulated appeals are the high rate of applicants' failure to appear before Appeals Committees after an invitation for an asylum interview, as well as postponements in the examination of cases mainly due to ineffective notifications, erroneous or incomplete updating and maintenance of physical and electronic files as well as problems in the renewal of asylum seekers' cards. All the above, result in inadequate compliance with procedural safeguards foreseen for backlog cases pending in the old asylum system and the non-enjoyment of the applicants' rights. For dealing effectively with those challenges a direct, effective and targeted mobilization of the competent Hellenic Police services is essential. Furthermore, a crucial matter concerning procedures of the old system is the insufficient reasoning of decisions rejecting renewal of subsidiary protection status, as well as the delays in the processing of applications for renewal of humanitarian status.

A substantial development in the field of management of new arrivals of refugees and migrants entering in an irregular manner from the Greek-Turkish border (Evros and East Aegean) was the start of operations of the First Reception Service staffed with civilian personnel. The operationalization of a First Reception Centre at Fylakio in Evros has signified a different approach in dealing with new arrivals which is based on proper registration, provision of information on rights and obligations in a language they understand, the coverage of basic human needs and procedures for further referrals. For the urgent coverage of additional entry points with increased flows, two Mobile Units of the First Reception Service were activated, operating however within a more limited framework in facilities under the competence of the Hellenic Police (detention centers in Lesbos and Samos). For the sustainability of the First Reception operations, the improvement of the services provided as well as the creation of First Reception Centers in additional entry points of the country, it is necessary to fill all vacant positions, whereas for the effectiveness of the referral mechanism the creation of additional (open) reception facilities and support services is a prerequisite.

In the context of first reception, the Coast Guard has legal competence to deal with new arrivals from the sea for a short but crucial period of time. Consequently, the immediate adoption of measures (temporary accommodation, coverage of first needs, etc.) by the Coastguard for the improvement of first reception conditions is essential, in compliance also with the relevant order issued by the Headquarters of the Coast Guard. Attention must be drawn to the fact that in 2013 the number of sea arrivals more than tripled (11.447 compared to 3.651 during 2012) while in the first 4 months of 2014 a doubling of figures is observed in comparison with the first quarter of 2013 (4.700 compared to 2.077). It should be noted that rescue operations of the Coast Guard are taking place almost on a daily basis.

Concerning access to territory and hence to effective protection of those who seek international protection, the ongoing shift of new arrivals patterns to the country's sea borders (as a consequence of strengthened border control in the Evros region) has been marked with shipwrecks and loss of human lives at sea. In 2014 more than 70 persons died or were reported missing in the Aegean. The need to prioritize the protection of human life over border surveillance calls for the reinforcement of search and rescue operational capacity, the possibility of legal transit through land borders for those who are in need of international protection, as well as an initiative at European level so that the possibility of legal movement is strengthened while the need for perilous sea crossings avoided, with the example of Syrian refugees today being the most illustrative. Moreover, it is pointed out that the vast majority of current new-arrivals in Greece consist mainly of persons with refugee profiles such as Syrians, Somalis, Eritreans and Palestinians.

Finally, a thorough and in depth investigation is required in relation to the reports regarding informal forced returns (pushbacks) of persons who had entered the Greek territory and had been refouled to Turkey, outside the framework foreseen in national, European and international legislation. Despite the assurances of the Greek Authorities that such practices do not occur, UNHCR has received and continues to receive a large number of testimonies (for the period between August 2013 and beginning of May 2014 such testimonies refer to more than 100 incidents) from refugees and migrants regarding informal forced returns to Turkey through the sea or the river Evros. These testimonies (which in some cases are strengthened by the accounts of local residents who have assisted the new-arrivals) highlight a similar mode of action in different incidents, while they frequently include reference to violent behavior (use of physical or verbal abuse) by the law enforcement bodies involved.

## **Administrative Detention**

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An issue of great concern to UNHCR is administrative detention of third country nationals (amongst whom are included persons who fall within the UNHCR mandate), to the extent that both the grounds for justifying detention and detention conditions fall significantly short of international minimum standards, especially when detention takes place in police precincts, which are not designed to hold detainees for long periods of time

In a recent analysis, UNHCR notes that detention, rather than being an exceptional measure, for many governments constitutes standard practice aimed at discouraging irregular entry or stay in the country. Highlighting that this objective does not constitute a legitimate reason for detention according to international law, UNHCR notes that even the most severe detention policies cannot deter irregular migration and calls on governments to implement alternative measures, sufficient to adequately address any State concerns linked to internal security and public order.

