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LANZAROTE CONVENTION

Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

FOCUSED QUESTIONNAIRE

Protecting children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

TURKEY

(Replies sent by the State)

Replies registered by the Secretariat on 23 September 2016

Revised replies to question 5 registered by the Secretariat on 20 January 2017

DATA (Lanzarote Convention, Chapter III)

1) How many migrant and asylum-seeking children (accompanied and unaccompanied)¹ are in your country as a result of the refugee crisis?

a) Please provide estimates, if exact data is not available, for the period between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2016,² and specify how many of these children are victims or presumed victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse;

As of 04.08.2016, the number of those Syrians who are under the age of 18 and Temporary Protection in our country is 1,213,289. According to the records, 49 Syrian children became victims of "sexual exploitation/abuse" between 01 July 2015 and 30 June 2016. Apart from this, 247 children who were victims of the remaining offences were brought to the Child Follow-up Centers ("ÇİMs")³.

b) Describe how the victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse were identified or describe the challenges faced to identify them. Specify whether a distinction is made between victims of sexual exploitation/abuse prior to the entry on your territory (Group 1) and after entry (Group 2) and provide data/estimates of the two groups of victims. Please also explain how the age is determined in case of doubt;

It is possible to identify those children who are victims of sexual exploitation/abuse through different ways. While the victim or his/her family may directly apply to the law enforcement agencies or judicial authorities, observations of the healthcare or educational institutions are immediately reported to the law enforcement agencies or judicial authorities. Under the Turkish Penal Code, where they have been informed of such an offence, it is compulsory for the public officials to report it to the competent authorities without any delay.

From the perspective of providing protection to those children who are victims of sexual exploitation/abuse, whether the act at stake has been committed within the country or abroad makes no difference. Necessary measures are taken in both cases, which will be explained in detail below.

c) Indicate also how the data collected is used to offer a coordinated response between the different agencies in charge of the protection from, the prevention of and the fight against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children;

Where necessary, in order to ensure the inter-institutional cooperation during the courts' implementation of those protective and supportive measures as prescribed in Article 5 of the Juvenile Protection Law numbered 5395 (measures to be taken with respect to consulting, education, care, health and shelter) for the purpose of protecting the children's best interests; a Central Coordination Meeting is held under the

¹ Please provide the definition of accompanied/unaccompanied children in your country and, if available, provide separate figures for accompanied and unaccompanied children. If such data is not available, please provide data on migrant and asylum-seeking children.

² If figures for this period are not available, please provide the most recent annual data.

³Detailed information related to the Child Follow-Up Centers will be given below.

presidency of the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies or a Deputy Undersecretary to be designated by him/her and with the participation of the Deputy Undersecretaries of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Director General for Child Services and the Director General for Criminal Affairs of the Ministry of Justice. In addition to this, in the provincial implementation of the protective and supportive measures, the liaison, harmony, organization and cooperation between the institutions are ensured under the presidency of the governors or deputy governors and via the chief public prosecutors or deputy chief public prosecutors or public prosecutors to be designated by them, the provincial police chiefs, the provincial gendarme commanders, the provincial directors of national education, the provincial directors of health, the mayors of metropolitan, provincial and district municipalities, the regional directors of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security or, in their absence, the provincial directors of the Turkish Labor Institution, the provincial directors of youth and sports, the provincial directors of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the secretary generals of the Provincial Special Administrations or their assistants or deputies to be designated by them, the chiefs of the Probation and Assistance Centers and the bar association agents. The inter-institutional coordination in the district implementation of the protective and supportive measures is ensured by the district governorates.

Furthermore, the Child Rights Monitoring and Evaluation Board has been instituted under the Prime Ministry Circular numbered 2012/9 and published in the Official Gazette dated 04 April 2012 and numbered 28254 for the purposes of making proposals with respect to the administrative and legal regulations related to the Child Rights, preparing and approving strategy papers and action plans, ensuring the inter-institutional cooperation and the coordination on the Child Rights.

