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Adolescents in Wanderland:

A Qualitative Study on the Immediate Problems Faced by Unaccompanied and
Separated Children Seeking Asylum on Lesbos, Greece

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Abstract:

This thesis is a qualitative study researching the immediate protection of adolescents, specifically Unaccompanied and Separated Children, in the current refugee crisis as they arrive in the European Union on the Greek island of Lesbos. The aim is to contrast the extent immediate protection mechanisms, required by both law and in theory, are being realised on Lesbos and to what extent they are failing the most vulnerable. Despite much quantitative research on the current refugee crisis, there is a serious lack of qualitative research to accompany it and this thesis will therefore attempt to illuminate the subjective experiences of those working, volunteering and arriving on Lesbos in order to further the discourse on the implementation of immediate protection mechanisms. Through interviews, observations and archival research I gathered enough information to be able to thoroughly analyse what has been happening there. Ultimately I have discovered that much more work and theorising is needed to adapt these mechanisms, and much greater efficacy is needed from all people involved if it is to be improved. In a world that is becoming more and more unstable, and with the amount of globally displaced persons increasing every year, this research, and more of its kind, is necessary to improve protection mechanisms that so far have been inadequate.

Table of Acronyms

BIA	Best Interest Assessment
BID	Best Interest Determination
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CK Team	Coordination Kleio
CoE	Council of Europe
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECtHR	European Court on Human Rights
EU	European Union
EUCFR	European Charter of Fundamental Rights
GNUM	Guardian Network for Unaccompanied Minors
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICECSR	International Convention on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MSF	Medecins Sans Frontieres
NCSS	National Center for Social Solidarity
NGO	Non government Organisation
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
RAMH	Rapid Assessment of Mental Health Needs
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
UASC	Unaccompanied and Separated Children
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
WHO	World Health Organisation
WRC	Women’s Refugee Commission

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“What has happened to you, the Europe of humanism, the champion of human rights, democracy and freedom? ... The home of poets, philosophers, artists, musicians, and men and women of letters? What has happened to you ... the mother of great men and women who upheld, and even sacrificed their lives for, the dignity of their brothers and sisters?”

Pope Francis

This thesis is focused on contributing to the immediate protection of unaccompanied and separated children (UASCs) forced to leave their homes and seek refuge in Europe. Specifically, it will be looking at the protection of those traveling from Turkey, across the Mediterranean Sea and arriving onto the Greek island of Lesbos. The Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) is the most ratified human rights treaty in the world¹, and all states within the European Union have a legally binding obligation to protect UASCs, who are some of the most vulnerable people entering Europe². This thesis will analyse the extent to which legal mechanisms have failed to immediately protect these children arriving, why they have failed and what can be done to improve them in the future.

The on-going refugee/migrant crisis is arguably the biggest challenge in the history of the European Union³ and it is pushing the region to its breaking point. Since the beginning of the Syrian Civil war in 2011, the numbers of refugees and migrants arriving in the EU had increased, but it was nothing compared to last year in 2015, when the total number of arrivals exploded, with over a million arriving in Europe via the Mediterranean (see Figure 1.1 below). In that year alone the EU received a total of 1,321,560 asylum applications, officially turning an already bad situation into a crisis⁴.

¹ (UNICEF 2005)

² (Committee on the Rights of the Child 2005)

³ (Al Jazeera and Agence France-Presse 2015)

⁴ (BBC News Europe 2016)

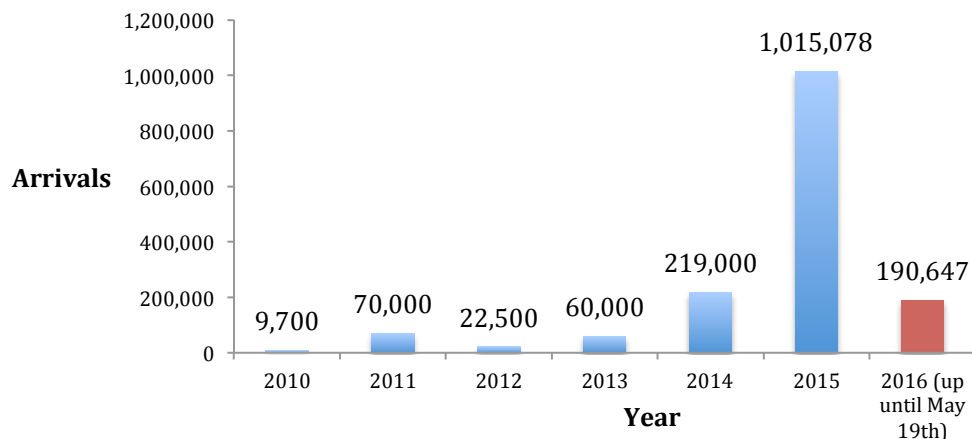


Figure 1.1- Refugees and Migrants Arriving in Europe by the Mediterranean Sea. Source: UNHCR, 2016

Although the civil war in Syria has played an important role in triggering this crisis, the overwhelming influx of people is due to a myriad of conflicts and political unrest across the Middle East and parts of Northern Africa, or what is labelled as the ‘arc of instability,’⁵ with the issue being much larger and more complex than it first appears. Looking at the demographics from the arrivals who crossed the Mediterranean Sea, a trip the vast majority of refugees/migrants took into the EU (shown in Figure 1.1), we find that although Syrians make up roughly half of the asylum applicants, the rest are predominantly from Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan in the Middle East, and from Eritrea, Nigeria and Somalia in sub-Saharan Africa⁶. According to the IOM and UNICEF, in 2015 (up until October) more than 1 in every 5 of those arrivals was a child, with 60% of the children being from Afghanistan⁷. Currently the UNHCR claims that the proportion of those under the age of 18 arriving has risen, accounting for roughly a third of all refugees/migrants that have travelled across the Mediterranean so far in 2016⁸.

At the height of the crisis last year the small Greek island of Lesbos was the focal point in the Mediterranean, receiving over 3,000⁹ people a day, much more than anywhere else in the EU. People who after spending months of traveling through war-zones, across borders and facing countless human rights abuses eventually made it to

⁵ (Swing 2016)

⁶ (UNHCR 2016)

⁷ (IOM and UNICEF 2015)

⁸ (UNHCR 2016)

⁹ (Clayton 2015)

the coastline of Turkey, where their final destination of Europe was only a 7 kilometre¹⁰ boat journey away. I learned during my fieldwork in Lesvos that in order to make the journey across the narrow stretch of water smugglers operate on the Turkish coast sometimes charging over a thousand Euros per person, money that is often all the refugees/migrants have left, and once paid, they are then packed like cattle onto old, inflatable boats. If they escape the Turkish coastguard and do not drown during the crossing, they likely arrive along the Northern and Eastern coastline of Lesvos, a coastline that is relatively inaccessible and full of hazards. If the smugglers are too afraid to drop them off on the beaches¹¹ then the passengers may be threatened with a knife and forced to jump into the cold Mediterranean waters and swim the last stretch. It was not until autumn of last year that NGOs and volunteers started arriving and organising themselves so that they could really be effective. It is estimated that 3771 people are dead/missing from 2015, slightly more than the 3500 in 2014¹², and is a figure that would be much higher had people from all over the world not decided to give up their time and volunteer to help in this crisis.

Reuters News Agency and the UNHCR stated that in 2015 industrialised countries received nearly 100,000 asylum applications from UASCs, a historic high, accounting for two to three percent of all the applicants in Central Europe, with this figure being as high as ten percent in some countries.¹³ Article 20 of the CRC states that “a child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State”; protection that a state is legally obliged to realise with immediate effect¹⁴. Helping UASCs as quickly as possible is an imperative, a fact highlighted by Catherine Bearder, an MEP for the Liberal Democrats, who was quoted in the ‘The Guardian’ saying that “when the migrants land on Europe’s shores, when they are not properly looked after, they are absolutely ripe victims for the traffickers” and she argues that governments are not doing enough to prevent it¹⁵.

¹⁰ (The Flying Surgeon 2015)

¹¹ This happened when my team spotted a boat and the smugglers mistook our volunteers for police.

¹² (UNHCR 2016)

¹³ (Nebehay 2016) (UNHCR Central Europe 2016)

¹⁴ (CRC 1989, Art. 20.1)

¹⁵ (Rankin 2016)

Media coverage on this current crisis has been impossible to ignore, especially in Europe, and although I was aware of what was happening, it wasn't until September last year when I picked up a free copy of the 'Metro'¹⁶ waiting for my train to London that I really began to think about the issue. I will never forget seeing the front cover that day, a day when the picture of a Syrian baby drowned and washed up on the beaches of Turkey was on every paper and news channel in the country. Then it became real to me. With a minimum estimate of 10,000¹⁷ refugee/migrant children missing after entering the EU, it is clear that in reality the protection mechanisms in place to safeguard them have catastrophically failed. UASCs are one of the most vulnerable groups, and despite being a wealth of research conducted on the subject and plenty of laws in place to protect these children and their most basic human rights, it has not worked.

It is acknowledged by the Committee on the Rights of the Child that the current "data is insufficient for a detailed analysis of the implementation of the rights of such children"¹⁸ The estimate of 10,000 children missing is modest and Europol suggest the figure may be much higher as it doesn't include those who have not registered¹⁹. In an area of the world where so many Human Rights conventions, treaties and laws are specifically designed protect the most vulnerable, how can this be allowed to happen? How can so many children just vanish within the EU?

The statistics and facts presented so far clearly demonstrate the scale of this crisis, especially in terms of how much it affects children and also how overwhelming it has been for the EU. The Director General of the IMO emphasised that there is an "arc of instability stretching from the Western bulge of Africa to Asia"²⁰ and we cannot ignore the fact large-scale migration is in the world to stay, so the EU must be prepared. I wanted to help in whatever way I could through volunteering, and also conduct research in the hope of improving the response when such a crisis inevitably happens again. I spent 18 days on Lesbos working on the beaches and in refugee camps with Coordination Kleio (the CK-Team), and in my free time I qualitatively

¹⁶ (Nsubuga 2015)

¹⁷ (Townsend 2016)

¹⁸ (Committee on the Rights of the Child 2005)

¹⁹ (Missing Children Europe 2016)

²⁰ (Swing 2016)

researched the human rights situation for the immediate protection of vulnerable people and specifically how well UASCs are being protected.

The aim of the thesis is to illuminate the experiences of those involved in the refugee and migrant crisis on Lesbos in order to illustrate the reality that legal instruments and literature have on the immediate protection of refugees/migrants, children (including adolescents), and UASCs. To achieve this aim, Chapter 2 will first define these three categories and demonstrate how they will make up the theoretical foundations to support this thesis. Then, in Chapter 3, I can explain the methodology both in theory and practice so that the reader can fully understand why the research methods were chosen and how they are carried out. Chapter 4 will go on to discuss the underlying legal and operational framework as well as considering the theoretical discourse surrounding this thesis. Chapter 5 is the most significant section, and as a result will present the findings from the research conducted on Lesbos in great detail. Finally Chapter 6 will then analyse the findings of Chapter 5 with what was discussed in Chapter 4's review of the legal and theoretical discourse before the concluding this work. Ultimately the thesis will consider the extent to which immediate protection mechanisms have failed in Lesbos, why they have failed and what steps can be taken to improve the situation for the future. This research is measurable, achievable, but above all, necessary.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

“Man is not born to solve the problem of the universe, but to find out what he has to do; and to restrain himself within the limits of his comprehension.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

2.1 Introduction

In order to have a comprehensive and rounded understanding of issue at hand, the theoretical foundations of this thesis will be based on three specific areas. Firstly, I will consider the problem with definitions surrounding the current refugee/migrant crisis as a whole, then I will seek to find a definition what a child is and finally I will focus on defining UASCs and specifically look at where unaccompanied adolescents are unique within that understanding. It is important to see these three definitions as the pillars that support the structure of this thesis and it is important to refer back to this framework in order to reaffirm and understand the direction of my research.

2.2 Defining Refugees and Migrants

So far I have remained rather ambiguous and used the term refugee/migrant to refer to the hundreds of thousands undocumented arrivals entering the EU during the current crisis. In the British press the term migrant is much more commonly used and below is the BBC’s explanation as to why:

“This group includes people fleeing war-torn countries such as Syria, who are likely to be granted refugee status, as well as people who are seeking jobs and better lives, who governments are likely to rule are economic migrants.”²¹

This definition seems straightforward, but there is a fear that the term ‘migrant’ has negative connotations and creates a general feeling of malaise in the readers, rather than creating sympathy towards these people struggling for a better life.²² When European politics seems to be shifting to the right and the rhetoric regarding

²¹ (BBC Europe 2016)

²² (Pritchard 2015)

‘migrants’ is also becoming more negative then it is increasingly important to think about what the terms really mean in both their definitions and the impact they have.

According to the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which was amended by the 1967 protocol, a refugee is person who:

“owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.”²³

Interestingly, Steinbock argues that the Conventions definition of a refugee is a highly politicised view and “both a product and a part of the history of the twentieth century, and an excessively literal textual approach runs the risk of ignoring that history.”²⁴ The very foundation to understanding the term refugee is the requirement to protect a person from harm on the basis of their differences. However, in order to be recognised as a refugee, a person must be fleeing their country of origin as a result of aligning themselves with a particular social group that is facing persecution, and not therefore, as a result of individual circumstances.²⁵ To demonstrate the problems with this Steinbock gives the example of Environmental refugees who are not necessarily part of a collective. Additionally, he highlights the Conventions definition leaves the term ‘social groups’ as rather ambiguous, and the courts should more regularly give the benefit of the doubt to different groups in order to respond to “evolving forms of oppression.”²⁶

A migrant is considered as someone who is leaving their country generally in order to better their life in some way, which for example may be economic reasons, family, education or travel²⁷. According to the UNHCR the vast majority of the unofficial arrivals coming into the EU are refugees fleeing war and persecution, but there are

²³ (UN Convention 1951, Article 1(A)(2))

²⁴ (Steinbock 1999, 19)

²⁵ (Ibid, 21)

²⁶ (Ibid, 34)

²⁷ (UNHCR 2015)

also migrants who are from countries where they don't face such horrors and are perhaps not perceived as being entitled to seek asylum. The UNHCR agrees that by referring to all people as migrants is wrong and is used as a tool for politics, as opposed to means of helping people, so they maintain that the distinction is very important to highlight.²⁸ Therefore, when speaking generally in this thesis I will refer to the arrivals by using the term 'refugees and migrants,' and I will focus the research on all unaccompanied children regardless of their legal status. This is in order to avoid the conflation of two very different terms, and in the hope of not inadvertently politicising my thesis.

2.3 Definition of the Child and Specifically Adolescents

In the Oxford English Dictionary an adult is defined as being “a fully grown person who is legally responsible for their actions,”²⁹ but what needs to be considered is what it means when is someone 'legally responsible' and what makes them 'fully grown.' What really makes and defines someone as an adult? Perhaps it's defined by when you are an age you can legally vote, get married, drink alcohol or leave formal education. However, in reality we all age and develop at different rates depending on our own individual circumstances, cultures and biology. Understandably there must be a practical age limit, what is known as the age of majority, for a government to officially recognise, but how do you select an appropriate age?

In international legal terms, the CRC defines a child as “a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger.”³⁰ This definition, supported by both the EU's and Council of Europe's (CoE) legal frameworks, remains rather ambiguous and does not offer a concrete definition as to what age a child should be, instead it merely offers a suggestion. This is evident when we consider the different legal definitions of the age of majority across the world. It ranges from the age of 15 in some countries like Iran, to the age of 21 in others like the US. This age of majority can also be gendered, for example in Pakistan up until 2011 the age of majority for a male was 18, compared to a female who had either

²⁸ (Edwards 2015)

²⁹ (Oxford Learner's Dictionary 2016)

³⁰ (CRC 1989, Art. 1)

reached the age of sixteen or gone through puberty.³¹ If in general the definition of a child or an adult is already controversial, then in the current refugee and migrant crisis it becomes even more problematic, and so the discourse must be explored further.

It is important to acknowledge that on an individual basis age is not always the only determining factor. For instance within the UK vulnerable cases can be kept in contact with social workers up until the age of 21³², and in order to claim tax-support for a child in the US there are five different definitions of a dependant child with students up to the age of 24 being included, or if permanently disabled, then you can be considered a ‘child’ at any age³³. The age of criminal responsibility, where you can be tried as an adult, also varies, with the UK setting the lowest age in the EU at 10-years-old,³⁴ and Portugal one of the highest at 16-years-old³⁵.

