



# AUTh IO5

## Supporting Refugees on Health and Law Issues S.U.C.R.E.

Anna-Maria Konsta  
School of Law  
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki



ARISTOTLE  
UNIVERSITY OF  
THESSALONIKI



VRIJE  
UNIVERSITEIT  
AMSTERDAM



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# IO5-Deliverables and Objective

- D9: A digital/online module and monitoring/recommendations guidelines for trainers regarding health support of refugees
- D10: A digital/online module and monitoring/recommendations guidelines for trainers regarding legal support of refugees
- The main objective for IO5 is: Health and legal training on immigration and asylum addressed to persons and organizations(governmental, NGOs, local) involved in the reception of migrants/asylum seekers.

# IO5 – Project Activities

- Activity 1: Developing training modules on issues related to Legal services
- Activity 2: Developing training modules on issues related to health care services
- Activity 3: Developing training modules on issues related to health care and legal services
- Activity 4: Monitoring and evaluation of the health/legal support

# IO5-Activity 1

- Developing training modules on issues related to Legal services. This activity deals with legal training on the current EU and national legal framework on immigration and asylum addressed to persons and organizations (governmental, NGOs, local) involved in the reception of migrants/asylum seekers.

# Activity 2

- Developing training modules on issues related to health care services. This activity has as its main objective to develop a training module on issues related to health services/support in the country reception and/or at reception places of immigrants/refugees as well as on providing counseling and basic information to newcomers.

# Activity 3

- Developing training modules on issues related to health care and legal services. This activity deals more specifically with health insurance and social protection of the refugees/immigrants, specifying their relevant rights and assessing the available resources on these issues.

# Activity 4

- Monitoring and evaluation of the health/legal support. This activity monitors how the respective module is implemented as well as listening to feedback from project recipients.

# Activities 1-3

- For Activities 1-3, AUTh and GCR had to:
  - Identify potential participants (organizations and people)
  - Mobilize participants and construct 1 focus group
  - contribute to the bibliography, study material and session plans for the development of the online module



# Activities 1-3

- VU Amsterdam and University of Cologne had to:
- Distribute questionnaires and/or conduct interviews with individual refugee students in their respective Universities in an attempt to identify refugee specific legal needs both in educational and community contexts.
- Submit a report on the questionnaires/interviews results including examples of good practices.
- Contribute to the bibliography for the online courses preferably in English.

# Activity 4

- AUTh and the GCR had to:
- contribute to a final report on monitoring/recommendations guidelines for trainers regarding legal and health support for refugees, which would include the results of the focus group for each activity, and questionnaires/interviews.
- All partners should have had 1-2 skype meetings for feedback. There were regular skype meetings with the partner universities.

# AUTh

- collected the bibliography,
- prepared, after request by the partners, the questionnaires for activities 1-3 to be handed out to refugee students by VU Amsterdam and University of Cologne. Both partner Universities edited the questions and prepared the final questionnaires,
- organized the material for the online module,
- identified and mobilized participants for the focus group for each activity,
- organized the focus group for activities 1-3,
- produced the final educational material,
- produced the final report on monitoring/recommendations guidelines for trainers regarding legal and health support for refugees.

# GCR

- GCR contributed mainly on the legal aspects of IO5, i.e. activities 1,3 and 4 at all stages of its involvement in the project. In the case of activity 2 related to support of refugees on health issues, GCR provided support on the identification and mobilization on potential participants.

# Questionnaires

- 24 refugee students answered the questionnaires in the case of VU Amsterdam,
- 8 refugee students answered the questionnaires in the case of the University of Cologne.

# Focus group for activities 1-3

- Organized by AUTh on 10.03.2017 took place at the Building of Basic Sciences of the Medical School
- Participants: GCR (members of social and economic services), members of Doctors of the World (doctors and social workers) and lawyers - members of NGOs (13 participants in total).
- The same group convened separately for each activity.



