

The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality  
Interparliamentary Committee Meeting  
3 March 2016, 09.00 - 12.30

**Women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU**  
**Current legislation and situation at national level**



**WOMEN REFUGEES AND  
ASYLUM SEEKERS IN THE EU**  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2016

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## Questionnaire in preparation of the debate on 3 March 2015

*Text sent to national Parliaments- Interparliamentary Committee Meeting*

### **Shedding the light on vulnerable persons**

In the context of an exceptional humanitarian crisis, the number of people seeking refugee status in Europe has continued to climb over the last year. An increasing share of those fleeing countries of violence and heading for regions where they may find protection, are women and children.

**Question 1:** Could you provide data on the overall **numbers** and on the **percentage** of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

Women and children are indeed among the most vulnerable categories, subject to multiple discriminations and violations of their basic human rights.

**Question 2:** Does your national legislation provide any **specific provisions** aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

### **From fleeing to integration: overcoming difficulties at all stages**

Women and girls fleeing conflicts and war face various forms of gender based violence, be it in their country of origin, during their journey towards a hosting country, or afterwards once they are received in Europe. Women undergo increasingly pervasive violations of their rights in conflicts, including the use of rape as a weapon of war. Whilst fleeing war and conflicts, women are rendered vulnerable to trafficking and prostitution. In addition, NGOs have recently reported widespread violence against women and girls in transit zones. Once they have access to protection in an EU country, their special needs must then be fully addressed.

**Question 3:** Which **specific actions are currently being implemented** in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?

### **Violence against women as a ground for seeking asylum**

Given the increased use of violence against women in relation to armed conflicts in all its forms, including rape, the use of sexual violence as weapon of war and female genital mutilation, it is timely to analyse these cruel phenomena as motivations: firstly, for women to leave their country of origin and seek asylum, and, secondly, for Member States to grant asylum.

**Question 4:** Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that **gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

## **Austria - Nationalrat & Bundesrat**

*Please note that the questionnaire was completed by the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior.*

### **1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your country?**

The statistical evaluation is still on-going, but some facts are already established at this point. In the year 2015 24.365 female asylum seekers were registered in Austria and they represented 27, 61 percent of the overall number of applicants. 9128 unaccompanied minors (of those were 342 female) were counted in 2015.

### **2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?**

Pursuant to Art. 6 and 7 Basic Welfare Support Agreement (GVV) all persons entitled to receive basic welfare support are covered by the social insurance system and therefore receive health care like Austrian citizens which goes far beyond emergency medical treatment and which covers also special needs for vulnerable groups, such as minors and women. Based on the Agreement, each province ("Bundesland") has to introduce a more specific Basic Welfare Act accordingly

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

Concerning the situation in transit zones no specific actions are known. But concerning the support of registered asylum seekers in shelters ("Betreuungsstellen") several actions can be specified: Especially women who have arrived alone are sheltered separately from other applicants and they are protected by especially appointed guards. Workshops led by a female psychologist are offered where women are informed about sexual harassment and emergency support facilities. Others led by teachers are focused on the needs of mothers and children. Women and Women with children receive food at different times than other applicants.

### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that genderbased violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

Unfortunately, we have no statistics and data at disposal concerning the granting of asylum due to gender-based violence. Nevertheless, in the Asylum Act and in Austrian case law such kind of persecution is recognized as a legitimate basis for obtaining this status.

## Cyprus - Βουλή των Αντιπροσώπων / Vouli ton Antiprosopon

Please note that the questionnaire was completed by the Asylum Service and the Civil Registry and Migration Department of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Cyprus.

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your country?

In 2015, the total number of persons which applied for international protection in Cyprus was 2253. Out of this number, 878 were women and 576 were minors (under the age of 18). Out of the 576 minors, 118 were unaccompanied at the time of submitting the application (in a number of cases this changed at a later stage)

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

The national refugee legislation has a number of special provisions for vulnerable groups such as women and minors.

Article 10 of the National Refugee Laws of 2000 – 2014, refers to the special treatment of unaccompanied minors during the asylum procedure, including special reception facilities. According to this article, all unaccompanied minors fall under the guardianship of the Director of the Social Welfare Services and are hosted in special houses for minors or with family members or with foster families. The Director is also acting as the representative of the minor during the whole asylum procedure. Personal interviews before the Asylum Service are conducted by caseworkers who have the necessary knowledge of the special needs of the minor, always in the presence of the representative. The Asylum Service may use medical examinations to determine the age of unaccompanied minors within the framework of the examination of his application.

In case of use of medical examinations, the Asylum Service ensures: (a) that the unaccompanied minor is informed prior to the examination of his application, and in a language which he is reasonably supposed to understand, of the possibility of determination of his age by medical examination. This includes information on the method of examination and the possible consequences of the result of the medical examination to the examination of the application, as well as the consequences of refusal on the part of the unaccompanied minor to undergo the medical examination; (b) the unaccompanied minor and/ or his representative consent to carry out an examination to determine the age of the unaccompanied minor; and (c) the decision to reject an application from an unaccompanied minor who refused to undergo such medical examination is not based solely on such refusal.

Article 18 of the National Refugee Laws of 2000 – 2014 provides the following: The Asylum Service and all other authorities of the Republic involved in the implementation of this Law take into account the specific state of vulnerable persons such as minors, unaccompanied minors, persons with special needs, elderly persons, pregnant women, single parents with minor children and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape, or other forms of serious psychological, physical, or sexual violence. This subsection applies only to persons who are established to have special needs based on an individual evaluation of their case.

Unaccompanied minors with refugee or subsidiary protection status.

#### Article 25A.

(1) In case an unaccompanied minor is recognised as a refugee or is granted subsidiary protection status, the Head immediately informs the Director of Social Welfare Services, who acts as the guardian of the unaccompanied minor, covering his needs. The Director of Social Welfare Services, ensuring when necessary the consent of an adult person and taking into account the views of the unaccompanied minor, in accordance with his age and degree of maturity, assigns his care to –

- (a) adult relatives; or
- (b) a foster family; or
- (c) centres specialised in accommodation for minors; or
- (d) other accommodation suitable for minors.

(2) As far as possible, brothers and sisters are kept together, taking into account the best interests of the minor concerned and, in particular, his age and degree of maturity. Changes of residence of unaccompanied minors are limited to a minimum.

(3) The competent authorities, within the framework of the protection of the best interests of the unaccompanied minor, endeavour to trace the members of the minor's family as soon as possible. In cases where there may be a threat to the life or integrity of the minor or his close relatives, particularly if they have remained in the country of origin, care must be taken to ensure that the collection, processing and circulation of information concerning those persons is undertaken on a confidential basis.

(4) Those working with unaccompanied minors have already or are receiving appropriate training concerning their needs

#### Rights of refugees.

21. –(1) A person recognised as a refugee under this Law – receives the same treatment as that received by the citizens of the Republic under the relevant laws and regulations relating to public allowance, in addition to any other necessary assistance in terms of social welfare, as well as adequate health care to those with special needs such as pregnant women, persons who have undergone torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence or minors who have been victims of any form of abuse, neglect, exploitation, torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or who have suffered from armed conflict

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

Article 46, L 60(I)/2014 provides that:

- (1) During the identification process, the Office of Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OOCTHB) applies the provisions of Article 30 and also provides the information specified in subsection (2) of Article 33, inasmuch as the potential victim is identified as a victim within the framework of this Law.
- (2) The interview takes place in a language understood by the victim with the free assistance of an interpreter, when necessary, to ensure appropriate communication with the victim.
- (3) If the potential victim is a child or an unaccompanied minor, a legal guardian or court-appointed representative or his legal representative is always present during the interview carried out in

order to identify the child as a victim, as appropriate and the provisions of Articles 39, 41 and 50 apply accordingly.

- (4) After the recognition of a person as a victim, the OoCTHB grants the person a certificate of recognition, initially covering a two month period for reflection purposes. The certificate may be revised either for reflection purposes or for the victim to enjoy the rights prescribed in this Law after the reflection period.
- (5) The OoCTHB, based on internal regulations of the Police, and based on this Law, proceeds to the identification of victims.

If the Social Welfare Services or other stakeholders like the Immigration Department have reasonable grounds to believe that a minor is a victim of trafficking, or in cases which meet the criteria for identifying victims, the social workers or immigration officers or any other official stakeholders who are in contact with minors, notify the OoCTHB so as to arrange interview sessions with the children, in the presence of the Social Welfare Services' officials.

During the identification procedure, minors are accommodated in special shelters for children, which are under the aegis of the Social Welfare Services.

So far, there have been no cases of non-voluntary return of a child victim to his/her country of origin.

In a nutshell, according to Article 47 of the relevant Law, the victims have the right to physical, psychological and social restitution; more specifically:

1. Access to the necessary means of subsistence, including adequate and safe residence, psychological, material and financial assistance
2. Access to free emergency healthcare and free healthcare
3. Access to translation and interpretation services
4. Access to education
5. The right to have their special needs due to pregnancy, state of health, disability, mental or psychological disorder or arising from serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence addressed
6. Access to temporary residence permits that can be renewed

All of the above are provided by governmental services.

NGOs provide basic services and offer support to victims, while also assisting in the repatriation procedure, if necessary.

#### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

There are no specific statistical data kept on the number of cases that have been granted international protection for reasons of gender-based violence. Despite that, we can confirm that there were a number of cases of women who had been/or would be subject to gender-based violence that have been granted international protection by the Asylum Service. Especially African women subjected to female genital mutilation are considered as "prima facie" refugees.

## Czech Republic - *Poslanecká sněmovna*

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

Number of applications for international protection filed by women and children and their percentage share in the aggregated number of applications in different years

	2013 / % of total no.	2014 / % of total no.	2015 / % of total no.
<b>Women</b>	220 / 31,11	402 / 34,78	459 / 30
<b>Minors</b>	132 / 18,67	229 / 19,8	269 / 17,6

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

Procedural Directive 2013/32/EU and Admission Directive 2013/33/EU are transposed by the amendment to the Act on Asylum, which came into effect on 18th of December 2015. Both directives are focused on categories of vulnerable international protection seekers. The main purpose of the amendment is to respond to the issue of vulnerable international protection seekers. The legal definition of vulnerable asylum seeker was extended and despite the immigration crisis, legal guarantee of inadmissibility of the detention of vulnerable asylum seekers was preserved in the amendment. The main innovation is obligation of the Ministry of Interior to determine, as soon as possible after the submission is filed, whether an applicant fulfils the definition of vulnerable person. If an applicant fulfils the definition the Ministry determines whether he or she has certain specific needs or needs support to exercise the rights and duties which the Act on Asylum imposes. Ministry of Interior, as the authority in charge regarding the procedure on international protection, is obliged to grant the support. Office of the Administration of Refugee's Facilities is also obliged to determine eventual vulnerable person. The Office conducts asylum facilities and provides social support and consultations. On applicant's request the amendment also grants a possibility that an interview is conducted or translated by a person of the same sex. Provisions on healthcare or other care were not transposed due to the fact that the asylum seekers are insured persons within the system of public health insurance and they have the same rights related to the healthcare as citizens.

### 3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?

Applicants in admission and accommodation centres including traumatised women/victims of violence have access to psychological and health care and have access to social supervision in form of social interview. In justified cases, or, at the explicit request, social interview as well as interpreting services regarding the international protection procedure are conducted by a person of the same sex. In the case of the application procedure in an admission center in the transit area of the international airport the Ministry grants permission to a vulnerable person to enter the national territory and provides transport to an asylum facility. There is an accommodation center available in Kostelec which serves as sheltered housing for women, women with children and disabled persons.