As well as in practice, this development is also a subject of theory, for example the philosopher Rousseau divides up our development into six different stages (chapters) in his book *Èmile or On Education*³⁶: Books I and II The Age of Nature (up until 12 years), books III and IV look at the transitional stages of adolescence, book V is called the Age of Wisdom (ages 20-25) and finally book VI is the Age of Happiness. The books talk about the importance of education in our development and transition into adulthood, suggesting that we are not fully mentally developed until at least the age of 20. Book III and IV breaks down the aspects of childhood further by discussing the stages of adolescence. A person who has reached puberty and is at the beginning of their adolescence, “the transitional period between childhood and adulthood,”³⁷ is at a critical juncture in development. They are particularly at risk psychologically and their experiences can have profound impacts on their mental state.³⁸ It is also acknowledged that female adolescents may be more at risk “because of their sex and age [they] are ... particularly susceptible to exploitation and violence—including rape, abuse, early marriage and abduction—during the immediate aftermath of a

³¹ (The Offence of Zina, Ordinance No. VII 1979), (Provincial Assembly of Sindh 2011)

³² (NSPCC 2016)

³³ (Holtzblatt and McCubbin 2003)

³⁴ (GOV.UK 2015)

³⁵ (Child Rights International Network 2016)

³⁶ (Rousseau 1979)

³⁷ (Women’s Refugee Commission 2014, 9)

³⁸ See (Hebebrand, et al. 2016)(Marquardt, et al. 2015) (Majumder, et al. 2015)

natural disaster or conflict.”³⁹ It is therefore important to recognize this in my thesis, and endeavor not generalise protection mechanisms for all children regardless of age or sex.

Despite the complexities in finding a definition, for utilities sake, in this thesis a child will be defined according to the CRC’s near universally ratified definition suggesting any one below the age of 18 should be considered a child. However, special attention will be given to adolescence in my research as these groups face singular problems and can arguably be at more risk.

2.4 Defining Unaccompanied and Separated Children

UASCs, sometimes referred to as unaccompanied minors, are one of the most vulnerable groups of people caught up in a refugee crisis and special measures are required in order to give them the adequate protection they need.⁴⁰ A UASC is a child, defined by the CRC, travelling without the protection of an accompanying adult who is lawfully responsible for them⁴¹. As well as facing exploitation, abuse and risks of being trafficked,⁴² a worrying number of these children suffer from depression and post-traumatic stress,⁴³ and as a result it is extremely important to identify and protect these children as soon as possible. Under EU law, UASCs require protection arriving from territorial waters and transit zones,⁴⁴ and the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has also made it clear that all people arriving in territorial waters fall under the jurisdiction of the member state that is party to the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR)⁴⁵. If unaccompanied, the Committee on the Rights of the Child have stated that these children, under the scope of the best interest of the child, require immediate identification, prompt registration, all available information, documentation and tracing of family.⁴⁶

³⁹ (Women’s Refugee Commission 2014, 9)

⁴⁰ (Connolly 2015)(Bhabha and Finch 2006)

⁴¹ (Huemer, Karnik and Steiner 2009); see also (Directive 2011/95/EU)

⁴² (Rankin 2016)

⁴³ (Eide and Hjern 2013)

⁴⁴ (Library Of Congress 2015)

⁴⁵ (Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy 2012)

⁴⁶ (CRC/GC/2005/6 2005)

When unaccompanied, the UNHCR Guidelines on the Protection and Care of Refugee children further stresses the importance in distinguishing between children and adolescents, as unaccompanied adolescents face many different issues compared to those of younger children:

“When the refugee situation takes away the structure they need, it can be more difficult for them to adjust than for adults. Their physical maturity but lack of full adult capabilities and status also make them possible targets of exploitation, such as in sexual abuse and military recruitment. In advocating for adolescents it may at times be more useful to focus on their needs in a given situation, rather than the CRC's legal language of "rights of the child," which might be misunderstood unless carefully explained.”⁴⁷.

Therefore, if someone is to really help give protection to these children, they must do so with a sense of pragmatism, respect and understanding. If not then they may risk facing unnecessary difficulties and problems.

Another interesting issue is what happens to these children once they turn 18 and no longer fall under the vulnerable category of being an unaccompanied child? The UNHCR and Council of Europe (CoE) wrote a report on the UASC's ‘Transition into Adulthood,’⁴⁸ suggesting that member states within the CoE need to harmonise their differing laws on this issue in order to protect those vulnerable cases from continuing to face problems after reaching the age of majority. However, as this thesis focuses on the immediate protection of UASCs as they arrive it likely won't be a problem.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to provide a lens for which to understand the context of this thesis, and through the discourses discussed I can now elaborate on the methodology in the following chapter. As the field research is focused on Lesbos, Greece, I will be referring specifically to the laws that are ratified by the countries within the EU and the CoE, as well as referring to international treaties that Greece is a party to. I will then be exploring the reality of how they are being enforced and to what extent they

⁴⁷ (UNHCR 1994, ch. 2 (III))

⁴⁸ (UNHCR; Council of Europe 2014)

are failing the categories of people discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology: Methods Behind the Field Research Conducted in Lesvos, Greece

“All knowledge that is about human society, and not about the natural world, is historical knowledge, and therefore rests upon judgment and interpretation. This is not to say that facts or data are non-existent, but that facts get their importance from what is made of them in interpretation... for interpretations depend very much on who the interpreter is, who he or she is addressing, what his or her purpose is, at what historical moment the interpretation takes place.”

Edward W. Said

3.1 Introduction

After deciding to focus my research on contributing to the protection of UASCs as they make their way into the EU across the Mediterranean, I considered how to best conduct my field research in order to gain a valuable insight into the failings of the international community, government and NGOs in the current refugee crisis, and how, through illuminating subjective experiences, the situation can be improved. I eventually chose to conduct qualitative research on the island of Lesvos based on my own observations, archival research and semi-structured interviews. This research would be gathered over a three-week period spent on the island while volunteering for an NGO there, the CK-Team.

The aim of this research is to illustrate the immediate situation of refugees and migrants, children, and most specifically UASCs, arriving on Lesvos, and by immediate protection, it will be from the moment they enter EU waters up until the point they are taken into appropriate care by the respective authorities or NGOs on the island. The island of Lesvos was chosen for this research because in 2015, being just a few miles off the coast of Turkey, it saw thousands of refugees and migrants arriving in the EU each day attempting to get further and further into mainland Europe. It is estimated that roughly 60% of all arrivals in the Mediterranean that year came through this small Greek island⁴⁹ and it was repeatedly discussed in the news as “the

⁴⁹ (Tagaris 2015)

focal point for the refugee crisis in Greece”.⁵⁰ Therefore it came as the natural choice to focus my efforts and research how effective and immediate the protection mechanisms for UASCs were as they are arriving in EU waters and on EU soil.

3.2 Ontological and Epistemological Framework

In our endless search for knowledge we tend to measure, quantify and compartmentalise everything into fact. From this we aim to present an objective reality in which we can use to further understand the world and universe around us. However, this single view of reality tends to ignore the subjective world experiences of the individual; many things that matter to people are not objectively true, such as their feelings, emotions and perceptions.

“Although ontology has many definitions and approaches, in Philosophy and Geography it tends to be formulated by considering interactions between the world as-it-is and ideas or conceptions about the world.”⁵¹

Contemporary discourse in the Social Science’s supports the ontology that our world is, to an extent, constructed through our own individual life experiences, instead of there being one objective reality⁵². This opposes the objectivist thinking of the natural sciences that sees the world, and the universe, as a finite system that can be understood based on universal, measurable laws. Although this is a useful ontological standpoint when conducting large-scale quantitative research, this thesis will be focusing much more on small-scale, in-depth qualitative research that cannot easily be measured by statistics and ‘hard’ data.⁵³ Instead it will rely on the individual and subjective experiences, ‘soft data,’ to contribute much more depth and understanding from the individuals experience.⁵⁴

While ‘ontology’ concerns what is ‘in’ the world, epistemology attempts to explain how we ‘know’ the world through discourse and power. If we accept that the way knowledge is sought after and presented is in itself subjective, and a product of our

⁵⁰ (Amin 2016)

⁵¹ (Gregory, et al. 2009, 511)

⁵² (Ibid)

⁵³ (Ibid)

⁵⁴ (Ibid, 206)

own ontological standpoints, then our epistemology changes and we have a different understanding of how knowledge can be explored and improved. Most notably, Michel Foucault's work on post-structuralism and Edward Said's on post-colonialism and Judith Butler's work in feminist and queer theories, all maintain that we cannot always accept the epistemology of the powerful or the majority⁵⁵. Instead, in this thesis, I will aim to remain aware and cautious of my own ontological and epistemological constructions and aim to gather different kinds of subjective knowledge in order to contribute much more to the existing discourse.

3.3 Theoretical justifications for Qualitative Study

Edward Said's contribution to the discourse on post-colonialism highlights the danger of explaining the world solely through an 'objective' lens, and he argues that this limited perspective gives a sense of power and control to the western world, describing the rest of the world as nothing but "a theatrical stage affixed to Europe,"⁵⁶ or seeing the world as an exhibition.⁵⁷ Therefore it is important to understand the world in a way that is not ordered and constructed by an arguably bias quantitative, numerically based, epistemology. Often through different kinds of intensive qualitative research we can learn things that quantitative research cannot teach us, identifying a richness, depth and humanity to people's lives. It is ultimately about finding causation and meaning within a study, compared to just pattern and correlation.

These understandings of a quantitative scientific representation can be easily recognised when considering the portrayal of refugees and migrants in the current crisis. It has already been acknowledged in Chapter 2.2 of this thesis that there is a danger of over-simplifying the problems through a biased representation of migrants or refugees. This is perhaps in part by being bombarded with data and statistics that the media can exploit to create fear, instead of helping us to understand the situation on a human level:

"450,000 migrants 'are on their way to Europe from Libya', warns EU

⁵⁵ See (Foucault 1970) (Said 1979) (J. Butler 1993)

⁵⁶ (Said 1979, 63)

⁵⁷ See (D. Gregory 2004), (Mitchell 1988), (Sharp 2009)

chief: Numbers could eclipse last summer's wave of arrivals because of 'volatile situation' in North Africa”⁵⁸

This language is seen all too often and the UNHCR’s Filippo Grande highlights the “worrying climate of xenophobia in the EU.”⁵⁹ Presenting the facts and figures of a crisis is one thing, but really understanding the intricacies of social constructions and subjective experiences cannot be gained from just one type of constructed knowledge. Therefore, in order to further contribute to the discourse, the qualitative research in this thesis will help to elicit new information and knowledge about how effective the current protection mechanisms for UASCs are. However, what is important to remember is that while conducting qualitative research I will have to be careful to not make any generalisations, and maintain that this is data rich, small-scale research and I am aiming to further illustrate and critique existing knowledges within the discourse.

3.4 Ethical Framework

Often researchers can control questions and studies so that the participants are constricted and not able to freely express themselves or develop their opinions properly, and this is often done while the researchers remain cold and distant from them. This type of research is then presented as objective and truthful, when in fact it can be far from it.⁶⁰ As a qualitative researcher it is important to recognise that people are not objects, and it is necessary to have a much warmer relationship with the participants, allowing for more trust and a more natural environment.⁶¹ This will be especially important when conducting interviews, in which case it is also important not to limit the respondent to set questions, and instead make sure they are allowed to have much more freedom so they can help influence the research process. Above all, it is key to give a voice to the marginalised, a voice that is often silenced by a ‘hard’ quantitative approach.⁶² I will try to represent the participants as best I can in this thesis, but it is important to recognise that as a result of my own unconscious

⁵⁸ (Groves 2016)

⁵⁹ (EurActiv.com with AFP 2016)

⁶⁰ (Kinpaisby-Hill 2011, 15)

⁶¹ See (Kesby and Gwanzura-Ottmoller 2007)(Kendon, Pain and Kesby 2007)

⁶² (Kinpaisby-Hill 2011, 11)

ontology and epistemology they may be unintentionally misrepresented.⁶³

Also, because the research will focus on UASCs I will have to make sure that I comply with the ethical standards set for working with children in Greece. As one of the most vulnerable categories of people it is incredibly important to go through the correct processes and to have all required documentation in order before my departure. Attached to the thesis you will find the correct application forms and procedures for working with children (see Annex A), but as I will not be interviewing children, which will be explained in detail in section 3.5 of this chapter, it is not necessary to get additional approval from the University of Coimbra and the Greek government.

Finally, I will be working with people who may have been through some traumatic events while helping in the refugee and migrant crisis, and there is a chance that I may ask questions that the participant is not comfortable answering or being reminded of. Therefore, before conducting any research that directly involves working with other people I will highlight this issue, confirm they are happy to continue with the interview and let them know what options they have if there are any problems as a result of my research (See Annex B for ethical approval forms).

3.5 Methods for Conducting the Qualitative Research

There are many different approaches that can be considered when conducting qualitative research and mainly you gather different types of data from interviews, focus groups, observations, and archival research. Although, what must be considered first is what the methods are that will help to achieve the aims of this thesis. In other words what qualitative research methods will help uncover the extent of failures in the immediate protection of unaccompanied children in Lesvos?

In total I spent 18 days on Lesvos, arriving on April 10th 2016 and leaving on April 28th 2016. With such a short time frame to conduct my research, and considering the fact that I was volunteering for all that time, I acknowledged my research would be somewhat constricted. Focus groups, which are groups organised usually by the

⁶³ (Rose 1997)

researcher to discuss an issue, would have been impossible to arrange in such a short amount of time and I therefore I had not planned to conduct them. Instead I intended to focus on interviews and my own observations while on the island, and I could conduct further archival research outside of Lesvos.

As I would be there for almost three weeks and have the freedom to move around the island, I would easily be able to conduct observational research. This type of research can be incredibly illuminating, and as I would not be disclosing my role as a researcher and I could avoid some issues of access in the hope of making legitimate observations about the situation there. According to Laurier and Philo,⁶⁴ not enough importance is placed on observing public places and there is a lot to be learned from observing the responses and reactions of people in that space.⁶⁵ They maintain that our gestures, expressions and how the observed interact within a given situation allows the observer to unearth different, important information than if they were to intervene and unnaturally influence what was happening. I would not be using any recording devices, but instead I would rely on notes taken in my field journal that would be updated in detail every evening. It is important to keep the individuals mentioned in my observations anonymous in order to avoid any unintended ethical issues arising in this research. Another problem that I would have to be wary of is that by being a part of what is happening there, through volunteering, it may make it difficult to maintain a social science angle and keep my marginality during the research, what is called 'going native'. To prevent this I will also regularly critique my own positionality in my field journal and make sure I had the time to reflect fully.

In the three weeks there, with the connections that I would have made through volunteering, I also hoped to conduct a series of interviews. The interviews would use a semi-structured format to maintain some direction in our discussions, but more importantly, also allow for the participants to have some influence in the direction and the focus of the interview.⁶⁶ In my short time on Lesvos I would be aiming to conduct around ten interviews of around 30 minutes, in which all participants have the option of remaining anonymous. These would be electronically recorded, and backed up with

⁶⁴ (Laurier and Philo 2006)

⁶⁵ (Ibid, 203)

⁶⁶ The interviews were prepared according to the works of (Bryman 2010)

physical notes taken by me during the interview itself. The respondents would all be chosen based on their position within their organisations, the organisations they worked for, and how much experience they have had working on the island. This information would then be transcribed and is attached to this thesis along with the basic interview structure, consent forms and an explanation of the research given to each of the participants (see Annex C). However, it is important to consider my own positionality when conducting each of my interviews as ultimately the situation would create “a division of labour in which one talks and one listens,”⁶⁷ a division that determines the power relationships and the ultimately the outcome of the research. Anderson recommends that we are careful to “to listen critically to the interviews, to the responses as well as the answers. We need to hear what [the interviewee] implied, suggested, and started to say but didn’t. We need to interpret their pauses and, when it happens, their unwillingness or inability to respond.”⁶⁸ The aim of the interviews would be to build up a picture of what happens from when a UASC enters EU waters to the point of them going into the protection of the relevant authorities on the island.

The archival research has been conducted since January of 2016 and primarily focuses on newspaper articles, journals, visual imagery and official documents. Scott⁶⁹ explains how important it is, when using this type of information, to fully understand its authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. It is also important to recognise certain bias’ that may be behind the composition of such information.

