

## **Response**

**of the Greek Government  
to the report of the European Committee  
for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman  
or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)  
on its visit to Greece**

**from 20 November to 1 December 2023**

The Government of Greece has requested the publication of this response. The CPT's report on the 2023 ad hoc visit to Greece is set out in document CPT/Inf (2024) 21.

Strasbourg, 12 July 2024

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**Response of Ministry of Citizen Protection of Greece  
(14 June 2024)**



HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
MINISTRY OF CITIZEN PROTECTION Athens, 24 May 2024  
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**TO:** MINISTRY OF FOREIGN

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**Cc.:** See LIST OF RECIPIENTS

**RE:** Response to the Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) final report on the CPT ad hoc visit to Greece (24.11-01.12.2023).

**REF.:** a) Document No. 1024/24/576659, dated 20-03-2024, by the Staff/Hellenic Police Headquarters  
b) Document No. 1023/24/584142, dated 21-03-2024, by the Alien & Border Protection Branch/Hellenic Police Headquarters  
c) Our document No. 1604/24/2327872, dated 18-11-2023.  
d) Our document No. 1604/24/57646, dated 09-01-2024 (*response to CPT preliminary observations*).  
e) Document No. 6691/AΣ 336, dated 19-03-2024, by the Permanent Representation of Greece to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

A. In response to Ref.(e) above and further to our document Ref. (d) above, regarding CPT's observations on matters falling within the competence of the Ministry of Citizen Protection, we would like to bring to your attention the following [by paragraph of the report (*recommendations/requests for information*)]:

**Facts found during the visit and action proposed:**

**1. Ill-treatment.**

**CPT's request to the Greek authorities to end ill-treatment of foreign nationals deprived of their liberty by the Hellenic Police.**

**Paragraphs 24-28 :**

As regards the allegations of ill-treatment against detainees in the Kolonos and Omonia Police Stations, at the Amygdaleza, Tavros (Petrou Ralli), Corinth and Drama Pre-Removal Detention Centres (PRDCs), as well as at the Special Holding Facility of the Athens Airport Police Division, the competent Hellenic Police Service (namely the Police Personnel Division/Hellenic Police Headquarters) is not aware to date of any relevant complaint submitted to any Authority or any of its subordinate Services by the alleged victims or third parties. Moreover, the fact that a large number of foreign nationals of various nationalities has been held on various occasions at the police services in question makes it difficult to identify the alleged victims and corroborate the aforementioned allegations.

#### **a. Safeguards against ill-treatment.**

**CPT's request to end the detention of foreign nationals for prolonged periods and take the measures necessary to ensure that detention is applied only as a measure of last resort.**

#### **Paragraphs 29-31 :**

According to Article 30 of Law 3907/2011, as amended and in force, third country nationals who are subject to return procedures, pursuant to Article 21, paragraph 1, are placed in detention for the purpose of preparing the return and carrying out the removal process.

Where the competent police authority considers that:

- a) there is no risk of absconding or
- b) the third country national concerned is cooperative and does not hamper the preparation of return or the removal process or
- γ) there are no national security concerns, other less coercive measures, such as those provided for in Article 22, paragraph 3, are applied (*the relevant legislation provides for the following alternatives to detention: regular reporting to the authorities, deposit of a financial guarantee, surrender of documents, or the obligation to stay at a specific location*), if they are considered effective.

At present, the alternative measures actually imposed are regular reporting to the authorities and/or the obligation to stay at a specific location [*mainly in the management of foreign nationals on the Eastern Aegean islands, who are accommodated in open or semi-open Closed Controlled Access Centres (CCACs) until their readmission to Türkiye is achieved (examination of asylum claims, exercise of remedies –without restriction of freedom and on condition of not leaving the island they are on)*].

In addition to the above, a number of other factors are also taken into account, such as:

- a. the impracticability of return/deportation for certain nationalities (*e.g. Syrians, Palestinians, etc.*), who are granted a 6-month deferment of removal (renewable),
- b. the treatment of vulnerable groups (*e.g. women, single-parent families*), in particular refugee minors, in order to provide the required level of protection,
- c. the availability of appropriate detention facilities and the possibility of ensuring decent living conditions for detainees and
- d. previous apprehensions.

Detention is imposed for the time strictly necessary to complete the removal procedure and may not exceed six (6) months. Yet, it may be prolonged for a further (12) months [*namely to a maximum of eighteen (18) months in total*] in cases where, despite the reasonable efforts by the competent Services, the removal procedure is likely to take longer due to the fact that the third-country national refuses to cooperate or there are delays in obtaining the necessary documents from third countries.

Detention is imposed for the time strictly necessary to complete the removal procedure, which proceeds and is carried out with due diligence.

The decision ordering detention contains factual and legal justification and is issued in writing, in accordance with the provision of Article 76, paragraph 2 of Law 3386/2005; it is issued within three (3) days if no return decision has been issued.

In any case, the availability of detention facilities and the possibility of ensuring decent conditions for those detained are taken into account when deciding to impose or prolong detention.

With regard to the contribution of the judicial authorities, it should be noted that detained third country nationals, in addition to their rights under the Code of Administrative Procedure, may also lodge objections against the decision ordering or prolonging their detention before the President of the Administrative Court of First Instance or the Judge appointed thereby who is territorially competent for the detainee's place of detention.

In any case, every three (3) months, the authority which issued the detention decision conducts an *ex officio* review of whether the conditions of detention are satisfied. If detention is prolonged, the relevant decisions are forwarded to the President of the Administrative Court of First Instance or the Judge appointed thereby referred to in paragraph 2, who assesses the legality of the

prolongation of detention and issues his/her decision without delay, summarised in the minutes, a copy of which is forwarded immediately to the competent police authority.

Our national legislation is fully in line with the requirements of the Union's legislation about guidance to those entitled to international protection.

No foreign national is subjected to arbitrary detention, outside the confines of the applicable legislation, and each case is examined on an individual basis.

As for the duration of detention, foreign nationals are detained for the time strictly necessary to complete the return procedures.

**CPT's requests to the Greek authorities for taking measures to ensure that all foreign nationals who are deprived of their liberty by the Hellenic Police under immigration legislation are granted the rights to notify a relative of their detention, to be provided with interpretation services, to have access to a lawyer and to a doctor, and that they are placed in a position to effectively exercise these rights as from the very outset of their deprivation of liberty.**

**Paragraphs 32-44:**

As regards the "*rights to notify a relative or a third person of their detention*", communication is not obstructed. On the contrary, the authorities facilitate communication, respecting the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Penitentiary Code and the confidentiality of telephone communications.

More specifically, foreign nationals in administrative detention are entitled to receive visits from relatives by blood or affinity up to 2<sup>nd</sup> degree. In the absence of such persons, they may receive visits from another relative or friend whom they name in advance to the guard of the detention facility.

Communication between foreign nationals in administrative detention and their visitors takes place in specially designed visiting rooms which meet the security requirements and allow for a comfortable communication environment. Visiting days and hours are determined by order of the detention facility commander.

The right to legal aid at all stages of criminal and administrative proceedings is established under the national legislation. Every foreign national in detention is entitled to be visited by a lawyer. The duration of the lawyer's contact with the foreign national they represent is not subject to any time restrictions other than those dictated by security measures and operating rules at the detention facilities.

With regard to foreign nationals in particular, the services responsible for issuing return decisions are obliged to and do provide every possible support to those requesting legal assistance, representation by a lawyer and linguistic assistance in order for them to exercise their rights. To this end, third country nationals are given leaflets with information in a language they use and understand.

In all detention facilities, the relevant documents are posted in prominent locations and information leaflets are handed out to those in detention to inform them, in a language they understand, of their rights regarding their detention and the asylum procedure.

In addition to **the continuous efforts to have interpreters present** in areas of administrative detention run by the Hellenic Police in order to better secure the rights of those in detention, the police authorities, among other things, have taken care that the following forms have been translated, standardised and codified:

(a) the "*Information Leaflet on the Rights of Detained Foreign Nationals Under Deportation*" [Form KA 141 (1)], in a total of nineteen (19) languages, in the context of its harmonisation with Law 3386/2005 [Official Government Gazette of the Hellenic Republic, Issue A', Volume 212 (GGA'-212)] on the "*Entry, residence and social integration of third country nationals on Greek territory*", namely in Greek, French, English, Italian, German, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, Albanian, Russian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian, Polish, Georgian, Chinese, Urdu, Pashto and Farsi, and

(b) the "*Information Leaflet on the Rights of Detained Foreign Nationals Under Return*" [Form KA 153 (1)], in a total of eight(8) languages, in the context of its harmonization with Law

3907/2011 (GGA'-7) "Establishment of an Asylum Service and an Initial Reception Service, adaptation of the Greek legislation to the provisions of Directive 2008/115/EC with regard to the 'common rules and procedures in Member States for the return of illegally staying third country nationals' and other provisions", namely in Greek, English, German, French, Albanian, Urdu, Pashto and Farsi.

The aforementioned information leaflets were sent, along with document No. 1604/21/1556693, dated 01-08-2021, by the Immigration Management Division/Hellenic Police Headquarters, to the competent Directorates throughout Greece, accompanied by related instructions-orders, in order to fully safeguard the rights of detained foreign nationals under deportation/return.

It should be noted that, for the 2021-2027 funding period (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund – AMIF), special provision has been made for third country nationals under return with respect to the hiring of interpreters in the context of the "linguistic assistance" project, as well as the hiring of jurists in the context of the "free legal assistance" project.

In addition to the aforementioned, representatives of the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) have access to detention facilities on a daily basis and communicate with illegal migrants with the aim of providing legal aid and representation in the asylum process to those who express a desire to do so. It is also important to note that representatives of other bodies dealing with migration and human rights issues, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have similar access to the detention facilities.

By way of illustration, from 01-01-2023 to 31-12-2023, a total of (179) international and European control bodies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), associations and institutions were granted permission to access alien detention facilities (*some of them were granted permission for multiple visits*), while from 01-01-2024 to date a total of (33) visits have taken place.

#### **b.- Conditions of Detention.**

##### **Paragraphs 47-51: Request for information regarding the conditions of detention in the Evros region (police and border guard stations).**

The legislation in force is rigorously complied with, with no detainee staying in the cells of the Orestiada Police Station beyond the minimum time required, namely beyond the time strictly necessary until he/she is brought before the Public Prosecutor at the Court of First Instance or transferred to a prison.

With regard to CPT's finding that access to natural light was insufficient, please be informed that each of the two (2) cells in the detention area has two (2) windows in the main room and one (1) in the bathroom.