There is no statistical information available referring especially to women as victims of violence.

### 4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is



### considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?

Regarding the reasons for granting asylum or subsidiary protection, every case is assessed individually and all elements are considered cumulatively. A case is assessed with regards to the credibility of the statements, the nature and intensity of action, information about situation in the country of origin, possibilities of the effective protection from being persecuted or protection against serious harm, real possibility of return, possibility of internal relocation within the country of origin, health and mental state, family background in the country of origin, etc.

## **Estonia - Riigikogu**

### **1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?**

The number of asylum seekers during 1997-2015 in Estonia:

Number of asylum applications received from women: 143 (17,4 %)

Number of asylum applications received from minors: 139 (16,9%)

The total number of asylum applications: 821.

### **2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?**

Section 6 of the valid Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens defines unaccompanied minors; Section 6<sup>1</sup> regulates the representation of unaccompanied minors and adults with restricted active legal capacity who have applied for or have received international protection; and Subsection 6<sup>2</sup> sets out the list of services available to unaccompanied minors who have applied for or have received international protection.

The Bill on Amendments to the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens and Other Associated Acts, which has passed the first reading in parliament and is scheduled for a second reading, will amend the national law by introducing the regulation on assessing and taking into consideration the special needs of an applicant.

The proceedings for international protection take into consideration the special circumstances, and the consequent needs, of an applicant with special needs. Applicants with special needs are mostly defined as vulnerable individuals, such as minors, unaccompanied minors, the handicapped, the aged, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of human trafficking, individuals with serious illness, individuals with mental health issues, victims of torture or rape, or persons who have been subjected to other brutal psychological, physical or sexual violence. No distinction is made based on the gender of an asylum seeker.

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

It is important to stress that the proceedings for international protection take into consideration the special circumstances, and the consequent needs, of an applicant with special needs. This is the first priority of both the administrative agency conducting the proceeding as well as of all the other bodies that come into contact with the applicant during the proceedings. The presence of a special need, and its nature, are assessed for every individual on a case-by-case basis. In addition to this, the Police and Border Guard Board may give priority to reviewing asylum applications by applicants with special needs or unaccompanied minors, or well-founded applications.

There are no specific actions exclusively for refugee women at this point, but Estonian National Victim Support Service is a public service which aims at maintaining or enhancing people's ability to cope after falling victim to negligence, mistreatment or physical, mental or sexual abuse. This service is provided by the Estonian National Social Insurance Board (ENSIB). To offer these services, victim support department was created and the system launched on 1st of January 2005 when

corresponding chapter in Victim Support Act obtained legal validity. Victim Support Department has 15 centres and 27 specialists employed across Estonia. Victim Support Centres are located in every county.

Victim support specialists mainly deal with cases of sexual, physical or mental abuse or mistreating, also neglect for over a decade. Also, there are quite a few cases when specialists work with suicidal clients as well, which is also often a result of long term abuse. Victim support specialists help people from every origin. Using different methods and involving specialists from different areas they preserve or improve the subsistence of victims. The main methods are, first of all, listening, offering emotional support and empowering, sharing information about different possibilities and solutions to the problems, and helping to communicate with different organisations. Crisis help is offered on an individual basis and in different collective bodies i.e. schools and other organisations.

Victim support specialists also provide initial help and counselling in crisis situations for the family of the victim or people who have witnessed a crime (i.e. killing). Specialists also deliver information of someone's death to their family members.

Victim support specialists also organise seminars and trainings about all forms of gender based violence, dating violence for young people and child abuse to the partners (local officials – social workers, child protection specialists and other organizations who work with people and their problems) and also in schools and kindergartens etc.

Victim support specialists cooperate with the psychologists, psychiatrists, police, prosecutors, local government officials (including child protection specialists), medics, rescue service and other representatives of different organisations (including shelters and other specific service providers). The need for network members varies from the nature of the case.

In 2004, a cooperation contract was signed by the head of ENSIB and Police and Border Guard Board which was renewed on 2012. According to that contract police and victim support work together in cases of domestic violence, sexual abuse, child abuse, murders etc.

Furthermore, the Victim Support Act states that the police are obligated to inform victims about their right to turn to a victim support specialist for further help and assistance. There are no boundaries about who can contact victim support specialists. By the Victim Support Act, anyone who feels that they have been somehow mistreated can come to the centre. Information about the service can be found in schools, ER, kindergartens, local municipalities etc. and on their websites.

Since most of the victim support specialists are located in the same building as the police, police officers also may forward people straight to the victim support specialist or invite the specialist to participate when they are meeting with the victim(s). Victim support specialists sometimes also make home visits with the police or local social workers when there is reason to suspect domestic violence or child abuse.

Since June 2013 dealing with human trafficking victims on national level and providing/finding the best assistance for them is also a responsibility of the Estonian national victim support system.

In 2007, the Victim Support Act was changed and since then a victim of an offence not resulting in death, serious damage to his or her health or disability lasting for at least six months, has the right to receive compensation for the cost of psychological care in an amount equal to up to one minimum monthly wage. In 2016, the sum is 420€ per person.

Children, parents and grandparents and other family members specified in subsection 22 of the Estonian Social Welfare Act of a victim of any offence are also entitled to the compensation if their ability to cope has decreased due to an offence committed with regard to the victim. Compensation shall be paid in an amount equal to up to one minimum monthly wage per family member, however, not more than in an amount equal to up to three times the minimum monthly wage per family.

In reality, a victim comes into contact with the victim support specialist and there is a questionnaire that shows the need for psychological care. Then victim support specialist also looks for the proper service provider for the particular client. All of the above also applies for refugees, who may come into contact with the victim support specialist with the support person and with the help of a translator.

Also there are planned additional financial means for psychological care and to help refugees towards whom crimes have been committed outside Estonia and who are in need to recover from traumatic experiences in their country of origin etc.

#### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that genderbased violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

Estonia grants international protection on two grounds:

- 1) **refugee status** is granted to individuals who have left their country of origin and cannot or do not dare to return due to a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their race, religion, ethnicity, social community, or political beliefs.
- 2) **subsidiary protection** is granted to individuals who do not qualify as refugees, and yet there are substantial grounds to believe that their return or expulsion to their country of origin may put them in serious risk, including imposition or execution of death penalty, or torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or individual threat to their lives or the lives of civilians, or violence against them or civilians by reason of international or internal armed conflict.

Section 19 of the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens sets out the bases for identifying persecution or serious threat; Subsection 19(2) provides that actions that are based on the gender of the individual, or target children, are also considered persecution. In practice this means that gender based violence is taken into consideration by the Police and Border Guard Board when assessing persecution.

## **Finland - Eduskunta**

### **1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?**

In 2015 Finland received all in all 32 476 asylum seekers. Of these persons 81% was male (26 430) and 19% female (5 998).

Unaccompanied minors were 3 024 or 9% of total (94% male (2 832), 6% female (188)).

### **2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?**

Both the Finnish Alien's Act (301/2004) and the Act on the Reception of Persons Seeking International Protection (746/2011) contain such provisions. Examples:

Section 52 of the Alien's Act contains provisions on issuing residence permits on compassionate grounds.

The Act on the Reception of Persons Seeking International Protection contains provisions on implementing it regarding children (section 5) and persons in a vulnerable position (section 6). It stipulates that the best interest of the child always has to be considered, and that the special need of persons in a vulnerable position has to be considered as well.

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

During the asylum process, special needs of women refugees who state that they are victims of violence are met, for instance, by conducting the asylum interview with a female asylum case officer. The reception facilities and conditions also cater for the special needs by providing appropriate health care and other services.

Further, Finland receives 1 050 resettled refugees (quota refugees) annually. They are pre-selected by UNHCR, after which Finland makes the final selection. An internal guideline of the Finnish Immigration Service states that at least 15% of the selection of these resettled refugees will be women in a vulnerable position (e.g. victims of violence, single parents etc.).

### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

Each asylum case is processed individually, and the grounds for asylum are examined. Gender-based violence can be considered a reason to grant asylum based on the overall assessment, which takes into account the situation in the country of origin (known incidents of gender-based violence), as well as the individual assessment of the person's asylum claim. Unfortunately, Finland does not have accurate data regarding the number of cases, where asylum has been granted based on gender-based violence.

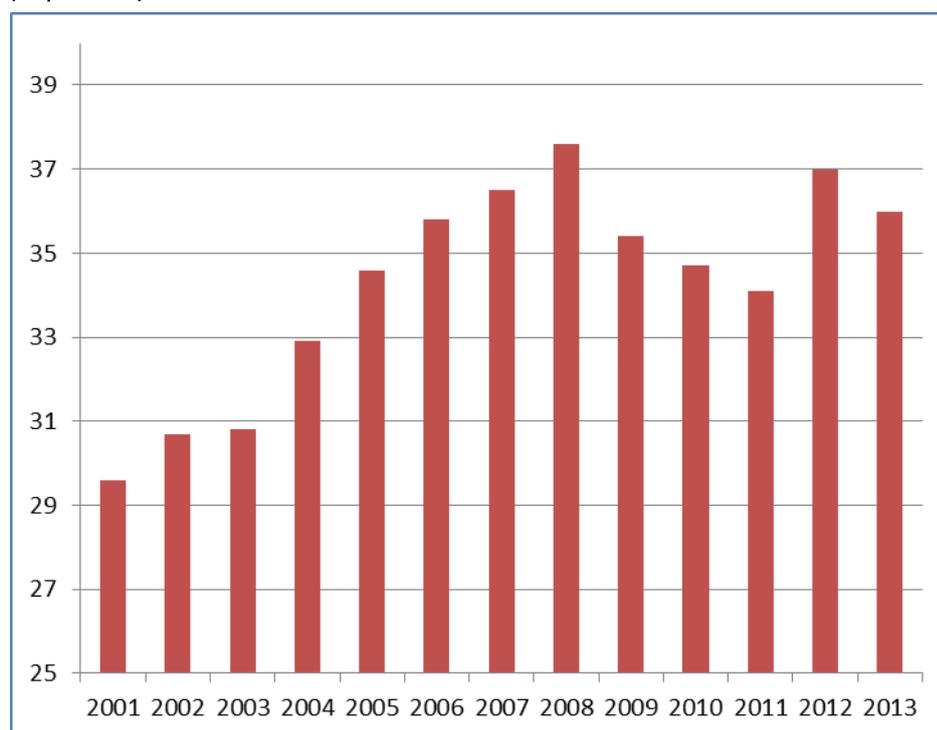
## France - Assemblée nationale

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

For a number of years, the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA) has noted a larger proportion of women seeking asylum: the proportion of women among people making initial asylum applications has increased from 29.6 % in 2001 to 37 % in 2012, as shown in the graph below.

#### PROPORTION OF WOMEN AMONG INITIAL ASYLUM APPLICANTS FROM 2001 TO 2013

(in percent)



Source: graph created using data from OFPRA annual activity reports

In 2013, 16 501 initial asylum applications were submitted to OFPRA by women, making up 35.9 % of all initial asylum applicants, slightly less than in 2012 (37 %). It is worth noting in this regard that the term 'application for international protection' includes both applications for asylum (constitutional, conventional, subsidiary protection) and applications for stateless person status.

#### INITIAL APPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION SUBMITTED IN 2013 BY GENDER (NOT INCLUDING ACCOMPANYING MINORS)

	Number	Percentage	Average age
<b>Women</b>	16 501	<b>35.9 %</b>	33.6 years
Men	29 424	64.1 %	32.0 years
<b>Total 2013</b>	45 925	100 %	35.6 years

Source: OFPRA

Most of the women seeking asylum came from Africa, Europe and Asia in the proportions shown in the table below. Women made up 45 % of European asylum seekers, but only 25 % of asylum seekers from Asia(1).