“We cannot...learn through written records alone how an organisation actually operates day to day. Equally we cannot treat records – however “official” – as firm evidence of what they report”⁷⁰

Equally, visual imagery can tell us a lot but I must be careful to examine it properly and remember that even images can be bias⁷¹ representing only what the photographer

⁶⁷ (Bondi 2003, 70)

⁶⁸ (Anderson and Jack 1991, 17)

⁶⁹ (Scott 1990, 6)

⁷⁰ (Atkinson and Coffey 2004)

⁷¹ (Scott 1990, 195)

wants to be shown. I planned to become deeply familiar with around six to ten documents and allow those to be complemented and supported by other information I had already researched.

Finally, it was important to consider and assess the potential risks in order to identify any problems I may have faced while conducting my research there. In Lesvos, as a result of the unimaginable scale of the refugee and migrant crisis, it would be very difficult to know what risks may arise, especially bearing in mind I would be volunteering for the CK-Team as first response in case of a landing. After making sure I got comprehensive insurance to cover any emergencies, I made sure I had a bag packed to cope with most problems that I may encounter (See Annex D for Kit List provided by the CK-Team). I also trained for any sea swimming I may have to do whilst there, in case any arrivals fell into the sea and could not swim, or were being drowned by fake lifejackets⁷². Another potential risk could arise from the nature of the field research itself and I would have to be careful not to get on the wrong side of anyone, including the police, military, refugees, migrants, adolescents, NGO's etc. through asking the wrong kind of questions or attempting to access areas and camps without the appropriate permissions. If I disturbed anything as the result of my research it could potentially have huge negative impacts on myself and on other people.

3.6 Limitations

Before going, the biggest limitation to the study was the lack of time I had available to conduct my research on Lesvos. With only 18 days, under three weeks, it would be a challenge to conduct adequate observations and interviews in order to paint a detailed picture of the situation there. As the only researcher, in a situation that is changing every single day, and hoping to make connections with all types of people in all kinds of organisations on the island, it would not be an easy task. One issue I expected was the refusal of certain parties to allow me access to areas or to conduct interviews. I believed that interviews with bigger NGOs and organisations may prove much more difficult, especially given the stressful situation there already and a reluctance to talk to somebody who they may not trust. Also as the situation was

⁷² A common problem seen during my time on Lesvos. A lot of people traveling by boat were miss-sold fake, useless lifejackets that arguably helped drown people more than keep them afloat.

changing every day it was impossible to tell what would be happening when I arrived there and how that could affect my research.

When conducting my research I was aiming to get an understanding of how things have changed since the number of arrivals started dramatically increasing from the summer of 2015 up until the time that I arrived. I had to remain flexible, pragmatic and determined if I was to achieve my goals set out in this methodology and accept that I may not get all the information I hoped for. If that were to be the case then I would support what information I have with more thorough archival research.

Conclusion

Through accepting the ontology and epistemology behind the qualitative methodology, and conducting the research discussed in this chapter, it will allow me to fully illustrate the situation on the island of Lesbos and allow the reader to better understand the reality of the situation concerning the immediate protection of UASCs there.

“The aim is to be systematic and analytic, but not rigid. Although categories and ‘variables’ initially guide the study, others are allowed and expected to emerge throughout the study. Thus, [the researcher] is embedded in constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situations, settings, styles, images, meanings and nuances”⁷³

I would have to be aware that, despite my intentions discussed in this chapter, ‘no plan survives first contact’ and I would need to be ready to accept whatever happens, and in order to get the most out of my time there, I would need to be pragmatic and rely on my quick decisions and good judgement.

To re-affirm the aims of this thesis, I will be conducting qualitative research to fully understand the reality of legal protection mechanisms, as well as considering how literature and theory is put into practice, in order to illustrate the failings that have occurred on the island of Lesbos, Greece. This research will focus on the experiences

⁷³ (Altheide 1987, 68)

of the people volunteering and working there, archival research and my own observations. This will help to further the discourse on the immediate protections of Refugees and Migrants, Children, adolescents and specifically UASCs in order to benefit the future well being of those entering, as a refugee or migrant, into the EU.

Chapter 4: A Review of the Main Legal Instruments and Literature

“In the midst of migrants in search of a better life there are people in need of protection: refugees and asylum-seekers, women and children victims of trafficking. Many move simply to avoid dying of hunger. When leaving is not an option but a necessity, this is more than poverty”

Antonio Guterres⁷⁴

4.1 Introduction

According to the UNHCR the world is witnessing the largest amount of displaced people in known history with recent figures suggesting that 65.3 million people have been forced from their homes as either recognised refugees (21.3 million), asylum seekers or stateless persons, with 54% of those people coming from just three countries alone: Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia. It is estimated that more than half of all the 21.3 million refugees are under the age of 18, or to put that demographic into perspective, it is a crowd of refugee children roughly the same size in population as Berlin, Los Angeles and Madrid combined.⁷⁵ What’s worse is that this figure will be much higher when you consider that the number of children officially recognised as refugees does not include those who are still applying for asylum or those considered as migrants and stateless persons.

The BBC highlights that despite the focus on the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe, the vast majority (86%) of displaced persons are being hosted by middle to low-income countries.⁷⁶ Turkey is currently hosting more forcibly displaced people than any other country with an estimated 2.5 million currently residing there, and it is no surprise considering the countries relative stability and its geographical proximity to countries plagued by war and instability like Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as Turkey’s on-going problems with recognising the sovereignty of Kurdish minorities.⁷⁷ Unfortunately the current refugee and migrant crisis in the Mediterranean is not an isolated event and since the WWII, which galvanised Europe and the Allies into

⁷⁴ Former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2005-2015)

⁷⁵ (UNHCR (b) 2016)

⁷⁶ (BBC World News 2016)

⁷⁷ See (Barkey 1998, 1) (Harff and Gurr 2004) (Gunter 2016)

legally recognising the problems faced by those fleeing war and persecution, there has been a constant stream of crises.⁷⁸ As a result there is a wealth of case law, literature and research on this problem and it must be analysed in order to determine what is important and applicable to the current crisis happening in the EU, specifically for those arriving on Lesbos, Greece. Within law and theory UASCs are near universally recognised as vulnerable and in need of special protections, and now I will aim to determine what exactly is required legally, as well as what is called for in theory.

In order to understand what is necessary and what is needed, this chapter will be broken down into two different areas: the legal and operational framework of international and EU law in the immediate protection of refugees and migrants, children, adolescents and UASCs; and the immediate protection of refugees and migrants, children, adolescents and UASCs in theory. This chapter will help illustrate the legal and theoretical discourses, allowing me to present and compare this with the reality of the situation in Lesbos to determine what, if anything, has been going wrong.

4.2 The Legal and Operational Framework of International and European Law

4.2.1 The Immediate Protection of Refugees and Migrants

It wasn't until after the atrocities of WWII, and the refugee crisis that was the result, did the international community really consider what it meant to be a 'refugee.' The enormous displacement of people in a post-war Europe led to the creation of the first major convention, drafted between 1949-1951,⁷⁹ which legally recognised the status of refugees. Today the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, along with the Additional Protocol adopted in 1967, have been ratified by 148 States who are party to one or both of these instruments.⁸⁰

Goodwin-Gill's introduction to the Convention highlights that the treaty was created in a highly politicised environment that only sought to define what a refugee meant,

⁷⁸ See (DePillis, Saluja and Lu 2015)

⁷⁹ See (Goodwin-Gill 1996)

⁸⁰ With 142 States party both of these instruments, see (UNHCR 2011)

acting solely as a ‘reactive’ document that didn’t even consider the prevention or the protection of internally displaced people;⁸¹ or in other words it is only when borders are crossed that a person can be considered a refugee.⁸² Hathaway simplifies the rights of the Convention and how a State is obliged to recognise a refugee’s:

“need to escape, to be accepted, and to be sheltered. [Also] under the Convention, refugees are not to be penalized for seeking protection, nor exposed to the risk of return to their state of origin, ... [as well as] a number of basic survival and dignity rights.”⁸³

Importantly here, those recognised as refugees are protected by Article 33 and cannot be returned to their country of origin, or what is known as the concept of non-refoulment. If they are considered to be a migrant instead they can be returned but it is important to note that up until the end of an individual’s asylum application, they are entitled to all the protections given to refugees.⁸⁴

As I am focusing on the immediate protection of arrivals I am mostly concerned with the obligation of an EU Member State to provide basic support to refugees and migrants who have arrived and are yet to have their asylum status determined. These rights are also reinforced by international conventions such as the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Convention Against Torture (CAT). All EU states, therefore including Greece, are party to the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, with the Bureau of the UNHCR in Brussels being responsible for advising the EU on how to apply international law and what its immediate obligations are.⁸⁵ To accede to the EU, States must be party to the ECHR legally binding them to articles that all arrivals applying for asylum are entitled to. These include Article 2 (the Right to Life), Article 3 (the Prohibition of Torture, including inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment), Article 5 (the Right to Liberty and Security), Article 6 (the Right to a Fair Trial), Article 8 (Respect for family and private life) and Article 13

⁸¹ (Goodwin-Gill 2008)

⁸² For further definition see (Hathaway and Foster 2014)

⁸³ (Hathaway 2005, 94)

⁸⁴ (Ibid, 279)

⁸⁵ (Directorate General for External Policies of the Union 2013, 7)

(the Right to an Effective Remedy).⁸⁶ The EU Charter on Fundamental Rights (EUCFR), which “forms part of the European Union legal structure” and binds Member States to its articles adding “Article 4 [that] prohibits ill-treatment in absolute terms and Article 18 [that] provides a right to asylum.”⁸⁷ Finally, to reiterate myself, Case Law within the ECtHR has already determined that these rights are available to anyone who enters a state’s sovereign waters⁸⁸ and therefore are entitled to all the basic protections listed above.

4.2.2 The Immediate Protection of Children and Specifically Adolescents

In the ICESCR, under General Comment 14 on the Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health, it states “priority in the provision of international medical aid, distribution and management of resources, such as safe and potable water, food and medical supplies, and financial aid should be given to the most vulnerable or marginalized groups of the population,”⁸⁹ defining vulnerable people as “ethnic minorities and indigenous populations, women, children, adolescents, older persons, persons with disabilities and persons with HIV/AIDS.”⁹⁰ The Council of the European Union ‘on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons’ have stated that the protection of displaced people arriving in the case of mass arrivals entering the EU should be immediate and temporary.⁹¹ Article 3.1 highlights that this temporary protection shall not prejudice recognition of refugee status and be applied to ALL displaced persons.

All displaced persons are entitled to these minimum standards, including children and adolescents, but these vulnerable categories are further allowed special protection mechanisms. The CRC is the most universally ratified instrument and offers a vast range of rights for the child, and according to the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) the four key principles of the Convention that apply to children in an emergency are the Right to ‘survival and development,’ ‘non-discrimination,’ ‘child

⁸⁶ (Council of Europe 1950)

⁸⁷ (Directorate General for External Policies of the Union 2013, 8)

⁸⁸ (Hirsi Jamaa and Others v. Italy 2012)

⁸⁹ (UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 2004, para 40)

⁹⁰ (Ibid, para 12, b)

⁹¹ (Council Directive 2001/55/EC 2001, Art. 2)

participation’ and the ‘best interest of the child.’⁹² In terms of the receiving State, it requires any actor:

“In accordance with Article 19, ... to develop social programs that not only provide necessary support for children but that also encourage identification, investigation, and reporting of child abuse. Moreover, the protection rights ensure the child's right to be free from abduction and abandonment.”⁹³

In the European Unions Directive ‘on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection,’⁹⁴ Article 20.5 reminds Member States of the Best Interest of the Child when protecting these vulnerable categories and that in Article 7 the actors of protection, specifically the State, are legally bound to offer that protection if it is within their capability.

As well as basic protections, States and organisations are obliged to give the beneficiary all the information necessary on the asylum process⁹⁵ and doing everything to ensure and maintain family unity.⁹⁶ The family is seen “as the fundamental group of society concerned with the protection and well being of children and adolescents”⁹⁷ and “States have regularly affirmed the view that ‘the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state.’”⁹⁸

Adolescents are specifically included in the CRC⁹⁹ as a specific group and this is because of the different kinds of problems they face. Although adolescents may have developed physically, the UNHCR’s guidelines on the ‘Protection and Care’ of Refugee Children argues that they are still developing mentally and learning, which is why there is a legal requirement to offer access to education or professional training

⁹² (Child Protection Working Group 2012, 15)

⁹³ (Gates 1999, 307)

⁹⁴ (Directive 2011/95/EU the European Parliament and the Council 2011)

⁹⁵ (Ibid, Art. 22)

⁹⁶ (Ibid, Art. 23)

⁹⁷ (UNHCR Executive Committee Conclusion No. 84 1997, para (a)(i))

⁹⁸ (Hathaway, 2005, 543)

⁹⁹ (CRC, 1989, Art. 42)

specifically for them within the CRC.¹⁰⁰ As they are considered children under international treaties they are entitled to everything within the CRC, and are equally as entitled to remain with their family. However, it is important to recognize that they have freedoms that may not be given to children and national laws may vary from state to state, entitling adolescents to certain privileges. In Greece for instance, there is no minimum age on the consumption of alcohol¹⁰¹, and this is especially important to consider when culturally these laws vary from country to country and ultimately we must consider what is in the ‘best interest of the child.’

4.2.3 The Immediate Protection of Unaccompanied and Separated Children

As already discussed in the introduction to this thesis, children are disproportionately affected by this current refugee crisis and by mass refugee crises in general due to a myriad of reasons.¹⁰² Within the EU a UASC in the event of a mass-influx of people is defined as a “third-country national or stateless persons below the age of eighteen, who arrive on the territory of the Member States unaccompanied by an adult responsible for them whether by law or custom, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into the care of such a person, or minors who are left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the Member States.”¹⁰³ This Council Directive stipulates that States must use all necessary measures for UASCs to fully enjoy temporary protection from a legal guardian or suitable organisation,¹⁰⁴ and also reminds States that all UASCs shall be provided ‘necessary medical or other assistance,’¹⁰⁵ this is reaffirmed by Article 22 of the CRC.