The Board convenes under the presidency of the Minister of Family and Social Policies or, where necessary, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and is composed of senior officials from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, the Ministry of Foreign Relations, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Development, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transportation, Maritime Affairs and Communications, the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the Radio and Television Supreme Council, the Information and Communication Technologies Authority, the Council of Higher Education, the Union of Turkish Bar Associations as well as the Head of the Human Rights Institution under the Prime Ministry, the General Director for Child Services, the national coordinators of Child Rights Committees and a sufficient number of representatives from other institutions and non-governmental organizations that are active in the field of child rights and which will be designated by the Minister of Family and Social Policies.

Besides, the Victim Rights Department has been conducting the preliminary works of the Draft Law on Victim Rights which aims at the establishment of coordination committees under the presidency of the chief public prosecutors or deputy chief public prosecutors to be designated by them in those places where a justice commission is available and

with the participation of the representatives from the public and non-governmental institutions offering services for children for the purposes of making proposals for the settlement of those problems confronted in the provision of support and assistance services to the victims by the public institutions and organizations and the non-governmental organizations, helping the victims solve the economic and psychosocial problems they have faced, and ensuring the coordination between the public and non-governmental institutions providing support and assistance services to the victims.

Moreover, the Victim Rights Department supports the Observatory of Child Friendly Justice for Marginalized Victims of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in Turkey Project, run by the International Children's Center, which will contribute to the improvement of the judicial system in the matter of sexual exploitation/abuse of children in Turkey and which aims at establishing an observatory for the purpose of bringing those regulations and practices prevailing in this field in Turkey into line with the international standards so that the children could have access to a justice system that is conform to the international standards.

Furthermore, the Regulation on Combating Human Trafficking and Protection of Victims was published in the Official Gazette of 17 March 2016 numbered 29656 in an effort to regulate those works and procedures which fall under the scope of the protection of victims of human trafficking and the prevention of human trafficking without making any distinction between the Turkish citizens and foreigners. According to this regulation, the potential victims of human trafficking are directed by law enforcement officers to the Provincial Directorates for Migration Management. In those units, extensive interviews are held and efforts are exerted with a view to identifying the victims.

Besides, for the purposes of determining those policies to be implemented in combating human trafficking, a coordination committee has been instituted under the afore-cited Regulation, which is composed of senior officials from the relevant institutions.

Of those challenges encountered during the identification process, the leading one is that the victims are either not willing to talk as they are afraid or not even aware of their victimhood.

d) Identify the institution(s) responsible for the collection of above data.

The Directorate General for Migration Management is responsible for collecting and analyzing the information supplied by the public institutions and organizations, non-governmental organizations as well as other organizations providing services to the victims at local or international level. Other institutions that are responsible in this field can be enumerated as the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) of the Prime Ministry, the Directorate General for Criminal Records and Statistics of the Ministry of Justice, the Directorate General for Child Services of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

PREVENTION (Lanzarote Convention, Chapter II)

2) What are the specific measures taken to prevent that children affected by the refugee crisis fall victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse?

- a) Highlight in particular the measures (e.g. awareness raising material, specialised training, screening of professionals, etc.) which have proven to be effective;

Diverse activities are conducted by several institutions in order to prevent the children affected by the refugee crisis in our country from falling victims of sexual exploitation/abuse.

1. Directorate General for Migration Management: Within the scope of the Project on Protection of Human Trafficking Victims conducted by the International Organization for Migration and the primary beneficiary of which is the Directorate General for Migration Management and the THB/IFS2 projects conducted by the ICMPD:

- the Directorate General for Migration Management organizes workshops for the personnel of the law enforcement agencies, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the Ministry of Justice.

- the Communication Center for Foreigners (YİMER) has been established to receive those tips and emergency appeals of human trafficking victims. The said line can be reached 24/7 from all over Turkey and abroad with language options including Turkish, English, Arabic, Russian, Persian and German.

- brochures in Turkish, Arabic, English, Russian and Uzbek languages have been distributed in order to raise awareness on the offence of human trafficking.

- information meetings were held for the employees of the Embassies of those origin countries of the offence.