#### INITIAL APPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN 2013: PROPORTION OF WOMEN AND AVERAGE AGE BY CONTINENT OF ORIGIN

Continent	Total initial applications	Initial applications by women	Percentage of women	Average age of women	Average age of men
Africa	17 133	5 835	34 %	30.8 years	31.3 years
The Americas	1 784	758	42 %	32.1 years	33 years
Asia	10 953	2695	25 %	37.5 years	31.5 years
Europe	15 828	7 125	45 %	34.6 years	33.4 years
Stateless	227	88	39 %	33.9 years	36.1 years
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45 925</b>	<b>16 501</b>	<b>35.9 %</b>	<b>33.6 years</b>	<b>32 years</b>

\* Does not include accompanying minors

Source: table created using data taken from various parts of the 2013 OFPRA activity report (May 2014)

In total, if reviews and accompanying minors are added to the number of initial applications by women, 25 000 applications were counted in 2013 (see table below). The French High Council for Equality between Men and Women (HCEfh), in its comments on the current draft law as adopted in November 2014 (2), said that women represented some 37.7 % of asylum seekers, citing Eurostat data for 2013.

#### STATISTICS ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION APPLICATIONS BY WOMEN, REVIEWS AND ACCOMPANYING MINORS

	Initial applications	Reviews	Total applications not including accompanying minors	Applications for accompanying minors	Overall total
Africa	5 835	391	6 226	2 336	8 562
The Americas	750	35	6 225	70	863
Asia	2 695	275	793	669	3 819
Europe	7 125	731	2 970	3 776	11 631
Stateless	88		88		88
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16 501</b>	<b>1 432</b>	<b>17 933</b>	<b>7 030</b>	<b>24 963</b>

Source: OFPRA (Activity Report, May 2014)

## 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

<sup>(1)</sup> 2013 Activity Report, OFPRA, May 2014.

<sup>(2)</sup> 'Comments on the draft law on asylum reform', at the request of the 'Women's rights and international and European challenges' committee, presided by Mr Maxime Forest (Ms Cécile Sportis, rapporteur), adopted by the HCEfh on 7 November 2014 (source: Eurostat, 2013).

In line with the 'reception' directive, the asylum reform will make it possible to take account of vulnerable applicants (3) when selecting a suitable procedure for the processing of their applications. Article 11 of Law No 2015-925 of 9 July 2015 on the reform of the right to asylum states that, for the duration of the asylum application process, OFPRA can decide on the best means of examination to safeguard the rights of the applicant, taking account of his/her individual situation, young age or vulnerability (Article L. 723-3 of the French Code for Entry and Residence of Foreigners and the Right of Asylum (CESEDA)).

According to the impact assessment of the draft law, these provisions, which make it possible to adapt the means of examination of an asylum application to the needs of the applicant, could benefit women in violent situations (victims of trafficking, victims of rape and violence, etc.) and could make it possible, in particular, to adjust the way that interviews are conducted (interview by a protection officer of the same sex with special training to deal with these issues). The impact assessment also shows that the provisions are already being used by OFPRA, which has specific guidelines for dealing with issues such as human trafficking, violence against women and sexual orientation and gives training for dealing with reports of abuse, in particular rape.

For the sake of improved protection, Article L.723-3 also makes it possible to give priority to applications made by vulnerable persons who have been identified as having special requirements in their reception or in the examination of their application. Conversely, if it appears that a priority procedure – now referred to as an 'accelerated procedure' – is not appropriate, OPFRA can choose to examine the application through the normal procedure. In that way, 'if the Office decides that an asylum seeker requires particular procedural guarantees that are not compatible with the accelerated procedure for examining his/her case because he/she has suffered serious violence or is underage [...], it can decide not to carry out the procedure in that way'.

The new Article L. 723-3 takes the notion of vulnerability from the reception directive but without focusing specifically on women and, as has frequently been pointed out in the delegation's work, without referring to the non-exhaustive list set out under Article 21 of the reception directive: 'minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of human trafficking, persons with serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, such as victims of female genital mutilation'.

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

Article 22 of the European 'reception' directive states that 'In order to effectively implement Article 21, Member States shall assess whether the applicant is an applicant with special reception needs. Member States shall also indicate the nature of such needs'.

Article 23 of the above-mentioned law builds on CESEDA with a chapter on reception conditions for asylum seekers. The new Article L.744-1 refers directly to the reception directive. Article L. 744-6 transposes the EU proposal to evaluate individual needs. It states that, on presentation of an asylum application, the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) shall carry out a vulnerability assessment of asylum seekers as soon as possible, so that it can determine what their special reception requirements are, if any. Special requirements are taken into account even if they are

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<sup>(3)</sup> Article 21 of the reception directive also states that '*Member States shall take into account the specific situation of vulnerable persons [...] in the national law implementing this Directive*'.



identified later on in the procedure. The way in which special requirements are evaluated and passed on to OFPRA is governed by a Council of State decree.

The OFII is therefore responsible for 'detecting' vulnerable asylum seekers so that their special requirements can be assessed, which is particularly relevant when a person is showing signs of trauma. This measure can benefit women who have been subjected to serious violence.

#### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

In assessing a claim for asylum, the authorities seek to verify whether the acts of violence described constitute persecution within the meaning of Article 1A of the relevant Geneva Convention and then examine whether the fear of persecution is justified in the light of the standard grounds (of which there are five, cf. supra).

Article 3 of the above-mentioned law sets out the notion of acts and grounds for persecution and refers directly to articles 9 and 10 of the 'qualification' directive in the assessment of these acts and grounds<sup>(4)</sup>.

Article 9 of the directive sets out the forms acts of persecution can take, mentioning in particular: '(a) acts of physical or mental violence, including acts of sexual violence;' '(b) legal, administrative, police, and/or judicial measures which are in themselves discriminatory or which are implemented in a discriminatory manner;' '(f) acts of a gender-specific or child-specific nature.' These provisions are therefore in line with the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, also known as the 'Istanbul Convention', ratified by France in July 2014 (cf. supra), which states in particular that Member States must take the necessary measures to ensure that gender-based violence may be recognised as a form of persecution (cf. supra).

What is more, having listed in Article 9 the acts of violence that directly or indirectly concern women, the directive sets out grounds for persecution in Article 10, the first paragraph of which is shown below and referred to in Article 3 of the above-mentioned law.

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<sup>(4)</sup> Under the proposed amendment to Article 711-2 CESEDA in Article 2 of the draft law, '*Acts of persecution within the meaning of Article 1A of the Geneva Convention shall be considered in the conditions set out under Article 9, paragraphs 1 and 2 and Article 10, paragraph 1 of Directive No 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 [...]*'.

### **The provisions of Article 10.1 of the 'qualification' directive of 2011**

'1. Member States shall take the following elements into account when assessing the reasons for persecution:

- a) the concept of race shall, in particular, include considerations of colour, descent, or membership of a particular ethnic group;
- b) the concept of religion shall in particular include the holding of theistic, non-theistic and atheistic beliefs, the participation in, or abstention from, formal worship in private or in public, either alone or in community with others, other religious acts or expressions of view, or forms of personal or communal conduct based on or mandated by any religious belief;
- c) the concept of nationality shall not be confined to citizenship or lack thereof but shall, in particular, include membership of a group determined by its cultural, ethnic, or linguistic identity, common geographical or political origins or its relationship with the population of another State;
- d) a group shall be considered to form a particular social group where in particular:
  - members of that group share an innate characteristic, or a common background that cannot be changed, or share a characteristic or belief that is so fundamental to identity or conscience that a person should not be forced to renounce it, and
  - that group has a distinct identity in the relevant country, because it is perceived as being different by the surrounding society.

Depending on the circumstances in the country of origin, a particular social group might include a group based on a common characteristic of sexual orientation. Gender related aspects, including gender identity, shall be given due consideration for the purposes of determining membership of a particular social group or identifying a characteristic of such a group;

- e) the concept of political opinion shall, in particular, include the holding of an opinion, thought or belief on a matter related to the potential actors of persecution mentioned in Article 6 and to their policies or methods, whether or not that opinion, thought or belief has been acted upon by the applicant.

The reference to the two articles of the qualification directive shown above could also make it easier for women to secure refugee status and could pave the way for improvements to national law by openly recognising sexual violence and acts of a gender-specific nature as forms of persecution and by clarifying the notion of belonging to a particular social group and clearly setting out the grounds for persecution.

## Greece - *Βουλή των Ελλήνων / Vouli ton Ellinon*

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

During 2015, on the total number of 911.471 foreigners entering our country, 185.968 (20,4%) were women and 167.177 ( 18,3%) were minors.

Moreover, based on data of the Hellenic Coastguard, 847.930 refugees-immigrants entered our country via the sea, from which 145.918 were minors.

In 2015, out of an overall number of 13.197 asylum seekers, 3.331 (25,2%) were female and 2.497 (18,9%) were minors (out of which 426 (3,2% of the total) were unaccompanied minors).

According to the First Reception Service data on the number of unaccompanied minors in 2015, 919 minors arrived, 871 of these boys and 48 girls. The majority of them come from Syria. The top nationalities of unaccompanied minors are: Syrians (413), Afghans (357), Pakistanis (50), Iraqis (47), and Moroccans (18).

Regarding women (adults) that belong in vulnerable groups the First Reception Service has recorded the following data for 2015:

- Women in pregnancy and childbirth: 59
- Single parent families headed by women: 286
- Victims of abuse: 12

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

Greece's national legislation specifically refers to the rights of vulnerable applicants for international protection. Vulnerable groups include persons that have been subject to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual abuse, minors and especially unaccompanied minors; relevant legislation aims at guaranteeing their safety, on the basis of the concerned child's best interest, also abiding by the fundamental principle of family unity, in cooperation with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

According to the Greece's national legislation, competent authorities and local government organizations are responsible for the special care and treatment of vulnerable applicants for international protection, such as minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled persons, elderly persons, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, as well as persons that have been subject to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence.

The objective of the First Reception Service (FRS) is the reception of third country nationals who are arrested due to illegal entry or stay in Greece, under conditions that guarantee human dignity and ensure their legal rights, in accordance with the international obligations of the country (Reception Conditions Directive 2003/9/EC, Recast 013/33/EU).

Minors have the same access to health care as children who are legal residents in the host country. They are provided with appropriate accommodation and are represented by a legal guardian,

according to the order of the Public Prosecutor. For minors who are victims of violence necessary medical assistance is provided as well as psychological support and social reintegration services. The experts of FRS take into account age, maturity and the general condition of the minor. Medical and psychosocial support is outsourced to NGOs, performing all tasks regarding medical exams and provision of first level medical aid, psychosocial support and referrals to the local hospitals. As soon as the first reception procedures are completed, the FRS ensures the transfer of unaccompanied children from arrival points (mainly from the North Aegean islands) to specialized facilities on the mainland in Athens but also in other areas of the Greek territory.

The National Centre of Social Solidarity (EKKA) is responsible for finding a position in an open hosting structure. Unaccompanied siblings live in the same accommodation facility.

All actions of the First Reception Service regarding the care and protection of unaccompanied minors are based on the main principle that everything must be done in a way that ensures the best interest of the child.

The vulnerable women categories (women in pregnancy and childbirth, single parent families headed by women, victims of abuse) receive special treatment as soon as they request Asylum. In case they don't, they are provided with a temporary medical and psychosocial support.