The CRC reiterates the immediacy of this obligation and highlights that UASCs face much greater risks and are often discriminated against, further stating that the state must identify them at “the earliest possible stage, including at the border.”¹⁰⁶ The allocation of all available resources to such children “is a priority ... [and] States are

¹⁰⁰ (Ibid)(UNHCR 1994, Ch. 2(III))

¹⁰¹ Presidential Decree 36/1994, art. 1 para 1 letter b based on Act 1481/1994 art.12 para 1 pursuant to sentence a and c, and para 2

¹⁰² (Hathaway, 2005, 534)

¹⁰³ (Council Directive 2001/55/EC 2001, Art. 2(f))

¹⁰⁴ (Ibid, Art. 16.1)

¹⁰⁵ (Ibid, Art 13.4)

¹⁰⁶ (CRC/GC/2005/6 2005, IV.a.13)

expected to accept and facilitate assistance offered within their respected mandate”¹⁰⁷ by UNICEF, UNHCR or other organisations.¹⁰⁸ States are also required to pay necessary vigilance in order to protect a child's right to life and survival and development, especially if there is a chance that organised crime might be involved.¹⁰⁹ Once the UASC is under the protection of the relevant authorities, then appropriate assessments must be carried out including psychological evaluations, determination of age, health checks, interviews; and any methods to do so cannot affect the physical integrity of the child. Then they should be given identity papers and the authorities should try to determine if they could trace any family members.¹¹⁰ At this point guardians should be appointed to look after the UASCs through their asylum process or until they reach the age of majority. It must be highlighted that in “large scale emergencies” the role of a guardian can be adopted by the state or organisations working to help these children.¹¹¹

The European Commission’s ‘Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010-2014)’ recommends that as soon as UASCs are detected they should be separated from adults in order to protect them from coming to any further harm and early profiling is of extreme importance. In order to achieve this it has recommended adopting more comprehensive legislation, exchanging information, and using the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and Frontex to train and develop practices specifically in relation to UASCs.¹¹²

4.3 The Theory behind Immediate Protection

4.3.1 The Immediate Protection of Refugees and Migrants

After talking about how refugees and migrants are to be legally protected, specifically in the case of a mass influx of refugees and displaced persons, it is important to consider the discourse more thoroughly and explore the theoretical understandings of this kind of immediate protection. Although it is imperative to discuss the protection mechanisms offered by international and regional law, what we must really consider

¹⁰⁷ (Ibid, IV.a.16)

¹⁰⁸ See (Gates 1999, 322)

¹⁰⁹ (CRC/GC/2005/6 2005, IV.d.23)

¹¹⁰ (Ibid, V.a.31)

¹¹¹ (Ibid, V.b.38)

¹¹² (Directorate General for External Policies of the Union 2013, 10)(Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council 2010, 4.1)

now is whether those mechanisms are enough, whether they are relevant, and whether they can clash with our very Human Rights; rights that should be “universal, indivisible, interdependent and inter-related.”¹¹³

Patricia Tuitt highlights the fact that the international treaties designed to protect refugees and displaced people are the product of a predominantly white, Western, male ideological standpoint who:

“experience direct, targeted persecution on account of his civil and political status, not indirect or indiscriminate harm due to internal conflict, socio-economic factors, gender, age or a whole host of factors that reflect more closely modern refugee producing phenomena.”¹¹⁴

‘Refugee’ and, perhaps even more so, ‘Migrant’ are terms that arguably only serve to ‘other’ these displaced people, further separating ‘us’ from ‘them.’ Foucauldian discourse on knowledge and power recognises this binary and the “limitation of our own”¹¹⁵ thoughts. Foucault believes that our own pre-constructed thoughts, based on our experiences, create an illusory world around us based on our bias knowledge and perception of power; what he labels ‘epitemes.’ Since the European Enlightenment of the 18th Century, the West have been ordering and structuring the chaos of the world around them. It is through this “matematisation of space,”¹¹⁶ compartmentalisation of chaos and need for categorisation that people have began to manage and control everything around them. Even Shakespearean literature of the early 17th century alluded to the power of knowledge, and how it is used to control the ‘other.’ When Caliban, the islands native is plotting to reclaim control from Prospero, the educated western foreigner, he says:

"Remember

First to possess his books; for without them

¹¹³ (World Conference on Human Rights 1993)

¹¹⁴ (Tuitt 2007, 71)

¹¹⁵ (Foucault 1970, xv)

¹¹⁶ (Sharp 2009, 31)

He's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not
One spirit to command."¹¹⁷

It is this clash of two ideological different worlds in the play that really encapsulates the way knowledge is constructed to serve Western interests, ignore the voice of the 'other' and its failure to understand what the result of that disempowerment is. Joanne Sharp discusses the need to apply this understanding to theories on development and aid given out from developed countries to less developed ones, and she urges the sciences to have more understanding and compassion when trying to help anyone.¹¹⁸ Tuitt demonstrates that this is not something acknowledged in current law, and when labelling someone as refugee, legal instruments tend to prioritise Civil and Political rights "over the equally fundamental socio-economic and cultural rights. This privileging is a feature of the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees"¹¹⁹ and the international foundation to contemporary definitions within law. She further highlights receiving states' inability to ensure "refugee determination procedures" adhere to Human Rights standards, especially in the West.¹²⁰ She maintains that this is partly a result of Western patriarchy and its gendering of the 'refugee.' It is the desire to control and compartmentalize a problem in order to fix it, assuming it knows what is right. However, the experience of the 'other' is ignored or condescended removing the power and control of those in need, and Tuitt argues that we need to acknowledge this and persuade those in control to think about what might be in the best interest of everyone, let alone the child.¹²¹

So what are the implications of this discourse on the immediate protection of refugees and migrants arriving on Lesbos, Greece?

"Contrary to twentieth-century trends in human rights protection generally, the principal obligation of states to refugees is framed in negative, as opposed to positive, terms, that is, as an obligation not to

¹¹⁷ (Shakespeare 2011, III.ii.86-88)

¹¹⁸ (Sharp 2009, 147)

¹¹⁹ (Tuitt 2007, 70)

¹²⁰ (Ibid)

¹²¹ (Ibid, 71)

return (*refouler*) an individual to persecution rather than as a duty to admit those fearing persecution.”¹²²

Nicholson and Twomey call for a much more encompassing view on the discourse of refugees, including those yet to be determined, and argue that considering a crisis as a whole allows States to narrow their scope of protection and ignore the individuals experiences and how their own Human Rights might be impacted. Instead States focus too much on the cost of a crisis for themselves, and the negative obligations, as opposed to the positive obligations that seek to protect the individual.¹²³

Another issue that arises is the process of defining someone as a refugee or migrant while they are applying for asylum. We should consider Steinbock’s call for a greater understanding and flexibility when considering the term refugee and not constrict ourselves to the Convention’s basic definition.¹²⁴ Interestingly, in Carlier’s theory of ‘Three Scales’ of the Geneva Convention, she argues that this is not as much the result of the Convention, as it is a problem of political will. She notes that this international legal definition, based on the mass movement of displaced people during and after WWII, is designed for major crises and therefore made to be flexible. She instead blames the political will of states and highlights how some case law’s “reasoning for a decision to recognise refugee status is flawed.”¹²⁵ Sztucki agrees with this critique of political will, maintaining that in Europe there is a reluctance to acknowledge people arriving as refugees, assuming displaced people are more likely to be perceived as economic migrants. The impetus is instead placed on those arrivals to prove there are not.¹²⁶

The mass refugee crisis that resulted from the balkanisation of Former Yugoslavia in the 90’s, and the failure to quickly react, was one of the key events that caused the EU to adopt the concept of ‘temporary protection’ mechanisms.¹²⁷ ‘Temporary Protection’ is designed to protect refugees for a specified amount of time, which may be prolonged, while States and the international community have time to process

¹²² (Nicholson and Twomey 1999, 3)

¹²³ (Ibid, 4)

¹²⁴ (Steinbock 1999, 34)

¹²⁵ (Carlier 1999, 40)

¹²⁶ (Sztucki 1999, 70)

¹²⁷ (Ibid, 65)

asylum applications and decide what to do for a long-term solution. It is during this time period, this no-mans land of the political realm, refugees and migrants (sometimes yet to be recognised as either) are removed of all their identity and are presented as the suffering and the helpless casualties of the world. Michael Dillon supports this by highlighting how:

“[t]he advent of the refugee – one whose very own ontological horizons have been devastated; one removed from a world – thereby dramatically exposes and radically disrupts the political horizons not only of the hosts in which they arise, but also of the political Modernity as such”¹²⁸

Dillon defines this situation of the refugee as the ‘Inter,’ a space on the political horizon and a place between states. It becomes a place where those seeking asylum are caught in the grey area between their own identity and law, waiting for their rights to be fully returned to them. Warner further illustrates this point by claiming that these asylum seekers, who are the ‘vanguard’ of their people, society and culture, are stripped of their ‘inalienable’ human rights and are left as an “embarrassing figure for the international system to deal with.”¹²⁹ He further argues that although the law defends certain rights for those caught in the ‘inter,’ what is still needed is further discourse on the blending of this international legal enforcement with the responsiveness of the state to protect Human Rights. We cannot rely on one or the other to solve the problem, and instead a concerted effort in all areas is needed to bring these ‘helpless’ people out of the ‘inter,’ the periphery of the humanitarian sphere, and give them back their own freedom to exist.

Another problem that is not often considered by the immediate protection mechanisms are the mental health and psychological issues that can be a result of the incredible stresses involved in fleeing your homeland from war and persecution. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has been shown to be much higher in refugees and although today groups and organisations understand the impact this can have on people during a crisis, not enough is being done.¹³⁰ The World Health Organisation

¹²⁸ (Dillon 1999, 135)

¹²⁹ (Warner 1999, 255)

¹³⁰ See (Bronstein and Montgomery 2011)(Steel, et al. 2009)(Petevi, Revel and Jacobs 2001)

(WHO) state that it is extremely beneficial and cost effective to recognize this as a certainty in such a crisis, and have constructed a tool for the ‘Rapid Assessment of Mental Health Needs’ (RAMH). The RAMH gives a list of prerequisites, which are considered basic necessities, when trying to conduct this assessment. It calls for the training of humanitarian workers on basic mental health skills, providing recreational space within refugee camps, starting and maintaining a channel of reliable information, involving the communities at risk in the decision making process and in activities, setting up schools and recreational activities for children, establishing cultural and religious events, and finally facilitating the creation of self-help groups and inter-generational support mechanism.¹³¹

4.3.2 The Immediate Protection of Children and Specifically Adolescents

As has been discussed, children are particularly at risk when crossing borders, and becoming trapped by ‘temporary protections’ in the hope of applying for asylum with their families. Children are likely to make up more than half or more of the population fleeing from a country and seeking to find refuge somewhere else, and the types of risks they are more likely to face include damage to their physical and mental well-being, death or injury, separation from their family, recruitment as child soldiers, sexual violence or other forms of exploitation and abuse.

The CPWG’s ‘Minimum Standards For Child Protection In Humanitarian Action’ is not an exhaustive list, but it helps humanitarian workers to more fully understand the States’ basic obligations, and how they can help to fulfil that.¹³² Therefore it is important now to more fully develop the four key areas mentioned in chapter 4.2.2; the Right to survival and development, non-discrimination, child participation and, perhaps most importantly, the best interest of the child.¹³³ Survival and Development is a right that encompasses the impacts an emergency can have on the child and it is important to consider what responses a humanitarian action can have in terms of their “physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual”¹³⁴ state. In an emergency situation often the vulnerable can become further marginalised and forgotten and it is

¹³¹ (Petevi, Revel and Jacobs 2001, 1-2)

¹³² (Child Protection Working Group 2012)

¹³³ (Ibid, 15)

¹³⁴ (Ibid)

imperative that humanitarian action monitors how old and new patterns of discrimination manifest themselves and tackle any issues that do arise. ‘Child Participation’ must be thoroughly considered in humanitarian action, especially considering the age and gender of a child and what is important is to not assume what is best for the child, instead what is most important is listening and understanding what they need in order to develop and enjoy a healthy social life. Finally, the most important, but perhaps most cryptic of all, is the best interest of the child, which obliges any humanitarian action to consider the effect that action could have on the child.¹³⁵

However, a negative consequence when organisations are acting in emergencies is the paternalistic/maternalistic desire take control in order to help. This adoption of the role as the protector of those they are trying to help is irresponsible, and children are prevented from using their own decision-making ability and actively participating.¹³⁶ Instead of adopting this somewhat instinctive role assumed by a mandate to protect children, sometimes what is important to remember is that a child’s own family, culture and friendships may be much more valuable to them than can be imagined by the limited scope of protection mechanisms.¹³⁷ This can be particularly important for adolescents who are far more developed mentally than young children, and they are willing to participate in their own lives in order to challenge the disempowerment of their new situation and prioritise their needs for those trying to help. This can even be beneficial in camps or areas with social tensions amongst different nationalities and ethnic groups, allowing for a more stable environment:

“...in the mixed Muslim-Tamil village the adolescent members of the Child Action Group have focused their efforts particularly on cultural and educational activities and have built solid bonds of trust and respect across the lines of ethnicity which still divide many adults.”¹³⁸

¹³⁵ See also The Sphere Project (2011, 55-73) which more fully illustrates the importance of this protection.

¹³⁶ (Hart 2002, 36)

¹³⁷ (Ibid)

¹³⁸ (Ibid, 37)

The power of participation allows children, especially adolescents, to develop and play an active role in their own life, a life that will continue without constant protection of humanitarian action. The UNHCR's 'Framework for the Protection of Children' supports this and it is one of their six core goals, consisting of the aforementioned CPWG's four key principles, and two new provisions; namely the issuance of legal documents, and identifying durable solutions for the future.

One of the most important things a child can have is access to education, and sadly this often disappears when a child becomes displaced from their home. As well as the act of learning, being in school reduces a child's exposure to many of the risks already mentioned.¹³⁹ UNICEF's report on the 'Mental/Psychological Health of Adolescent Syrian Refugees in Jordan' highlighted that educational access was one of the main concerns for children,¹⁴⁰ and this access to education has been recognized as important to a child's mental well-being along with family relationships and a focus on their immediate psychological state after their arrival.¹⁴¹ Although education is important, the immediacy of protection I am considering in this thesis does not fully encompass this issue despite its clear importance.

As well as considering adolescents as a sub-category to children, what must also be considered to some degree is how gender effects the immediate protection of both children and adolescents especially. Sadly women and girls face much greater risks such as gender-based violence (GBV), discrimination and abuse.¹⁴² The 2014 'I'm here' report by the Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) looks specifically at the protection required specifically for adolescent girls in the immediate aftermath of a disaster or crisis. It highlights the importance of humanitarian actors acknowledging this minority as it allows for life-saving access to information, services and resources. In the report, the researchers noticed that within a few hours the WRC were able to use mobile phone technology to construct a digital layout of the camp, within a few days the team had then created a Girl Roster in order to account for all the adolescent girls in the camp and within the week all focus groups had been completed and the

¹³⁹ (UNHCR (b) 2014)

¹⁴⁰ (UNHCR; UKaid; International Medical Corps 2014, 5)

¹⁴¹ (Hebebrand, et al. 2016)

¹⁴² (Womens Refugee Commission 2014, 15)

report was sent to the key actors in South Sudan, where this study was taking place.¹⁴³ By mapping and identifying key areas of the camp and creating a Girl Roster the team on the ground were able to effectively control and manage the situation, and ultimately improve the protection of one of the most vulnerable categories of people.

What must be discussed is what is meant when we talk about the ‘best interest of the child.’ It is the subject of much debate, but what is commonly accepted is the idea that it’s ambiguity is that way because it has to be; the solution that is “dictated or suggested depends on the issues involved, the context in which they appear and the child or children involved.”¹⁴⁴ It is important not to neglect the other articles of the treaty as they are all legally of equal importance, and a child’s best interest cannot be taken without referring to their other rights, or vice-versa. The best interest of the child therefore, is designed to consider ‘how’ a child’s rights are implemented.¹⁴⁵

It seems odd that universal rights do not fully consider the disproportionate impact that are associated with being a child or a woman, who by some statistics make up almost two thirds of the world’s refugees.¹⁴⁶ The very laws that claim to be universal are created from a subjective, educated, Western male perspective, and yet “the universality of human rights is [still] assumed notwithstanding all the violations documented by human rights organisations.”¹⁴⁷ Fields and Nars’ cynicism here echoes the theory of Cultural Relativism, which calls for a much more progressive stance on the idea of universal human rights, compared to the imperialistic nature of the more static understandings seen today.¹⁴⁸ What is thus needed for minorities, and children in this particular case is the continual evolution of international law and discourse so that it can become more culturally and socially aware, allowing the ‘universality’ of Human Rights to be flexible and ultimately help protect those most vulnerable.

¹⁴³ (Ibid, 2)

¹⁴⁴ (Cantwell 1997, 23)

¹⁴⁵ (Gates 1999, 305)

¹⁴⁶ (Tuitt 2007, 73)

¹⁴⁷ (Fields and Narr 1992, note 4, 1)

¹⁴⁸ (Ifediora 2001, 5)

4.3.3 The Immediate Protection of Unaccompanied and Separated Children

Sadly, what the law requires for UASCs is not completely effective in the reality of the current crisis. Near the French port-town of Calais, there is an estimated 4,946 refugees and migrants currently living in a camp hoping to make it to the U.K. Of those, 423 are unaccompanied children, but since the demolition of the make shift camp earlier this year 129 of those children have gone missing.¹⁴⁹ This is just a fraction of the thousands of refugee and migrant children who are lost somewhere in Europe, but it demonstrates how pressing the issue is and how little care is being taken by some of those involved.

“For a child, it is a terrifying experience in itself to have to flee to an unknown land, having been abruptly wrenched away, under bombing or gunfire, from home, school, friends, everything that was comforting, that gave meaning to life ... [however, if] the child loses his or her parents-the only remaining reassuring link-and is left alone, it is absolutely atrocious.”¹⁵⁰

UASCs are legally entitled to a myriad of special protection mechanisms that have been discussed in chapter 4.2.3. However, the initial problem is being able to quickly and accurately assess arrivals and identifying this category of people. In the UNHCRs Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child¹⁵¹ an outline for a system for humanitarian action is presented from the moment a UASC is identified through the effective registration and documentation of all arrivals into the host state, and it is important to note that without this this immediate recognition it will be much more difficult to carry out any assessment.