- apart from these, information campaigns and trainings will be organized in order to promote victim identification and pro-active scanning among the vulnerable communities such as migrants within the framework of the Project on Preventing, Identifying and Combating Trafficking of Refugees in Turkey (PICTOR-Turkey) which will be conducted by the ICMPD together with the Directorate General for Migration Management.

2. Ministry of Health: Under the coordination of the Public Health Agency of Turkey, 81 Provincial Directorates of Public Health have been organizing since 2010 awareness-raising trainings on child neglect and sexual exploitation/abuse (Child Follow-Up Centers) for those personnel who work at extremes, encounter children and are likely to encounter children (healthcare personnel, class teachers, school counselors, preschool teachers, personnel at rehabilitation centers, children police, officers at police stations, personnel at the Gendarmerie Children's Bureaus, personnel at the Provincial Directorates of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, instructors at Koran courses, personnel at the Family and Religious Guidance Offices of the Provincial Mufti Offices and lawyers at bar associations etc.) and to the public. Flyers are distributed during the said trainings.

3. Ministry of Family and Social Policies

Within the framework of the "No Lost Generation" initiative financed by the EU MADAD Fund, the "**Social Cohesion Program**" is conducted with the cooperation of our Directorate General and the UNICEF Turkey Country Office for the purposes of ensuring – through the Provincial Committees for Child Rights – the social inclusion of the Syrian children who live out of the camps in Turkey and creating a platform which would enable mutual dialogue and exchange of information between the Turkish and the Syrian children.

The Program aims at minimizing the problems encountered by the Syrian children in their social cohesion, raising their awareness on the actual risks and their sources within the society, enabling them to lead a life in accordance with their rights as well as promoting the intercultural understanding and tolerance.

The Program is conducted in the form of trainings provided through the peer education technique and by those Turkish and Syrian children who are registered to the Provincial Committees for Child Rights. The Social Cohesion Training Module which has been prepared by the trainers and which is based on the empowerment approach provides trainings in Turkish and Arabic languages on the following topics:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- The Society Where We Live In,
- Concepts of Safety, Violence-Exploitation, Discrimination, Child Labor and Early Marriage and Their Prevention,
- Culture-Tolerance-Cooperation,
- Understanding and Communicating with One Another
- Important Institutions from which they could receive services.

Around 7,120 children have been reached so far within the scope of the trainings held in Hatay, Gaziantep, Mardin, Adıyaman, Osmaniye, Adana, Kahramanmaraş, Kilis, Mersin and Şanlıurfa.

The works currently being conducted in 10 provinces will also be extended in 2016 to cover Ankara, Bursa, İstanbul, İzmir, Kayseri, Konya, Kocaeli, Malatya, Edirne and Muğla where the number of those Syrian children living out of the camps is high.

- b) Underline any lessons learnt from specific challenges (e.g. in raising awareness on sexual violence amidst other urgent priorities, etc.) that had to be faced to improve prevention.

The differences between the culture, social life and legal regulations of those children who, having been affected by the refugee crisis, came to our country and the socio-cultural structure and the legal system of our country may raise difficulties in the prevention of such offences. It is crucial in overcoming such difficulties that the refugee children be expeditiously be informed about our country's legal system. As is stated above, information and training activities are conducted by several institutions to this end.

PROTECTION (Lanzarote Convention, Chapter IV)

- 3) Has a coordinated child protection approach been put in place to cater for the specific needs of migrant and asylum-seeking children victims of sexual exploitation and/or sexual abuse?

The Draft Law on Victim Rights – the preliminary works of which have been conducted by the Victim Rights Department of the Ministry of Justice – aims at the establishment of coordination committees under the presidency of the chief public prosecutors or deputy chief public prosecutors to be designated by them in those places where a justice commission is available and with the participation of the representatives from the public and non-governmental organizations offering services for children for the purposes of making proposals for the settlement of those problems confronted in the provision of support and assistance services to the victims by the public institutions and organizations and the non-governmental organizations, helping the victims solve the economic and psychosocial problems they have faced, and ensuring the coordination between the public and non-governmental institutions providing support and assistance services to the victims.