From the moment a member of a vulnerable group, such as a woman or a minor, appears in the Asylum Service for lodging an application, there are some provisions, in our legislation, aimed at receiving these applicants in a more appropriate way. The related articles are the following:

Article 16, 'Examination Procedure', of Presidential Decree 141/2011, which provides the possibility of the prioritized examination of applications submitted by vulnerable groups;

Article 17, 'Personal Interview', of Presidential Decree 141/2011, which in paragraph 2 provides that when the interview concerns a female applicant, special attention is paid so that the interview is conducted by a specialized female officer, in the presence of a female interpreter. When minors are concerned, the personal interview is conducted taking into consideration their maturity and psychological consequences of their traumatic experiences;

Article 17, 'Personal Interview', of Presidential Decree 141/2011, which in paragraph 7 provides that each caseworker must be sufficiently qualified to take into account the personal or general circumstances regarding the application, including the applicant's cultural origin. In particular, the case workers shall be trained concerning the special needs of women, children and victims of violence and torture.

Article 11, 'Applications of unaccompanied minors', of Presidential Decree 141/2011, which provides that, when an application is lodged by an unaccompanied minor, the competent authorities shall take action according to par. 1 of Article 19 of Presidential Decree 220/2007 in order to appoint a guardian for the minor. The guardian or the person exercising guardianship shall be given the opportunity to inform the unaccompanied minor of the meaning and possible consequences of the personal interview, as well as how to be prepared for it. The guardian or the person exercising guardianship is invited and may attend the minor's interview and may submit questions or make observations to facilitate the procedure. The case workers who conduct interviews with an unaccompanied minor must have the necessary knowledge regarding the special needs of minors and must conduct the interview in such a way as to make it fully understandable to the applicant, taking in particular account of his/her age. Applications for international protection of unaccompanied minors are always examined under the regular procedure. Ensuring the child's best

interest shall be a primary obligation when implementing the provisions of this article.

All the above provisions are explained in a more detailed and specified way in the Asylum Service's Standard Operating Procedures.

The competent authorities, upon receiving and examining applications for asylum by unaccompanied minors, proceed directly to the following actions:

- ensure housing, by hosting the minor to adult relatives-family members, foster family or housing centers, for their protection against trafficking, exploitation or abuse
- take action for siblings' co-housing and co-habitation
- make efforts for tracing family members
- unaccompanied minors' changes of residence must be limited to the minimum necessary
- in case of circumstances where the life or physical safety of the minor or its close relatives is under threat, appropriate measures are taken during the informing process

The Greek Port Authorities have received special action guidelines for the treatment of vulnerable asylum seekers (unaccompanied minors, victims of torture, sexual violence, human trafficking etc), relating to:

- a. Measures to be taken for satisfying basic needs of incoming immigrants-refugees upon arrival, from the moment of their safe landing, following rescue, recovery, disembarkation and accommodation under the responsibility of competent Port Authorities, until they are handed over to Authorities competent for their processing and treatment (Police Authorities and other Service of the Ministry for Public Order and Citizen's Protection)
- b. Immigrants' and asylum seekers' rights, specifically:
  - Access to safe territory and accommodation
  - Terms and conditions of living in an area of freedom
  - Living conditions
  - Access to asylum procedure
  - Additional guarantees for vulnerable groups
  - Forced return
- c. Additional guarantees for vulnerable groups, specially emphasizing children's' rights as stipulated in FRONTEX organization's human rights' manual

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

Special care and treatment is envisaged for persons that have been subject to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence.

The competent authorities for asylum seekers' reception and hospitality or asylum seekers' applications' reception and processing ensure the transport of victims of torture, rape or other serious forms of violence to special services for their necessary treatment and support prior to their interview for processing and examining asylum application.

If during the asylum procedure with women (registration and interview), there are indicators that they have been victims of violence, the Service informs the applicant about her rights and options immediately, e.g. about NGOs active on relevant issues, the competent authorities (police and judicial authorities) etc. The competent authorities are also informed.

Especially on trafficking there is a special Unit for combating human trafficking at the Police Headquarters and also a National Rapporteur on Trafficking, who deals exclusively with these cases.

The competent authorities for reception and hospitality ensure access to Social Care Units of minors-victims of any form of abuse, negligence, exploitation, torture or cruel, inhuman or humiliating treatment, for receiving proper psychological care and specialized treatment.

There are detailed guidelines for both the administrative staff and the case workers on taking all the appropriate actions for victims of violence.

## **Trafficking**

One key issue is the need to target vulnerability to Trafficking. Many victims of Trafficking of Human Beings (THB) are women refugees. Thus, many new legislative measures have been introduced and the implementation process has been initiated, especially after the introduction of 3 important legal instruments: a) the ratification of the UN Palermo Protocol (2010), b) the ratification of the CoE Convention on Action against THB (2013) and c) the transposition of the anti-trafficking EU Directive (2011/36/EC) into the Greek legal order (with the Law 4198/2013). Under Law 4198/2013, the Office of the National Rapporteur on THB (NRO) (established within the Minister of Foreign Affairs) has the mandate to cooperate closely with focal points in other competent Ministries as well as with International Organizations (IOM & UNHCR) and the accredited by the European Commission's Civil Society Platform NGOs in the field of anti-trafficking. The NRO is active in all four pillars of the strategy to combat trafficking (prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership with civil society, local authorities, academia and private sector).

One of the main NRO' priorities is to improve and widen the scope of our identification regime so as to involve more 'unusual' partners and stakeholders in first level identification of more potential victims (i.e. to develop THB training in the First Reception Services, the Asylum Service, border & coast guards, labour inspectors, hospitals, public transportation employees, hotels, CSR supply chains etc.), as well as to establish a comprehensive and systematically updated database of victims and perpetrators and to implement education, train-the- trainers and awareness-raising projects. The NRO has recently established the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), a platform for inter-agency cooperation on issues such as sheltering, compensation and safe return for the VoTs, and a Permanent Consultation Forum with civil society to ensure better cooperation among different stakeholders and better coordination of the available services offered by them.

Special protective measures for children/ unaccompanied minors have been implemented by various partners and stakeholders. Towards that end, potential victims of child trafficking are protected in eleven (11) shelters, funded by the European Refugee Fund, the EEA Grants and the State. The State Agency National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA) manages all relevant applications. Moreover, all shelters operated by the State or NGOs' offer protection to children that are in danger, including those who are victims of trafficking. Especially for children in danger, a number of helplines operate 24/7 (the National Helpline for Children "1107" by EKKA and the Helpline "1506" as well as the European Hotline for Missing Children "116000" operated by our NGO partners). In addition, the NRO participates as Associate Partner in a number of EU funded programs aimed at identifying and protecting child victims of THB.

THB victims (identified or potential ones) receive psycho-social support, psychotherapy, medical care, vocational guidance and legal representation or the facilitation of repatriation. The support continues to transition period towards their reintegration. It should be noted that sheltering is

provided independently of the cooperation of the victim with the authorities. There are both state-run and NGO-operated shelters serving victims of trafficking (accommodation, psycho-social assistance, counselling, medical treatment, legal aid, educational programs).

A) The “National Programme on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women”, refers to all forms of gender based violence and applies to all women victims of violence irrespective of their social, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, faiths, states of health, etc. This means that women refugees are certainly not excluded of the services provided under the Programme. There are 14 Counselling Centres ( at region level) 25 Counselling Centres (at municipality level), 19 Shelters for Abused Women (operated by 19 large municipalities) which provide bilingual (Greek and English) services of shelter, psychological and social support to women victims of all forms of violence- including trafficking- and their children.

There are, also, two Shelters for Abused Women operated by the Ministry of Labour/ National Centre for Social Solidarity (in the cities of Athens and Thessaloniki) as well as the bilingual (Greek and English) SOS helpline 15900 accompanied by the email-address [sos15900@isotita.gr](mailto:sos15900@isotita.gr), which is in operation since March 2011 (24 hours a day and 365 days a year).

The services provided by the above mentioned -free of charge- structures include psychosocial support, legal counselling as well as counselling in labour issues, emergency shelter and, where necessary, legal aid in cooperation with local Bar Associations. The tasks of the structures also include networking with local agencies and relevant associations for joint communication and public awareness programmes.

B) A manual entitled “Guidelines for Protecting Women and Girls during first entry and asylum procedures in Greece” is published in 2011, in Greek and in English, by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality, in collaboration with the UNHCR and the Ministry of Public Order. It is intended for professionals involved in the services of first reception of citizens of third countries, as well as personnel conducting asylum interviews or involved in asylum procedures. The manual aims at assisting in the fairer assessment of international protection needs of refugee women and girls seeking asylum. Its guidelines refer to the treatment of women and girls during relevant procedures including reception during first entry, detention, access to the asylum procedure and conduct of the interview.

#### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

According to the Asylum Service and the First Reception Service data, gender-based violence is unfortunately used very often as a war weapon in times of armed conflicts and thus is the main reason of women immigration.

Therefore, gender based violence is a very important ground that is always taken into serious consideration. There are cases where the intensity of the violence against a woman or a girl and its physical and psychological consequences is the crucial point for granting refugee status e.g. female genital mutilation, forced marriages, sexual violence against women as a weapon of war, women as sex slaves, severe discriminations against women. All the above is part of the individualised case by case assessment, as it is provided by law.

*Greece is on the process of ratification of Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which states clear in article 60 that:*

a) *Violence against women is considered as a form of serious harm and recognized as a form of persecution within the meaning of Article 1, A (2), of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of*

*Refugees and parties should take all the necessary measures to provide complementary/subsidiary protection.*

*b) Parties shall ensure that a gender-sensitive interpretation is given to each of the Convention grounds and that where it is established that the persecution feared is for one or more of these grounds, applicants shall be granted refugee status according to the applicable relevant instruments.*

*c) Parties shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to develop gender-sensitive reception procedures and support services for asylum-seekers as well as gender guidelines and gender-sensitive asylum procedures, including refugee status determination and application for international protection.*



## Hungary - Országgyűlés

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

Number of persons applied for asylum in Hungary in 2015 by sex and age group:

- There were 177 135 asylum applications in total.
- Number of male applicants in total: 140 789 (79.58 %)
  - Age 0-13: 18 303 (10.33 %)
  - Age 14-17: 12 333 (6.96 %)
  - Age 18-34: 90 586 (51.14 %)
  - Age 35-64: 19 492 (11 %)
  - Age 65 +: 265 (0.15 %)
- Number of female applicants in total: 36 156 (20.42 %)
  - Age 0-13: 12 519 (7.07 %)
  - Age 14-17: 2 319 (1.31 %)
  - Age 18-34: 14 685 (8.29 %)
  - Age 35-64: 6 484 (3.66 %)
  - Age 65 +: 149 (0.08 %)

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

Under the Hungarian Asylum Act (Act LXXX of 2007), persons in need of special treatment are unaccompanied minors or other vulnerable people, in particular, minors, elderly or disabled people, pregnant women, single parents raising a minor child or victims of torture, rape or any other grave form of psychological, physical or sexual violence, who are found, after proper individual assessment, to have special needs because of their individual situation. It is fundamental principle of the Asylum Act that its provisions shall be applied to persons in need of special treatment with due consideration of the specific needs arising from their situation. Moreover in case of persons in need of special treatment, the special rules applicable to the procedure conducted at the border and the provisions applicable in airport procedure do not apply.

### 3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?

In terms of procedural questions, identification of vulnerability can be explored by couples attending separate asylum hearings. Moreover, case officer and interpreter of the same gender can also be provided if there is any indication for gender based ill-treatment. Social workers provide help in the reception facilities. After recognition beneficiaries of international protection can stay at the reception facility for 60 days. During this period social workers working at the reception centre and partner NGOs can give appropriate assistance or treatment (including psychiatric, psychotherapeutic, psychological treatment, psycho-social counselling) for vulnerable persons. After signing the integration contract, the family support centres take over this responsibility.