Despite the fact that according to legislation in force, administrative detention should only be used as a last resort measure, when all possibilities of enforcing other less restrictive measures have been exhausted, be imposed on an individualized basis adequately justified, be inextricably linked with its intended purpose (that is, removal of the third country national from the country) and cover only the period of time required for the fulfillment of such purpose, it is generally and systematically applied even when the previously mentioned preconditions are not met. Consequently it is currently observed that in the so called “pre-removal” centers amongst the detainees are persons whose deportation/removal from the country is not feasible, including those for whom UNHCR has issued a non-return advisory, unaccompanied minors who are registered as adults, persons with severe health problems as well as persons who might have the right to family reunification in other countries of the EU.

It has also been observed that when return decisions are objectively not possible to execute, (such as in the case of Syrians in line with the Circular for the non-deportation and non-detention of Syrians), reasons of ‘public order’ may still be evoked by the competent law enforcement authorities, in order to impose the measure of detention pending removal. Beyond the questionable legitimacy of these acts, since detention does not serve a legal purpose as detainees are not returnable, the reasons of ‘public order’ are rarely sufficiently and individually justified in relevant detention orders.

As regards detention of applicants seeking international protection, in addition to beyond the above mentioned safeguards, their detention, according to the law, is required to be an exceptional measure. Applications for international protection by persons in detention must be processed within the shortest possible time.

Finally, UNHCR expresses its serious concern over the adoption by the competent Ministry, of a Decision which practically allows the extension of detention beyond the upper limit (foreseen in Greek legislation as well as the relevant EU Directive) of 18 months and stresses in any case that this measure should not be applied to asylum seekers.

## **Reception of asylum seekers - Reception and care of unaccompanied children**

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The reception of asylum seekers in accommodation centers with all necessary support services (medical and pharmaceutical, social, legal and psychological), is foreseen in European and national legislation. Apart from the need to improve the quality of services, the capacity of open reception structures is largely insufficient compared to the actual needs (about 1,000 reception places are available). The operation of these structures, the management of which is generally undertaken by NGOs, faces continuing challenges associated with their

almost full dependence on fragmented and non- permanent funding. Strategic planning and coordination of the competent Ministries on the organization of the reception system is necessary, in view of the immediate need to operationalize the commitment by Greek authorities to the European Commission, to create 1,500 additional positions in open reception structures by the end of 2014.

In the field of social rights, asylum seekers continue to face numerous difficulties exacerbated by the economic crisis. The country is unable to provide the necessary material reception conditions, as foreseen in the EU law, and asylum seekers often live marginalized, without support, shelter or legal employment.

Regarding the reception of unaccompanied children, the improvement of services offered, on the basis of the Best Interest of the Child, continues to be a priority. This principle should be the cornerstone of and inform a series of other State actions relating to unaccompanied children while it should render imperative the review and improvement of the guardianship institution (both in terms of legislation and, in particular, in terms of implementation) to ensure proper representation of the child in all procedures by which he/she is concerned.

### **Integration of beneficiaries of international protection**

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The percentage of granting international protection has increased significantly. During one year of operation of the Asylum Service, international protection was granted to about 1106 refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, whom the State is now required to support so they can live with dignity and self-sufficiency. The inclusion of beneficiaries of international protection in integration policies for third country nationals (according to the recent Immigration Code 4251/2014 Art. 128), should lead to integration measures, which take into account the special needs of the persons in this category.

The economic crisis continues to affect vulnerable groups, including refugees and in particular children, refugee women, persons with disabilities and the elderly. Consequently it has become imperative to extent support to those groups immediately after granting protection status, as well as include them in the various social protection measures so that they have effective access to a minimum of social protection net.

### **Racist Violence**

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Last year was marked by an outbreak of racist violence against third country nationals who were targeted due to national or ethnic origin, color or religious beliefs. The Racist Violence Recording Network recorded, through interviews with victims, 166 incidents of racist violence in 2013, with at least 320 victims. In 143 cases the victims were refugees or migrants. The majority of incidents resulted in serious injuries (one with a tragic ending) and was notable for the brutality of the attacks perpetrated by organized groups. In the last quarter of 2013 and after the preventive detention of prominent figures of the Golden Dawn, the incidents of organized racist attacks significantly decreased.