While communicating with those children who have been driven to crime, who have stepped in the judicial system either as a victim or a witness, it is important to proceed by bearing their ages, development and needs in mind in order to prevent them from becoming victims for a second time. To this end, the "Approach to Victims Guide" has been prepared by the Victim Rights Department to be used as a guide and reference by the practitioners – notably the law enforcement officers, health care workers and the judicial professionals – who provide services to the victims and for the purpose of creating awareness among those victims who have sustained the physical, psychological and emotional effects of the committed crimes. 15,000 copies of the said guide have been published to be distributed to the relevant authorities. The guide includes guidelines about the points to be taken into consideration and the rules to be observed by the public officials while providing services to child victims.

- a) Describe the measures taken to address the situation and cater for the children's specific needs (multiple traumas, language/cultural differences, etc.), including with respect to guardianship/placement;

In this context, various activities are conducted by several institutions:

1. Ministry of Health:

The goals included in the National Mental Health Plan of the Ministry of Health are "Enhancing the National Institutional Capacity to Provide Support in Cases of Disaster and Trauma" and "Conducting Works For Preventing Traumatic Childhood Experiences". Likewise, the goals included in the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan of the same Ministry are "Precluding Traumatic Childhood Experiences That Are Likely to Have Adverse Effects on Mental Development" and "Improving Service Delivery Before and After Cases of Emergency and Disaster". In line with these goals, **the Public Health Agency of Turkey organizes** – with the support of the personnel of the Ministry of National Education – the "Psychosocial Protection, Prevention and Crisis Response Program Training" **for the**

purposes of having the primary healthcare personnel providing psychosocial support services for children **learn the concept of trauma, notice the adverse effects of trauma on childhood mental development and enhancing their skills and knowledge of basic approaches.** In addition, with the support of the Ministry of Health, trainings on "Approaching and Prevention of Traumas among the Children and the Adolescents" have been organized for school counselors in order to promote and develop the qualifications of the personnel of the Ministry of National Education.

2. Ministry of Family and Social Policies:

Those children who have entered our country without the company of a major who – by virtue of the laws or the customs – is responsible for them as well as those children who have drifted apart from their families are taken under the care and protection of the institutions that are subordinate to our Directorate General.

Unaccompanied children between the ages of 0 and 12 receive services from the Children Houses, the Children Houses Sites, the Children Care Houses, the nursery schools and the orphanages that are subordinate to our Ministry. From among the unaccompanied children, those who have become victims of crime, have been driven to crime, live on the streets and who are pregnant and drug addict receive services from the Children Support Centers that have the necessary specialization as required by the children's age groups (11-14 and 15-18) and sexes. As for the unaccompanied children between the ages of 13 and 18, the children support centers have been established in Ağrı, Konya, Yozgat, Gaziantep, Bilecik, Erzincan, İstanbul and Van. In our institutions, unaccompanied children are provided with care, nutrition, education and healthcare services as well as other services such as providing employment, language training etc. in cooperation with the relevant public institutions and organizations.

The ANKA Psychosocial Child Support Program is conducted in those Children Support Centers where the unaccompanied children - who have become victims of crime, have been driven to crime, live on the streets, are pregnant and drug addict - are under care and protection.

The program comprises modules such as ensuring personality development, changing the behaviors associated with crime and drug addiction, improving regular life skills, and these modules are applied to the addicted children.

The ANKA Child Support Program, which aims at ensuring a multi-perspective approach and involvement, consists of the Individual Needs and Risks Assessment Form (the "BİRDEF"), Group Works, Individual Consultancy, Family Studies, Supportive Environment Components, Guidelines of Approach for Supportive Personnel, Institutional Approach for Crisis Intervention.

For every child admitted in a child support center, a person is assigned - by the director of the center – as his/her counselor from among those professionals who work as social workers, psychologists, sociologists, psychological counselors, teachers or child development experts. The counselor fills up the Individual Needs and Risks Assessment Form (the "BİRDEF") for the child within the first 10 days.

