

CwC MEETING NOTES

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| CwC Meeting | |
| Meeting Subject | CwC Working Group Meeting |
| Date, Time & place of meeting | 12/10/2016, 14:00-15:40, UNHCR Athens Office |
| Meeting Chair | Rachel Maher (UNHCR) |
| Minutes/notes prepared by | Paata Simsive |
| Present (organizations) | UNHCR; Solidarity Now; Refucomm; Oxfam; DRC; HRC; IFRC; IRC; Internews; Melissa Network, Salvation Army, Translators Without Borders. |

Agenda:

1. Questions comments on Q/A leaflet.

| Point/details | Details/Going forward/action points | |
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| Registration Q/A leaflet | <p>Q/A leaflet drafted by CwC and Asylum Service with complementary questions regarding Registration procedures (including Syrian fast-track system, fingerprinting and transportation) was distributed in hard copy and the attendees were asked to provide comments. It was noted that some questions have not yet been included because they are still under review by Asylum Service.</p> <p>There is a need for information about destination countries on the Relocation scheme. There is not yet much statistical information on whether people eligible to be relocated from Greece actually accept all offers. Many people deny relocation in countries such as Romania or Bulgaria in part because of the lack of information about these countries. Refer to EASO.</p> | Action Point: once all questions are signed off by the Asylum Service, will share Q & A more widely. |

2. Main issues discussed during the meeting

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| Access to labour market. | <p>Due to questions arising regarding PoC rights and benefits, a UNHCR representative briefed the CwC WG on labour rights of refugees and access to the labor market.</p> <p>From April 2016 onwards, due to changes in the national legislation, refugees in Greece no longer need any further permission, such as a work permit, in order to access the labour market. This however, does not (yet) apply in the case of pre-registered people because they are not fully registered asylum seekers. There is currently no legislation allowing them access to labour market, even though the government has announced there is an intention of opening up the right to work to pre-registered candidates.</p> <p>Practically, there are certain regulations and requirements that all refugees need to satisfy to have access to the labour market. Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They need to have a refugee card. - Tax Reg. Number (AFM). - Social Security Number (AMKA) - In the case they wish to work at restaurant or similar establishment they will need an additional permits certifying their good hygiene standards | <p>Action Points:</p> <p>Solidarity Now to share the existing information including a list of tax offices/Citizens Service Centres (KEP) offices that facilitate the procedures; UNHCR to contact Greek Forum for Refugees to follow up on information available.</p> |
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| <p>Specific problems related to tax authorities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under certain circumstances, a bank account might also be needed. <p>As it was pointed out during the discussion, obtaining Tax Reg. Number is often a major problem. Tax authorities usually ask for a permanent address, while many refugees have no such address and that unofficial sites are not recognised as a place of residence. One of the reasons why tax authorities ask a proof of address is to determine the local competency of the right tax office. It was advocated during the discussion that tax offices should rely on the address mentioned on the refugee card.</p> | |
| <p>Issues related to the language</p> | <p>All authorities provide information only in Greek. However, certain authorities have developed materials regarding the access to employment in English. Many NGOs provide their own guidelines. This might cause duplication of the provided information.</p> <p>In addition, even if refugees are well informed, they still face language problems since all application forms need to be filled in and submitted in Greek, so they will need support to access the labor market.</p> <p>Possible solutions: NGOs do have the right to advocate, either by accompanying the PoCs through case-management system, or by providing support from a lawyer. It was mentioned that if they do so, to document the intervention to the UNHCR.</p> <p>One more way to address this problem could also be to provide NGOs with a list of tax offices/Citizens Service Centres (KEP) offices that facilitate the procedures. This solution however, will be restricted to those offices that have a local authority in each individual case. It was reminded that there were similar problems with KEP.</p> <p>UNHCR to may be able to provide support the Greek Council of Refugees to update the material available online in line with the legislation. UNHCR was requested to consider referring issues raised and complaints to the ministry to ask for a possible solution of the problems related to Tax Offices.</p> | |
| <p>Winterization/NFI distribution</p> | <p>SMS focal point - presentation on Winterization plan(NFIs)</p> <p>17-31 October: Several winter items such as sleeping bags, ponchos, socks, blankets, etc. will be delivered to all sites by UNHCR and distributed throughout Greece by site management and partners in a major operation through October to cover gaps for winter.</p> <p>There are some top priority sites, such as Katsika in Ioannina. Priorities are made by the government; the distribution is made on the basis of “who needs it most”, due to geography/weather and camp conditions. All camps will be covered in this one off distribution.</p> <p>Messaging to field workers and PoCs to inform population of upcoming distribution has been drafted and will be disseminated.</p> | |