# Focus Group on Activity 1

## **On legal issues the following topics were discussed:**

- The need for special training of the trainers or anyone involved in refugee/immigrant issues.
- The issue of humanitarian visa.
- The importance of knowing refugee status.
- Gender and Sexuality issues pertaining to the refugees and immigrants, should be brought forth and addressed. Relevant CJEU cases for homosexual immigrants/refugees and/or gang rape incidents.
- Document validation eg Student Status.
- Linguistic issue – Problematic issues in document translation.
- Organizing camp life based on professional expertise.
- Nationality issues. The case of Stateless immigrants. Law concerning immigration cover those issues.
- Agreement with Turkey.

# Focus group on Activity 2

- **On medical issues the following topics were discussed:**
- First aid administration.
- Education of the refugees/immigrants concerning disease prevention. The role of their culture and religion.
- Vaccination.
- The issue of not being able to run paraclinical tests for free in public Health Centers.



# Focus Group on Activity 3

- **On health insurance, social protection:**
- Problems with the issuing of the social security number (SSN), Tax Registration Number (TRN) and the issuing of unemployment card by the Manpower Employment Organization (MEO).

- During the focus groups for each separate activity (activities 1-3), the practical problems (legal and medical) that refugees/migrants face daily in refugee camps, and in places of more permanent accommodation, as well as issues of social protection, were discussed. In particular, proposals were made regarding the better integration of refugees/migrants in higher education.
- After processing the results of the focus group in relation to the first three activities of IO5, the AUTh team research team in cooperation with the GCR team has produced the digital educational/training material.



# Training Material – Activity 1

The educational material concerning law issues consists of five parts:

- Part I: useful definitions on refugee law matters.
- Part II: the refugee status determination (RSD) according to the UNHCR Refugees' Determination status handbook.
- Part III: normal and special asylum procedures, according to Directive 2013/32/EU, and Greek Law 4375/2016.
- Part IV: the minimum standards of reception conditions according to Directive 2013/33/EU and the Greek Presidential Decree 220/2007 in combination with the Greek Laws 4375/2016 and 4368/2016.
- Part V: the administrative detention of asylum seekers according to Greek Laws 4375/2016, 3907/2011 and 3386/2005.
- Moreover, the bibliography of the theoretical basis concerning refugee protection law, and useful educational material, such as relevant case-law and legislative texts are to be found attached in this part of the course.

# Training Material – Activity 2

- It consists of a detailed presentation on first aid issues and it is divided into the following topics:
- Aim of First Aid,
- Stages of action,
- Resuscitation position,
- Handling and How to deal with fainting, electrocution, bleeding, burn and choking.
- The material is supplemented by a detailed pamphlet on first aid written by the AUTh team, and extra material with information regarding protection from natural disasters, such as earthquakes or fires.

# Training Material – Activity 3

- It consists of the following parts:
- Part I: the conditions of access to health in AIDA (Asylum Information Database) countries and the specialized treatment to victims of torture, according to the recast Reception Conditions Directive.
- In Parts II and III) other matters of social protection policy are described, such as:
  - the issue of pension of uninsured adults,
  - the necessary requirements and the documents needed to be acquired by refugees,
  - the recognized social rights of refugees,
  - the basic social benefits on behalf of refugees,
  - and the difficulties they have to confront regarding social insurance.
- Finally, in Part IV, more specific issues of social protection policy are examined, such as the disability allowance and the allowance for unprotected children.
- Relevant legislative texts are attached to this material.

# Report – Activity 4

- This report includes best practices / recommendations which have been based mainly on the results of the focus groups.

# IO5-Recommendations I

- Taking into account the results of the focus groups for each activity, SUCRE - IO5 makes the following proposals - recommendations:
- Regarding access to asylum, Turkey should not be considered as first country of asylum (for Syrian refugees) and safe third country (for Syrians and other nationalities) by the Greek authorities. Asylum seekers should not be returned to Turkey.
- Regarding asylum procedures, fast-track border procedure should not apply because they do not provide adequate safeguards. The composition of the Appeal Committees should guarantee the right to effective remedy.