¹⁴⁹ (Yeung 2016)

¹⁵⁰ (Berthiaume 1994)

¹⁵¹ (UNHCR 2008)

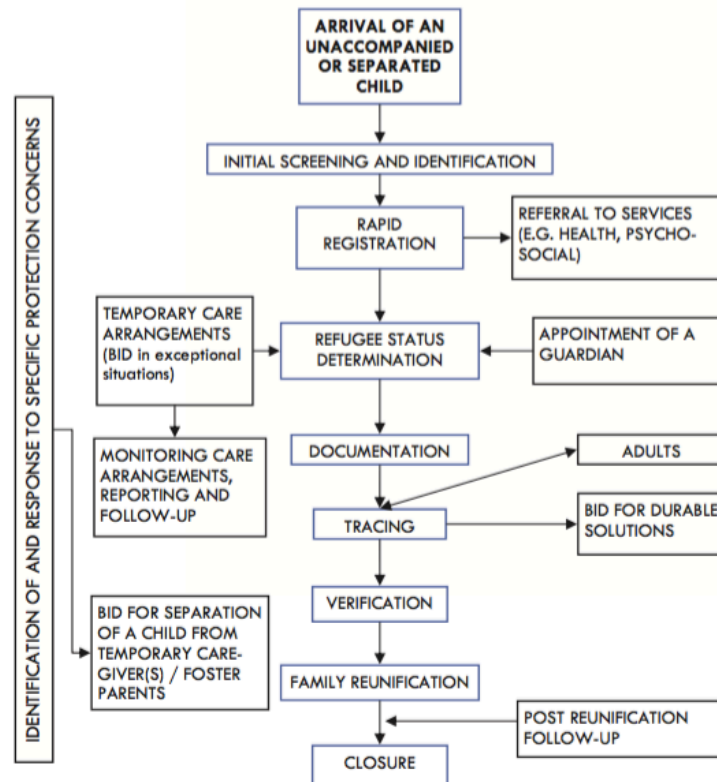


Figure 4.1- Elements of a comprehensive child protection system for unaccompanied and separated refugee children¹⁵²

Figure 4.1 details the process of how humanitarian action should help UASCs in an emergency, and at what point to use the Best Interest Determination (BID); a mechanism designed to make very important life decisions with a UASC particularly at risk, and how those decisions should be carried out in order to give the utmost protection.¹⁵³ The BID should only be carried out on UASCs by staff on the ground who have the “requisite skills and knowledge”¹⁵⁴ in how to do this correctly.¹⁵⁵ For the purpose of this thesis I am most interested in the first four stages of this process, from a UASCs arrival, screening and rapid registration, and also the result of their refugee status determination in order for UASCs to receive either temporary care or the appointment of a guardian.

The initial identification of UASCs is a big issue, and this is highlighted by the 2014

¹⁵² (Ibid, 19)

¹⁵³ (Ibid)

¹⁵⁴ (Ibid, 22)

¹⁵⁵ The BIA is designed for all children and not much information is given on this in the report.

Project ‘Vigila et Protégé’¹⁵⁶ which looked specifically at the arrival and protection of those arriving in Italy. In terms of the immediate arrivals of refugees and migrants the report states how the police forces are usually responsible for their recognition after the initial first-aid screening, identification and assessment of age.¹⁵⁷ This seems acceptable, but what is not considered is that in the event of a mass influx of arrivals, is it possible to administer this immediate identification for all refugees and migrants given that on Lesbos specifically there were over 3,000 arrivals per day at the height of the crisis?

Another issue is that adolescents can be much more physically developed than what fits into the Western perceptions of a child, and those who make first contact with potential UASCs might automatically assess the age of adolescents and falsely assume that they are 18 or older.¹⁵⁸

This initial experience of arriving for the UASC can have hugely negative consequences, affecting their security, dignity and integrity.¹⁵⁹ Often we are presented with the data and statistics of UASCs and how many arrive, where they come from, what their age or gender is, but with all this statistical analysis what is not often considered is their own experiences.¹⁶⁰

“When [they have been considered], it has shown that children raise immediate child protection and trafficking concerns upon their arrival at ports of entry, [and need] immigration officials who are quick to respond to the presentation of risk factors, and a good liaison between social work teams and immigration teams. Most concerns subside following investigation.”¹⁶¹

These concerns are very real to the UASCs who are arriving, but sadly their voice is often ignored. What is less considered is the fact that some UASCs may instead already be in the process of being trafficked as they are crossing into the EU, and can

¹⁵⁶ (Vigila et Protege 2012)

¹⁵⁷ (Ibid, 12)

¹⁵⁸ See (Bhabha and Finch 2006)(Connolly 2015)(Crawley 2011)

¹⁵⁹ (Kohli 2012)

¹⁶⁰ (Connolly 2015, 57)

¹⁶¹ (Ibid)

easily slip through the protection mechanisms put in place for them.¹⁶² The European Commission's action plan on trafficking (2010-2014)¹⁶³ highlights: the need for an EU Member State to firstly continue their efforts to integrate resettlement, particularly for UASCs, focusing on children's development; secondly, the EU needs to increase targeted awareness-raising of potential problems in the country of origin and during transit; and finally the EU must continue to develop its child protection systems. Importantly, before the application of asylum is submitted UASCs are still to be protected and each Member State has some freedom to achieve that.¹⁶⁴

During the initial screening process to identify the UASCs, it has been highlighted that it does not often fully consider any immediate medical issues, the possibility of exhaustion and array of other problems these children may be experiencing. Instead there is much more focus from authorities on going through initial registration process as quickly as possible.¹⁶⁵ This, when accompanied with language barriers, a lack of information and a failure to grasp what is actually happening to them can be overwhelming for the children who are most at risk.¹⁶⁶ Although there are guidelines, and obligations on the state, there is no clear or simple way to provide the best possible care and assistance for children once they are identified. What is vitally important is for key actors and staff working with these children to be aware that throughout this process they may be full of "fear, anxiety and a closed sense of their own futures"¹⁶⁷ and it is important to not ask too many difficult questions as "in some instances [this could] trigger unmanageable memories of past events."¹⁶⁸ What is required is active listening, care and a constant awareness of how the child might be feeling and what they are experiencing. In Greece specifically are "medical professionals, psychologists and social workers operating at first reception or detention centers"¹⁶⁹ and they should be able to cope with these issues. Although, it is important to remember detention centers should only be a last resort for UASCs and avoided at all costs.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶² (Pearce, Hynes and Bovarnick 2009) (Wirtz 2009) (Gates 1999, 318)

¹⁶³ (European Commission 2010)

¹⁶⁴ (Ibid, Chpt. 4.1)

¹⁶⁵ (Connolly 2015, 58)

¹⁶⁶ (Ibid, 59)

¹⁶⁷ (Ibid, 60)

¹⁶⁸ (Ibid)

¹⁶⁹ (Vigila et Protege 2012, 30)

¹⁷⁰ (Library Of Congress 2015)

Once their registration, which contains their basic biographical data and information, has been fast tracked and completed then they should either be assigned a guardian or have temporary care arrangements worked out in order to offer shelter and complete a BID if necessary.

In the ‘Vigila et Protégé’ report it was estimated that in Italy 30% of UASCs are expected run away from care within 48 hours, and 58% within the first week, in the hope of getting to a pre-arranged destinations.¹⁷¹ This can be the result of a host of reasons, but one important factor is their susceptible psychological state. From a study of children fleeing conflict in Croatia, those who had not had a supportive family or community framework to fall back on were found to be much more vulnerable to developing further psychological difficulties,¹⁷² such as PTSD,¹⁷³ and many demonstrated this when they were placed into temporary care. One of the problems with solving this issue and seeing how it can be improved is that it requires a control group to study, but when dealing with children in such a stressful situation this is not at all ethically acceptable.¹⁷⁴ What Connelly concludes in her study of UASCs in the UK is that what’s most important is restoring a sense of normality and structure in these children’s lives, even the smallest things we take for granted like the freedom of movement¹⁷⁵ and the empowerment language can provide. Most importantly she highlights the limbo, quite literally, that these children become trapped in. In order to reclaim their lives and this lost time it is important to hear their voices and allow the children to truly guide the procedures, not the other way around. This approach can be seen to have more positive effects in keeping UASCs from running away, and in Italy this approach led from 62% running away 2006 to 28.1% in 2014.¹⁷⁶

Finally, as discussed in the immediate protection of adolescents in Chapter 4.2.3, it is very important to consider how to approach this particular category of children, including their gender, as they require protection mechanisms and an understanding

¹⁷¹ (Vigila et Protege 2012, 4)

¹⁷² (Ajdukovic and Ajdukovic 2009, 194)

¹⁷³ see (Sourander 1998)

¹⁷⁴ (Ajdukovic and Ajdukovic 2009, 193)

¹⁷⁵ (Connolly, 2015, 73)

¹⁷⁶ (Vigila et Protege 2012, 16)

that are not required for others, and this becomes even more important when they are UASCs.

4.4 Conclusion

By combining the international and regional law instruments with the theory and literature on a problem, some of which has been recognised for decades now, I hope to see some progression in their efficacy during my field research on Lesbos.

Although I am aware that the unprecedented number of arrivals for the EU may prove difficult to cope, Greece, and the EU, should be there to support the legal obligations and capacity to cope. This is especially relevant in light of the news that 10,000 children have gone missing since entering the EU and it is perhaps more important than even for a review of the legal and theoretical practices necessary in giving the utmost protection to all refugees and migrants, and in particular children, adolescents and refugees. Finally, it is important to recall that the Committee on the Rights of the Child request for more research to be conducted on the plight of UASCs all across the world, and the requirement for constant evaluation, both in terms of quantitative and qualitative analysis, if it is to improve.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ (Committee on the Rights of the Child 2005)

Chapter 5: Findings from the Field Research in Lesvos

“On the edge of Europe, refugees are trapped with no light at the end of the tunnel. A setup that is so flawed, rushed and ill-prepared is ripe for mistakes, trampling the rights and well-being of some of the most vulnerable people.”

Gauri van Gulik¹⁷⁸

5.1 Introduction

The research from my time spent on Lesvos, which consists of observations, semi-structured interviews and archival research, will be presented below and broken down into the recurring themes which have been explored throughout the thesis; starting with the findings relating to the general refugee and migrant crisis, before then focusing on children and UASCs. The research will be presented in a chronological fashion in order to make it more logical and easily accessible for the reader, and in keeping with my qualitative epistemology,¹⁷⁹ the observational research will intentionally be used to help describe and compliment the other research as it is presented. The research presented intends to fulfil my aims, described in Chapter 3, and specifically help to expand the discourse on the immediate protection of UASCs arriving on Lesvos. This extensive qualitative research will help illuminate what problems, if any, exist and can advise and influence any future work conducted within the scope of this thesis.

Before arriving in Lesvos to conduct my research I made myself familiar with all the documents that were forwarded to me from the Lesvos Volunteer community¹⁸⁰, which could be easily accessed and discussed through their social media group. One document, a map of Lesvos designed for volunteers, can be found below in Image 5.1.

¹⁷⁸ Deputy Director for Europe at Amnesty International

¹⁷⁹ See Chapter 3.2

¹⁸⁰ See the website ‘lesvol.info’ for up to date information.

returned.¹⁸² With this Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, promised the:

“dispatching of the 4,000 staff that will be needed from Greece, Member States, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and FRONTEX. We need case workers, interpreters, judges, return officers and security officers.”¹⁸³

The hope was that this deal would put refugees and migrants off from making the deadly journey across the Mediterranean to Greece, and they could then concentrate on those who had already arrived before March 20th, 2016. I knew that this decision would change the situation on the island, I just didn't know how much.

5.2 Presentation of Research

5.2.1 My Arrival and introduction into the CK-Team

I arrived in Lesvos late Sunday evening knowing that my bed was over an hour and a half drive away. With no car, no buses and not enough money for a taxi I was already in trouble. While trying to figure out a plan I got talking to two women I overheard speaking English. It turned out that they were volunteering for a Norwegian NGO, A Drop in The Ocean, along the Northern coastline in a place called Molyvos, not too far from where the CK-Team were operating. They were renting out an old, damaged 4x4 from a suspect Car Rental Agency that seemed happy to let volunteers drive away in a vehicle that was clearly in such a state of disrepair, but luckily for me there was a spare seat. Unsurprisingly we had an engine problem shortly into the drive and had to pull into a 24-hour service station to see what was wrong. While we were waiting we began to discuss what was happening in Lesvos with the employees of this friendly, family run service station. They were telling us how badly this crisis has hit the local economy because the tourism industry they rely on has crashed. Although this was a

¹⁸² Although the deal was, and still is hugely controversial, it didn't seem necessary to discuss it in detail. If you want to read more about it I suggest (Peers 2016) (Pamuk and Baczynska 2016)

¹⁸³ (European Commission 2016)

big problem, they sympathised with refugees because they said it was exactly what their family had been through less than a century before when fleeing the atrocities committed by the Ottoman Empire. Something I had never considered before. As we were leaving we asked for directions to Molyvos, and to Kleio where I would be volunteering. They warned us that if we didn't know the way to Kleio it would be safer to go there in the light because, despite being close together, the roads can be dangerous at night as the NE corner of Lesvos is infamous for its steep, rocky terrain. I decided to stay in Molyvos and wait get picked up in the morning by my team.

In the morning, as I stood waiting by the drained swimming pool of this beautiful, vacant, beachside resort, I could clearly make out the coastline of Turkey within what felt like touching away and can be seen in image 5.2 below.



Image 5.2 My First View of the Turkish Coastline

I was standing where tens of thousands of refugees had been arriving, and thousands had already died in making this short crossing. Eventually an old British Ford Focus Paramedic car showed up with two guys inside. Chris, a 28 year old Paramedic from the US, and Thomas, an 18-year-old Swiss volunteer, stepped out of their vehicle and greeted me. They were currently both in charge of co-ordinating the CK-Team and,

although the past week had slowed in terms of arrivals, they were eager to head off as soon as possible so I could be given a run down of the team's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and ready to work that evening. Image 5.3 below shows a detailed map of the area we were operating in:

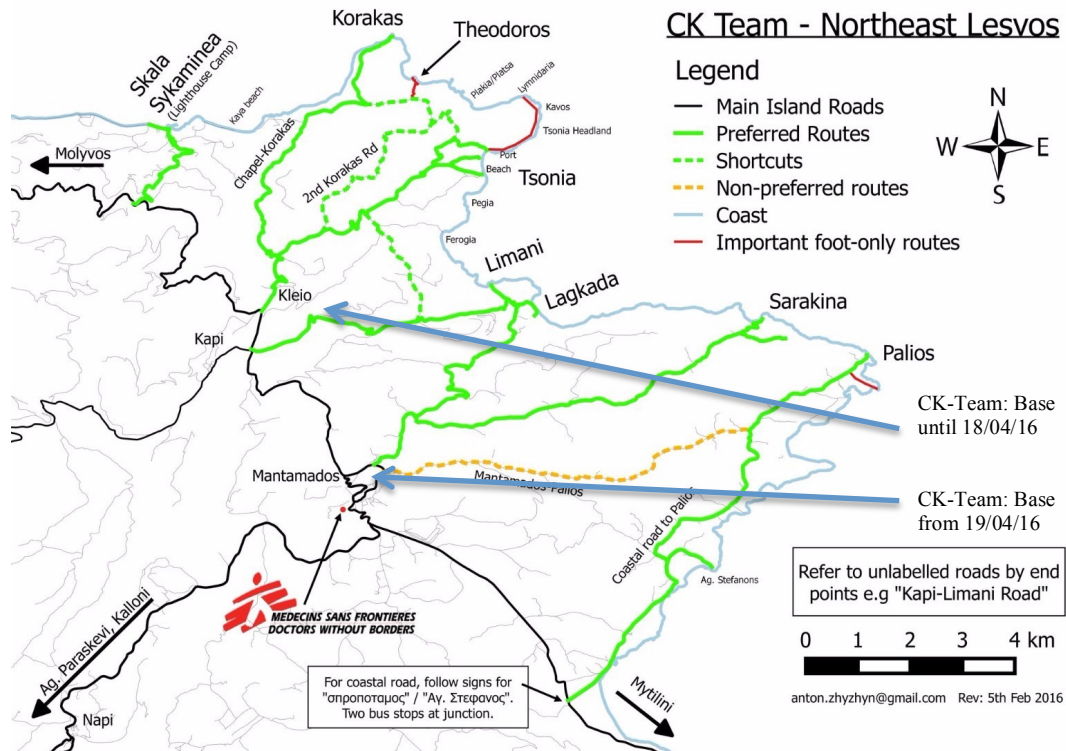


Image 5.3- A detailed Map Showing the CK-Teams area of operation

From the base we worked out of in Kleio, which later moved to Mantamados, we would drive 4x4's down to three separate locations in order to have three teams of two distributed along the coastline, and ready to drive to any of the landing sites denoted by the green road on the map; we were 'Stage-1' response. The three locations we stayed at were Korakas, or also known as Point-8 as we were 0.8km from the coastline, in the North; Lagkada which is East of Kleio; and Palios which can be seen far East of Mantamandos. Although the distance doesn't look far, the drive to each was roughly an hour due to the very rough, off-road terrain mostly done while traversing the side of a cliff.