Moreover, each cell is equipped with four (4) light bulbs (*three in the main room and one in the bathroom*).

As far as the cells at the Didymoteicho Police Station are concerned, detainees are held in them for the time strictly necessary until they are brought before the competent Public Prosecutor or transferred to a prison.

Moreover, the necessary actions are underway, in collaboration with the Municipality of Didymoteicho, in order to proceed with the construction of a building in Didymoteicho that will accommodate the Didymoteicho Police Station and the Didymoteicho Security Police Station.

The cells at the Orestiada Border Guard Station are short-stay cells, which means that detainees remain in them for the time strictly necessary until they are brought before the Public Prosecutor at the Orestiada Court of First Instance or transferred to the Orestiada Pre-Removal Detention Centre (PRDC).

In any case, measures are taken to provide a safe and decent detention environment to those apprehended, always taking into account the particular needs of vulnerable social groups.

In the cells at the Feres Border Guard Station, the hot water comes from the boiler, which is connected to the central heating boiler and the power supply of the building. During the winter period, the boiler operates 8-10 hours a day, heating the water from the 80-litre tank installed in the building, from which detainees are supplied with hot water. Thus, there is no shortage of hot water when there is need for hot water.

Regarding the non-provision of sanitary products to detainees, please be informed that the Alexandroupolis Police Directorate provides sanitary products for the detainees to all services with detention facilities within its competence and, therefore, to the Feres Border Guard Station. It is also noted that, in the context of the close cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the continuous efforts of the Hellenic Police to improve the conditions of detention, sanitary and other necessary products (*clothing, bedding, etc.*) are provided for the detainees. The provision of sanitary products is a matter to which UNHCR representatives attach great importance during their regular and extraordinary visits to the units subordinate to the Directorate in question.

In relation to CPT's observation on detainees' access to outdoor exercise, the Feres Border Guard Station allows detainees to have yard time twice a day, under the current detention schedule, with the only exception of days with extreme weather conditions. Yard time is spent in an outdoor area with no equipment for physical exercise, courts or other sports facilities, namely in an area that only offers the possibility for a short rest, a walk, socializing and limited sporting activities that do not require the use of equipment for physical exercise or other equipment. Besides, the Feres Border Guard Station is not a prison and lacks corresponding facilities.

In addition, please be informed that, on the day of the Committee's visit, the sixteen (16) detainees who were in the detention facilities of the Feres Border Guard Station did not complain about any of the matters mentioned in the report. On the contrary, they confirmed that the conditions of their confinement were the best possible.

It is also important to stress that, at the Feres Border Guard Station, detainees are held for only a few days, until they are taken to the Fylakio (Orestiada) Reception and Identification Centre (RIC) for further management in accordance with the Greek legislation.

With regard to the Tychero Border Guard Station and the lack of mattresses, blankets and heating, as well as the absence of working light source in the toilets and sanitary facilities, please be informed that the cells at the Tychero Border Guard Station closed down in 2013. Those apprehended stay at the Station until the completion of the preliminary investigation and for no longer than 5-6 hours. There is therefore no need for bedding in the bunks, as those apprehended do not stay at the Tychero Border Guard Station, since within a matter of hours are transferred to the cells of the Feres or Soufli Border Guard Stations (*depending on availability*).

It should be taken into consideration that, following the visit, the aforementioned Service proceeded to the procurement of bedding, while the procurement of mattresses is awaited.

As for the lack of natural and artificial light (*only one artificial light out of six was functioning*) in the detention area and light in toilets, the Tychero Border Guard Station is located in a rural area in Tychero, 50 km away from the city of Alexandroupolis, which means a lack of infrastructures and services in terms of specialised labor and technical staff (*electricians, etc.*). The day prior to the Committee's visit, due to the adverse weather conditions prevailing in the area, there were continuous power cuts, causing damage to five (5) out of six (6) lights within the cells area.

In the days following the visit, the aforementioned Service proceeded to the installation of a large flood light to provide adequate artificial light and the replacement of burnt out light bulbs in the detention area. Moreover, the lights in the toilets were repaired and made functional again.

It should be stressed that, as far as natural light in the detention area is concerned, apart from the fact that there are two (2) windows, as required by the urban and architectural layout of the detention areas, no additional windows can be constructed to allow natural light, mainly for security reasons and in order to prevent escape. This is a general practice in several police services and prisons.



It is noted that relevant orders have been given and care has been taken to resolve electrical problems. Moreover, with regard to the lack of heating, please be informed that the said Service is equipped with a properly operating heating system. At the time of the Committee's visit, there were no detainees and, therefore, there was no point to putting the system into operation.

**Paragraphs 52-54: Request for information regarding the conditions of detention on the islands of the Aegean Sea (Mytilene and Kos Police Stations).**

With regard to the Committee's reference to the detention conditions at the Mytilene Police Station, please be informed that the detention area consists of four (4) cells (each equipped with 6-7 concrete plinths) and a health centre. There are also two (2) short-stay cells. The cells have natural and artificial light and remain open for several hours every day to allow detainees access to the corridor outside, where there is natural ventilation. By design, the detention facility has no exercise area/yard. At night, the cells of the Mytilene Police Station are adequately lit with light bulbs that meet the safety standards and specifications.

In the area of responsibility of the Lesvos Police Directorate, there is no Pre-Removal Detention Centre for the administrative detention of foreign nationals (*as its operation has been suspended since September 2020*) and the detention of these persons in the cells of the Mytilene Police Station is for only a few days.

Moreover, the aforementioned Service has not received any complaints of ill-treatment of foreign nationals by the police or security personnel at the Lesvos CCAC (located in Mavrovouni) and, more specifically, allegations of abusive language by the personnel of the "G4S" private security company.

The Lesvos Police Directorate takes all necessary police surveillance and security measures to prevent violence and various forms of crime among those staying at the Lesvos CCAC, by conducting foot and vehicle patrols and deploying support squads and security teams.

The Kos Police Station accommodates two (2) cells that serve all the police Services of the island of Kos. The 1<sup>st</sup> cell has a capacity of fourteen (14) people and is usually used for the detention of men who are held either for administrative reasons or with criminal charges. In this area, there are two (2) baths, clean mattresses and bedding that always correspond to the number of detainees. Moreover, detainees are provided with sanitary items for as many days as they remain in the cell.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> cell has a capacity of eight (8) people and is usually used for the detention of women who are held either for administrative reasons or with criminal charges. In other cases, and if there are no women detainees, it is used as a temporary detention area. In the area within the cell, there is one (1) bath, clean mattresses and bedding that always correspond to the number of detainees. Moreover, detainees are provided with sanitary items for as many days as they remain in the cell. Hot water is available throughout the year to allow the detainees to clean and wash themselves. The area is cleaned on a daily basis by a company that has a contract with the Hellenic Police.

Furthermore, detainees from other Services of the island, such as the Kos Coast Guard, are accommodated in the cells, as their cells have been considered unsuitable, as well as in other police stations of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Police Directorate of the Dodecanese, when detainees are brought before the Office of the Public Prosecutor at the Kos Court of First Instance (*in the event of flagrante delicto*).

The Kos Police Station carries out inspections in the cells on a weekly basis in order to detect damage or deterioration. If damage or deterioration is detected, the necessary steps are taken to restore them as soon as possible.

**Paragraphs 55-58: Request for information regarding the conditions of detention in the Omonia and Keratsini-Drapetsona Police Stations.**

The cells at the Omonia Police Station receive detainees who have been arrested because they are accused for the commission of criminal offences or have pending convictions or arrest warrants against them, as well as foreign nationals who have been apprehended for violation of the legislation on aliens, for the time strictly necessary until they are brought before the competent

prosecutorial or judicial authorities or transferred to the detention facilities of the Attica Alien Police Directorate respectively.

As regards the standards and conditions of detention:

(i) The cells were fully refurbished in September 2023, in accordance with the recommendations of the relevant Division of the Hellenic Police Headquarters and the works carried out included the painting of all rooms, the refurbishment of WCs, the procurement of new bedding, the installation of a hot water supply system (*solar water heater*), as well as the maintenance – repair of plumbing and electrical installations and air conditioning.

(ii) The premises are cleaned daily in accordance with the annual cleaning contract.

(iii) Once a month, or when necessary, general disinfection, disinsection and rodent extermination, as well as targeted microbiocide (*Covid-19, scabies, bedbugs*) are carried out.

(iv) Natural light enters the premises through the windows of the building. The premises are also adequately lit with artificial light.

(v) The layout of the cells is such as to allow detainees to move outside the area where the beds are located (*in a corridor*); however, as they are located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and are detained for a short period, there is no possibility of movement in an outdoor area.

It should be mentioned that, due to the fact that the building is rented, any structural alteration to it, apart from the structural stability-safety restrictions, requires the owner's agreement.

As for the cells at the Keratsini-Drapetsona Police Station, of the two detention areas, only one is operational, since the other has been identified as unsuitable by the Committee and is not used.

The aforementioned detention area has been made operational due to frequent interventions (*mainly because it is old*) in terms of material and equipment and the work of a private cleaning crew, following the conclusion of a contract.

It should be noted that the Piraeus Police Directorate rents the building housing the police station, but not under a contract, and is in continuous cooperation with the competent Land Service in order to find a newer building.

**Paragraph 59: Recommendation- CPT calls upon the Greek authorities to ensure that:**

- **each detained person is provided with a mattress, a blanket and bedding –all clean– and a means of rest, such as a plinth or a bed;**
- **all cells are maintained in a decent state of repair and cleanliness;**
- **all cells offer sufficient access to natural light and adequate artificial lighting, which requires structural changes in several of the police establishments visited;**
- **all cells offer heating in winter;**
- **all sanitary facilities are kept in an adequate state of repair and hygiene;**
- **all persons held for longer than 24 hours are provided with a basic sanitary kit, free of charge, and access to hot water for the purpose of washing;**
- **all persons detained for periods exceeding 24 hours are offered access to outdoor exercise every day, which requires structural changes in several of the police establishments visited.**

With a view to ensuring better detention conditions and protect the health of both the detainees and the personnel of the Hellenic Police, specific orders and instructions have been given to all Services to encourage continuous efforts regarding:

- ✓ the meticulous cleaning and beautification of detention facilities (*regular painting*);
- ✓ the regular disinfection of facilities (*especially toilets and bedding*), in accordance with the applicable provisions and hygiene rules of the Health Regulations;
- ✓ the personal hygiene and cleanliness of detainees;
- ✓ the provision of healthcare to detainees, in collaboration with the co-competent Health Services;

- ✓ the regular and adequate ventilation of cells and, where possible, the provision of yard time to detainees, subject always to the necessary security measures;
- ✓ the provision of adequate food;
- ✓ the periodic sanitary inspection of detention facilities by the competent sanitary authorities;
- ✓ the daily inspection and control of detention facilities for the detection of any deficiencies and/or damage; additional orders and instructions have been given for the faithful implementation—compliance with Presidential Decree 45/2008 regarding the protection of the uniformed personnel of the Hellenic Police from safety and health hazards which derive or may derive during the performance of their duties, given their inherent specificities, and the prevention of disease transmission.