Although the authorities were particularly slow in acknowledging the existence, magnitude, features and the need to address the phenomenon of racist violence, the steps noted at the level of institutional organization (establishment of Special Departments to deal with racist violence within the Police) and judicial prosecution (examination of racial motive and recent convictions) are positive developments. A key precondition for addressing impunity remains the need to protect victims and essential witnesses, regardless of their legal status. In this direction, the recent adoption of a Ministerial Decision to reinstate Article 19 of the Immigration Code, may significantly contribute to tackling racist crime.

Finally, special reference is made to the findings of the Network on the significant increase of incidents, where police is associated to racist violence, a fact that highlights the necessity to establish an independent mechanism to effectively investigate allegations of police violence and arbitrariness.

## (C) Recommendations

### Asylum

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- Filling of all vacant positions in the Asylum Service through the utilization of possibilities obtained through the civil servants mobility scheme or through the annual planned recruitment slots by the Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection.
- Adoption of a realistic timeframe for the prompt operationalization of, if not all, at least some of the foreseen Regional Asylum Offices (i.e. in Thessaloniki, Iraklio, Patra), so as to cover geographic areas with significant numbers of non-detained third country nationals wishing to apply for asylum but unable to have access to the procedure at their place of residence.
- Re-adjustment of the State Budget provisions (for 2015 and the following years) as regards the registered credits for the expenditure of the Asylum Service, so as to cover, if not all, at least the greater part of the operational needs of the Central Asylum Service, as well as of the Regional Asylum Offices.
- Immediate processing of the asylum applications pending at first instance (Hellenic Police) under the ‘old’ asylum procedure, which were estimated, as of January 2014, at 5.000 cases.
- Continuation of the investment, both in financial and human resources terms and by embracing solutions that will accelerate the appeals (backlog) clearance process without negatively affecting its quality. Elaboration of a concrete Action Plan for the examination of pending appeals which will include quantified targets, timeframes and indicators as well as enhanced operational support to the Attica Aliens Directorate in particular, for the improvement of the administrative procedures affecting examination at second instance (notifications of invitations and renewals of asylum seekers Cards).
- Immediate adoption of the necessary regulatory or circular provisions to enable the issuance of decisions on renewal requests of residence permits on humanitarian grounds, which were granted under the ‘old’ asylum procedure. Until the final settlement of this issue, it is recommended to extend ipso facto the expired residence permits and to have them returned to their holders (in case they were removed at the moment a request for renewal was submitted).
- Review the policy of the competent Authorities (under the old asylum procedure) concerning the standardized rejection of asylum applications at second instance with inadequate justification, as well as of renewal requests for residence permits by beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and humanitarian status. During the first quarter of 2014, the deciding authorities at first instance under the ‘old’ system produced only 5 positive decisions vis a vis Syrians’ asylum applications (out of 106 decisions issued). During the same period, the competent Authorities under the new asylum procedure have issued positive decisions concerning Syrians’ applications at a rate of 99,5%.

## First Reception

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- Immediate adoption of measures for the filling of vacant positions at the First Reception Service with staff having the expertise and skills foreseen in Law 3907/2011.
- Establishment and functioning of First Reception Centres in all main entry points, prioritizing the islands of Northeastern Aegean and the Dodecanese, so that all third country nationals are subject to first reception procedures (screening, identification and referral), and there are no ‘variable speed’ procedures.
- Ensuring the necessary resources for the sustainable functioning of the Regional Units of First Reception (Centres and Mobile Units), based on the need to achieve a certain level of quality of services provided as well as the effective management of new arrivals.
- Establishment of Standard Operating Procedures as well as adequate and continuous training for the staff of the Service and its cooperating stakeholders, following standards adopted in other European systems.
- Immediate adoption of measures for the establishment of open reception facilities and social support of asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups, so that referrals by the First Reception Centres and other actors operating in entry points are feasible effective and possible to implement as soon as first reception procedures are completed.

## Borders

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- Strengthening, in terms of human resources and operational means, especially in border areas, of the response capacity of the competent authorities (Hellenic Coast Guard) regarding search and rescue operations at sea.
- Adoption by the two competent Ministries (Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection and Ministry of Marine and the Aegean) of internal rules of procedure and operational action plans at the borders, with respect to the norms of international, European and national law. These norms primarily concern the protection of human life and human dignity, as well as the duty of registration and non-refoulement of persons that may be in need of international protection. Continuous and efficient monitoring of compliance with these norms, possibly through the establishment of a special body within the Hellenic Police and the Coast Guard.
- Particularly for new arrivals by sea, strengthening of the capacity for effective management of new arrivals by the local Coast Guard Authorities, through the provision of the necessary equipment (relief items, medicines, items for self-hygiene and protection) and human resources. Immediate and sustained improvement of detention conditions under the competence of the Coast Guard at the entry points.
- Effective investigation of incidents at sea and land borders for which there are testimonies concerning informal forced returns (group refoulements). Publication of the results of such investigations.
- Continuation and enhancement of dialogue, at European Union level, for addressing the issue of mixed migration flows and the need for responsibility sharing between EU Member States, focusing on the safety of human life and the protection of refugees. Along with the need for further strengthening of the rescue operations, such dialogue should focus on creating channels for legal transit of refugees, to avoid their resorting to dangerous irregular movements.