All the team were equipped with walkie-talkies and working mobile phones¹⁸⁴ and we

¹⁸⁴ as all the NGOs on the island communicated through WhatsApp messenger

were to wait for any sign of a landing around our camp, or contact from the NGO's Sea-Watch and Proactiva who patrolled the sea at night, and helped towboats safely to shore.¹⁸⁵ When interviewing with Thomas, the coordinator from the CK-Team who had been dealing with beach landings for 2-months non-stop, he explained how the first things you do in case of an arrival is:

“... look for medical cases because those are always important so we can send our medic down there but we also look for nationalities, so we can call MSF on which cultural mediators to bring up from Mytilene...”¹⁸⁶

After that we were then to contact everybody on our dedicated WhatsApp Landings Chat giving basic information; which included our location, the number of arrivals, how many wet,¹⁸⁷ how many injured, nationality, how many pregnant and how many children. Through the chat this information would reach Chris, the paramedic, MSF, and Borderline Europe¹⁸⁸ who would respond by coming to our location and helping to take the refugees and migrants to safety and to a 'stage-two' camp, either to the Borderline Europe or MSF camp, depending on which was closer. Our job, as well as gathering this information, was to look after the arrivals as they then waited, with food, water, blankets and first aid. Due to the poor road conditions this could be at least an hours wait and during that time it is necessary to keep up the spirits of arrivals, and more importantly keep them from wondering off, which a lot of them I was told would do.

5.2.2 The Changing Situation on Lesbos

Sitting in her parents beautiful, Greek courtyard looking across the Mediterranean towards Turkey, I listen to Chloe, the coordinator for Borderline Europe who came back home to Kleio in June of 2015, as she describes the chaos that this unexpected crisis that started then. Initially it was mostly left to families on the island, and some very early volunteers, to help by giving out food and water as people passed their homes heading towards the capital in the

¹⁸⁵ Normally this would be done in shifts when there were landings everyday just a month before, but because the amount of arrivals had slowed since the EU-Turkey deal it became no longer necessary by the time I left.

¹⁸⁶ (Fleischer 2016)

¹⁸⁷ Due to risk of hypothermia

¹⁸⁸ In case we had no signal we would use the walkie-talkies.

south, Mytilene.

“Then refugees were arriving with 5000 ... every day and a lot of them arrived in Korakas, under the village, and they would walk up 8km to the village ... then continue on to Mantamandos. Some of them would wait for a bus here, but the situation was there was about 3 or 4 buses operation, from UNHCR and ... the coastguard ... which meant a bus would come somewhere like here once every 48 hours. At which point like a thousand people were queuing and had accumulated and the bus only seats 50 so then you decide who to put on the bus. You could put , errr, the most vulnerable cases disabled, pregnant, elderly women, but that meant splitting up families, the families they couldn’t get on the bus. So most people would end up walking to Mytilene or waiting many many days for a bus... driving back from Mytilene was just a constant stream of people walking”¹⁸⁹

By October NGOs and volunteers started coming in much larger numbers, but Chloe was sad to see that her home town, and the area covered by the CK-Team in Image 5.3, was somewhat ignored due to its inaccessibility and a lack of accommodation for volunteers. That was until people like Chloe, and Matt the founder of the CK-Team,¹⁹⁰ fought to change that. It wasn’t easy and the village was divided amongst what to do, they saw all these refugees and migrants passing through in a constant stream of misery, but some believed if a more temporary structure was put up they would risk creating ‘hotspot’ for refugees; “people had entered a mass hysteria ... [they thought] thousands of people would gather here, that they would rape women and children, that they would steal and pillage the village.”¹⁹¹ Borderline Europe wanted to use an abandoned Cheese Factory (CF), See Image 5.4, on the edge of town as a first station for refugees and migrants on their way to Mytilene, and after several problems, eventually in January of 2016 they managed to open it. Now the CF is the first stop for refugees and migrants landing between Korakas and Lagkada camp, and a place where Borderline can “give them clothes, warm them up, give them tea, give

¹⁸⁹ (Haralambous 2016)

¹⁹⁰ A British schoolteacher who can in July of 2015 to help and he noticed how bad the situation was in the NW part of Lesbos.

¹⁹¹ (Haralambous 2016)

them first aid medical care and triage, call an ambulance if necessary, and then, eventually a bus would ... transport them,”¹⁹² either to the MSF camp, or straight to the islands now notorious ‘detention centre,’ Moria.



Image 5.4: The Cheese-factory, Borderline Europe’s ‘Stage-2’ camp, outside Kleio

If the refugees and arrivals landed anywhere near Palios then they would be taken straight to the MSF camp marked on Image 5.3. The camp is on the outskirts of Mantamandos and opened with just a few tents in July and gradually expanded so that by late October, early November it was done. I visited this camp several times with the CK-Team who were helping the local Greek staff learn English and more easily communicate with the arrivals. The camp sits upon a hill overlooking Mantamandos, the biggest town on this part of the island, and is made to host thousands of refugees at a time. Alice, the camp manager originally from Germany, sits with me in the large, open reception and describes the process of handling the huge amounts of arrivals they receive both from the CK-Teams area and, in 2015, from the Skala Sykaminea where Drop in the Ocean and other NGOs operated to the West.

“We nearly always [brought] them here, to make sure everyone gets a blanket because in Moria the distribution, the supply was not so good so we made sure everyone has eaten something, ... everyone has hot meals

¹⁹² (Ibid)

and an NFI¹⁹³ kit, ... Normally the people wanted to go to Moria to be registered, not now.”¹⁹⁴

Moria and Kara Tepe were the biggest transition camps on the island, just a few miles out of Mytilene, where upon arriving people could be registered and start the asylum process if they wished to, or instead from there people could head to the capital and by a ferry ticket to Athens to continue on their journey into Europe. However, with the EU-Turkey deal this all changed,¹⁹⁵ and the result was immediate detention in Moria of all refugees and migrants arriving on the island, without any real information being given to them:

“... after the deal ... that’s when MSF doctors and translators stepped out of Moria to work, its not because they wouldn’t work in a detention centre, because they work in prisons all over the world, but its because it was totally unclear what the procedure was. How long would the people stay there? Who’s going to be able to be admissible [for asylum]? That was unclear so we said we cannot work with that, we cannot tell the people [that] we don’t know and not care what happens for them. We stepped out there and we cut the buses to not help the police detain the people”¹⁹⁶

The decision of MSF in refusing to work for the EU made international headlines¹⁹⁷ and highlighted some of the problems that have emerged as a result of the deal. As well as pulling out of Moria, Alice also explained how MSF no longer helped to transport anyone to Moria, and instead the Greek coastguard would collect them from the MSF camp.

¹⁹³ Non-food item

¹⁹⁴ (Kleinschmidt 2016)

¹⁹⁵ Another big camp was Kara Tepe which will be further discussed in Chapter 5.2.4.

¹⁹⁶ (Kleinschmidt 2016)

¹⁹⁷ QUOTE

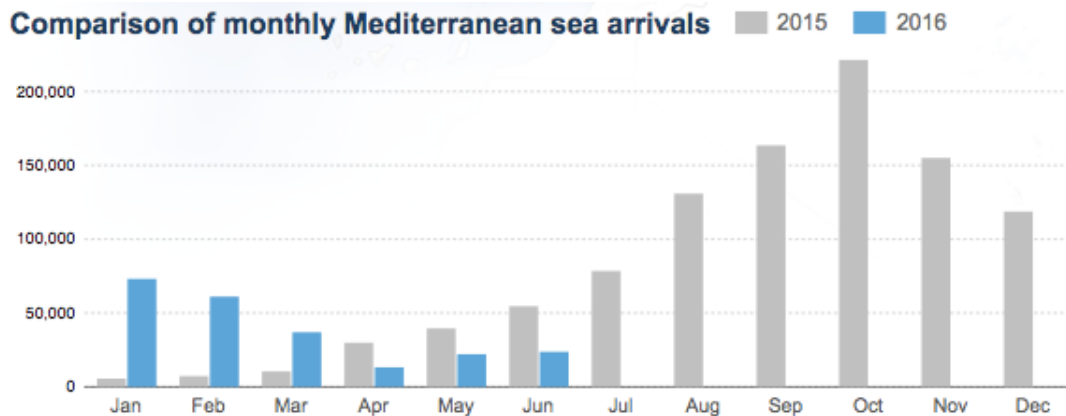


Figure 5.1 A Graph Comparing the Peaking and Decline of Arrivals since 2015¹⁹⁸

There has been a dramatic decline in the amount of arrivals since the EU-Turkey deal on March 20th (see Figure 5.1 above), and now as soon as the coastguard hears of the landing over the radio they can instantly send a coach to collect the refugees and migrants from the MSF camp. Before the deal the arrivals would spend at least 10 hours at the MSF camp, but now it is much less. The last group of refugees and migrants to arrive had twenty minutes at the CF and fifteen minutes at the MSF camp to be given basic care and some information on where they are and where they are being taken.¹⁹⁹ Alice frustratingly says that they “cannot deal with it, [they] can hear them out but [to give them] answers, no.” Since the deal they don’t even know how long people will be detained, and despite a promise by the government to let refugees and migrant’s have the freedom to move 25 days after registering for asylum, Alice feared there were already problems with the new process, especially in terms of the distributing of official documentation to leave Moria. In the regional meeting with the UNHCR Protection Officer, that the CK-Team was a part of, they told us that so far 3400 applications had been submitted, with roughly 5-7 of those being processed each day.²⁰⁰ At this current rate some would be waiting years to find out, with supposed freedom to move around after 25-days of official detention is a small consolation.²⁰¹

5.2.3 ‘Detention’ of Refugees and Migrants in Moria

Moria is a foreboding place, it is located a few miles north of the capital, Mytilene,

¹⁹⁸ (UNHCR 2016)

¹⁹⁹ (Abidi 2016)(Kleinschmidt 2016)

²⁰⁰ It took place on 26/4/16 in Molyvos, and I have a recording of the meeting which can be heard on request.

²⁰¹ Since returning I have discovered that they this system is working properly.

and quite difficult to find unless you already know where it is. With its rows of barbed wire fences, police patrols and grey concrete structures it stands hidden and in stark contrast to the beauty of the olive groves that hide in. From the outside it is hard to really get a sense of the scale, but it is estimated that there were roughly 3000 to 4000 refugees and migrants in there.²⁰² If you walk around it, with the fence on your left, and a recently closed down NGO that occupied the land on your right, Better Days for Moria, you come to a part of the fence where the refugees and migrants can come and speak to you, and more importantly come to buy food, drinks and sim-cards²⁰³ from a couple of mobile food-trucks parked there. For somewhere so protected it was strange that police just ignore this small section of interaction.

At first it's an odd feeling, you don't really know how to start interacting with the people sitting there. How do you relate? Eventually, after a few moments of awkwardness, I had a smiling young man come and ask me through the fence if I could help him get the attention of one of the food truck owners, I did, and that is how we began talking. His name was Walkman, a fitting name he had recently given to himself after walking with his wife and two children, who he carried under his arms at points, from Afghanistan to Turkey, and then across the Mediterranean to Lesbos. He was the son a military/police commander in an area of Afghanistan where the Taliban were fighting to regain control. His, and his family's life was in danger, so his father told him to leave and make his way to Europe. He was 25, the same age as me. At the fence he showed me photos of the conditions inside, most of them were put in containers designed to fit 4 people at most, but these had at least 10 other Afghans squeezed in with literally no room for anything else, not even a chair. Already in April he said the heat was unbearable, and it was only going to get worse. Then all of a sudden I heard Arabic being repeated over the camps prison-like Tannoy system. I asked Walkman what it was and he told me it was people whose asylum application had been decided being summoned. He said that he was still waiting, and then he asked if I knew anything on asylum for Afghans who had worked for the US military. Sadly I told him no and told him to ask a lawyer, he replied 'there are no lawyers in here'; a fact that was not recognised at the UNHCR general protection meeting a week later, until a freelance Human Rights lawyer, Ariel Richter, highlighted this as

²⁰² From what I was told, observed and supported by (Human Rights Watch 2016)

²⁰³ They bought sim-cards so they could contact relatives, and also access information on asylum

an issue.²⁰⁴ What struck me most in our brief conversation was how strange it was we were talking through a barbed wire fence like this; with a man who had done nothing wrong but try to help his family get to safety.

Reports have condemned the conditions of these ‘hotspots,’ and in a Human Rights Watch report²⁰⁵ they ask all different kinds of detainees in Moria about the conditions and their responses are shown in Figure 5.2 below.

“I spend five or six hours waiting in line for food. Fighting between different nationalities breaks out. The police are small in number. They can’t do anything. There are 40 or 50 people fighting and only four or five guards.”

“Here the police don’t protect us ... There is no safety at all. In a prison it would be better organized than here.”

“People are fighting and the police just watch like it is a dog fight. They even clap their hands like it is a show for them.”

“There is no security in the camp. We do not feel safe here. I cannot leave my documents in the tent, I always carry them with me. At night, men get drunk and abuse people. The police are not here.”

“The toilets are always dirty and flooded. They never clean them.”

“A 29-year-old wheelchair-bound Afghan man in Moria said: ‘My health got worse since I’ve been here. I can’t feel my leg any more. They made an appointment for me at the hospital for an MRI two months from now. No one cares what will happen to my body during these two months.’ ”

Figure 5.2: Quotes from those inside Moria in April/May of 2016²⁰⁶

After talking at the fence for a while we were surprised to find out a volunteer with us had gone under, something not too difficult to do in this part of the camp, to see the

²⁰⁴ (UNHCR (c) 2016)

²⁰⁵ (Human Rights Watch 2016)

²⁰⁶ (Human Rights Watch 2016)

conditions.²⁰⁷ At around 1 p.m., on the return of this individual the police caught them, and as a result the five people standing at the fence, including myself, were detained. They described how within Moria there was an overpowering feeling of listlessness and despair. No real noise, no talking, no life. People have literally nothing to do as they are confined within this ‘hotspot,’ and with facilities for an estimated 700 people struggling to cope with thousands,²⁰⁸ cheap tents spill out along the gravel with nothing but a few blankets to offer the occupants some comfort. The UASCs at the heart of the camp, a depressing small square designed to hold all vulnerable cases, filled with a few concrete buildings and surrounded by barbed wire. Since the deal, Moria has been plagued by false-promises of freedom, protests, riots, hunger strikes and even a visit from the Pope. Despite the best efforts of the authorities to make Moria more appealing for the Pope’s visit on the 16th of April 2016, including other Orthodox religious figures and the Greek Prime minister, Aléxis Tsípras, the removal of some barbed wire and painting white of the concrete buildings was not enough to persuade the Pope that the conditions were acceptable in any way.²⁰⁹ Protests were held within the camp and outside, demanding the Pope to condemn the EU-Turkey deal. It gave a brief glimmer of hope to the detainees, the volunteers and NGOs who condemned everything that had happened recently (See Image 5.5 and 5.6 below).

²⁰⁷ It was a relatively porous section of the fence, where I witnessed detainees jumping over, and climbing under.