### **Paragraphs 60-64: Request for information regarding the detention conditions in the Special Holding Area of the Athens Airport Police Directorate.**

The Athens Airport Police Directorate has a total detention area for detainees held under criminal charges, of (110 m<sup>2</sup>), with a capacity of (15) persons, who are distributed in (9) separate detention areas (cells). Outside the detention areas, are two (2) restrooms with respective bathrooms, three (3) pay phones and two (2) water coolers. In addition to the above-mentioned rooms, there are specially designed rooms, which are: a) a temporary holding area for inadmissible persons (INAD), with a capacity of (40) beds, with two toilets and corresponding bathrooms; b) a room for applicants for international protection, with a capacity of (10) beds, with one toilet and corresponding bathroom; and c) a special room for the care of infants. The above described rooms are fully equipped with mattresses, bedding, hot water supply and also a central ventilation system of approved specifications for heating and cooling.

Detainees are provided with constant access to their basic needs, healthcare, their personal belongings (*including their mobile phones*), as well as access to a lawyer and an interpreter.

All temporary detention facilities meet all the necessary hygiene and safety standards. In addition, every effort is made to ensure that the above-mentioned premises are regularly maintained, disinfected, and disinfested, as well as cleaned on a daily basis, so that they remain functional and clean at all times.

Regarding the issues mentioned in the relevant Report concerning various damages in the abovementioned spaces, we would like to note that all damages have already been repaired and more specifically in the inadmissible persons areas, all old beds have been replaced with new ones and new mattresses and bedding have been placed.

In all the aforementioned areas, the rights of foreign nationals are posted in several languages.

In addition, in the detention areas of the above mentioned directorate, there is no possibility for opening windows due to the construction of the building but also for security reasons, and there is no courtyard or outdoor exercise area for detainees, although in the past there have been consultations for the creation of new detention areas with a courtyard.

### **Paragraphs 65-83: Request for information on the conditions of detention in the Pre-removal Detention Centres for Aliens (PRDC).**

#### **Pre-removal Detention Centre of Xanthi.**

Regarding the building facilities of the Pre-removal Detention Centre, it should be mentioned that every possible effort is made, within the financial budget, for their maintenance and repair, with continuous maintenance and restoration of electrical and plumbing damages. Furthermore, the holding areas are disinfected and disinfested once (1) a month.

The detainees are regularly supplied with cleaning materials (*washing powder*), personal hygiene items, and their blankets are regularly washed by a special cleaning crew.

For the cleaning of the detention areas, an effort is being made to increase the working hours of the cleaners of the contracted private cleaning crew.

As regards the detainees' clothing, they all have access to their personal belongings, which they take with them to their rooms in the dormitories, except those prohibited for security reasons. In addition, the PRDC provides clothing items, mainly from donations (private associations, NGOs etc.), which are made available to the detainees according to their needs.

Concerning the issue of recreational activities for detainees, it should be noted that board games, coloring books etc. are provided at regular intervals for their recreation within their rooms, as well as soccer balls, volleyballs, and cricket equipment for sports activities in the outdoor exercise areas. In the near future, relevant actions will be taken to set up outdoor exercise areas (*benches, sports equipment, exercise machines etc.*) in order for the detainees to be creatively active.

### **Pre-removal Detention Centre of Drama.**

In the said PRDC, documents in all languages are posted in a prominent spot in the reception area, which detail the rights and obligations of foreign nationals during their stay in the Centre, while decision documents are handed in the presence of an interpreter.

The detained foreign nationals can make use of their mobile phones, while the possibility of communication with their families through video calls is provided in a special room. Visits from families or friends are free and can take place seven (7) days a week during day time hours (excluding night time hours).

The detention areas consist of six (6) separate wings, in each of which there is a pre-fabricated container intended for use as a restaurant and recreation room, but the existing equipment (chairs, tables, coolers etc.) has been destroyed by misuse or vandalism in the past. Efforts are being made to replace the damaged equipment.

Disinfections-disinfestations are carried out on a monthly basis in all areas by a specialized team and a relevant disinfection certificate is issued. The pre-fabricated containers are cleaned by a cleaning crew on a daily basis except Sunday.

Furthermore, there are four catering companies operating in the PRDC which comply with the current legislation and possess relevant operation licenses. They adhere to all applicable Market and Health provisions, the Food and Beverage Code and all hygiene rules, providing daily hot meals perfectly tailored to the religious beliefs of the detainees and the diet proposed by them during religious holidays.

The quantities of clothing and footwear that have been gathered come from donations of various charitable organizations and institutions and are deemed satisfactory. The above items are provided to all foreign nationals upon their arrival and are then distributed by the social worker, and in the absence thereof, with the care of the Officer in charge.

Regarding all the damages and vandalisms in the holding areas, as well as the damaged floors within the accommodation buildings, the necessary expenditure requests have been submitted and their approval for repair is expected.

The said PRDC has a lending library with adequate material in most languages, while board games painting and craft supplies, balls, cricket equipment and television are available for recreational and educational activities for the detainees.

In addition to the above, there are medical, dental, nursing and administrative staff of the Health Units S.A. who are responsible for the management of medical cases.

The distribution of medication administered by the doctor for each detainee individually is carried out at the care and expense of the Drama Police Directorate and is followed to the letter in terms of administration by specialized nursing and police staff around the clock, who are exclusively engaged with this task by keeping individual health cards. Near the PRDC there is the Paranesti Health Centre, to which primary care medical cases are referred while serious medical cases that cannot be treated by the Paranesti Health Centre are referred to the General Hospital of Drama. For medical cases that do not have a corresponding specialty at the Drama General Hospital (psychiatrist, neurologist, dermatologist), appointments are made in hospitals of neighboring prefectures and transfers are made on predetermined dates and times.

The guarded detention areas are six (6) wings which are surrounded by NATO-style wire fencing. The exit of detainees for any reason (asylum, command post, doctor's office, dentist) outside this context and the detention area and their transfer anywhere is treated as a transfer (police escort).

### **Pre-removal Detention Centre of Orestiada.**

Regarding the detention facilities, it should be noted that the present full refurbishment of the Service's facilities, which was completed in May 2021, was done following a study by a team of engineers from the Hellenic Police Headquarters. During the renovation, the maximum capacity was reduced from (374) to (232) beds in order to meet the four (4) m<sup>2</sup> per person requirement. In order to increase the living space per person, as well as to increase natural lighting the upper level of several bunk beds around the perimeter of each ward was removed. In addition artificial lighting was installed in all wards. Furthermore, an anteroom with benches was created in every cell to be used as a recreation area as well as a separate space for worship which remain accessible 24 hours a day, while all sanitary facilities were renovated. According to the Service's needs, one detention ward was converted into office space in order to carry out the procedures for newly arrived foreign nationals. In addition, new separate outdoor areas with a shelter were created along the building per dormitory. New water supply, electricity and fire extinguishing networks were installed in the facility and the ventilation system was fully restored. In order to provide hot water, (6) solar water heaters of (160) liters each, were installed, which combined with a boiler, provide the possibility of using hot water throughout their stay. It should be mentioned that the areas are checked daily and any arising damages are promptly repaired.

Regarding the lack of interpretation services and communication difficulties, it should be known that the Health Units S.A team was occasionally staffed with interpreters. However, during the visit there was no interpreter available due to lack of interest in the advertised positions until then, while the hiring of a Turkish language interpreter was expected. Additionally, for interpretation needs, the option of tele-interpretation is provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as well as interpreters of the Health Units S.A in other Pre-removal Detention Centres.

Informing the detainees on their rights and situation takes place both upon entry and during their detention with the assistance of an interpreter in their language, while "Information Leaflets on their rights" (D-33) are posted on notice boards in various languages, including fixed notice boards in the corridors in all detention areas as well as on portable ones.

For the submission of any complaints, relevant complaint forms (D-34) have been placed on portable notice boards.

For the provision of legal advice by a lawyer, lists of lawyers providing legal services as well as lists of NGOs providing legal advice are posted on the notice boards, if the detainees so wish and their contact is facilitated in every way.

Regarding the communication of detainees, telecards are distributed upon entry free of charge (*donated by the ICRC*) for their first communication via card-phone which exists in the area for newcomers. In addition, their mobile phones remain in the valuables storage room, but whenever they wish their communication is facilitated by giving them the mobile phone to chat in a special space, while there is the possibility of using social media and video-calling through the communication station-laptop (*donated by the ICRC*).

For the detainees' recreational needs, various games are distributed on a regular basis depending on their age, for use both indoors and during yard time in the courtyards, while the possibility of entertainment is provided through televisions outside each ward, as well as radios. Furthermore there is a lending library with foreign language books.

Outdoor exercise is carried out daily, generally in the morning between 09:00 and 13:00 and in the evening before sunset, except on days with adverse weather conditions.

Regarding hygiene and cleanliness, there is a contract with a cleaning crew consisting of three cleaners on a daily basis as well as weekends and holidays, who clean the detention areas and the rest of the facilities.

Beddings are regularly cleaned using a professional washing machine and dryer available on site and are replaced if damaged. Also, upon their entry and whenever necessary, detainees receive personal hygiene items and any clothing and footwear needs are recorded and provided to them by the Hellenic Police and donations. It should be mentioned that regular disinfections-disinsecticides-disinfestations-pestcontrol are carried out by a private contractor.

### **Pre-removal Detention Centre of Tavros.**

All cells have access to natural light and fresh air. Each bed has a mattress and all detainees are provided with two (2) clean bedding, personal hygiene items (*shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, toilet paper, etc.*), clothing and footwear upon their arrival. These items are provided in cooperation with the Social Service of the Health Units S.A. (A.E.M.Y.). The mattresses and bed linen are changed regularly.

Within the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor detention cells, there are two (2) professional washing machines and one (1) dryer for the cleaning of bedding and clothing. All actions related to the provision of personal hygiene items, cleaning items, etc. are recorded in the personal card of each detainee and in the daily report of the Center's Security Guard Duty Officers.