The Individual Needs and Risks Assessment Form (the "BİRDEF") is composed of 68 questions addressing 13 problematic fields such as the child's way and reason to come to the center, his/her educational status, his/her family's economic status, the place where he/she lives, his/her friend relationships, his/her physical and mental condition, whether he/she uses substance, whether he/she has been abused or driven to crime, his/her personal characteristics, his/her behavioral problems, his/her family's characteristics and 6 questions dealing with the strengths. Once the form has been filled up, the child and his/her family are provided with work group and individual consultancy services depending on the needs and risks which show up.

3. Ministry of Justice

At the present time, psychologists, pedagogues and social workers at family courts in courthouses draw up reports and thereby assist courts during the cases such as divorce, child custody, adoption, personal relationship. Likewise psychologists, pedagogues and social workers at family courts prepare the social survey reports requested by the court in respect of the child victims who have been driven to crime.

Besides, teachers, psychologists, social workers and sociologists at probation directorates work on the rehabilitation and the reintroduction to society of the child victims who have been driven to crime.

In addition to all these, it is aimed with the Draft Law on Victim Rights – the preliminary works of which have been conducted by the Victim Rights Department – that the Directorates for Victims and Judicial Support Services be instituted to fulfill tasks such as providing – at courthouses – those victims qualified as vulnerable groups – which also include child victims – with consultancy services/psychosocial support and offering compensation and employment services in the settlement of their psychosocial problems. Moreover, it is envisaged that these services would also be provided for those who have suffered from the crime in the event of death of the victim.

- b) Indicate also what measures have been taken to protect the children concerned from further exploitation/abuse and to assist the victims in seeking redress (please highlight any differences between Groups 1 and 2 of children as outlined above);

The Directorate General for Migration Management fulfill the proceedings related to the children described as victims of human trafficking pursuant to the Juvenile Protection Law. Those children who are described as victims of sexual exploitation/abuse are directed by the Provincial Directorates for Migration Management to the relevant units of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

The units of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies carry out the following activities:

Individual Consultancy;

Within the framework of the individual consultancy works, modules of running away from home, self-injury, suicide, victim of exploitation/abuse, crisis management and trauma are applied.

Group Works;

The group works consist of 5 sections – such as individual development, healthy living, emotional regulation, addiction and pregnancy – and 78 sessions. Each session lasts 45 minutes. While modules of individual development and healthy living are applied to all children, other modules which are applied according to the circumstances such as being driven to crime, victim of exploitation/abuse, drug addict and pregnant, anger management, impulse control disorder are applied by considering the children's individual differences and needs.

The Addiction Module of Group Works is conducted in sessions that are titled as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Before the Sessions | 10. Not to Give Prompt Reaction |
| 2. Effects of Alcohol | 11. Learning How to Control Oneself |
| 3. Substances and Their Effects | 12. Coping with Drug Cravings |
| 4. What is Addiction? | 13. Getting out of the Vortex |
| 5. Don't Get Conditioned | 14. Risky Situations |
| 6. Brain and Addiction | 15. Saying "No" is for the Best |
| 7. Addiction Discredits | 16. Stones of the Path to Recovery from Addiction |
| 8. Devil's Advocate | 17. New Stones of the Path to Recovery from Addiction |
| 9. Hazardous Candies | 18. Quitting Smoking |

The sessions are designed for the children who use substances and who are active alcohol abusers. In addition to the general group rules to be respected during the group works, some other group rules have been determined for those who use alcohol-substance, and these rules are put into effect during relevant sessions. During the first session and at the beginning of each subsequent session of group works, these rules are reminded; it is after then that the sessions are initiated.

During the sessions, forms are used for exercises, and those who are not literate enough are assisted. The session on the adverse effects of alcohol and smoking – which is included in the addiction module – is also lectured as a preventive training to those young ones who do not use alcohol-substance. While the sessions are designed as open group works, it is also possible to conduct them, in line with the practitioner's request, in close groups and by following the session order.

Family Studies;

In family studies, whether a given family is prone to run the risk of acting in a manner to endanger the child's security is evaluated in the first place. Where there is not any impediment against the child's meeting his/her family, an agreement is made with the participation of the family. Within the framework of the program, the families are provided with individual consultancy services on empowering family-child relationship, effective parenting skills, approaching those children who are driven to crime, drug addict and victims of abuse.