²⁰⁸ Ibid

²⁰⁹ See Introduction



Image 5.5 A Photo Showing the CK-Team, Borderline and other NGOs protesting the day of the Pope's visit²¹⁰

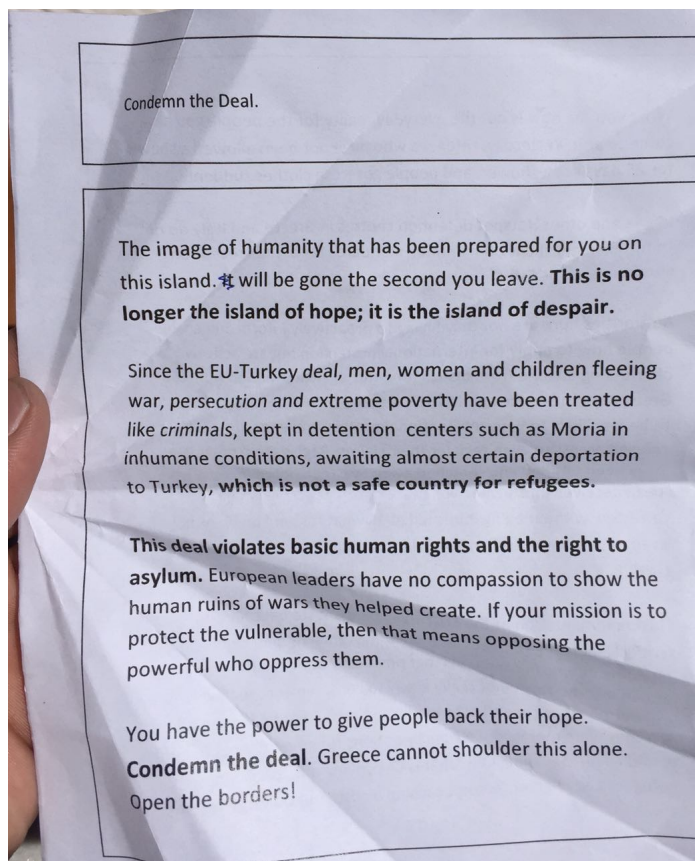


Image 5.6 A Photo Showing the Fliers Distributed within Moria, in Mytilene and even given to the

²¹⁰ (Unknown, taken 16/04/2016)

Pope by a member of the CK-Team²¹¹

After the Pope left from his largely symbolic visit,²¹² things unfortunately went back to normal and below I have two photos, Image 5.7 and 5.8, that were sent via a volunteer on the islands WhatsApp group, taken originally from within the camp by detainees who took part in the hunger strike and the riots occurring in the following days after the Pope's departure.



Image 5.7 A Photo Showing a Hunger Strike within Moria demanding Better Conditions²¹³

²¹¹ (Wilcox 2016)

²¹² (Witte and Faiola 2016)

²¹³ (Anonymous, 2016, taken 17/04/2016)



Image 5.8 A Photo Showing a Riot, which began after an Adolescent was Allegedly Struck by a Police Officer, forcing all the authorities and NGOs to retreat before riot police regained control.²¹⁴

The riots in Moria were so bad that one member of the CK-Team drove through the night to help a group of friends he had made on the inside. They were refusing to join the fight against the police and, as a result, were threatened with their lives. Having nobody else to help them, they called him in desperation and fortunately he managed to get them out and into the safety of a family camp, Kara Tepe.²¹⁵

On my final day at a Turkish café in the port of Mytilene I discussed this with Jeroen, one of the founders of ‘Better Days for Moria,’ who had been there since the crisis began with his wife and two young children. In October and November, long before the deal, he recalled how refugees and migrants “were dropped off in the UN and MSF buses [at Moria]. They would get there, at least they got their registration ticket, and then they had to wait, and then they ended up at the olive grove next to Moria, sitting without toilets, without water, without food, without anything.”²¹⁶ He helped to set up the most celebrated camp on the island, which he described as a comparative paradise compared to what refugees and migrants have to deal with now. The camp was accommodating roughly 2000-3000 refugees and migrants at a time, and saw an estimated 250,000 to 300,000 people come through in its six months of operation. By

²¹⁴ (Anonymous, taken 26/04/2016)

²¹⁵ See (Hamilton 2016)

²¹⁶ (Jeroen 2016)

the time I visited to help clear the site, there was barely anything left except an empty, brown patch of land which showed no real signs of its former self except a few people loading containers, a couple of Pakistani people sitting on a sofa in the shade of a tree, and a grand sign arching over the entrance, reading ‘Welcome’ in over ten languages, left as a final protest to the government and the deal that destroyed their camp.

Theirs wasn’t the only camp that was effected by the deal, on April 20th No Borders Kitchen, a camp set up by a group of anarchists and home to hundreds of refugees and migrants, was the target of a 6 a.m. early morning police raid, involving the Coast guard and undercover police, evicting everyone from the property. Talking to a volunteer who was working there, she described how they were not even given time to collect their belongings, with all the refugees and immigrants being put on to buses regardless of their documents and given no information about what was happening.²¹⁷

The confusion of what was happening after the deal, felt by myself and in all the interviews, clearly impacted the rights of all of the refugees and migrants now stuck on the island and it was already beginning to have huge repercussions, especially for children, and specifically UASCs.

5.2.4 The Journey and Immediate Protection of Children Arriving on Lesvos

To really look at the immediate protection of children, including adolescents, my research focused on the events happening from when the crisis began in June of 2015, up until the EU-Turkey deal in March 2016, and the results that followed. During my last week on Lesvos the CK-Team were given the opportunity to rehearse a landing with the Spanish Bombeiros, who were trained as lifeguards and worked closely with the CK-Teams camp in Korakas. They were operating in an old, dilapidated lighthouse stationed on a rocky outcrop along the coastline, 0.8km from our camp, hence the nickname ‘Point-8’ for the CK-Teams reception camp there. Ironically this location, designed to warn off boats, was a beacon of hope for refugees and migrants making their journey from Turkey. Sadly it was the site of a lot of deaths when the crisis was at its worst in early 2016 and the reason rehearsing was necessary. The CK-Team’s role was to pump up one of the used inflatable boats that sometimes

²¹⁷ see (No Borders Kitchen, Lesvos 2016)

transported 50 to 60 refugees and migrants at a time and act as refugees. The boats, designed for a maximum of 30 people according to the guidelines written on the inside, were extremely old and worn and covered in spots of rubber where the boat had had a puncture and been repaired (See Image 5.9 below).



Image 5.9 A picture showing the repaired inflatable boat used in a previous crossing and now for training.²¹⁸

During the rehearsal I learned how children especially were to be looked after when getting off the boat. It was comforting to see that the Boat Landings Procedure we were given specifically mention the care of children and how to safely get them off the boats onto the shoreline without ever separating them from their parents,²¹⁹ and how to give emergency first aid if necessary (seen being demonstrated below in Image 5.10).²²⁰

²¹⁸ (Wilcox, 2016)

²¹⁹ See Annex E

²²⁰ As a side note, on returning the inflatable myself and Thomas found ourselves sinking out in the ocean and were left to relentlessly pump up and bail out the boat as we headed for the coast. The brief fear I felt is but a fraction of what 60 people, most of whom cannot swim, must feel in their terrifying crossings.



Image 5.10 Casualty Evacuation Procedures Practice In Case of Drowning²²¹

As discussed in Chapter 5.2.2, children would then be counted on arrival and this information would be passed on to Borderline Europe and MSF. When talking about how children were identified Thomas, the coordinator of the CK-Team explains that when each team was receiving more than three boats a night a before the EU-Turkey deal, they didn't have much time and had to make an assessment by counting the number of children who were under the height of 1 meter and looked under the age of 15 or 16. He describes how it can be an overwhelmingly emotional experience for volunteers and things can be easily missed, especially in the dark.

When talking with Aliya, a 24 year-old British girl who found herself managing the Lighthouse Relief NGO stationed with the Bombeiros, since being on the island from October last year she had seen the impact landings had on the mostly “underprepared and untrained”²²² volunteers, and when coupled with the thousands of arrivals by the end of 2015, it was very difficult to prioritise the safety of children. This was obvious

²²¹ (Wilcox, 2016)

²²² (Abidi 2016)

when she, like Chloe from Borderline Europe,²²³ witnessed the endless streams of people choosing to walk to Mytilene:

“it’s like 50km to Mytilene, and it was families, young kids, elderly and they were on one road, so if you’re driving you pass and notice everyone.”²²⁴

Aliya describes that a big problem was that the official NGO’s couldn’t legally transport refugees and migrants with no paperwork, and they had to rely on volunteers like Aliya helping to transport the most vulnerable people to Mytilene, despite the risk. This led to specifically MSF funding the CK-Teams accommodation and transport in order to avoid putting their NGO at risk. By Christmas transportation became much more efficient and Aliya could then concentrate on her role at Korakas organising volunteers to help arrivals land safely and get them to the CK-Teams Point-8 transition camp.

In all the interviews I conducted, a major problem with this ‘Stage-1’ of protection was that the volunteers were mostly untrained, inexperienced people who, along with helping people, sometimes had different agendas. People saw it as a time “when you get to play hero, get to take the selfie [and] get to feel really wonderful about how kind you have been.”²²⁵ In the Mayors office along the port of Mytilene, with a grand view of the harbour, I talk to Marios, the welcoming Senior Advisor to the Mayor:

“The volunteers everywhere receiving boats, ... people grabbing children and separating them from their families. There wasn’t any concrete procedure even though legally there is, it wasn’t followed ... lots of volunteers arriving here, we didn’t have any registration process for volunteer groups and NGOs. It was difficult. Yes, but after ... 5-6 months with the help of UNHCR and the central government we managed to organise things properly. So you have to address things, prioritise first, immediate accommodation centres and then we needed

²²³ (Haralambous 2016)

²²⁴ (Abidi 2016)

²²⁵ (Haralambous 2016)

transportation, then we had to see separately about UASCs and children.”²²⁶

He describes how the crisis caught the island off-guard and that it understandably took time to respond, around Christmas time of 2015, with what they achieved being seen as “a small miracle.”²²⁷ Now children are being kept in special accommodation across the island and even, as Marios points out, the Municipal Accommodation Centre is being used as a child friendly space. Sadly, the early chaos seen before the EU-Turkey deal unfortunately resulted in some families losing their children. Aliya, from the Lighthouse Foundation, sadly recalls how one family returned to Korakas to look for their missing child and all she could do was comfort them and call the IRC to look into it. She tells me that the IRC used to close missing child cases after a certain period of time, now they don’t.²²⁸

After the six months for which it took the local authorities and the UNHCR to really respond, some NGOs had begun dealing with the crisis in their own way. Jeroen, from ‘Better Days for Moria,’ describes to me the way that children, with their families, were driven to Moria or Kara Tepe from ‘Stage-two’ reception camps like that of MSF or the CF. In the end of October, beginning of November he tells me how Kara Tepe was closed to all except Syrian’s and Iraqi’s:

“and so all the Afghans, [Pakistani’s] and Iranians they [had] been kicked out and ended up next to the official camp [Moria], ... waiting much longer for their registration. [Eventually] at least they got their registration ticket, and then they had to wait ...”²²⁹

These people left to wait were made up of old, young, sick and disabled and when volunteers came together to form ‘Better Days for Moria.’ Jeroen reaches for his phone he shows me how quickly the camp built up. They had even created an area specifically for the day-care of children set up by a couple of volunteers. He describes the camp as getting stronger and stronger over the new-year, but so many different

²²⁶ (Andriotis 2016)

²²⁷ (Ibid)

²²⁸ (Abidi 2016)

²²⁹ (Jeroen 2016)

volunteers meant there were a lot of disagreements, and he describes how they made a lot of enemies. This was especially an issue with the volunteers who had set up the day-care centre for the children, who were caught “exploiting” children by using images of them on Facebook without permission in order to raise funds for themselves. Jeroen then recalls how he was surprisingly left in charge of the centre, but with a family himself, he felt like he and his wife could learn to cope. As a result of this exploitation, and the hundreds of volunteers and journalists who were swarming on the place daily, they “switched [their] policy, put a fence behind a fence saying this is a kids place. Anyone who comes here leaves their phone in the bucket, so they can be with the kids.”²³⁰ Jeroen repeats just how many there were coming to get photos, they were even trying to stick their camera lenses through the holes in the tent. Visibly angry, he exclaims that both people, and volunteers, can be so respect-less. Despite all of this Jeroen managed to create something quite amazing, and he shows me a photo of the Children’s centre that looks like something you could find in any modern city:

“the kids, you just show them what you want, they pick it up straight away We gave them possibility to draw, or to paint, or to do play-dough or whatever. We started like later, very soon realising that its not about us, ... its about them, so that’s why it became their place.”²³¹

They did such a great job that even established organisations²³² told him his organisation so because these big organisations hadn’t even started doing what ‘Better Days’ were. Praksis, a local NGO for the protection of UASCs, was even requesting help from ‘Better Days for Moria’ instead of Save the Children and UNHCR because those big organisations were much too slow to respond. He said Save the Children came by “offering [him] the world,” promising meetings, workshops, training, protection staff and so on. Sadly however, nothing ever came of these promises and Jeroen was left somewhat disappointed by these false promise, or at least, promises that were too slow to come to fruition before the camps closure in early April.²³³

²³⁰ (Ibid)

²³¹ (Ibid)

²³² Either Save the Children, UNHCR, IRC or MSF. They were all monitoring what was going on there, and I didn’t ask him to specify which organization complimented their work.

²³³ (Jeroen 2016)

Finally, I ask about any sign of psychological issues in the children, and he said that sometimes you get the feeling there was but children were arriving and moving on so quickly before the deal it was impossible to really recognise it.

After the closure of ‘Better Days for Moria’ children are now either detained in Moria with their families or, if they’re lucky, moved to the Kara Tepe family camp. The conditions inside Moria have already been described, and for children, let alone adults, it is utterly unacceptable. Alice, from MSF, described how within Moria there was even confusion amongst police when handing out asylum information and application forms, leading to some children not being given anything.

I believe it’s important to add one final observation in order to be discussed in Chapter 6 that I made when at the fence of Moria. Slightly further around the corner, away from the food trucks I came across a teenage boy behind the fence taking shelter from the sun in the shade of the concrete toilet block. He was sitting and writing in a notebook, I asked what he was doing. He told me he was finding some privacy to write, studying in the only private place he could find. He had managed to get all the way from the Central African Republic and was now stuck in Moria with his family. I didn’t know what else to say, so I wished him good luck and left.

Most of my experience with children came from volunteering within Kara Tepe. Since only accepting of only Syrian and Iraqi asylum seekers in 2015, it had converted into a camp for all families. In my last week on the island the CK-Team secured a deal with Stavros, the enigmatic camp manager, to entertain and teach the children three times a week.²³⁴ It is an open family camp that could be accessed if you had official permission from Stavros and the authorities or if you had a wristband proving you lived there.²³⁵ Stavros was a hard man to talk to, he was a middle-aged Greek man, who appeared to be ex-military from his clean-shaven face and military style boots, and clearly was doing a very good job running the camp, but despite my best efforts and hours of waiting for an interview, it was sadly cut short.

²³⁴ See Annex A for application papers

²³⁵ The wristband was a recent addition because refugees and migrants who weren’t staying there were entering.

22/04/16

The camp is a strange place. There is this sense of friendliness and openness, well at least compared to Moria, and everyone says hello and children are happy to play. However, the feeling of despair is palpable. ... We made some friends with Afghanis who we gave some gifts to. The children are so sweet, and the family very welcoming by giving us fruit and tea ... I feel bad to take their fruit but I feel impolite to not take anything at all.

After we went to find everyone else [the CK-Team] and discovered them playing with a huge group of kids ... they all seemed starved for attention and are literally fighting to play with you and hold your hand.

The scary thing about Kara Tepe is that the children are allowed to wonder free, with no educational facilities, no toys and a terrible park. It's no place for children to grow and develop. They are even allowed to just wonder out of the front gate following us with nobody stopping them. We have to force them to go back.

Figure 5.3- An extract from my Daily Field Observations Journal

After entering we realised we didn't have much of a plan. We initially walked around to get an understanding of the place, and soon found an open space to take out the footballs we brought, and all of a sudden children surrounded us. During my time there we mostly played football, guitar, and coloured in sketchbooks. The children were so young and ranged from the age of around three up to ten, so mostly primary school children. When we came again, we were met with so much enthusiasm, some even scaled the barbed wire fences as a short cut to get to us, insisting they hold our hands and walk with us. They were literally fighting for our attention, and this led to some violent outbursts from children, which we had to stop. I noticed how a lot of the children were divided amongst their different nationalities, which was reflected by the layout of the camp by putting different nationalities in different areas,²³⁶ and this, from what I observed didn't help the children get along. There was one issue in particular where children started throwing rocks at each other over a football they didn't want to share, and I had to break it up in the end, leaving one boy crying, and me struggling to console him with no common language to do so. The children were also very rough with all of the CK-Team volunteers by jumping and climbing all over us, something I didn't mind too much because without us being there the children had

²³⁶ According to the family from Afghanistan we made friends with

nothing to do. It was so sad to see the kids here with nothing to entertain them and seemingly no school to learn or to study. There were some makeshift classes, done by ourselves and other NGOs, but there were only ever a handful of children. Before leaving on my last day a three-year old boy refused to let me leave, holding onto my index finger and repeating the little English he knew, “sit down, sit down” over and over again. I picked him up, took him to where he was staying and said goodbye. The last thing I remember was how little he weighed.