New-type hot and cold water coolers have been installed outside each wing and in the two courtyards to cover the drinking water needs and allow for the preparation of hot drinks for the detainees.

All areas of the detention facilities are equipped with central heating and air conditioning. Hot water is also available 24/7 for all detainees.

A specialized external team contracted for the work provides daily cleaning services throughout the Centre and all of the Attica Alien Police Directorate's premises.

Moreover, disinfestation - disinfection – disinfection against microbes – disinfestation against mosquitoes – disinfestation against bed bugs - disinfection against Covid-19 are performed on a regular basis, as well as on an exceptional basis, when deemed necessary.

The Attica Aliens Police Directorate incurs expenses throughout the year to improve the living conditions of detainees and maintain detention facilities. These expenses include the supply of medicines, electrical – plumbing materials, bedding, mattresses, personal and general cleaning items, painting of cells and communal areas and maintenance of the detention facilities.

Access to sanitary facilities within the detention wings is unhindered throughout the day and night, for the needs of all detainees. In wing D-2 there are (02) toilets and (01) bathroom, in wing D-3 there are (06) toilets and (04) bathrooms, in wing D-4 there are (03) toilets and (02) bathrooms, and in wing D-5 there are (02) toilets and (01) bathroom.

Outdoor exercise of the detainees is carried out both morning and evening (*between 09:00-13:00 and 18:00'-21:00'*) on a daily basis for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor wings and between 09:00-13:00 at weekends, with police forces assigned for this purpose. All prisoners have access to sports such as (*football, volleyball, basketball, table tennis, table games, etc.*), in accordance with the Service's timetable. Moreover, in the two (2) courtyards and the corridors of all wings, 55-inch televisions have been installed for the entertainment and recreation of the detainees.

Visits take place four times a week between 16:00'-18:00' and relatives of the detainees can come and leave them personal items (*clothes, telecards, cigarettes, hygiene products etc*) which are then delivered to the inmates by the police officers.

Access to the communication devices (*cardphones*) is available throughout the day and night from cardphones located inside the detention areas. However, according to the regulation, detainees are not allowed to use their mobile phones and electronic devices. In case of emergencies involving relatives of the detainees, the detainee concerned can communicate by telephone at any time. He/She can use a fixed-line telephone from the office of the Duty Officer or a mobile phone with a phone card provided by the Duty Officer, and in case of emergencies, he/she is also given the

possibility to communicate via his/her mobile phone with his/her relatives. Communication with lawyers is unrestricted and not subject to time restrictions.

Furthermore, every week on Wednesday morning, the canteen of the Attica Alien Police Directorate comes to supply the detainees with various allowed items.

There is daily provision of three meals at the Attica Alien Police Directorate restaurant, where the police personnel also eat.

Detained foreign nationals are systematically informed about the regulation applicable to detention facilities, as well as about their rights and obligations (*which are posted in prominent places in each wing, in the communal areas and in the two courtyards in more than twelve (12) languages and dialects*). Included in their rights is the right of contact with representatives of Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), such as the International Committee of the Red cross, the Greek Council for Refugees (G.C.R), the United Nations High Commission and other bodies dealing with immigration, which come with a relevant permit.

In addition to the above, it should be noted that, both the Pre-removal Detention Centre in Tavros as well as the one in Amygdaleza have interpreters, provided by the European Agency FRONTEX, who are responsible for serving administrative return decisions, as well as daily communication with detainees in the context of promoting voluntary returns. More specifically, in the above mentioned PRDCs, interpreters have been provided for the following languages: Bengali, Arabic, Kurdish, French, Pashto, Dari, Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Somali.

Health Units S.A provides all detainees with the necessary healthcare and psychosocial diagnosis and support by medical, nursing and other scientific personnel, while incidents of foreign national detainees who cannot be treated by the doctors are referred to a public hospital on duty or another appropriate medical institution, for hospitalization or examination accompanied by police officers. There is also the possibility of providing dental care by appointment with the transfer of detainees to the dental clinic operating in the Amygdaleza PRDC. Also, it should be noted, that a team comes to the detention facilities in Tavros, which is made up by one (01) medical doctor, three (03) nurses, one (01) interpreter, one (01) social worker, one (01) psychologist, one (01) health visitor and one (01) administrator. At the same time, on Thursdays (unless there is an unforeseen event), a psychiatrist from the organization OKANA (Organisation Against Drugs) visits the Centre and examines the substance-dependent detainees while on Fridays a special associate of OKANA conducts counseling group sessions with substance-dependent detainees.

Detainees suffering from infectious diseases or mental disorders, are transferred to a separate detention area as per Article 12, paragraph 6 of Decision No 8038/23/22-Υ' "Establishment and Operation of Pre-removal Detention Centres for Aliens and their operating Regulations", where they receive the necessary medical care and psychosocial support to ensure their own health and safety, as well as that of their fellow detainees and staff. Therefore, the said foreign national with hepatitis C was detained in the Special Treatment Wing, not because he was a carrier, but because, according to the doctors of the Health Units S.A. (A.E.M.Y.), he had inappropriate behaviour, suffered from psychiatric disturbances and was receiving psychiatric treatment and, throughout his detention, was staying with at least three (3) other detainees.

### **Pre-removal Detention Centre of Kos.**

The number of detainees during the Committee's visit was (33) adult males. Due to the small number of detainees, they are held in wing (E), which has (13) pre-fabricated containers of which (12) are accommodation containers with two rooms each and a toilet in the middle and (1) container is used as a prayer space. Every room has (4) single beds with clean mattresses and bedding, which are provided by police personnel, as well as sanitary, washing and cleaning supplies. Also, the foreign nationals have received extra bedding (*blankets and sheets*).

Cleaning is carried out daily by a private cleaning crew, which enters the wing to collect rubbish and clean the rooms if the residents so wish.

The detainees' meals are provided by an external catering service which is supervised by the respective Duty Officer. In addition, it is possible for detainees to purchase products from a mini-market, which are inspected by police officers.

All detainees have mobile phones, with disabled cameras. The cameras have been disabled on the detainees' own initiative, after being urged to do so for security reasons. In case someone does not have a phone, the PRDC provides him with one for free.

At the same time there is the possibility of yard time throughout the day as well as balls and board games for recreation.

Medical care of the detainees is provided by the medical service of the Closed Control Access Center (C.C.A.C.) of the island of Kos and in case urgent medical assistance is needed, there is the possibility of their transfer by Police vehicle or ambulance to the Kos' General Hospital.

### **Pre-removal Detention Centre of Corinth.**

Each wing is equipped with heating and cooling units (air conditioning) and boiler for the supply of hot water as well as solar panels. Each wing accommodates around forty (40) to forty-five (45) persons.

With regard to the material and technical infrastructure, it should be noted that quite often, the damage to the centre's facilities, is found to be the fault of the detainees. This is why there is a maintenance team with an annual contract for the restoration of the continuous damage –wear and tear caused in the Centre.

The disinfection of the facilities is carried out by a cleaning team according to the contract, once (1) a month and occasionally where necessary. The blankets are cleaned by a contracted company and mattresses are replaced as needed. Moreover, detainees are provided with a bag with personal hygiene items (*blanket, sheet, soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste and, at regular intervals, detergent or similar items*) upon their entry.

All areas of the Centre are cleaned on a daily basis by a private cleaning team, which has been awarded this task through a tender process.

The detention period adheres to the time limits laid down in Laws 4939/22, 3386/05 and 3907/11. All detention decisions are submitted to the Administrative Court of First Instance of Korinthos for verification of their legality.

In the Korinthos Pre-Removal Detention Centre, around the perimeter of the buildings housing the foreign nationals, there is an area of total surface of 611 m<sup>2</sup>, where the alien detainees held on the ground floor and the first floor receive four (4) hours a day of yard time, alternately, due to the large number of detainees and the limited area of the yards. As far as protection from the sun and rain is concerned, works have been carried out and the areas are partially covered, but it is not possible to cover them completely for security reasons.

With regard to the diagnosis of a 22-year-old man with tuberculosis after more than a year in detention, as well as thirty-three (33) other detainees who tested positive to the Mantoux test, it should be noted that all detainees are received with full medical records upon their arrival from their home services. The above 22-year old foreign national, a national of Pakistan, was received on 29-09-2023 at the Korinthos Pre-Removal Detention Centre, coming from the Aliens Directorate of Attica, with no history of reported tuberculosis and, on 06-11-2023, he was transferred to the pathology department of the Korinthos General Hospital, after the appearance of symptoms of weight loss, cough, shortness of breath, vomiting and debilitation and after his examination by the attending physicians, further medical investigation of his symptoms in a clinic was recommended. On 08-11-2023 he was again transported by officers of the Corinth Police Directorate to the Korinthos General Hospital - Regular Clinic, where after conducting the necessary medical examinations it was decided to admit him and keep him hospitalized for further medical investigation of his condition. In addition, it should also be noted, that during their detention, when there are reasons to do so, foreign nationals are subjected to further examinations in health care facilities and in cooperation with a doctor from Health Units SA (A.E.M.Y.), a decision is made on their further management. The fact that (33) detainees tested positive to the Mantoux test does not necessarily mean that they are suffering from tuberculosis since this is subsequently established by further clinical examinations.



Regarding the death of a 24-year-old man who died on 24-10-2023, just six hours after his referral to the hospital from the Korinthos Pre-removal Detention Centre, we would like to bring to your attention that the above foreign national was received on 03-07-2023, having been transferred from the Trikala Police Directorate via the Attica Courts' Prisoner Transfer Division, accompanied by an administrative and medical file. At 23:20 on 23-10-2023, the above mentioned detainee, declared indisposition and shortness of breath and was therefore immediately evacuated by police officers of the Korinthos Pre-removal Detention Centre to the Korinthos General Hospital. When examined by the doctors on duty there, he was diagnosed with severe pneumonia and was admitted at 02:40 on 24-10-2023 to the Regular Clinic of Internal Medicine where he died at 05:10 on the same day. The Police and Border Guards on duty acted immediately, at the request of the alien and transferred him to the Korinthos General Hospital. Their actions were appropriate and foreseen in cases requiring medical attention. Moreover, the incident is being investigated by the Korinthos Police Department, while for the causes of death the Forensic Service of Nafplion Kalamata was ordered to conduct an autopsy, the results of which have not yet been known. The possibility of criminal action has been excluded by the evidence so far. The Embassy of Pakistan has been informed (*informing relatives of the deceased*). The competent Korinthos Police Directorate has not ordered the conduct of an administrative investigation into the case because on the one hand there is no evidence to justify it, and on the other hand the death of the above mentioned foreign national was caused by pathological causes and as mentioned above, the actions of those on service duty in the Korinthos Pre-removal Detention Centre were the appropriate ones.