Supportive Environment Components;

Coupled with the effective consultancy system, the supportive environment components – as a part of the program - ensure active follow-up of every child staying at the center. The children and the personnel are informed of the program and its components; counselors and care personnel who will work subject to these counselors are determined; a "when starting the day" meeting is held with the children; and the children are given responsibilities by their counselors according to their ages and development levels and in a manner which would not bestow privileges upon them and value one child above others. In accordance with the principle of the child's right to participate, an agreement is made with the children.

Scoring and Grading;

The scoring and grading system is an award-oriented system which evaluates and encourages the child's individual development in order to ensure organization at the centers. Ideally 3 but at least 2 grades are formed at the centers, and the higher the child's grade is, the better opportunities the child has other than his/her natural and legal rights. A child who has arrived at the center for the first time starts from the first grade; those children who respect the rules, participate in group works and other activities score points; and those who get high scores on a regular basis move up to the upper grade or down to the lower grade in the contrary case. Every center creates its proper scoring and grading system.

Institutions' Daily Life Routine;

The daily life routines of the centers are structured in line with the program; the social, cultural and sportive activities as well as vocational courses are planned in accordance with the children's development levels by considering their characteristics, interests, skills and needs; and the rules that are created in line with this plan are hung in a size big enough to be seen by both the children and the personnel and at convenient points of the center.

Institutional Approach for Crisis Intervention;

An institutional approach is determined at the centers, which would be adopted while intervening in crisis situations such as fight, substance abuse, self-injury, sexual exploitation/abuse, suicide risk and attempt, loss of a relative and breaking bad news.

Follow-up and Assessment;

Under the ANKA Child Support Program, the support programs customized for every child are assessed once in every three months, and the developments achieved during the program are monitored. After the assessment, whether the child will be returned to his/her family or continue to participate in the program in a different social services institution is determined.

ANKA Base Personnel Training Program;

The ANKA Base Personnel Training Program – which is one of the components of the ANKA Child Support Program composed of 12 modules – is implemented for the purposes of supporting all personnel including directors, counselors, care, security and cleaning personnel, cook etc. who work at child support centers, developing a common understanding and approach during the children's rehabilitation process, and standardizing the trainings.

Subject Headings of the Module include:

1. Presentation on the ANKA Child Support Program
2. Communication
3. Approach to the Child
4. Supporting the Children's Development
5. Developing Positive Behaviors
6. Awareness-Raising Training on First Aid
7. Hygiene and Cleaning
8. Adequate and Balanced Nutrition
9. Risks and Risky Behaviors
10. Crisis Intervention
11. Limits and Our Responsibilities
12. Team Work

The Ministry of National Education conducts the following activities:

The Ministry updated the relevant legislation in order to enhance the scope and the capacity of the activities conducted for the Syrian, and the Circular no. 2014/21 was issued in October 2014. Moreover, the Regulation on the Non-Formal Education Institutions was revised, which lifted those obstacles preventing the Syrian from benefiting from the public education services.

It is on the basis of two main approaches that the Ministry conducts its activities for the Syrian and Iraqi people who are under temporary protection. The first one of them is including those Syrian and Iraqi people who lead their lives scatteredly all over Turkey into the current education system together with the Turkish citizens and enabling them have access to the services. In this vein, there is no obstacle against the students' maintaining their education together with their Turkish peers starting from preschool until 12th grade. Furthermore, the Syrian students continue to be admitted to the public and private schools. The second approach, on the other hand, is our activity conducted with a view to educating the Syrian in those cities of ours and the temporary

accommodation centers where they live and coexist densely, through a program specially prepared for them, in their own language and with the support of their proper teachers. In accordance with the Circular no. 2014/21, “temporary education centers” are being inaugurated within the temporary accommodation centers and in those regions where the Syrian and the Iraqi live densely. In those centers, the Turkish teachers teach the Syrian students Turkish, while volunteer Syrian teachers give other lessons in their own language. In doing so, it is aimed that the children would resume their education without a gap year, learn Turkish in the same time and thus be included in the Turkish education system. Works are under way for the student orientation program. 77,018 have already been taught Turkish in 2016. Summer courses are planned for teaching Turkish.

