



Study Visit/Workshop
“Best practices in managing reception/detention centers for asylum seekers”
Potsdam and Eisenhüttenstadt detention centre for asylum seekers
in Land of Brandenburg, Federal Republic of Germany
17th - 19th June 2009
MARRI Regional Centre

CONCLUSIONS

The Study Visit/Workshop “Best practices in managing reception/detention centers for asylum seekers” presented excellent opportunity experts from MARRI Member States’ national institutions responsible for managing reception/detention centers for asylum seekers to exchange good practices, identify gaps and needs, and discuss possible solutions for overcoming them as well as to set recommendations and expectations for the future.

Furthermore, Study Visit/Workshop contributed MARRI Member States’ national experts to gain insight into EU/Brandenburg expertise and experience on how a reception centre for asylum seekers can be established and maintained.

In order to meet International and European minimum standards as well as to improve capacities of national institutions responsible for managing reception/detention centers for asylum seekers which will ensure a fair and effective system of refugee protection with full respect of human rights and dignity, the participants agreed on the following:

- ✓ Reception centers for asylum seekers represent very important link in asylum systems, providing people in need of refugee protection.

- ✓ Adoption of national legal instruments which will ensure common minimum conditions of reception of those who, forced by circumstances, legitimately seek protection have been identified as fundamental. They need to be based on and harmonised with relevant instruments of international law, in particular Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27 January 2003 laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers, Conclusions from the European Council Tampere meeting held on 15&16 October 1999, Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees of 28 July 1951, as supplemented by the New York Protocol of 31 January 1967, thus ensuring that nobody is sent back to persecution, i.e. maintaining the principle of non-refoulement.

- ✓ Reception of groups with special needs such as minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, should be specifically designed to meet those needs.
- ✓ Reception of applicants who are in detention should be specifically designed to meet their needs in that situation.
- ✓ The importance of ensuring compliance with the minimum procedural guarantees consisting in:
 - ü providing material reception conditions to ensure a standard of living adequate for the health of applicants and capable of ensuring their subsistence;
 - ü providing information on organizations or groups of persons that provide specific legal assistance and organizations that might be able to help or inform them concerning the available reception conditions, including health care;
 - ü providing document certifying status as an asylum seeker;
 - ü residence and freedom of movement;
 - ü providing appropriate measures to maintain as far as possible family unity;
 - ü providing medical screening for applicants on public health grounds;
 - ü providing necessary health care which shall include, at least, emergency care and essential treatment of illness;
 - ü providing schooling and education of minors;
 - ü providing conditions for granting access to the labour market for the applicant;
 - ü providing access to vocational training;
 - ü granted access to accommodation centres to the legal advisors or counsellors of asylum seekers and representatives of the UNHCR or non-governmental organisations designated and recognised by the State concerned

has been underlined as necessary to ensure full respect of human rights and dignity of the asylum seekers;

- ✓ Establishment of pool of interpreters especially for the “exotic” languages has been emphasised as essential;
- ✓ The need of development of network for cooperation among MARRI Member States in the field of reception of Asylum seekers have been identified as important. Cooperation would be realized through regular annual meetings, where heads of reception/detention centers for asylum seekers will exchange opinions, good practices, identify gaps and possible solutions in order to step up capacities and efficiency of national reception systems.

- ✓ **Creation of a roster of national experts/representatives responsible in managing reception/detention centers for asylum seekers has been pointed out as a crucial for all MMS, to be used as focal points for future cooperation and information exchange.**
- ✓ **In order to establish network for cooperation, prior consent of the responsible high level MARRI MS national authorities must be obtained.**
- ✓ **Appropriate coordination should be encouraged between the competent authorities as regards the reception of asylum seekers, and harmonious relationships between local communities and accommodation centres should therefore be promoted.**
- ✓ **Development/improvement of permanent training systems for all stakeholders involved;**

Potsdam, 19th June 2009