**4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

All asylum applications are assessed on a case by case basis, taking into account the particular circumstances of each individual case. Nevertheless, it can be generally stated that gender can be regarded as factor of forming a particular social group, therefore if persecution can be established, international protection will be granted.

*Budapest, 26 January 2015*

*Source: Ministry of Interior, Hungary*

## Italy - Camera dei Deputati

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

In 2014 64.886 people, of which 7.6 % were women and 6.8 % minors, have applied for international protection (*Report on the reception of migrants and refugees in Italy. Aspects, procedures, problems*,<sup>5</sup>October 2015, p. 15-16).

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

Yes.

Conditions for the reception of applicants for international protection are regulated by Legislative Decree 142/2015 (articles 1 to 23) which has transposed Directive 2013/33 into national law. Asylum seekers falling into specific vulnerable groups are granted specific forms of assistance in the provision of reception services. These groups are the following: minors, unaccompanied minors; disabled people; elderly people; pregnant women; single parents with minor children; victims of human trafficking; seriously ill and/or mentally disturbed persons; persons for whom it has been established that they have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence; victims of genital mutilation. The specific reception services for the vulnerable include special assistance and appropriate psychological support. These services are ensured both within the initial reception centres run by central government and in the framework of the local-government reception system (SPRAR). Also, persons who have suffered damage as a result of torture, rape or other serious acts of violence are entitled to receive assistance or appropriate medical and psychological care (article 17).

Specific provisions deal with the reception of minors (article 18) in compliance with the principle of priority of the minor's greater interest, which is the guiding principle in the implementation of reception measures. To that end, minors are listened to, taking into account their age, their maturity and personal development, also in order to learn about their past experiences and assess the risk of the minor being a victim of human trafficking; the possibility of family reunification is also examined. Unaccompanied minors are the recipients of further forms of assistance, as initial reception centres exclusively intended for them are to be established for the purposes of immediate help and protection, and they cannot be held in the identification and expulsion centres. Furthermore, unaccompanied minors may access the SPRAR facilities even without a request for asylum (article 19).

### 3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?

Residence permits may be issued to foreign victims of acts of domestic violence on humanitarian grounds. The residence permit's aim is to allow the foreign victim to escape violence (Consolidated Text on Immigration, Legislative Decree 286/1998, article 18-*bis* introduced by Legislative Decree 93/2013 on combating gender violence).

Among the measures against violence we may recall:

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<sup>5</sup>[http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.interno.it/dipim/export/sites/default/it/assets/pubblicazioni/Rapporto\\_accoglienza\\_ps.pdf](http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.interno.it/dipim/export/sites/default/it/assets/pubblicazioni/Rapporto_accoglienza_ps.pdf)

- the [National System of social assistance and integration for the victims of trafficking](#);<sup>6</sup>
- the [Extraordinary Action Plan against sexual and gender violence](#)<sup>7</sup> (which also applies to foreign women) adopted by Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers on 7 July 2015.

#### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

The law explicitly includes “acts specifically directed against one gender or against children” among the acts of persecution taken into consideration for the purpose of granting refugee status (Legislative Decree 251/2007).

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/index.php/component/content/article/70-traffico-di-esseri-umani-/2295-contro-la-tratta-di-persone>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/images/piano\\_contro\\_violenzasessualeedigenere\\_2015.pdf](http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/images/piano_contro_violenzasessualeedigenere_2015.pdf)

## Lithuania - *Seimas*

### **1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?**

In 2015, Lithuania received 291 asylum applications, out of which 97 were lodged by women and 69 by minors (30 girls and 39 boys).

### **2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?**

The provisions governing the reception of vulnerable persons, including women and children, are laid down in Chapter 9 of the Description of Procedures for Examining Asylum Applications from Aliens and for Making and Enforcing Respective Decisions approved by Order of the Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania No 1V-361 of 15 November 2015 “On the Approval of the Description of Procedures for Examining Asylum Applications from Aliens and for Making and Enforcing Respective Decisions”, which states the following:

Civil servants who carry out interviews and other actions related to examination of asylum applications from asylum seekers who are vulnerable persons must have had appropriate training and continue to receive the training on the needs of vulnerable asylum applicants. At the request of an asylum applicant, the interview must involve an authorised representative.

When asylum applicants who are vulnerable persons have mental disorders, illnesses or suffered or there are indications that they may have suffered torture, rape or other explicit forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, medical advice must be sought prior to the interview about the way of conducting an interview and the questions to be avoided. If necessary, an interview may involve the participation of a doctor, other medical worker or psychologist. When there are indications that a person has been subjected to trauma and torture, an interview must be carried out by plainclothes officials or civil servants.

When there are indications that questions cause pain or mental discomfort to an asylum applicant, civil servants must end an interview and postpone it for a later time without prejudice to the deadlines for examining an asylum application referred to in Part 68 of the Description of Procedures.

When there are indications and information that a person has been subjected to torture or other physical, psychological or sexual violence, a civil servant from the Migration Department may seek an expert’s report or medical conclusion.

All interviews and other actions related to examining asylum applications from women must be conducted, if possible, by female civil servants. When female asylum applicants agree to it, interviews and other actions may be carried out by male civil servants.

Interviews and other actions related to examining of asylum applications from unaccompanied minors must involve the participation of a child’s guardian (carer) and an authorised representative, except when an authorised representative cannot attend an interview due to objective reasons beyond his/her control.

Civil servants examining asylum applications from unaccompanied minors must request the help of various institutions of the Republic of Lithuania or foreign countries, except for institutions of countries of origin of asylum applicants, in order to establish the place of residence of parents or other close relatives of unaccompanied minors who apply for asylum, unless this is contrary to the interests of a child. Asylum applications from unaccompanied minors are examined as soon as possible.

Institutions involved in the asylum procedure cooperate with NGOs rendering assistance to refugees and provide NGOs with access to asylum seekers who are vulnerable persons in the place of their residence, accommodation or detention, where NGOs can offer services and assistance meeting the needs of refugees.

Please note that amendments to the Description of Procedures are currently being drafted with a view to extending the regulation of the reception of vulnerable persons by establishing the procedure for the identification of such persons in the framework of Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection (recast) and Directive 2013/33/EU laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast).

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

As already mentioned, amendments to the Description of Procedures are currently being drafted to extend the regulation of the reception of vulnerable persons.

### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender- based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

Part 66(1) of the Description of Procedures provides that acts of persecution can, inter alia, take the form of: physical and psychological violence including sexual violence; acts of a gender-specific or child-specific nature. As regards the definition of a social group, gender related aspects, including gender identity, shall be given due consideration for the purposes of determining membership of a particular social group or identifying a characteristic of such a group.

In the light of this, gender-based violence can be assimilated to persecution on account of membership of a particular social group. If it is established that an asylum seeker, who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted on account of membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of his/her nationality, and is unable or afraid to avail himself/herself of the protection of that state, he/she is to be granted refugee status in the Republic of Lithuania.

## Malta - *Parlament ta' Malta*

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

Below are the percentages based on the first asylum applications:

First Applications Total						
January to December 2015						
Nationality	UNSPECIFIED	FEMALE	MALE	MINOR FEMALE	MINOR MALE	Total
ALGERIA		1	11			12
BANGLADESH		1	1	1		3
BENIN			1			1
CAMEROON		1	1			2
CHINA (INCLUDING HONG KONG)			3			3
COMOROS			5			5
COTE D'IVOIRE (IVORY COAST)		3	15		1	19
EGYPT	3	4	13	5	4	29
ERITREA	1	18	11	12	7	49
ETHIOPIA		1	2	1	2	6
GAMBIA			5			5
GHANA			1			1
GUINEA			2		1	3
GUINEA-BISSAU			12			12
INDIA		1	1			2
INDONESIA		1				1
IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)		4	5	1		10
IRAQ		2	5	1		8
JORDAN		1				1
LIBERIA					1	1
LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA (LIBYA)		112	614	80	96	902
MALI			25		3	28
MOLDOVA, REPUBLIC OF		1				1
MOROCCO		2	1	1	1	5
NEPAL		1	3			4
NIGERIA	1	1	3		3	8
PAKISTAN		1	4			5
PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, OCC. (PALESTINE/WEST		3	4		5	12

BANK)						
SENEGAL			24			24
SERBIA		2	2			4
SOMALIA	1	3	10	14	12	40
SUDAN			2		1	3
SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC (SYRIA)		51	239	35	73	398
THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA		3	11			14
TUNISIA		2	4	1		7
TURKEY			1			1
UKRAINE		35	28	5	3	71
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		1		2	1	4
UZBEKISTAN			2			2
VENEZUELA		7	3			10
Total	6	263	1074	159	214	1716
Percentage	0%	15%	63%	9%	12%	100%

**2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?**

Yes. Article 6 (2b) of the Refugees Act (420.11) states that “In the performance of its functions, the Agency [Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers] shall provide particular services to categories of persons identified as vulnerable according to current policies.”

Part IV of SL 420.08 features specific provisions on the reception of vulnerable asylum seekers. The conditions of such vulnerable persons shall be taken into due account in the provision of reception. Moreover, minors shall not be detained.

Moreover, the Strategy for the Reception of Asylum Seekers and Irregular Migrants sets out that vulnerable persons shall not be detained.

Vulnerability is defined in Regulation 14 of SL 420.08.

**3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

Single adult females (including single mothers) are accommodated in an open centre for females. Care team members, including welfare officers and social workers, engage with all female residents with a view to assist them with their needs, including, when necessary, support for those who are victims of violence. The agency has a working relationship with mainstream entities that can offer support to victims of violence.

Females forming part of a family which includes a partner are accommodated in an open centre for families where care team members engage with residents with a view to assist with their various needs, both as individuals and as a family unit.



The agency is in charge of the Adult Referral Assessment Team, which receives referrals for early release from detention, including for women who are victims of violence. Depending on ARAT's findings, the Agency recommends early release to the Principal Immigration Officer.

**4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

We have no evidence to this effect.

## Montenegro - Skupstina

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

Total number of persons with the asylum seekers status, for whom the care was provided in the period 20 February 2014 - 31 December 2015, is 2,577,8 of which:

- Number of women with the asylum seekers status is 275 or 10.67%.
- Number of women who have been granted the refugee status is 5, or 0.19% of the overall number of asylum seekers, or 1.81% of the overall number of women with the refugee status.
- Number of minors who had the asylum seekers status is 149 or 5.78%.
- Number of minors who have been granted the asylum seekers status is 2 or 0.08% of the overall number of persons with the asylum seekers status, or 1.34% of the overall number of minors with the refugee status.

In the period 1 January - 31 December 2015, there were 245 women asylum seekers (15% of the total number of submitted applications for granting the asylum in 2015) and 106 minors with one or both parents (6.5% of total number of submitted applications for granting asylum in 2015).

During 2015, 16 protections were accorded in Montenegro, of which 9 for women (56% of the total number of protections accorded during 2015).

Of 9 protections accorded for women, 7 were for adults and 2 for minors.

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors?

National legislation provide specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors. Provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way asylum seekers such as women and minors are contained in the Law on Asylum and Rulebook on the manner of exercising the right to accommodation of asylum seekers, persons recognised as refugees, persons who have been accorded subsidiary protection and persons who have been accorded temporary protection.

Article 11 of the Law on Asylum prescribes that in the asylum procedure, care shall be taken of the special needs of minors, persons completely or partially deprived of legal capacity, unaccompanied minors, persons with mental or physical disabilities, the elderly, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, persons subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of mental, physical or sexual violence and other vulnerable persons.