The Ministry of Justice conducts the following activities:

Child-Friendly Interview Rooms have been established in 31 Provinces. The Child-Friendly Interview Rooms are those rooms that are technically equipped and in tune with the SEGBİS (the Sound and Image Informatics System) which provide the appropriate conditions to interview with the children who have come to the courthouses. Its standards were set within the framework of the **Justice for Children Project** conducted between 2012 and 2014 with the financial support of the EU and the technical support of the UNICEF and in partnership with the Training Department, the Directorate General for Prisons and Detention Houses of the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors and the Justice Academy of Turkey. Works are under way on those matters related to the operation of these rooms.

The Child Follow-up Centers have been established within the body of those hospitals/institutions that are subordinate to the Ministry of Health for the purposes of minimizing the secondary traumatization of sexually exploited/abused children and ensuring that the judicial and medical procedures are fulfilled at one sitting and in a center composed of the persons educated in these fields. The Child Follow-up Centers receive the sexually exploited/abused children who have come via the prosecutor’s offices or those children who are suspected to have been sexually exploited/abused.

In July 2016, the Victim Rights Department prepared a report titled “Child Neglect and Abuse: Legislation, Services Provided, Practical Problems and Solution Proposals” in order to contribute to the works of the Parliamentary Investigation Committee instituted to investigate all cases of child abuse - notably sexual exploitation/abuse – and to set the measures necessary to be taken and presented it to the said Committee.

In addition to all these, it is aimed with the Draft Law on Victim Rights – the preliminary works of which have been conducted by the Victim Rights Department – that Victims and Judicial Support Services Directorates would be instituted to fulfill tasks such as providing – in courthouses - those victims qualified as vulnerable groups – which also include child victims – with consultancy services/psychosocial support and offering compensation and employment services in the settlement of their psychosocial problems. Furthermore, it is envisaged that these services would also be provided for those who have suffered from the crime in the event of death of the victim.

- c) Underline any lessons learnt from specific challenges (in reporting suspicion of sexual exploitation and abuse, in tailoring assistance to the victims, etc.) that had to be faced to improve protection.

The main challenges confronted can be enumerated as follows:

- The institutions and persons that are obliged to notify do not have much knowledge about the notification mechanism or they have reservations about running this mechanism.
- The families do not know what they should do during the process, and they have concerns.
- In some cases, the statement taken in the ÇİM is not considered sufficient by the judge, the child is once more summoned to the court where he/she is traumatized for a second time during the statement taking.
- Difficulties encountered during the implementation and monitoring of the injunctions issued.

The offence of sexual exploitation/abuse is mostly concealed. Therefore, it may be necessary to intervene promptly. It is necessary to take the measures required to determine such situations faster.

COOPERATION (Lanzarote Convention, Chapter IX)

- 4) Provide examples of successful cooperation with other Parties to the Lanzarote Convention for the purpose of:
 - a) Preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children affected by the refugee crisis;
 - b) Protecting and providing assistance to victims;
 - c) Investigations or proceedings concerning the offences established in accordance with the Lanzarote Convention.

Besides being party to the international conventions on the matter, Turkey also signed agreements and protocols with numerous countries on cooperation in combating transnational organized crime and human trafficking.

Workshops were organized with the cooperation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (the UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration and the World Health Organization. Within this scope, Turkey held trainings on the measures to be taken for the protection of the Syrians out of the accommodation centers.

ANY OTHER ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 5) Please provide any other additional information which may be useful to identify areas for targeted cooperation aimed at ensuring that children affected by the refugee crisis are effectively protected from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and in guaranteeing their human dignity and physical and psychological integrity.

Below we provide additional information about the paragraph in the last part of the Report of Replies to the Questionnaire of the Lanzarote Committee on the Protection of Refugee Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, which indicates that the number of early and forced marriages of Syrian refugee children in Turkey has alarmingly increased.