In addition, as regards the health coverage of the detainees, it should be noted, that at present, the Centre is permanently staffed by medical personnel of the Health Units S.A. organization with the presence of an interpreter, providing primary medical care to foreign detainees on a daily basis, while whenever required, foreigners are transferred to the Korinthos General Hospital for further examinations and/or hospitalization.

Regarding examinations in order to determine whether a person is a minor, the PRDC informs by email the Reception and Identification Service which is responsible, in order to issue a decision for carrying out medical examinations to determine whether the person is a minor or not. Automatically, from the declaration of a foreign national's status as a minor and until the completion of the procedures of the corresponding examinations for the determination of this fact or not, the person in question is treated and held separately as a minor, in a different area from the other adult detainees and has yard time separately.

**Paragraphs 78 and 82 : Recommendation - the CPT Committee urges the Greek authorities to take immediate measures for the detained Foreign Nationals in the Pre-Removal Detention Center for Foreign Nationals in Amygdaleza in order to ensure:**

- A minimum of 4 sq.m of living space per person in multiple occupancy cells or rooms;
- Decent sleeping conditions, including a bed, mattresses, blankets and bedding, all clean (*and free of infestation*),
- Ready access to sufficient clean drinking water,
- Adequate food, both in quantity and nutritional value,
- Daily access to hot water,
- Adequate lighting (*including daylight*) and heating/cooling,
- Cells or rooms equipped with a call bell, a table, chairs and personal lockable space;
- Sufficient quantities of detergents and personal hygiene products, at all times;
- The possibility to regularly wash their clothes and have their blankets cleaned, and the foam mattresses replaced, whenever necessary.

**In addition, the CPT Committee calls once upon the Greek authorities to take the necessary steps to ensure that, in all pre-removal detention centers:**

- An open-door regime is applied, including at Pre-Removal Detention Center for Foreigner Nationals of Corinth, Orestiada and Tavros,
- All outdoor yards are appropriately equipped with benches and weather protectors and provide a dignified and non-penalty environment,
- A program of activities (*educational, recreational and professional*) is developed, which includes various activities, such as, for example, language courses, games, arts and crafts or "cultural cuisines",
- A common liaison room is created, equipped with tables and chairs, TV and games and
- A place of worship is housed, including Corinth and Tavros.

Taking into account the periodic observations of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) and other International and European Institutions towards our country, the operation of the seven (7) Pre-removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals: Amygdaleza, Tavros, Corinth, Drama, Xanthi, Orestiada (Fylakio) and Kos, giving emphasis - priority to ensuring the reception and stay conditions, in a decent living environment.

The Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals are responsible for: (a) ensuring the feeding, cleanliness, medical examination and transportation of foreigners to hospitals or health centers, (b) cooperating with co-competent authorities, services and bodies for the purpose of providing medical care, psychosocial care and counseling support to detained persons and (c) providing interpretation, in cases where this is required.

It is noted that the living conditions in The Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals are fully in line with international standards of living in closed Centers, as:

- ✓ There is an outdoor courtyard and activity area,
- ✓ The proportion of place of residence of each third country national corresponds to four (4) sq.m. at least,
- ✓ A full meal is provided with an offer of three (3) meals per day,
- ✓ There are telephone facilities in all public areas for the unhindered and direct access of detainees to them,
- ✓ Everyone, without exception, is given the opportunity to submit their requests to the Commander of the Centre,
- ✓ The free communication of detainees with lawyers, NGOs and other human rights protection bodies is promoted (*the details of which are provided to any interested party through the Detention Centre Guard*),
- ✓ Separate places of religious worship are provided and
- ✓ The retention of the personal belongings of third country nationals is permitted.

In addition, the design of education, both at the basic and post-educational level, aims to ensure that police personnel have a strong self-concept, emotional stability, a responsible personality, with humanitarian principles, without prejudice.

Also, in the regions of the Police Divisions where there are Immigration Detention Centers, seminars are organized to inform police officers employed on a daily basis in Detention Centers, with the cooperation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), various NGOs, etc.

At the same time, there is cooperation with the co-competent Ministries and Bodies, in order to improve the reception and hospitality conditions of immigrants.

As part of the ongoing effort of the Hellenic Police to improve the conditions of Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign National, in the context of the financing of the 2014-2020 Period, relevant tenders were carried out in 2023, in accordance with the applicable legislation, and the supply of material and technical equipment was carried out as follows:

(a) The creation of recreation areas in the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign National of Amygdaleza and Drama, with the installation of televisions and sets of dining tables with benches with a pilot character.

(a.1) In particular, for the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals of Amygdaleza, Tavros and Drama, the placement of eleven (11), eleven (11) and six (06) TVs, respectively, in suitable areas in order to be visible to all detainees, contributes to the improvement of the conditions of the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign National and the general upgrading of detention conditions, as entertainment - information is provided to detained foreigners throughout the day.

(a.2) For Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign National of Amygdaleza and Drama, the installation of two (02) and one (01) TV, respectively, contribute to the support of the operation of respective play-station devices by detained foreigners belonging to vulnerable groups.

(a.3) For the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign National of Amygdaleza and Drama, the placement of twenty (20) and ten (10) sets of dining tables with benches, respectively, in accommodation within the detention wards, within which the televisions were placed, contributes to the improvement of the conditions of the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign National and the satisfaction of chronic requirements of international organizations and humanitarian organizations.

In the context of the New Funding Program 2021-2027, we hope that it will be more generally applicable to all Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign National

(b) "Lending Libraries" operate in all Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals, in suitable areas (houses or rooms of buildings), with the help of the Social Workers of the Health Units/S.A

(c) Within the area of "Lending Libraries" in all Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign National, following the signing of a relevant Memorandum of Cooperation between the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Hellenic Police, "communication stations" were installed with the appropriate technical equipment to allow the communication of detained foreigners with their families located in their countries of origin.

(d) Commercial laundries were installed (*until their placement, the needs were served by household laundries*) in the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Amygdaleza (*they also serve the needs of the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Tavros*), Corinth and Drama (*they also serve the needs of the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Xanthi and Orestiada*) contribute to the cleanliness of the bedding (*blankets and mattresses*) of the detained aliens (*cleaning planning on a regular basis*) and to the improvement of hygiene conditions.

(e) Projectors were installed in all Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals for the screening of films, football matches, etc. that contribute to the entertainment of detained foreigners.

(f) The following were placed in all Pre- Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals:

(i) "Tables of announcements with simple type protection" at the Offices of the Service Officer, the Health Units/S.A and the Asylum Service (*in order to post announcements, etc.*).

(ii) "Notices with anti-ballistic protection type" within the detention facilities of foreigners in order to post forms to inform the detained foreigners.

As part of our planning for the implementation of Home Affairs of the European Union of the 2021-2027 programming period (AMIF Fund), procedures have been launched for the implementation of a series of projects related to Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals and returns, such as: the provision of legal support services for detained foreigners, the coverage of operating costs of Detention Centers, etc., the implementation of which will contribute significantly, as a priority, to ensuring the appropriate living conditions in a decent living environment.

In the above context, a relevant project has been included for the renovation – reconstruction of the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals of Tavros, Drama and Xanthi, where large-scale works will be carried out.

In addition, for third-country nationals subject to return procedures, interpreters will be recruited for the implementation of the "linguistic assistance" project, as well as legal experts under the "free legal assistance" project.

### **Healthcare services.**

#### **Recommendations of paragraphs 84-102:**

In the context of the implementation of the National Program of the Internal Affairs sector 2014-2020 (Multiannual AMIF Fund), at the beginning of 2018, the Ministry of Health / Health Units/S.A ) was entrusted with the projects of providing health care services, psychological and social support services, as well as interpretation services in the Prefecture of Central Macedonia.

In particular, you are aware that this Program began in mid-January 2018 with the activation of Doctors, Psychiatrists, Nurses, Administrative Employees, Health Visitors, Psychologists, Social Workers and Interpreters, as well as the operation of dental clinics in the Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals of Amygdaleza and Drama, while a continuous effort is made to fully staff all the aforementioned specialties of the scientific staff with the provided number. The cases of foreign detainees who cannot be treated by the doctors of the Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals are referred for hospitalization or for examination accompanied by police officers to an emergency hospital or other appropriate hospital.

In particular, at this time per Detention Center, regarding staffing, the following are known:

Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Amygdaleza : doctors -0-, psychiatrist -0-, administrative employees -1-, health visitors -2-, nurses -3-, psychologists -2-, social workers -2-, interpreters -2-.

Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Tavros : doctors -1-, psychiatrist -0-, administrative employees -1-, health visitors -1-, nurses -3-, psychologists -1-, social workers -1-, interpreters -1-.

Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Corinth: doctors -1-, psychiatrist -0-, administrative employees -1-, health visitors -2-, nurses -2-, psychologists -0-, social workers -0-, interpreters -1-.

Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Drama (Paranesti): doctors -0-, psychiatrist -0-, administrative employees -1-, health visitors -0-, nurses -3-, psychologists -0-, social workers -0-, interpreters -0-.

Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Xanthi: doctors -1-, psychiatrist -0-, administrative employees -1-, health visitors -0-, nurses -2-, psychologists -1-, social workers -1-, interpreters -1-.

Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals of Orestiada (Fylakio): doctors -1-, psychiatrist -0-, administrative employees -1-, health visitors -0-, nurses -1-, psychologists -1-, social workers -1-, interpreters -1-.

Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals Kos : has been transferred to the Special Detention Facilities of the Closed Controlled Facility of the Island of Kos.

In this context, the Ministry of Health / Health Units (S.A) is making an effort to cover 100% of the provided positions with staff and for this purpose, under the current legislation, continuous calls for staffing with scientific staff are carried out, but with the observation of delays due to procedural issues.

In addition to the above, it is known that the provision of primary health care in Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals aims at the health coverage of immigrants as follows:

- (a) Provide health care as well as prevention.
- (b) Psychological and social support, taking into account that they are confined.
- (c) Prevention of the spread of diseases and infections among detainees, Detention Centre workers and the wider community.
- (d) Supporting the work of the above services with the participation of interpreters, so as to reduce the response time to the needs of detained aliens and the proper management of problems related to health issues and their stay in general and to facilitate the communication of aliens with the Greek authorities operating in the Centers.
- (e) Responding to immediate health needs in the living space, so that detained foreigners and their escorts are not burdened, where possible and not necessary, with their transfer to a secondary health care unit.
- (f) Promote an integrated approach to healthcare, both through improved health and generally through improvements in accommodation / detention conditions.