The issues of vulnerable groups, including women and children, are being adequately addressed by fast procedure, sufficient accommodation, appropriate mechanisms for assistance, coordination,

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<sup>8</sup> The said data refer to the number of persons that the Directorate for the Care of Refugees provided care for.

<sup>2</sup> Data provided by the Directorate for Asylum

inter-agency cooperation, etc.

**3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

In the procedure on an asylum application, a special care is devoted to these particularly vulnerable categories, which, due to their specific life differences, need an additional support, hence they are protected by legal regulations and ethic norms, primarily by applying principles that imply: respect of personal dignity, non-discrimination, respect of differences, gender equality and similar.

Adequate psycho-social help and health protection are specific actions that are currently being implemented in the Centre for Asylum Seekers in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence.

**4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

In every community in the world, there are people who are victims of inhuman acts. Sexual violence and gender-based violence most often occur in environments where there is a general lack of respect of human rights. Sexual violence and gender-based violence are, certainly, by their nature violation of human rights.

To this end, in the procedure of establishing the refugee status of a refugee seeker, persons that might suffered the sexual violence are treated with a particular care and sensitivity.

## Norway - *Stortinget*

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

Information from open sources:

In 2015 in total 31 145 asylum applications were lodged in Norway (according to numbers from the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration – UDI).

7 215 of those were female applications. This constitutes approx. 23 percent of the total number of applications.

10 254 of the asylum applications were from minors. This constitutes about 33 percent of the total number of applications.

Female minors: 2 616

Male minors: 7 638

<http://www.udi.no/en/statistics-and-analysis/statistics/asylum-applications-lodged-in-norway-by-citizenship-sex-and-age/>

Women and children are indeed among the most vulnerable categories, subject to multiple discriminations and violations of their basic human rights.

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

Information from open sources and not exhaustive:

Trafficking, domestic violence etc.

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (the UDI)'s provisions for Reception centres for asylum seekers:

The reception centres for asylum seekers are required to identify and follow up those who might be victims of human trafficking, domestic violence or children marriage, cf. (information in Norwegian): <https://www.udiregelverk.no/no/rettskilder/udi-rundskriv/rs-2015-007/>

There are different types of residence permits that victims of physical or emotional violence (domestic violence) may apply for on certain conditions. See the UDI webpage for information: <https://www.udi.no/en/word-definitions/violence-in-the-family--domestic-violence/#link-8725>

If a woman fear that she will be or if she already has undergone female genital mutilation, she can be provided with different kinds of assistance, such as safe accommodation in a crisis centre, guidance and legal assistance to report the matter to the police. If she fears that she or her daughter will be subject to female genital mutilation in the home country, she can apply for protection (asylum).

For possible victims of trafficking there are different types of residence permits on certain conditions, such as a period of reflection (not renewable), a limited residence permit during investigations or court case and residence permits for witnesses in human trafficking cases. Victims of human trafficking can apply for protection (asylum).

- *The Ministry of Justice and Public Security is currently in the process of developing a new Action plan against human trafficking. Several concrete actions will be considered.*

In particular for children:

- About the relation between the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Norwegian Law:  
The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989, and ratified by Norway on 8 January 1991. On 1 October 2003, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was implemented in Norwegian law. The Norwegian Immigration Act shall be applied in accordance with international provisions by which Norway is bound when these are intended to strengthen the position of the individual.

In particular for unaccompanied minors:

- Reception of unaccompanied minors:  
Information on the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion website:  
“The state child welfare service is to offer care centre accommodation to all unaccompanied asylum seekers under the age of 15 years. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration is responsible for offering unaccompanied minor asylum seekers over the age of 15 years a place in a reception centre for unaccompanied minors or in a separate department linked to an ordinary asylum reception centre.  
Care centres for unaccompanied asylum seekers under the age of 15 years are to give the children the necessary care and security and ensure that they receive the follow-up and treatment they require. [...]”
- Representatives/guardians and a lawyer are appointed to unaccompanied minor asylum seekers who apply for asylum in Norway.

**3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

*(See answers to question 2 above)*

**4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

From open sources:

In 2014 about one quarter of the asylum seekers who got a permission to stay in Norway were women aged over 18.

In 2012 The Ministry of Justice issued new Guidelines to the Directorate of Immigration regarding Gender Related Persecution (revision of guidelines from 2009). In the Immigration Act of 2008 Section 29, a provision explicitly states that persecution might be actions “aimed especially towards gender.” The Ministry did not suggest a separate provision regarding the gender perspective when proposing a new Immigration Act in 2007, but suggested that proper guidelines should be given about gender related issues according to the consideration of refugees.

According to the guidelines the main aim is to give a comprehensive and systematic approach of those issues during the refugee consideration and asylum case handling where gender related questions might be of importance, and to make sure that these guidelines are followed in the asylum process. The guidelines will also contribute to a uniform practice.

*(Only in Norwegian language): <https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/retningslinjer-om-kjonnrelatert-forfolg/id696289/>*

## Poland - Sejm

### 1 Do you have data showing the total numbers and proportion of women and minors who have submitted applications to your country?

In Poland, about 50 % of applicants (6 059) are women and 46 % (5 620) are children. That is the highest proportion of women and children in Europe.

### 2 Does your national legislation have provisions for granting special treatment to women and minors seeking asylum? If so, what are they?

Yes. Under Polish law, if the applicant cannot come to the Border Guard headquarters in person because they have a disability or are elderly, a pregnant woman, a single parent or in foster care, in hospital, in detention or involved in criminal proceedings, a written declaration of their intention to apply for international protection can be submitted with the help of a post officer or electronically. In those cases, the application for international protection must be received and registered immediately, no later than three working days of receipt of the declaration of the intention to submit the application.

The Border Guard Authority, which is responsible for taking applications for international protection, must also offer persons with a disability, elderly persons, single parents and pregnant women transport to the reception centre and, where justified, meals for the journey.

If the application for international protection involves a person who requires special treatment, in particular:

- 1) a minor,
  - 2) a person with a disability,
  - 3) an elderly person,
  - 4) a pregnant woman,
  - 5) a single parent,
  - 6) a victim of human trafficking,
  - 7) a person with a serious illness,
  - 8) a person with a mental disorder,
  - 9) a person who has been tortured,
  - 10) a victim of psychological, physical or sexual violence or violence inflicted on the grounds of their gender, sexuality or sexual identity,
- the Head of the Office shall decide whether that person requires special treatment in the application procedure for international protection.

If an applicant requires special treatment, the application procedure for international asylum will be conducted:

- 1) in conditions that guarantee the applicant freedom to express themselves in a way that is adapted to their psychological state;
- 2) in a time frame adapted to their psychological and physical state, taking account of their medical treatment;
- 3) at the applicant's place of residence if their state of health so requires;

- 4) with the help of a psychologist, doctor or interpreter if necessary.
2. For applicants that require special treatment, where reasonably justified on the grounds of their needs, the application procedure for international asylum:
  - 1) shall be carried out by someone of the same gender;
  - 2) shall be carried out with the help of a psychologist, doctor or interpreter of the gender requested by the applicant.

**3 In your country, are special measures being taken to deal with the particular requirements of female refugees who are victims of violence?**

On 13 November 2015, by means of an amendment to the Act on granting protection to foreigners of 13 June 2003, Poland brought into its law a category of persons subject to identification and special procedural conditions in line with the reception directive. The category includes victims of psychological, physical or sexual violence or violence inflicted on the grounds of their gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, which also includes women subjected to physical violence. Particular attention is given to identification and procedural conditions in point 2.

**4 Do you have data showing that persecution against a person on the basis of their gender is being used as a basis for granting asylum?**

Under Polish law, persecution can take the form of physical or psychological violence, sexual violence or acts of a gender-specific or child-specific nature. For that reason, the authority in charge of granting international protection determines whether, taking account of a person's history, gender or age, the acts which have been committed against them or may be committed against them in future are a form of persecution or put them at real risk of harm. For that reason it can be said that, in general, the violence committed against an applicant on the basis of their gender is being used as a basis for granting them refugee status.

## Portugal - Assembleia da República

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

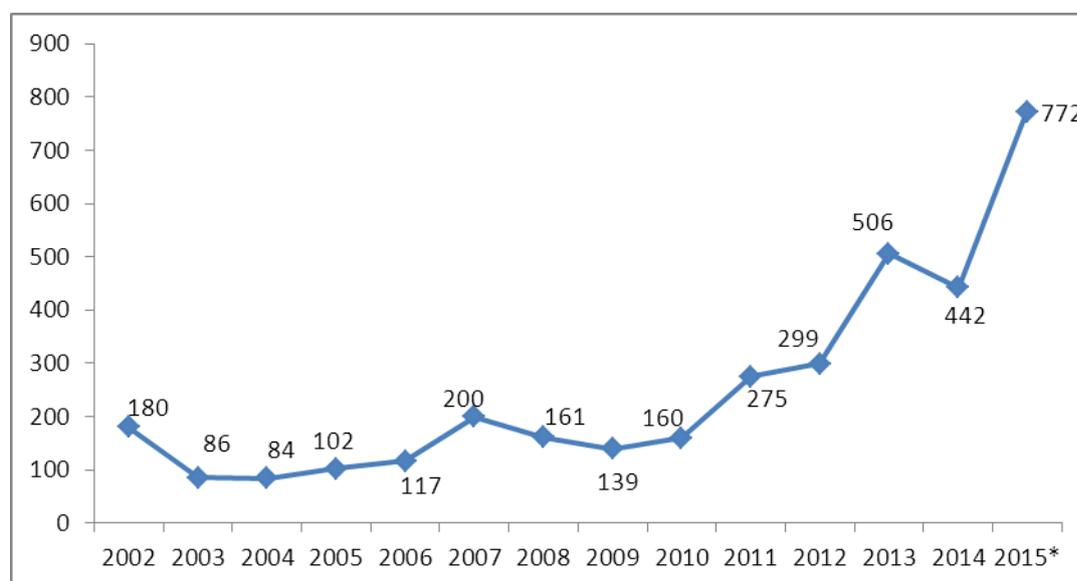
Portugal is a country that, traditionally, has not many asylum requests. Despite that, and according with the data from the Foreigners and Borders Service, and the Portuguese Council for Refugees, until October 2015, Portugal received 772 requests.

From this total, 281 were made by women, about 36% of the total, and 43 requests were made by unaccompanied minors, about 6% of the total.

Those requests were made by citizens from 45 different nationalities, being the most relevant countries of origin the Ukraine, China, Mali and Pakistan.

This total of 772 requests represent an increase of 126% in relation to the same period in 2014.

The next figure prepared by this High Commission for Migrations, with the data from the Foreigners and Borders Service and the Portuguese Council for Refugees, gives an overview of the number of asylum requests from 2002 until October 2015:



### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

I

The Portuguese legal framework for the refugees is in line with the international conventions and treaties ratified by Portugal in the United Nations context. With the publication, in 1948, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it was created the framework for the legislative developments in terms of the refugees and asylum seekers.

With this respect, in 1950, the Refugees Status was defined and the implementation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees with the particular obligation on the verification of the respect for the rights and duties regarding the refugees.



The following year, in 1951, the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees was created as the key legal document that defines who is a refugee, their rights and the legal obligations of the States. The 1967 Protocol, that was implemented in Portugal in 1975, and after that the United Nations Declaration on Territorial Asylum, gave more tools for the Portuguese legal framework.

In Portugal, when the refugee status is granted to a foreigner or a stateless person, the citizen has the permission to stay in the national territory having the same rights and duties of the foreigners with a residence permit.