As we have pointed out in our previous note, this information is based neither on the official responses sent by our Central Authority, nor on any other substantial research. On the contrary, the fact that this assessment rests on certain rumours is stated also in the document, forming the basis of the report. For this reason, we would like to bring the following matters to your attention:

1. Trainings provided in our country to Syrian children for enabling them to protect themselves against sexual abuse:

According to the data provided by the Ministry of National Education, the state provides education to 60% of school-aged Syrian children in Turkey. This ratio is 94% for children of elementary school age.

The education, provided in our country to Syrian children is not limited only to formal education. Informal training and education are also provided. 237,509 people received vocational trainings during years 2015 and 2016. These trainings are being provided in collaboration with UNICEF, the EU and the World Bank. New schools are being built for Syrian children.

These children are taught Turkish language, they are being taught the skills of how to sustain themselves during their stay in our country and they are given vocational courses, too.

Apart from these; education, training and psychological consulting services are being provided to children forced into crime, they are being informed and educated on the matters of "hard living conditions and traumatic events, how to prevent an abuse".

Additionally, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies provides these children with education in Turkish and Arabic languages on subject, among which there are:

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- Safety, Security, Violence and Abuse, Discrimination, Child Labour, Child Marriages,
- Important Institutions they could get help from.,
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As evidenced above, we try to spread awareness among children, enabling them to defend themselves against child marriages and defend their rights in general.

2. Protective and Supportive Measures:

Within the scope of a Social and Economic Support (SED) service, the General Directorate for Social Assistance and the Foundation for Social Assistance and Solidarity, provide aid for needy families, who are unable to support their children and who do not receive any financial assistance from the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. This service is open to and can be utilized by foreign citizens as well.

The purpose of the works, conducted in this regard, is to reduce the social cohesion problems experienced by Syrian children, to warn and teach them about the risks they are exposed to as well as the resources available in the society, to raise their awareness of their rights, and to increase tolerance and interaction among cultures.

The Ministry of Health provides awareness trainings to public servants and to people in general, who are in high probability of frequently interacting with refugee children, concerning negligence and abuse of children.

3. Works, conducted by the Directorate General of Immigration Services with regard to unaccompanied minors coming to our country

In Law No.6458 on Foreigners and International Protection, the term “unaccompanied minor” is defined as *“a child who arrives on the territory of Turkey unaccompanied by an adult responsible for him or her, whether by law or by practice, or a child who is left unaccompanied after he or she has entered the territory of Turkey, and for as long as he or she is not effectively taken into the care of such an adult”*. According to the Regulations on temporary protection, unaccompanied minors are placed in shelters under the coordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies.

The Directorate General of Immigration Services organizes training seminars about children left unaccompanied.

Through Law No.6458, the Directorate General of Immigration Services has set up within itself an Office of Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking and Regulations have been issued and enacted on the issue, aiming to prevent people from committing this crime and to provide support for its victims.

These Regulations treats forced marriages also as a form of human trafficking, so forced marriages are placed within the authority of the Office of Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking.

4. Investigation and Prosecution Proceedings

Notwithstanding whether the victim is a refugee in our country or a foreigner, these children are being subjected to the same domestic law procedures that are applied to Turkish citizens.

The same laws as those applied to regular Turkish citizens are being applied in our country to victim refugee children, notwithstanding the fact that they are foreigners.

Criminal investigation and prosecution proceeds are initiated by a report, complaint or by obtaining direct information that a forced or an early marriage has occurred. According to the legislation of the Republic of Turkey, early marriage constitutes sexual abuse of the child and is severely punished. Marriages below the age limit are not valid.

In conclusion, refugee children in our country are being provided with the necessary education services on early or forced marriage, needy children and their families are given financial and material assistance. We have the legislative capacity to start investigation process promptly and effectively as well as to punish the perpetrators severely once the authorities receive any information that such an act has occurred. Furthermore, information we have received from the security forces and other government institutions demonstrates that the allegations indicated in the report are unfounded. For this reason, we kindly ask the Committee to revise and correct these unfounded allegations in the report.