Patient's detainees are examined in the clinic of the Detention Center and in a concomitant case they are given appropriate medication. The medical examination includes a medical history, a general clinical examination and, in exceptional cases, referral to a laboratory test, in order to detect any infectious diseases (*tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, skin diseases*) or other contagious diseases.

The cases of foreign detainees who cannot be treated by the doctors of the Detention Center are referred for hospitalization or for examination, accompanied by police officers, to an on-call hospital or other appropriate hospital. If their hospitalization is deemed necessary, the competent police service of affiliation undertakes the guarding of the Foreign National, until his re-imprisonment in the prisons of Pre-Removal Detention Centers for Foreign Nationals.

In order to facilitate the work of the medical team of scientific staff, the Ministry of Health /Health Unit S.A is in the process of supplying pharmaceutical material.

In order to ensure medical confidentiality, for each detained patient, an electronic medical file is kept by the scientific staff of Health Unit S.A, in which all medical data concerning him are recorded. Medical records are stored securely and the degree of access that staff members have to each type of record is determined.

### **3.-Refoulements.**

#### **Paragraphs 152-153 :**

The Hellenic Police, within the framework of its competence, attaches particular importance to the protection of Fundamental Rights of every person crossing its external borders, regardless of immigration status or nationality. In this context, the competent Services of the Hellenic Police implement border surveillance activities, in full compliance with legal and operational standards, without disregarding the principles of non-discrimination, non-refoulement and the protection of human life and dignity.

The principle of non-refoulement, reflected in Article 33 of the 1951 Geneva Convention, is a cornerstone of international refugee law. Strict observance of this principle applies to all forms of forced removal.

To this end, all the competent Services of the Hellenic Police have been given clear orders and instructions for the observance of the human rights and dignity of all refugees / migrants arriving in our country, showing particular care for the right to apply for international protection and the legal remedies provided.

It is clarified that no foreigner in detention, who applies for international protection and until his application is examined, is returned (*will to apply for international protection, registration of an application, examination at first instance, examination of an appeal, any legal remedy before the competent administrative courts*), in full compliance with domestic and international law and especially respecting the requirements of the Geneva Convention and the procedures provided for in Directives 2013/32/EU, 2011/95/EU, 2013/33/EU which have been transposed into our national legislation and are codified in Law 4939/2022 "*Ratification of the Code of Law for the reception, international protection of third-country nationals and stateless persons and temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced aliens*" (Government Gazette A '-111/10.06.2022), as well as the relevant case law of the Council of State (CoS), the Court of Justice of the EU and the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

#### **Paragraph 154-155 :**

Regarding the allegations that unidentified masked men in military fatigues are operating at the Greek-Turkish land border, who allegedly carry out forced returns to Turkey, it is noted that the staff of the Greek Police wear a uniform, the type of which is provided for by a Police Regulation that clearly defines its type depending on the Service. Other Regulations provide for the duties and responsibilities of each Police Service. In addition, the staff of the Greek Armed Forces, which assists the Services of the Greek Police in border control activities, wears the camouflage uniforms, while the staff of Frontex, which participates in Joint Operations at the border, bears either the uniform of the Organization (Category 1 Permanent Corps) or the uniforms provided by the secondment/mission K-M, which participate in the Joint Operations. It is noted that only authorized personnel are allowed to operate in the border areas, part of which are considered military and therefore restricted areas.

#### **Paragraphs 158-159 :**

Our country implements a series of measures aimed at monitoring the compliance of law enforcement officials with ensuring the protection of Fundamental Rights, having put in place a three-level system to deal with complaints of "push-backs", i.e. administrative level of investigation, level of investigation by Independent Authorities and level of judicial investigation. In accordance with the responsibilities provided for by national law, the absolute independence of these Bodies/Authorities is ensured for the investigation of complaints submitted to them, both for all police actions throughout the country and for border operations.

In addition, the Hellenic Police and the Hellenic Coast Guard, in the context of Frontex Operations, implement the following two important monitoring mechanisms regarding possible violations of fundamental rights at the border:

(a) The first mechanism is called Serious Incident Reports and concerns the possibility provided to any participant in the operational activities of the Organization, who has reason to believe that a violation of fundamental rights has occurred, to report it to the Organization through the established reporting channels.

(b) The second is called the Complaints Mechanism and enables any person, regardless of age, who is directly affected by the actions or omissions of due legal actions, on behalf of the staff involved in an activity of the Organization and considers that their fundamental rights have been violated, due to these actions or omissions, to submit a complaint free of charge to the Organization. Upon receipt of such Reports or Complaints from the Frontex Fundamental Rights Office, which is the competent Authority of the Agency for the management of this material, the Greek Authorities are required to provide feedback on the alleged incidents and subsequent investigations at national level. These complaints are sent simultaneously to the "Ombudsman", within the framework of its responsibilities as a National Mechanism for the Investigation of Arbitrary Incidents in the Security Forces. Subsequently, the Independent Authority in question forwards the cases to investigation of the incidents, for any reprehensible actions and omissions of the Hellenic Police, to the Administrative Support and Human Resources Branch/ Hellenic Police Headquarters, which orders an administrative examination. In the light of the mechanism in question, the Border Protection Division/Hellenic Police Headquarters, through the National Contact Point of Frontex, has received during the period 2019-2022, one (1) complaint in 2019, five (5) complaints in 2020, two (2) complaints in 2021, six (6) complaints in 2022 and one (1) complaint in 2023.

Monitoring of compliance with fundamental rights was further strengthened in Greece in 2022. In particular, Articles 49 and 50 of Law 4960/2022 provided for the establishment of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum : (a) a Fundamental Rights Officer, responsible for the collection and preliminary evaluation of complaints about alleged violations of Fundamental Rights during the reception or asylum procedures and (b) a Special Committee on Compliance with Fundamental Rights, in charge of monitoring the relevant procedures and the implementation of national, union and international legislation in the fields of border protection and the provision of international protection.

### **Paragraph 161:**

In recent years, and especially after the migration crisis of 2015-2016, the Hellenic Police has faced a number of complaints for violation of Fundamental Rights in the Evros region. The above complaints, which were the subject of an examination of our country at European and international level, focused on the violation of the principle of non-refoulement by the Greek authorities.

In addition, various NGOs that claim to be in constant contact with Third country Nationals groups that attempt to cross the border illegally and are located on islets of the river Evros, send to the Hellenic Police Services the geographical coordinates of these points, in order for the Hellenic Police to identify and ensure the right of Third country Nationals groups to the protection of their fundamental rights. At the same time, appeals are submitted, following interim measures, with speedy procedures, to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), on the basis of Article 39 of the Rules of Court, in order to oblige our country to take all the necessary measures for the detection, non-removal, provision of food, water, medical care and in general the protection of the said Third country Nationals groups.

In the light of the faithful implementation of national and European legislation regarding the protection of external borders and fundamental rights, as well as the provisions provided for in the International Conventions signed by our country in the framework of the United Nations, the Hellenic Police Services activate the available resources for the identification and management of Third country Nationals groups at the points and coordinates notified by NGOs and other bodies.

**B.-**Greece as a host and transit country expects substantial results from "*the new Pact on Immigration and Asylum*" presented by the European Commission. Commission as a "holistic"

approach to the management of the migration phenomenon, which attempts to make it more effective, in the context of responsibility and solidarity between Member States.

The effective management of the Union's external borders, with all the necessary controls, the streamlining of asylum procedures, the creation of a new solidarity mechanism for crisis situations and their management, the adoption of a more effective return policy, the development of partnerships with third countries of origin or transit of third-country nationals, the creation of new legal migration routes, as well as the adoption of effective integration policies, are key objectives of Greece for the effective management of the migration phenomenon.

C.- We kindly ask for your further actions.

D.- The above is submitted to the Political and Physical Leadership Offices for information.

**THE HEAD**

**ALIENS & BORDER PROTECTION BRANCH**

**Ioannis Stavrakakis**

**Police Brigadier General**

**CC:**

- 1) Office of the General Secretary for Public Order
- 2) Staff Office to the Chief of the Hellenic Police
- 3) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Deputy Chief of the Hellenic Police
- 4) Hellenic Police Headquarters / General Staff
- 5) Police Inspector General for Northern Greece
- 6) Police Inspector General for Southern Greece
- 7) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Administrative Support and Human Resources Branch
- 8) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Order Branch
- 9) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Security Branch
- 10) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Alien and Border Protection Branch
- 11) Communication & Information Office



12) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Officer Personnel Division

13) Hellenic Police Headquarters / General Policing Division

14) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Border Protection Division

15) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Organisation and Legal Affairs Division

16) Hellenic Police Headquarters / State Security Division

17) Hellenic Police Headquarters / Public Security Division

18) Reception and Identification Service

19) Asylum Service

20) Ministry of Citizen Protection / Minister's Office

Address: 4, P. Kanellopoulou Avenue, 101 77, Athens

21) Ministry of Migration / Minister's Office (Minister: Mr Dimitris KAIRIDIS)

Address: 196-198, Thivon Avenue

22) Ministry of Citizen Protection / Deputy Minister's Office

Address: 4, P. Kanellopoulou Avenue, 101 77, Athens

23) Ministry of Foreign Affairs / C4 Directorate for Justice, Home Affairs & Schengen



**Response of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum of Greece  
(29 May 2024)**



HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
Ministry of Migration & Asylum

The Minister

Athens, May 29, 2024  
Our Reference Number: 157243

Mr Alan Mitchell  
President  
European Committee for the Prevention of Torture  
and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment  
*Strasbourg, France*  
*By email*

Dear Mr. President,

The Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum, the Hellenic Police, the Hellenic Coast Guard, and the entire Greek Government considers Greece's obligations under the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment to be of the utmost importance. Additionally, we truly value the work of the Council of Europe and that of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture in particular. However, we consider the Committee's "Report to the Greek Government on the CPT Visit to Greece Carried Out from 20 November to 1 December 2023," adopted on the 8th of March 2024, to be unjust.

Specifically, we would note the following:

1. Regarding points 105, 106 and the Committee's proposals: The main objectives of the enhanced security measures, including fencing on the perimeter and between the sectors, is the protection of the residents as well as strengthening the feeling of a secure atmosphere, especially in sectors where vulnerable persons are accommodated. At the same time, it should be noted that this part of the facilities follows the increased security standards of the Hellenic Police, as Pre-departure Centers operate within the Reception and Identification Centers (RIC), and Closed Controlled Access Centers (CCAC). Recognizing that the time of stay in the above Centers should be limited to a few months only, every possible effort is being made so that especially vulnerable persons are moved immediately and as a matter of priority to structures in mainland Greece. The pressure placed on the national reception system in the summer of 2023 pushed the new RICs/CCASs to their limits

and highlighted areas that needed immediate improvement and resolution, many of which have already been addressed.