For more details regarding any specific provision for asylum seekers we suggest the legislation available at [www.refugiados.acm.gov.pt](http://www.refugiados.acm.gov.pt)

II

In terms of the specific case of women and minors it is important to mention that in Portugal both legal and irregular migrants have access to the National Health Service under the same conditions applied to Portuguese citizens. This access is provided in all the dimensions: primary, secondary and emergency care, immunization and screening and prevention programmes.

Migrants with illegal status also have access to the National Health Service, although paying different fees, however minors and pregnant women are exempted of the payment of those fees, no matter of their legal status. Asylum seekers and refugees, and their families, do not pay user fees in the National Health Service. <http://www.acm.gov.pt/-/o-que-sao-as-taxas-moderadoras-e-que-servicos-tenho-que-pagar->

The Decree Law 67/2004 of 25th March created a national register of foreign minors with an irregular status, managed by the High Commission for Migrations, uniquely designed to ensure their access to health care, pre-school and school education given the fact that in Portugal both legal and irregular migrants have the right to access the education (if minors) and healthcare, no matter their legal status.

Portugal has Integration Plans for Immigrants, since 2007, that embodied several measures to improve immigrant's access to the National Health Service. One of those measures was the institutionalization of procedures to better manage health agreements and promote the immigrants access to health care. With this regard the Portuguese Health authorities, with the collaboration of this High Commission for Migration, designed a practical manual to manage diverse situations such as the procedures to implement in the case of undocumented children receiving health care in the National Health Service: a formal communication to the National Immigrant Support Centre. The model for this communication is available at the page 44 of this link: [www.acss.minsaude.pt/Portals/0/MANUALDEACOLHIMENTONOACESSOAO SISTEMADESA%C3%9ADE DECIDAD.pdf](http://www.acss.minsaude.pt/Portals/0/MANUALDEACOLHIMENTONOACESSOAO SISTEMADESA%C3%9ADE DECIDAD.pdf)

Finally, it is very important to underline that the legislative changes introduced by the Law 29/2012, of 9th August brought very relevant changes in the integration of the immigrant policies such as the legal assistance towards the victims of human trafficking, without the necessity of reciprocity (Article 109), as well the possibility of autonomisation of the residence permit, in the charge stage, on domestic violence crimes (Article 107).

III

Nevertheless, the Portuguese legislation is also deeply committed with the EU principles. Following the European Agenda on Migration published on the 13th May 2015, Portugal created on the 3rd September 2015 a Working Group for the European Agenda on Migration, technically coordinated by the Immigration and Borders Service and with the participation of other authorities such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Social Security Institute, the Institute for Employment and Professional Training, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and this High Commission for

Migrations. The political coordination of the Group is within the competences of the Secretary of State for Citizenship and Equality.

When necessary, this Working Group can also be advised by the Municipalities and NGOs. One of the main tasks of this Working Group is to provide an holistic approach regarding the refugees integration and create a map of all the national and local resources and capacities to improve the receiving mechanisms of those citizens (more details at: [www.refugiados.acm.gov.pt](http://www.refugiados.acm.gov.pt)). Portugal has a long and recognized experience in hosting and integrating immigrants and the same principles will be applied to the refugees. Portugal is coordinating this integration in different fields such as the integration in the labour market, providing language training, access to school for children, access to health care and providing housing. In terms of the housing is also important to mention that Portugal will not relocate those citizens into reception centers. In fact, and in close partnership with the municipalities and the local associations, those refugees will be integrated in local communities all over the country.

It is important to mention that not only the official authorities had promoted an answer for those citizens, but also the civil society gave an answer to this situation through the creation of an online platform ([www.refugiados.pt](http://www.refugiados.pt)) that aggregates NGOs, Social Solidarity Institutions, Universities, Media Companies and other economical groups.

Within the Working Group to the European Agenda for Migration, the mission of this High Commission for Migrations is focused in three axes.

The first axis is public opinions awareness regarding refugees` issues. It is being put in practice through campaigns that can both answer the existing inquires and mitigate prejudice regarding refugee populations. One of the examples was the creation, in partnership with the Refugees Support Platform, of the magazine “Myths and Facts about the Refugees”, a one week special free issue with the Portuguese newspapers and newsmagazines of higher circulation.

Through its Migrant Support Line, the High Commission for Migrations also made available the email address [refugiados@acm.gov.pt](mailto:refugiados@acm.gov.pt) to answer inquires and to manage all sort of sponsorships to host refugees.

Other axes that the High Commission is responsible for within the Working Group is the articulation between both the civil society and local councils and hosting proposals that may respond to housing, food, health, education, Portuguese teaching classes and employment needs.

Finally, and given the experience that this High Commission has in the field of immigrants integration through its Immigrants National Support Centres (also known as one-stop-shops) the latest goal of the High Commission`s work is the opening of those Centres to the refugees.

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

In terms of the Portuguese legislation it is very important to mention that immigrant women that entered the country within the Law on Family Reunification, and if they are victims of domestic violence, have the right to a special protection.

Acknowledging the change in migration flows in Portugal over the past few years and the need to define an integrated vision on migration to the country in a whole-of-government approach, in 2014, the Portuguese Government decided to change the action plans focused only on the integration of immigrants and started to define a national strategy to migration flows at global, including measures to target not only immigrants, but also Portuguese emigrants and refugees.

Although enlarging its target group for a broader sense of migrants, again this new strategy took in consideration the importance to reinforce the variety of sectors where integration should occur

(employment, health, education, justice, housing, culture and language, civic participation, human trafficking), as well as crosscutting themes such as gender issues, racism and discrimination and also the promotion of diversity and intercultural dialogue. This Migration Strategic Plan 2015-2020 ([www.acm.gov.pt/-/plano-estrategico-para-as-migracoes-pem-](http://www.acm.gov.pt/-/plano-estrategico-para-as-migracoes-pem-)) reinforces the former Plans for the Integration of Immigrants and contains 106 measures in 5 fundamental axes:

- Immigrant integration policies;
- Policies to promote the integration of the new Portuguese;
- Policies of migration flows coordination;
- Policies strengthening the migratory legality and quality of migration services;
- Incentive policies, monitoring and supporting the return of national emigrant citizens.

The definition of this plan is also the recognition that – although Portugal has been receiving several important international recognitions of the good practices and policies that it has for migrants (e.g. MIPEX results, UN 2009 Report on Human Development) – more has to be done. The practice of the law needs permanent monitorization and policy measures to reinforce it. The Portuguese legislation already contemplates the existence of a firewall between immigration enforcement and public services such as health care and education institutions. This system is quoted as a good practice, namely by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants as it can represent a significant step in ensuring the protection and the enjoyment of all civil, cultural, economic, political and social human rights of migrants.

Regarding some services that provide assistance to the protection of the Fundamental Rights, including special needs of refugees women, the National Immigrant Support Centres ([www.acm.gov.pt/-/cnaicentro-nacional-de-apoio-ao-imigrante](http://www.acm.gov.pt/-/cnaicentro-nacional-de-apoio-ao-imigrante)), known as the Portuguese One-Stop-Shop approach, located in Lisbon, Porto and Faro, and managed by the High Commission for Migration, are running since 2004. These support centres bring together different services and provide information and support to all immigrants, free of charge, in an integrated way, involving under the same roof services of 6 different ministries and support complementary offices that result from partnerships between the High Commission for Migration, Immigrant Associations and NGOs. Keeping its important role to the integration of immigrants, in 2013 and 2014, new support offices were created (e.g. over-indebted support office and support office for foreign voters registration) and others, with demand rise, were reinforced.

Other examples of specific offices that could provide support to refugees women are the Immigrant Legal Support Office (free legal advice to all immigrants in areas as diverse as immigration, nationality, employment, social security and minors), the Employment Support Office (helps to adequate the job offers for the professional capacities and the qualifications of each immigrant), the Social Support Office or the Family Reunification Support Office.

Furthermore, the High Commission for Migration, in collaboration with the Commission of Citizenship and Gender Equality, published some brochures, in six languages, on the combat against the domestic violence ([www.cig.gov.pt/2013/07/diga-nao-a-violencia-domestica-folhetos/](http://www.cig.gov.pt/2013/07/diga-nao-a-violencia-domestica-folhetos/)), which were distributed at the National Immigrant Support Centres and also through the Immigrant Associations.

In addition to this, the High Commission is also partner of the V National Plan to Prevent and Combat Domestic and Gender-Based Violence 2014-2017 ([www.cig.gov.pt/planos-nacionais-areas/violencia-domestica/](http://www.cig.gov.pt/planos-nacionais-areas/violencia-domestica/)), that includes the III Programme of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation, and is also partner of the III National Plan to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in

Human Beings 2014-2017 ([www.cig.gov.pt/planos-nacionais-areas/trafico-de-seres-humanos/](http://www.cig.gov.pt/planos-nacionais-areas/trafico-de-seres-humanos/)). With this regard some activities had been developed such as the distribution of brochures to alert for those situations, and also some training sessions for the professionals of this High Commission that work directly with the immigrant population, specially taking into account the report of domestic violence cases that is made to the competent authorities by the technicians of the National Immigrant Support Centres.

**4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

For more details on these data we suggest the contact with the Immigration and Borders Service ([www.sef.pt](http://www.sef.pt)) and eventually also with the Commission of Citizenship and Gender Equality ([www.cig.gov.pt](http://www.cig.gov.pt)).

## Romania - *Senatul*

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

In terms of total number and percentage of minors and women who were received by Romania, we will attach below the statistics on asylum applications in 2015.

Asylum applications in 2015:

Sex

Sex	Total	%
F	333	26,30%
M	933	73,70%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Minors (<18 years at time of application) / adult (> = 18 years at time of application)

Minor/Adult	Total	%
Minor	297	23,46%
Adult	969	76,54%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>100,00%</b>

Gender-Minors/Adults

Sex	Minor/Adult	Total	% of total gender	% of total applications
F	Minor	114	34,23%	9,00%
	Adult	219	65,77%	17,30%
<b>F Total</b>		<b>333</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>26,30%</b>
M	Minor	183	19,61%	14,45%
	Adult	750	80,39%	59,24%
<b>M Total</b>		<b>933</b>	<b>100,00%</b>	<b>73,70%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1266</b>		<b>100,00%</b>

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

National legislation provides specific measures on services for asylum seekers and people with a form of protection that are sheltered in the regional centers of the General Inspectorate for Immigration.

Hosting asylum seekers is regulated by Law 122/2006 on asylum in Romania, as amended and supplemented, and Government Decision no. 1251/2006 approving the Methodological Norms for the application of Law no. 122/2006 on asylum in Romania, including provisions specific to the category of vulnerable people seeking asylum.

As follows:

- According to art. 17 of Law 122/2006 on asylum in Romania, with subsequent amendments and additions:

"(1) During the asylum procedure the foreigner applying for a form of protection has the following rights:

[....]

k) the right to be sheltered in reception and sheltering centers subordinated to the Romanian Immigration Office until the end of the right to stay in Romania, for the asylum seeker who does not have the material means needed for living cost;

l) the right of asylum seeker with special needs to receive customized accommodations and assistance in housing centers

[....]

(8) When the shelter capacity in reception and sheltering centers for asylum seekers is exceeded, the General Inspectorate for Immigration, within the available funds, can grant asylum seekers a sum of money for the purpose of renting living spaces or may acquire specialized services for the reception and sheltering of asylum seekers in collective or individual locations. "

- According to art. 58 of the Government Decision no. 1251/2006 approving the Methodological Norms for the application of Law no. 122/2006 on asylum in Romania:

"(1) Sheltering minor asylum seekers is made with relatives accompanying them, regardless of the degree of relationship.