## Administrative detention

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- Implementation of administrative detention pending deportation/return as a last resort, following substantial individual assessment and adequate justification, and only where this is considered as an appropriate and necessary measure for executing a return decision. Implementation of alternative measures to detention, which would limit the enforcement of the measure of absolute deprivation of liberty.
- Reducing the duration of detention. Individual and full justification for each extension of duration. Substantial review of legality of detention with significant reinforcement of the competent courts.
- Detention of asylum seekers should be applied in cases foreseen by the law, on an exceptional basis and only for the minimum possible period of time. UNHCR Guidelines on detention of asylum seekers can be a reference for the issuance of guidelines for the implementation of the respective legislative framework.
- Revocation of the Ministerial Decision endorsing the Opinion of the Legal Council of the State (No 44/2014), at least to the extent it concerns the prolongation of administrative detention in pre-removal centres beyond 18 months.
- Releasing all third country nationals in detention for whom no forced return can be realized, including those whose removal would be in violation of the principle of non-refoulement. Such persons should be issued with decisions (as applicable) postponing their return or suspending the execution of their deportation
- Termination of the administrative practice according to which reasons of public order or public security are evoked as grounds for detention in view of return/deportation of a third country national whose return/deportations is otherwise not feasible. Where such reasons of public order are evoked, they have to be specified and duly justified.
- When imposing and reviewing detention, the existence of appropriate detention facilities and the ability to guarantee decent living conditions should be taken into account, as provided by law. In the absence of these, the measure of detention should not be imposed, especially to vulnerable groups, such as victims of torture, minors, etc.
- Issuance of Rules of Procedure for the Centres of pre-removal detention, which will refer to material conditions and services that there should be provided.
- Avoidance of use of Police Precincts and other totally inappropriate facilities for long term administrative detention of third country nationals and asylum seekers.

## Reception of asylum seekers

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- Promotion of a political initiative for the elaboration of a national strategy for the organization of reception for asylum seekers in Greece, according to the newly revised EU legislation, as well as the standards set by the relevant jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights. The national strategy must include the mapping of needs and institutions that may be involved in the organization of reception and undertake actions in this field, evaluation of the parameters that influence the demand for the provision of reception services, assessment of available resources from the state budget as well as supplementary EU funds, and drafting of an Action Plan with specific timeframe and goal setting.

- Delimitation and specialization of the competence of the national authorities involved in the reception of applicants of international protection, especially as concerns the initiative and coordination for the design of relevant policies, as well as the supervision of the Reception Centres.
- Ensuring a cohesive framework for the establishment and operation of Reception Centres (pre-conditions for operation and certification, Standard Operating Procedures, etc.) so as to ensure the homogenization of practices, a minimum of quality features in the services provided, as well as the possibility of creating horizontal tools that will facilitate the management of various procedural stages (i.e. referrals) and will prevent the unequal treatment of beneficiaries.
- Increase of reception capacity (slots) in order to cover at least the basic needs for those asylum seekers entitled to be admitted to a reception system. In view of the operationalization of the commitment by the Greek State to the European Commission for the creation of 1500 additional places within 2014, the actions taken for should be immediate and effective.
- Study and elaboration of a plan in cooperation with the Responsible Authority of the European Refugee Fund (Ministry of Labour) and the Responsible Authority of the new Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration (Ministry of Public Order and Citizen Protection) in order to ensure a smooth transition to the new EU funding cycle and to avoid disruption of services offered by Reception Centers.
- Immediate completion of the actions initiated by the Ministry of Labour for the uninterrupted implementation of Projects that were approved for funding under the annual Programme of the European Refugee Fund for 2012 and 2013, so as not to experience any loss of resources and also for Reception Centres, funded by these resources, to continue operating.