2. Regarding point 107, it should be noted that Kos, in particular, received an increased number of arrivals between August and December 2023 (around 1200 new arrivals per month). Most notably, arrivals exceeded 1500 in September and reached almost 2500 in October. Despite the increased efforts to relieve congestion, with over 2500 transfers to mainland Greece in the second half of 2023, Kos remained at an extremely high occupancy rate, requiring the gradual utilization of Pre-departure facilities and the old Reception Center of Kos as places of emergency accommodation. These actions were emergency measures to deal with the congestion, and were taken in order to avoid having residents stay overnight in outdoor areas in makeshift constructions.

The old facilities of Kos were completely evacuated by 01/02/2024 and by 29/3/2024 the use of the Pre-departure Center's facilities as a place of temporary accommodation also ceased. With the new Center operating under extraordinary conditions, and in order to complete the registration procedures as fast as possible, some of the persons whose registration was not yet complete were restricted to specific areas of the site, so that they could be easily located and so that any problems and conflicts with other persons who had been prioritized for movement outside the Center could be avoided. Regarding the delays in the registration process, as well as the issuance of restriction of movement documents (a standard step during the initial stage of the asylum process), registration capacity was significantly reinforced in order to reduce the number of unregistered persons on site as well as the interval during which their restriction of movement is in place. At the same time, all technical and procedural issues that in some cases caused delays in the delivery of documents were resolved in such a way so as to prevent such issues from arising again in the future.

The restriction of movement for third country nationals and stateless persons remains in force only during the period expressly described in the respective restriction of movement decisions of the Commanders of the Regional Services, as delivered to the new entrants in languages they understand. The restriction of movement has a maximum duration of twenty-five (25) days. It must be emphasized that, in any case, new entrants have the right to submit their opposition to decisions restricting their movement before the Administrative Courts.

3. In relation to paragraph 108, and in particular for persons who had received a negative asylum decision, it is clarified that material reception conditions are provided by the RICs/CCASs for the duration of the administrative procedure for examining requests for international protection (i.e. for as long as the third country nationals/ stateless persons have the status of an applicant for international protection). Within and outside the RICs/CCASs, civil society organizations are active and provide additional services, such as meals, on a voluntary basis to persons not eligible to receive material reception conditions.
4. Regarding paragraph 109, Samos as well as Kos (analyzed above), were under extremely high pressure as a result of a spike in arrivals in September, whereby Samos



already had a high level of occupancy, exceeding 3300. Despite the fact that between September and October more than 2000 persons were moved from Samos to mainland Greece, it was necessary to utilize - among others - communal and administrative spaces for the temporary housing of third country nationals until the structure was decongested in the beginning of the new year. Samos, like the rest of the island sites, was significantly reinforced in terms of registration staff, therefore the number of beneficiaries not fully registered has since dropped to zero and the procedures are now completed within the maximum limit of 25 days.

5. The overpopulation of the site also brought the water supply system to its limits, especially given the fact that the island has a general water shortage problem. From 01/08/2023 until the first months of 2024, the supply of running water was controlled for 10-12 hours a day, while every possible water source was utilized. Specifically, the Center received water from the Municipal Authority, the existing borehole, an Army tank truck, and a Fire Brigade tank truck. In order to ensure the adequacy of running water, the Ministry announced and is in the process of completing an international tender for the water supply of the RIC/CCAS of Samos until the end of 2024. It should be noted that in terms of drinking water, three liters of bottled water were provided to all residents on a daily basis.
6. With regard to paragraph 110 and the relevant proposals of the Committee, it should be noted that the largest part of the extension of the Fylakio RIC/CCAS includes special facilities for the detention of third country nationals and specifically four (4) wards of the Pre-departure Detention Center for Foreigners, while the rest of the section consists of the Quarantine area, Administrative Services, outdoor space, and common area. Increased surveillance and security measures are applied in the areas of the Pre-departure Center, which operates under the responsibility of the Hellenic Police (Ministry of Citizen Protection). The facilities mentioned in the report (barbed mesh and elevated lookouts) aim to achieve a high level of security for the Pre-departure Center, as well as the structure overall, and were implemented following written instructions from the competent Hellenic Police services within the framework of their authority (related letter with registration number 1774/22/1579056/30.07.2022).
7. Regarding paragraph 111, within the RICs/CCASs, an External Security and Protection Unit is active, among others, which has various responsibilities related to the safety of residents. Those responsibilities include conducting regular and emergency patrols and, if necessary, searches, in all areas of the facility in order to ensure sufficient internal monitoring of third country nationals and stateless persons within the Center. Particular attention is paid to the safe areas for families, single women, and the safe zones for unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups in general. These patrols are crucial to maintaining order, preventing illegal activities, and ensuring timely intervention in cases of serious disruptions or other incidents. In particular, specific response protocols are applied to security incidents that are identified either directly by the Center's staff or through the closed circuit monitoring system, with the aim of responding as soon as possible and preventing further escalation. At the same time, the 24-hour presence of security personnel also allows residents to communicate with a staff member immediately at all times, in order to ask for help or to report an



incident. Finally, and in order to achieve better management of housing unit allocation, as of 1/4/2024 a function has been activated in the Unified Information System of the RICs/CCASs, to provide a detailed description of the residents per housing unit, their family composition, and vulnerability information, in connection with their housing unit allocation. This measure facilitates the identification of any cases of residents who should not be cohabitating within the same housing unit, or even Center sector.

8. Regarding paragraph 113, it should be noted that reinforcements were immediately added to the personnel involved in registration procedures, and delays were subsequently eliminated both around the delivery of documents related to the registration process, and around the registration processing overall. Progress in this respect is reflected by the fact that the procedures now do not exceed 25 days on any island, and, while under normal conditions, procedures are completed within 12-14 days.
9. The issues described in paragraphs 112 and 113 had been recognized by the Ministry as extremely serious as early as September 2023. For this reason, registration capacity was significantly reinforced through support in logistical infrastructure as well as the deployment of additional staff provided by the European Union Agency for Asylum as an emergency measure. These teams contributed significantly to the procedures being completed within the 25-day period. Additional interpreters from the European Union Agency for Asylum also supported these teams, thereby significantly improving the ability to provide information to new entrants about their rights during reception and identification procedures, and especially in the context of the first stage. The registration staff provided as emergency support by the European Union Agency for Asylum will extend their presence in the RICs/CCASs until the end of 2024, at which point needs will be reassessed.
10. Furthermore, throughout their stay in a Center, residents have free access to the Information Desk and to the Administration in general, so that they can seek assistance and follow up on their case progress.
11. Regarding paragraph 115, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum has sent document no. 171134/22.03.2023 to the Permanent Greek Delegation to the European Union through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with information on the procedures described in Articles 40, 50, and 52 of Law 4939/2022. There has been no reaction from the Commission (supplementary letter, reasoned opinion, or archiving of the case) as to its overall position on the objections raised in the letter. Finally, with regard to article 52 of Law 4939/2022 "Detention of families at the border" (article 11 par. 6 of the Directive), a relevant amending provision has been drawn up, which is expected to be put forward for voting as soon as possible.
12. The Information Unit, as the report also states in paragraph 117, fulfills the legal obligation of providing information to new arrivals regarding the application process for international protection and the provision of material reception conditions. In order to cover the increased (and constantly shifting) multilingual interpretation needs, the Ministry of Health immediately requested assistance for interpretation



provision in the Philos program (medical and psychosocial services). In all Centers, the availability and operating hours of the helpdesks are known to the entire population, and the service is uninterrupted. At the same time, there is close cooperation with the European Union Agency for Asylum, so that within the framework of the "Let's Speak Asylum" initiative, the information material and relevant services are appropriately provided in a homogeneous manner across sites.

13. Regarding what is mentioned in paragraph 119, it should be noted that, as was partially analyzed above (see text on paragraph 107), out of all the islands, Kos received the greatest pressure in proportion to its capacity. Overcrowding increased equipment repair and replacement needs and therefore, despite the framework agreement for maintenance, there were delays in the repair of infrastructure, most often due to the rapid exhaustion of spare parts or the extensive extent of the damage. Damages have been mapped and most are already in the process of repair. At the same time, solutions are being explored that will ensure a faster supply of spare parts, thus securing that housing units are kept in good working order. With regard to placements in a housing unit, and especially with regard to cohabitation, the gradual decongestion of the islands has reduced the ratio of residents per cabin, and the guidelines for allocating residents into housing units according to their family composition and other special characteristics are now fully observed.
14. Regarding paragraphs 120 and 121, as of 1/2/2024 the old facilities of Kos were completely evacuated, while as of 29/3/2024 the use of the facilities of the Pre-departure Center as a place of temporary accommodation ceased.
15. Regarding paragraph 122, the Rubb halls of Lesvos were used as emergency accommodation to increase capacity for the heightened number of arrivals. The necessary construction work was carried out to extend their connection to the electricity grid, while in the meantime the additional sectors were powered by generators. At the same time, in October, 1666 mattresses were initially transported, while in December 4000 blankets were dispatched. In addition, 400 heating devices were purchased and dispatched to temporarily cover heating needs in emergency accommodation areas.
16. Regarding paragraph 125, it should be noted that the communal areas of Samos that were used as emergency accommodation have been fully evacuated and technical work is being carried out to return them to their original use. With occupancy now back to normal levels, sectors are operating in a way that accommodates their intended target groups, and the same applies to housing units intended to accommodate vulnerable people.
17. The General Secretariat for the Reception of Asylum Seekers and the Ministry of Health have already formulated basic planning guidelines for emergency needs that cover, among other things, the procedures of a) emergency increase in accommodation capacity, b) emergency increase in registration and movement capacity, c) access to financial resources for emergency needs, d) safety stock maintenance in non-food items. At the same time, there is close cooperation with key





partners for the above, so that they can participate in the planning, and also support with material or human resources if needed.