# I05-Recommendations II

- Reception conditions for asylum seekers including housing, healthcare and education should be provided by the State in conformity with International, European and EU Law (See Directive 2013/33/EU).
- Alternative to detention measures should be used instead of detention. Children should never be detained.
- There is a need for special training of trainers or anyone involved in refugee/immigrant issues. It is very important both for trainers and trainees to know the refugee status as described by the manual of the UNHCR . In this respect simplification of this manual is needed for training purposes.



# I05-Recommendations III

- Gender and Sexuality issues pertaining to the refugees and immigrants, should be brought forth and addressed. In the training material relevant CJEU cases for homosexual immigrants/refugees and/or gang rape incidents should be included.
- There are problematic issues in document translation, which is often made by private individuals. Validation of these documents is needed. It is of prime importance that any refugee document submitted to public authorities should be certified by a central body, such as the university for example, in order for a refugee or an asylum seeker to acquire the student status.
- The interviewing process of the refugees is more like an interrogation process. Basic guidelines that are given do not let them be relaxed during the interviewing process. There is a need for collaboration between the specialists involved. There is also a need for a proper translator when sensitive issues are discussed, especially when they pertain to unwanted pregnancies, gender/gexuality issues, domestic violence etc. The translator's behaviour is equally important to hers/his technical expertise. Universities with their respective language and psychology departments may contribute in this process.

# IO5-Recommendations IV

- Camp life should be organized on the basis of professional expertise. There should be : a) Decentralization of the camp life. Bodies should be formed according to the expertise of the camp residents, through supply of voluntary work. In order though for the residents to be allocated to several posts, they should be evaluated by relevant experts. b) The tasks of each team should be documented c) A Code of conduct should be followed according to central guidelines, for example it is deemed appropriate that any entity sent to the camp should be trained.
- Any teaching and complementary educational material addressed to trainers and/or trainees should be in a mobile/smartphone friendly form.
- The case of being accepted for studying in another member state's higher education institution: Up to now individual universities decide, but there is no best practice insofar. The refusal of academic admittance in another member state could violate the freedom of the immigrant/refugee's mobility.

# IO5-Recommendations V

- Concerning first aid administration: There should be education on first aid matters but also on how medicine is stored based on its active substance.
- There should be education/training of the refugees/immigrants concerning disease prevention. The role of their culture and religion may sometimes be an impediment in this respect. Also, there is the problem that immigrants/refugees are usually in transit status, so the population of the camp is in constant flux, and do not have the time to be properly informed. Special on camp training sessions involving actively refugees should be organized.
- In cases of no valid documents concerning vaccination in the refugees' country of origin, they need to be vaccinated at the reception country. There has been confusion concerning the new ministerial decisions in Greece (for example, children in schools) and vaccinations are carried out depending on stock availability. There is urgent need for a clear central governmental position on this issue, which concerns public safety.

# IO5-Recommendations VI

- Regarding the issue for refugees, and especially asylum seekers in Greece to run paraclinical tests in Health Centers, there is the problem that they are not able in practice to have such tests. There are no restrictions on paraclinical tests in Health Centers but despite that, in practice, the heads of the Centers decline to run them with no excuse provided. There is also the problem of lack of computerisation in Health Centers which has to be resolved.
- The issuing process of SSN (social security number) in Greece should be uniform and not case-dependant based on CSC (Citizens Service Center). Same should happen for TRN (Tax Registration Number) and the issuing of unemployment card from MEO (Manpower Employment Organization). There is a need for communication with the relevant municipalities and ministries in Greece.

# Impact of project

- The first impact of the project in the context of the focus groups organized for activities 1-3 of IO5 was positive. There was a consensus among the participants that there is generally a lack of organized training material on supporting refugees on health and legal issues.
- In September 2017, the educational material has already been created, and it will be used in the second year of the SUCRE project for training purposes. We are planning to hand in questionnaires to the selected trainees regarding their opinion on the efficiency of the training material. So, results on the overall impact of the project are to be expected by the time of completion of the SUCRE project.

# Concluding Remarks

- There is a need for special training of trainers or anyone involved in refugee/immigrant issues. The Universities could be the responsible bodies for organizing these training courses.
- There is a need for the programme to continue, in order to produce trainers. In this way, the service quality given to immigrants/refugees may be upgraded.