(2) Sheltering of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers who have reached age 16 and who lack the financial means necessary for cost living is done in reception and accommodation centers subordinated to the National Refugee Office until the expiry of 15 days of completion of the asylum procedure according to art. 17 para. (7) of the Act, if they have not been granted a form of protection.

(3) Sheltering of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers who have not reached the age of 16, is made according to art. 74 of Law no. 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of children's rights, as amended.

(4) The opinion of unaccompanied minor asylum seeker regarding the place he will be staying is taken into account and is given due significance in relation to his age and degree of maturity. "

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

Women refugees, victims of violence, are classified as vulnerable persons and receive specific assistance measures. In order to achieve individual assessment and taking appropriate measures to ensure the rights and guarantees provided by Law 122/2006 on asylum in Romania, as amended and supplemented, the competent authorities shall provide specialist support at the request of the General Inspectorate for Immigration.

To support the integration of this category of persons, the General Inspectorate for Immigration operates integration programs, sustained over a period of six months with the possibility of extension for another 6 months, while the refugees receive the following assistance measures:

- shelter in one of the centers managed by GII;
- Granting, for a period of two months, an amount equal to the material aid for asylum seekers;
- Cultural orientation courses;

- Social counseling and psychological support;
- Romanian language courses organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth through school inspectorates;
- Non-refundable material aid worth 540 lei for a period of maximum 12 months requesting the participation in the activities set out in the individual integration plan.

The integration program with a maximum duration of 1 year is accomplished according to an individual integration plan compiled by specialized personnel from the regional centers GII for each adult. Integration officers aim at implementing the activities envisaged in the plan, benefiting also from support from NGOs that carry out projects financed by the European Refugee Fund. Special cases (unaccompanied minors, disabled people, people who have reached retirement age and do not receive pension, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of trafficking and victims of torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, or sexual violence) may benefit from the extension of the program for free integration and accommodation in the GII centres, indefinitely, until the end of the situation of vulnerability.

Romania is in the process of ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence adopted in Istanbul, the most comprehensive international legal instrument addressing violence from the perspective of a serious violation of human rights. Romania signed the Istanbul Convention on 27 June 2014 and the Romanian Government approved on 23 September 2015 the draft law on the ratification of this document. At the same time, the Romanian President, signed on 9 October 2015 Decree no. 753/2015 for subjecting Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, for ratification by Parliament. The draft law is currently milestones parliamentary procedure. This was adopted unanimously on 18 November 2015 by the Chamber of Deputies and is to be approved by the specialized committees of the Senate, which acts as the decisional chamber.

The Istanbul Convention includes provisions legally binding states to protect the rights of women, victims of violence "without discrimination on any grounds, including those immigrant or refugee status" (article 4), by "measures required to develop procedures to receive and support services for asylum seekers sensitive in a gender issue" (art. 60), as well as " legislative or other measures to ensure that victims of violence against women in need of protection, regardless of their status of residence, will not be returned, under any circumstances, in a country where their lives would be in danger or where they might be subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishing "(61).

In preparation for the implementation of the Convention, in October 2015 a working group under the coordination of the Superior Council of Magistracy was formed, which includes along with the National Agency for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, representatives of the governmental bodies with responsibilities in the field and members of the Network of Non-Governmental Organizations "Break the silence about sexual violence" ("Rupem tăcerea despre violența sexuală").

Analyzing the Convention, it is clear that our country must take and transpose into national law a multitude of responsibilities and concrete measures to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence, including those mentioned above, which refer to protection of the rights of women refugee, victims of gender violence.

#### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

National practice revealed that persecution based on gender issues appeared in particular in the case of female asylum seekers coming from specific geographical areas (ex. Somalia, Eritrea, DR Congo) where such acts are generally widespread.

Taking into consideration the most cases of granting refugee status in Romania, the persecution based on gender is a criterion rarely invoked in support of applications for asylum and thus leading to granting a form of protection on that ground.



## Slovenia - *Državni zbor*

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

In 2015, 277 requests for international protection were received, of which 46 were submitted by women (16.6 %). 44 were unaccompanied minors (15.88 %).

\*

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

The legislation of the Republic of Slovenia considers minors, unaccompanied minors and victims of sexual and other violence as special vulnerable groups. As such they are guaranteed special care.

Every female applicant may request that her application be examined by a female official. Moreover, if possible, a female interpreter may be provided upon the request of the applicant. All applicants have the right to contraceptives, termination of pregnancy and healthcare during pregnancy and labour.

Applications submitted by unaccompanied minors are given priority. Applications by minors who are in the Republic of Slovenia together with their parents are examined together with their parents' applications. An unaccompanied minor is guaranteed international protection or a male or female legal representative who must be properly qualified for dealing with minors already before the receipt of application for international protection.

All official procedures which involve minors are carried out in the presence of a legal representative. In the case of a minor accompanied by parents, these procedures are carried out in the presence of one parent, whereas in the case of unaccompanied minors, they are carried out in the presence of an appointed legal representative.

During the examination of the application for international protection, the vulnerable groups are properly accommodated. As a general rule, applicants are accommodated in the Asylum Centre which comprises separated units for both, the unaccompanied minors and women. If the Asylum Centre cannot provide suitable accommodation (e.g. younger unaccompanied minors) they are provided accommodation with the help of the competent organisation or a relevant non-governmental organisation.

Vulnerable persons with special needs are also entitled to additional healthcare services, including psychotherapy.

In the process of accepting the application and during the entire procedure of granting international protection, particular attention is paid to identifying the victims of sexual violence, gender-based violence and to identifying the categories of vulnerable persons. After the receipt of application for international protection, the non-governmental organisations inform the persons seeking such protection, particularly those falling under the category of vulnerable persons, on who are the victims of human trafficking, who are the traffickers, what it awaits them on their journey to other countries, who are the victims of sexual violence and gender-based violence, and finally how to protect themselves. Standard operative procedures concerning the assistance and protection which

is to be provided to identified victims are also envisaged.

\*

**3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

The Republic of Slovenia provides the persons enjoying international protection with equal access to healthcare as the one enjoyed by the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia, including psychiatric help. As a general rule, this is not a specialised help. In addition to medical assistance, persons with international protection may also have recourse to any of the non-governmental organisations which offer assistance, support and counselling to victims of sexual violence and gender-based violence in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia.

\*

**4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

Gender-based violence and sexual violence in the country of origin may be considered as a reason to be granted international protection. However, it should be noted here that each application is considered individually and that only by comprehensively examining an individual case, a relevant decision may be taken.

No special statistics are kept on whether gender-based violence and sexual violence in the country of origin actually served as a basis for granting international protection.

## Sweden - Riksdagen

### 1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?

The total number asylum applications for the year 2015

Women: 48 149

Minors: 70 384

The overall percentage for 2015

Women: 30%

Minors: 43%

Source: the Swedish Migration Agency

<http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.7c00d8e6143101d166d1aab/1451894593595/Inkomna+ans%C3%B6kningar+om+asyl+2015+-+Applications+for+asylum+received+2015.pdf>

### 2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?

Sweden has signed the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. This entails, among other things, that Sweden shall examine each asylum application individually. The individual examination includes taking the applicant's gender and sexual orientation into account; e.g., whether the applicant is homosexual, bisexual or transgender.

In accordance with the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Swedish legislation and EU regulations, a person is classed a refugee when they have well-founded reasons to fear persecution due to gender. The Swedish Aliens Act is however gender neutral, and is therefore applicable to both females and males.

An asylum application is handled by the Swedish Migration Agency. The Swedish Aliens Act states that the Swedish Migration Agency shall take special consideration to the best interest of the child. In cases involving a child, particular attention must be given to what is required with regard to the child's health and development, and the best interests of the child in general. A child that will be affected by a decision in the case, must be heard (unless this is inappropriate).

All children, who can and wish to, have the right to speak and be listened to. The asylum reasons of children shall be particularly examined – a child may have other reasons for asylum than the parents. When the child's reasons for asylum have been examined, the administrator attempts, as much as is possible, to adapt the investigation taking the child's age, health and other circumstances into consideration. The child has the right to be accompanied by an adult in the investigation. This may be a parent, a public counsel or a trustee, if the child has no parent in Sweden. Asylum-seeking children are entitled to attend school and have access to free health and dental care in the same way that children registered as residents in Sweden have. If a child is unaccompanied (children under 18 years of age who arrive in Sweden without a guardian), the municipalities are responsible for a child's care. The Migration Agency therefore always contacts the municipality's social welfare duty officer, who ensures that children are taken care of at a specially adapted accommodation centre.

### 3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?

When investigating an asylum case, the Swedish Migrations Agency always try to identify and pay attention to if a person has experienced violence. If that is the case, the asylum seeking person should meet and talk to people that have the knowledge and special experience of meeting people in that situation (page 734 in the Swedish Migration Agency written handbook). The Migration Agency also informs about help that can be attained from others than the Migration Agency (page 735).

The Swedish Aliens Act is, as above mentioned, gender-neutral, although in practice, gender related considerations are being made. For example, an asylum-seeking person can request a female (or male) case officer, and the Migration Agency should always reflect upon if **the** case officers and interpreters should be female (or male). Considerations should always be made if women should be heard separately from a male partner or family member.

#### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

Sweden has signed the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the joint EU refugee regulations. This means that Sweden must consider all applications for asylum individually. Sweden grant residence permits to persons who are refugees or in need of protection on other grounds. The Migration Agency should first consider whether a person is a refugee or not, then whether a person are eligible for subsidiary protection, and finally if a person are otherwise in need of protection. In accordance with the UN Convention, Swedish legislation (and EU regulations), a person are a refugee if the person have good reason to fear persecution due to (among others) gender, as well as if there is an ongoing armed conflict.

## Turkey - *The Grand National Assembly of Turkey*

*Compilation of the two replies received respectively by Sibel ÖZDEMİR, CHP (Republican People's Party), Deputy of Istanbul, and by Ayşe DOĞAN, AKP (Justice and Development Party), Deputy of Tekirdağ.*

*Members of The Committee on Equal Opportunity For Women and Men.*

### **1 Could you provide data on the overall numbers and on the percentage of women and minors (disaggregated) have been received by your Country?**

2.500.000 Registered Syrian Refugees 49.2% Female and 10% Children.

212.200 Other Nations 30% 0-17 Aged Children and 25% 18-60+ Aged Women.

The proportion of the Interior Ministry on comprehensive women and minorities in our country are recorded by the General Directorate of Immigration Administration of the Ministry of Interior.

### **2 Does your national legislation provide any specific provisions aimed at receiving in a more appropriate way vulnerable asylum seekers such as women and minors? If yes, which ones?**

Law on Foreigners and International Protection ( April 2014)

Law on Work Permits For Foreigners (Feb 2003 and Jan 2016)

Temporary Protection Regulation ( Oct 2014)

Asylum in Turkey, Foreign and is regulated by the International Protection Act. Within the framework of this law has been established under the Ministry of Interior General Directorate of Migration Administration. International protection application process is carried out by the provincial organization affiliated to the Immigration Administration General Directorate of the provinces.

### **3 Which specific actions are currently being implemented in your Country in order to cope with the special needs of women refugees who are victims of violence?**

Centers for Elimination and Monitoring of Violence under Provincial Ministry of Family and Social Policy and Other State Institutions.

Temporary Protection beneficiary Women shall also benefit from all regulations, municipalities and NGO's.

### **4 Following statistics and data at your disposal, can you say that gender-based violence is considered in your Country as a reason to grant asylum?**

There is no such statistics in our hands.

The main reason of granting asylum in Turkey is that armed conflicts and domestic conflicts of Turkey's main and important neighbour middle-east countries such as Syrian and Irak.