18. During the management of increased arrivals on the islands from September onwards, there were gaps of a few days in the provision of specific items on the local level, which were eventually alleviated by using the spare safety stock of other structures located in mainland Greece. New arrivals are always provided with a welcome kit, which includes hygiene items, covering their needs for the initial period, while distribution points operate to provide additional items. A special skin preparation is provided to residents to treat scabies and fleas. Bed linen is washed daily and if this is not possible, extra bed linen is provided to deal with illness.
19. Regarding paragraph 127, inventory monitoring is now also done centrally so that gaps are identified early, and a holistic approach is followed across the board.
20. With regard to catering and what is mentioned in paragraphs 128 and 129, upon the conclusion of the Framework Agreement 26/2021 of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum with catering contractors for the "Provision of Meal Preparation, Transport and Distribution Services to hospitality structures for citizens of third countries or of stateless persons who have applied for international protection" it has been determined that the contractors, in collaboration with the Administration of the commissioning authority, will plan a complete nutritional diet plan, which will cover any dietary restrictions of the beneficiaries (e.g. allergies, vegetarian, intellectual, religious and/or cultural particularities) and take into account the specific religious and cultural practices of the third country nationals and stateless persons when it comes to the preparation of their rations. It is pointed out that the special nutritional needs of the beneficiaries arise after the medical examination of the Medical Examination and Psychosocial Support Scale and/or from any relevant medical opinion. For new arrivals (e.g. on the day of arrival) any special dietary needs (may) arise only from the declarations of the third country national or stateless person. In any case, the special nutritional needs of the population are transmitted on a daily basis to the contractor with the order form.
21. With regards to paragraph 130, in all the Regional Services under the jurisdiction of the Reception and Identification Service, activities are organized for both adult and minor residents through non-formal education programming as well as ad hoc actions, such as excursions, chess tournaments, painting, game workshops, film screenings, and choirs. RIS always encourages such initiatives and agrees that their organization should be systematic.
22. Regarding paragraphs 131 to 136 and the Committee's proposals, the following is noted:

For all unaccompanied minors who arrive at the RICs, the General Secretariat for the Protection of Vulnerable Citizens and Institutional Protection as well as the competent Prosecutor's Office are informed on the same day, so that they can ensure their immediate placement in a suitable housing environment. Cases of unaccompanied young minors, especially girls, are a rare phenomenon and their stay is limited to a



minimum, as they are prioritized by the above Authorities. The Ministry of Migration and Asylum set up a coordination group in December 2023 with the participation of all involved agencies, which aimed to immediately transfer all unaccompanied minors from the RICs to appropriate accommodation. In fact, the number of unaccompanied minors decreased significantly and has remained at low levels since then, with reception procedures being quickly completed. In addition, as of 1/1/2024, the implementation of the "Care III" program began, which provides 24-hour staff presence and additional services for unaccompanied minors in the Safe Zones of the RICs.

As of 1/1/2024, the National Guardianship System and Accommodation Framework for Unaccompanied Minors program is being implemented, which promotes the well-being of unaccompanied minors and ensures their best interests. Finally, it is emphasized that those unaccompanied minors living in Safe Zones receive food by the sponsoring company in restaurants within the accommodation area with a diet that takes into account the special needs and age of the unaccompanied minors.

23. Regarding paragraphs 137 to 140 and the Committee's proposals, it is noted that the "Ippokratis" program will start in the near future, which provides for increased operational capacity in medical and nursing staff, as well as staff that will provide psychosocial services to residents. Until then, the existing medical services are assisted by military doctors and doctors from local hospitals, by staff of the National Public Health Organization who organize missions to places with staff shortages and/or increased needs, and by civil society organizations, at the request of the Ministry. At the same time, in the RICs/CCASs, case management staff from the European Union Agency for Asylum is deployed and participates in the identification of vulnerable persons using standardized checklist-type tools, making referrals as needed to the Medical Control and Psychosocial Support Unit of the site.

Applicants for international protection are assigned a Temporary Number of Insurance and Healthcare for Foreigners (P.A.A.Y.P.A.), which covers their needs for medical care, access to health services, and social security. With this number, applicants have full access to the services provided by the National Health System, including prescription medicine. At the same time, the RICs/CCASs have upgraded the Unified Information System, allowing for the digital storage of residents' medical files and history.

24. Regarding the staffing issues mentioned in paragraphs 149 to 151 as well as the Committee's comments, it is noted that, among other readiness measures, the Reception and Identification Service regularly conducts human resource needs assessment exercises. In this context, the completion of the recent Proclamation 2k/2022 is expected for the "Priority filling of four hundred and seventy-three (473) positions of permanent University, Technological, Secondary and Compulsory Education staff at the Ministry of Migration and Asylum following article 28 of Law 4765 /2021"; this measure will significantly reinforce the Regional Services, so that further sectors and levels can be strengthened. At the same time, the Ministry has just signed the amendment of the Operating Plan 2022-2024 with the European Union



Agency for Asylum and aims to update and secure the number of staff and specialties needed by the RICs/CCASs in order to respond to current needs. Finally, recognizing that the continuous training of staff is an extremely critical factor, RIS has developed an annual training plan which, among other things, covers topics such as introductory training in reception for new staff, introductory training in vulnerability for new staff, vulnerability identification and relevant tools, reception and registration procedures, and cross-cultural issues.

I urge you to share the above-mentioned points with your fellow Committee members and I am at your Committee's disposal for further clarifications.

Yours sincerely,



Dimitris Kairidis



**Response of the Ministry of Maritime affairs and Insular Policy of Greece  
(3 June 2024)**



**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
**ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΝΑΥΤΙΛΙΑΣ & ΝΗΣΙΩΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗΣ**  
**ΑΡΧΗΓΕΙΟ ΛΙΜΕΝΙΚΟΥ ΣΩΜΑΤΟΣ-**  
**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΑΚΤΟΦΥΛΑΚΗΣ**  
**ΚΛΑΔΟΣ ΑΣΦΑΛΕΙΑΣ & ΑΣΤΥΝΟΜΕΥΣΗΣ**  
**ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΩΝ ΣΥΝΟΡΩΝ-**  
**ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΑ ΟΛΟΚΛΗΡΩΜΕΝΗΣ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΑΣ ΕΠΙΤΗΡΗΣΗΣ**  
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**Πειραιάς, 03 Ιουνίου 2024**

**Αριθ. Πρωτ: 2521.8-6/ 40574/2024**

**ΠΡΟΣ: ως Πίνακας Διανομής**

**ΘΕΜΑ: «Επιτροπή για την πρόληψη των Βασανιστηρίων και της απάνθρωπης ή ταπεινωτικής μεταχείρισης ή τιμωρίας (C.P.T.) του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης-Τελική έκθεση σε συνέχεια ad hoc επίσκεψης σε Ελλάδα (24.11-01.12.2023)».**

Σχετ: Το υπ' αρ. πρωτ.: 6691/ΑΣ 366 το από 19-03-2024 έγγραφο σας.

Σε απάντηση ανωτέρω σχετικού σας γνωρίζουμε από πλευράς Λ.Σ-ΕΛ.ΑΚΤ τα ακόλουθα:

1. The mission of the Hellenic Coast Guard is carried out in full compliance with the international obligations of our country based on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the International Convention for the Safety of Human Life at Sea and the International Convention for Naval Research and Rescue and Schengen Acquis. Moreover, thousands of migrants have been rescued by the Greek Coast Guard throughout the migration / refugee crisis and its efforts to assist individuals and ships in distress have been repeatedly recognized and welcomed internationally.
2. In light of the above and according to the records maintained by our Service, nothing emerges while reports about the pushbacks of migrants do not bear any presumption or substance.
3. Furthermore, the Hellenic Coast Guard follow a strict disciplinary legal framework investigating information concerning alleged incidents of ill-treatment at the borders, including allegations for unprocessed returns. In particular, when such allegations arise, a three-level mechanism is in place to address them. This mechanism consists of:
  - (a) The disciplinary procedure within the Authority and the launch of affidavit administrative examinations.
  - (b) The competent prosecutorial Greek Authorities.
  - (c) The Greek Ombudsman and the National Transparency Authority, both independent monitoring Authorities.
4. The H.C.G. acts, within the framework of preliminary investigation jurisdiction in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, respecting the signed International Agreements, European Legislation and always acting under the orders of Mr. Prosecutor who is in charge of said procedure. During the preliminary investigations, the appointment of an interpreter is ensured by the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure.
5. Regarding the access of migrants in the asylum, a permanent circular has been sent to the Port Authorities, which gives clear instructions on the obligatory process that must be followed for migrants to have access to lawyers, doctors and asylum.

6. Moreover, in 2019 we forwarded to the Port Authorities an information brochure of the National Council against Racism and Intolerance on the subject "The Public Administration against Racist Crime".

Our Directorate in 2023 sent to the Port Authorities a reminder order regarding the faithful observance of the articles of the Criminal Procedure Code regarding the rights of prisoners, the physical search, the behavior and the obligations of officials during the arrest/detention /bringing in of persons.

7. In addition, the Study program for Cadets of HCG in accordance with the new Training Regulations, is structured based on the "Common Basic European Curriculum for Border Guards and Coast Guards of the European Agency Frontex – CCC 2017" as its modules have been fully integrated. Within the Study program, a course with the title is included: "Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination", whose subject matter includes among other things the prevention and prohibition of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

8. Finally and as concerns the detention facilities of the Port Authority of Mytilene, after their rescue the migrants are temporarily transferred to a protected place of stay during the stage of the pre-trial investigation of the incident and until they are handed over to the co-competent Authorities for subsequent management (Police Authorities, Services of the Ministry of Immigration, etc.). The time of stay in an area under the jurisdiction of H.C.G. is minimal.

To this end, since 2013, an order has been sent to all Port Authorities highlighting rights of migrants during the time they remain under the responsibility of the Port Authorities.

6. Παρακαλείσθε για την ενημέρωσή σας.

**Ο Διευθυντής Κλάδου Α΄**

**Υποναύαρχος Λ.Σ ΧΑΜΕΤΗΣ Παντελής**

**ΠΙΝΑΚΑΣ ΔΙΑΝΟΜΗΣ:**

**ΑΠΟΔΕΚΤΕΣ ΓΙΑ ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΑ**

**- Μόνιμη Αντιπροσωπεία Στρασβούργου**

**ΑΠΟΔΕΚΤΕΣ ΓΙΑ ΚΟΙΝΟΠΟΙΗΣΗ:**

- ΥΠΕΞ/Δ3 Συμβούλιο της Ευρώπης και Ανθρωπίνων Δικαιωμάτων
- Γρ. κ. Υπουργού ΥΝΑΝΠ (υτα)
- Γρ. κ. ΑΛΣ-ΕΛ.ΑΚΤ (υτα)
- Γρ. κ. Β΄ ΥΛΣ (υτα)
- Γρ. κ. ΔΚΑ΄

**ΕΣΩΤΕΡΙΚΗ ΔΙΑΝΟΜΗ:**

**ΥΟΘΕ – ΔΑΠΘΑΣ**