## Unaccompanied minors

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- Expand the scope of the Ministerial Decision on age assessment to other procedures that concern unaccompanied foreign children and are implemented by other competent authorities such as the Police and the Asylum Service. The immediate goal of this mutatis mutandis implementation is to avoid long-term detention of minors, erroneously recorded as adults.
- Creation of a support mechanism for Public Prosecutors for their work as temporary guardians of unaccompanied minors, with the possibility of assignment to third parties of certain acts of representation of the minors. Relevant funding could also come from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund under the Directorate General of Justice and Home Affairs of the EU. The broader goal should be the practical support of the institution of guardianship, while the Working Group of the Ministry of Justice is expected to submit specific suggestions and recommendations for the adoption of necessary regulatory or practical measures with regards to guardianship.
- Ensure and facilitate immediate access of unaccompanied minors to the asylum procedure, as they currently face difficulties (relating to travelling, escorting, etc.) when they decide to apply for international protection. The prolonged stay of children without being registered hinders enjoyment of their basic rights, while it exposes them to the risk of arrest.
- Establishment of a Single Coordination Body for assessing the current situation, ensuring effective coordination and cooperation between all stakeholders involved and proposing appropriate measures for the protection of children in full respect of their rights. This institution could develop a protocol of actions

adopting a holistic approach and with statutory nature, so as to be followed by all professionals involved in the support and protection of UASC.

## **Integration of beneficiaries of international protection**

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- Development of a comprehensive plan and policies in the integration area for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, in line with the 1951 Convention, European and national legislation. The increase of recognition rate during the last two years renders the need for adoption of relevant measures even more imperative. Given the impact of economic crisis on the total population living today in Greece, the refugee population should be taken into account in the general social protection measures by the State, with emphasis on people with special needs.
- Development of action plans to address all different aspects of integration, including housing (especially during the first phase of the integration procedure), vocational training, employment, education, health and social welfare, with particular emphasis to the initial targeted support immediately after recognition.
- Acceleration of reunification process for refugee families' and expansion of favorable provisions to beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.
- Acceleration of issuance and renewal procedures of residence permits and travel documents, inter alia, through strengthening the operational capacity of the competent authorities (in staff and equipment) and efficient coordination of their actions.
- In the context of an eventual legislative amendment regarding on the acquisition of Greek citizenship, it should be ensured that the specific characteristics of beneficiaries of international protection and particularly of children being born in Greece are taken into account, as well as the fact that they cannot enjoy protection from their country of origin.
- Facilitate beneficiaries of international protection in order to benefit by the new provisions of Law 4251/2014 transposing into the Greek legal order the EU Directive on the status of third country nationals who are long-term residents.

## **Racist Violence**

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In this section, UNHCR, as one of the coordinators of the Racist Violence Recording Network, re-introduces and a series of recommendations (2013 Annual Report) by the Network and specifically:

- Adoption of a specific operational plan to prevent and tackle racist attacks, in cooperation with specialized international and European organizations.
- Creation of an official and uniform system for the recording and monitoring of racist crimes, in cooperation with the police and any governmental or non-governmental body which collects relevant data.
- Establishment of a specific legislative drafting committee, which will work for the development of an immediate legislative initiative allowing for the investigation of racial motive at the stage of preliminary penal investigations, regardless of the consideration of any aggravating circumstance, at the stage of the decision on the sentence.

- Conduct of a training program, with the assistance of international and European organizations with expertise and experience in the training of security and justice forces, for the persons serving in the Departments and Offices against Racist Violence, as well as the entire personnel of Hellenic Police.
- Cooperation of police precincts with governmental or non-governmental bodies and immigrant communities in order to provide medical and social assistance, legal assistance and interpretation which will facilitate the victims' access to the police.
- Amendment of the current legislative framework with a view to establishing an effective complaints mechanism regarding incidents of police violence and arbitrariness, allowing for an independent investigation and monitoring in accordance with the recommendations of international organizations.
- Establishment of a specific procedure in the framework of disciplinary control within Hellenic Police for a more expeditious processing of racially motivated arbitrary acts.

### **The protection of stateless persons in Greece**

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- Establishment of a national statelessness determination procedure, to be conducted on an individual basis, encompassing procedural safeguards. To this end, the adoption of specific legislation is required, as well as specialized training of decision-makers with a focus on the protection of stateless persons.
- Revision of the national legislative and administrative framework to ensure that stateless persons enjoy all rights enshrined in the 1954 Convention and have access to services to which they are entitled without discrimination.
- Accession to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
- Review of the Nationality Code to identify and amend any provisions that could lead to loss of nationality of children leaving them stateless.
- Ensure that all otherwise stateless children born on the territory acquire Greek nationality promptly.