The general protection meeting was held by the UNHCR in their 4-star hotel a few minutes drive south from Mytilene. It was a lovely property and members of NGO’s across the island attended, but there were no government or police officials present. The organiser of the meeting had just flown in from Serbia the day before and most things were being discussed very quickly considering there was only an hour for the meeting. They brought up the issue that it was hard recognising children who were developing psychological problems and only now, in April of 2016, was the health official from Greece arriving to assess this issue, and a facility in Mytilene dedicated to child psychology had not yet been used. They also acknowledged that children were not always being given asylum paperwork. Finally they recognised the problem of alcohol abuse by some refugees and migrants and highlighted the dangers it could pose to children, such as fighting amongst groups. As part of the new Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, they discussed how camps are over-crowded and a dedicated centre for age, gender and diversity assistance is needed along with access to medical and legal aid. Something they had not been getting, especially in Moria. Finally, they wanted to help with the capacity building of the existing Greek public service and then carry out BIAs and BIDs on children and UASCs.²³⁷

5.2.5 The Immediate Protection of Unaccompanied and Separated Children

A few weeks after I had left Lesvos, Save the Children and MSF had agreed to use the accommodation in Mantamandos that the CK-Team were using²³⁸ for UASCs, moving my team to somewhere else. The CK-Team was also to take an active role in designing activities for the UASCs who were being accommodated there. Before this happened, a protection meeting from Save the Children was necessary and held for the CK-Team on May 4th, 2016. In the meeting Save the Children described how

²³⁷ (UNHCR (c) 2016)

²³⁸ The accommodation for the CK-Team was supplied by MSF

within Moria some UASCs were still being held and sleeping 20 to a room, and Praksis had further noted alarming rates of mental health problems, and some children had been ‘acting out.’

However, before we consider the current situation at time of writing this thesis, it is important to see how protection developed over time and how it changed, especially in wake of the EU-Turkey deal signed in March of 2016. According to research by the National Center for Social Solidarity (NCSS), a Greek NGO that give support to vulnerable cases, highlighted that of the thousands of requests they received from UASCs:

“... 96.28% of requests of [those] referred to boys, while 3.81% referred to children younger than 12 years.”²³⁹

This is a statistic that is in keeping with all my observations, interviews and research on the island. It seems as though the vast majority of UASCs are adolescent males, and in all my research I only discovered one example where it was otherwise, and that will be discussed later. This statistic is important to keep in mind when presenting my findings on UASCs.

I talk to Thomas about the possibility of isolating and identifying UASCs as soon as they arrive on the beaches and he tells me how difficult it is to do, despite being aware of the protection required for these vulnerable cases.²⁴⁰ When you have landings day and night, with thousands of exhausted people arriving the last thing on your mind is identifying vulnerable cases. Aliya reiterates this and describes two main challenges in looking out for UASCs:

“[Firstly] the nature of movement is so quick and people are so eager to move on. So in some cases they are not looking for you to help them at that point they are looking to blend in ... but then there is also a challenge on the volunteers side where you have short-term volunteers of various backgrounds and skill sets, lack of language, lack of

²³⁹ (Anagnostopoulos, et al. 2015)

²⁴⁰ (Fleischer 2016)

training...”²⁴¹

Aliya talked about how a lot of arrivals would be in groups making it much harder to talk to individuals who are potentially UASCs. There was one occasion when her team had two adolescent UASCs arrive and immediately want to return to Turkey. The team was left divided on what to do, with some saying they should be allowed to decide for themselves, and others saying they shouldn’t be allowed to go:

“these two boys were really stressed out, like really stressed out ... It was divisive, it was weird, some volunteers were telling them ... they were allowed to go back, and like that’s insane.”²⁴²

A further issue that was also a concern for volunteers was that they were making the situation more stressful than it needed to be feeling as though they were humiliating them by asking questions about their age, or where their parents are.²⁴³ Thomas tells me that arrivals at ‘Stage-1’ normally wait around an hour and it is sometimes just enough time to get some information:

“We just about managed to identify him before we had to send him to MSF and we notified the head of MSF Mantamandos, ‘we think this child here, he must have been about 5 or 6, has no parents with him, he’s traveling with, I cant remember if it’s a distant relative or friends of the parents, but due to the speed we tried to do it its not easy to convey all the info”²⁴⁴

If any UASCs were identified at ‘Stage-1’ the volunteer drivers from ‘Stage-1 to -2’ and the volunteers at CF or MSF would be informed of their identification.

At the CF, ‘Stage-2,’ I asked Chloe how she recognised and dealt with UASCs if volunteers hadn’t brought it to her attention. She also highlighted the difficulty in isolating potential UASCs and talking to them. She would want to do it privately in

²⁴¹ (Abidi 2016)

²⁴² (Abidi 2016)

²⁴³ see (Fleischer 2016)(Haralambous 2016)(Abidi 2016)

²⁴⁴ (Fleischer 2016)

order to prevent others noticing UASCs were being treated differently. Like Aliya, she too faced situations where adolescent males wanted to leave and make their own way, but they would always bring it to the attention of MSF to make the decision instead:

“We would usually tell MSF, ‘listen there is this person here, this 17 year old Afghan boy, and then it’s [their] judgement call.”²⁴⁵

She would then accompany the individuals who she discovered or suspected were UASCs, which sometimes she told me was quite obvious, and make sure the driver knew they were unaccompanied so they could be quickly recognised at the MSF camp.

At the MSF camp, the procedures seem to be much clearer in terms of receiving UASCs, but that doesn’t mean that it is easier to do. Since the crisis began Alice has held regular phone conversations with the UNHCRs regional representative, and she tells me how the procedure had evolved to inform UNHCR in Moria of the Bus registration number, seat number and total amount of UASCs arriving. However, she added that it was still difficult to identify UASCs, and when they “managed to do it sometimes, ... [they] knew that [UASCs] would not be taken care of in Moria.”²⁴⁶ Although she acknowledged that some would be specially protected on arrival at Moria, she believed that during the peak of the crisis it was so overcrowded that they were most likely seen as everyone else.

In the regional meeting with the UNHCR Protection Officer,²⁴⁷ they talked about how three teams were still searching Moria for UASCs who have been trapped, unprotected, in the main camp since the EU-Turkey. One issue that has been repeatedly documented is the difficulty in asking UASCs questions, often they are scared to answer. Alice highlighted this concern and noted how difficult it was to then separate UASCs from groups of friends and distant relatives, despite being legally required to protect them:

²⁴⁵ (Haralambous 2016)

²⁴⁶ (Kleinschmidt 2016)

²⁴⁷ (UNHCR Regional Protection Officer, N. Lesvos 2016)

“We discussed it a lot with UNHCR, we said ‘but they are with their friends, their families, ... we try to send them together and separate them never, but we know that in the official procedure they will be separated. But okay this is the law, we will not do anything about it.’”²⁴⁸

It is difficult to know what’s best and I have found reluctance from everyone involved to ask potential UASCs questions, or, once identified, separate them from groups. The impression that I was left with after these interviews was that volunteers felt it is hard enough UASCs fleeing their home by themselves, risking their lives and arriving on the dangerous coastline of Lesbos, without additional problem of mostly untrained volunteers trying to split them apart from their friends. One potential problem with this response that has been discovered through my archival research is the chance that UASCs with no money are used by, and indebted to sophisticated smuggling networks. An industry estimated to be worth \$5-6 Billion in 2015, risks UASCs being “in bondage once they reach the destination country — or perhaps sooner.”²⁴⁹ Without quick identification it can be very easy for these cases to disappear and slip through a very porous net at any of the early stages.

Since the EU-Turkey deal in March, 2016 immediate identification has become even more difficult at these early stages. As there have been fewer arrivals the Coast Guard is much faster to collect them from MSF, and where MSF had sometimes a day to look after arrivals, they now have minutes before being collected and taken to Moria. Although, since the deal the landings on our beaches had dramatically dropped with one every few week, and the majority of arrivals have been picked up by FRONTEX who patrol the maritime border. Working with the UNHCR, they are much more capable of enforcing protection mechanisms. As a result this makes it much more difficult for UASCs to disappear, but I have no research on their treatment at this stage.

Before the deal, UASCs sent to Moria, from places like the MSF camp, could easily hide inside amongst the thousands of refugees and migrants arriving there every day.

²⁴⁸ (Kleinschmidt 2016)

²⁴⁹ (Hassan 2016)

It was up to volunteers and people like Christina Dimakou, who is one of a dozen legal guardians working for METAdrasi, an NGO implementing a Guardian Network for Unaccompanied Minors (GNUM):

“I’m trying to convince children as young as nine years old to listen to me and not the smugglers or their friends ... To convince them to follow legal procedures to be reunited with their relatives.”²⁵⁰

There is a complete lack of trust in any authority figure, and a problem that still exists as the UNHCR works tirelessly looking for UASCs who don’t want to be found both within Moria, and amongst the new arrivals.²⁵¹ The most important thing Christina learned in order to gain their trust was listening to them, hearing their stories and giving them back their voice. From April 2015 to November, the GNUM helped protect 256 children from the ages of 6 months to 18 years, and of whom, 218 were boys.²⁵²

When UASCs are willingly found, and even before Moria was converted into a detention centre, they are taken to Moria to be rapidly registered and sheltered in buildings, surrounded by barbed wire.²⁵³ The conditions I observed from the outside seemed awful and completely devoid of anything childlike. It was here that was rumoured to be the place where the riot on the 26th of April began, pictured in Image 5.8, after a police officer allegedly hit an unaccompanied child, triggering the riots that forced everyone working with the refugees and migrants to leave before riot-police moved in.²⁵⁴ There have been further reports of this worrying behaviour from officers since, with the Greek Reporter highlighting the awful conditions UASCs are facing after 12 Pakistani boys were taken to a Medical Centre in Mytilene. See Figure 5.4 below:

²⁵⁰ (Howden 2015)

²⁵¹ (UNHCR Regional Protection Officer, N. Lesvos 2016)

²⁵² (METAdrasi 2015)

²⁵³ (Howden 2015)

²⁵⁴ See (Reuters 2016)

“The young refugees were found to be in a state of shock. Some of the children had bruises, red-shot eyes and other marks on their wrists. A few of the children complained that their heads hurt, whereas one of the children suffered from a nosebleed.

The children stated that there had been rock-throwing between unaccompanied refugee minors from wards A and B during the night ... a rock hit one of the police officers on duty who, according to refugees, lost his calm and entered the ward, punching one of the minors.

The minor said that the officer threatened to return him to Turkey if he reported the violent behaviour. The children reacted to the threats, and were taken to the holding centre from 3 a.m. to 2 p.m. the next day where they were forced to squat in a seated position without their knees touching the ground. Whoever wobbled was struck on the back with water bottles.”

Figure 5.4- An Extract from the Newspaper the Greek Reporter²⁵⁵

According to the report, MSF observed how the police were hovering around the hospital and even intervening during the UASCs examinations. A Save the Children Protection Officer also confirmed how bad the conditions were, with 20 children being kept to a room.²⁵⁶ As of July 2016, there are an estimated 92 UASCs in the reception centre within Moria, all of whom are between 12 and 17, with most being there since May this year.²⁵⁷

If the UASCs are lucky they could be moved to accommodation supplied by METAdrasi, Praksis, or more recently Save the Children. After many failed attempts to contact these groups for an interview, I managed to get in contact with one volunteer working for METAdrasi who wishes to remain anonymous. On Lesbos METAdrasi was looking after about 25 UASCs in April, one of whom was a heavily

²⁵⁵ (Harris 2016)

²⁵⁶ (Save the Children Protection Officer 2016)

²⁵⁷ (Harris 2016)

pregnant girl, and the rest were mostly adolescent boys. The girl was 15-years-old and from Guinea, she had left after the death of her mother. After making her way to Turkey and being imprisoned there for a while she managed to make her way across the Mediterranean to Lesbos and into the protection of METAdrasi. I was told that she was going to be taken to Athens, because METAdrasi have a special centre for female UASCs where she can be better cared for.²⁵⁸ One major issue is the likelihood of UASCs attempting to run away from their accommodation or reception centre, and although I didn't get any statistics, on METAdrasi's website they make it clear that the children under their protection are informed of the dangers outside, including smuggling networks, physical abuse, rape and organ trafficking in an attempt to scare them from leaving, and from May 2011 to May 2016, working with NCSS, they have helped successfully accommodate 3,654 UASCs.²⁵⁹

In my interview with Marios, the senior advisor to the Mayor, he comes across very optimistically when discussing the current protection of UASCs:

“.... Given the circumstances and the situation right now, the procedure is effective ... UNHCR and NGOs are very careful what they are doing and follow their procedures and I think the ministry is supervising everything that has to do with UASCs pretty well.”²⁶⁰

He recognises the need for more to be done and currently the council is waiting on funding from the EU in order to invest in more accommodation for UASCs Mytilene, they are just waiting for the EU to respond. It takes time.

Since leaving Lesbos, the CK-Team old house in Mantamandos is now being used for UASCs, and the CK-Team is helping run activities for both outgoing and more introverted adolescents, they even put together a disco for a group of 20 male UASCs. Before the UASCs were housed the CK-Team were asked by the Save the Children protection officer to go round all the local shops within walking distance and tell staff not to serve alcohol to the children. Save the Children also put restrictions on giving

²⁵⁸ (Anonymous, 2016)

²⁵⁹ (METAdrasi 2016)

²⁶⁰ (Andriotis 2016)

UASCs certain legal advice and information, but the scope of that request wasn't made too clear.²⁶¹ This new development was the work of Save The Children, Praksis and MSF in order to implement “emergency relief programs for the refugee populations that enter Greece, including inter alia projects for the protection of children, the provision of psychosocial support and medical care.”²⁶² In the best interest of the child these NGOs joined together to offer temporary, open accommodation and care for the UASCs trapped in Moria's reception centre.

5.3 Limitations and Problems Faced in the Field

The biggest limitation to my research was already discussed in the methodology, and that was the difficulty in building up meaningful relationships with people in bigger NGOs and getting interviews with them in such a short amount of time. It meant that from refugees and migrants experience in Moria and after it was much more difficult to get information, which I feel is reflected in the presentation of my research. One other issue was that the deal made between the EU and Turkey weeks before my arrival changed everything on the island to an extent that confused every one on the island.

There is also a clear lack of visual imagery to support the research when discussing the camps, children, adolescents and UASCs. This is partly a result of the Police forcing us to delete our photos from Moria, respecting camp protocol in Kara Tepe and finally respecting the lives of those most vulnerable. Photos should not be taken or used for my own purposes without adequate permission. I also wasn't able to gather any research on how gender effects the protection of adolescents and UASCs because all but one of the findings was about male UASCs.

5.4 Reflexion and Analysis

5.4.1 Reflexion on the Research Process

Each day I reflected on my research and each day I worried about the same issues. The most important issue I will have to remain aware of in Chapter 6 was my inability to remain an observer to everything that was happening there. I knew there was a risk of

²⁶¹ See Annex F for the Save The Children UASC protection information sent to the CK-Team.

²⁶² See Annex F

‘going native’ and it was very easy to forget I was conducting research as I bonded more with the CK-Team. This, I feel, impacted my interviews and made me more reluctant to ask difficult questions in four of the interviews, specifically with Thomas, Aliya, Chloe and Alice. I also reflected on my role working as both a volunteer and researcher. This is due to the fact that when I was explaining what I did to my Afghani friends in Kara Tepe, I had the impression that just my presence there gave them a false sense of hope, as if somehow my work might be able to help them. In the future I will take more care in order to avoid a similar situation.

5.4.2 How The Analysis of the Research was Conducted

In the following chapter I will analyse the research by comparing to the law and theory looked at in Chapter 4, allowing me to more rigorously collect and assess the most important information. As discussed in Chapter 3.2, it is impossible to remain entirely objective and I am aware that the presentation of my research, especially the quotes and data I have chosen to use, is structured to fit the narrative of this thesis. For more perspective I suggest reading the transcriptions of all my interviews found in Annex C and looking at the archival research used throughout this chapter.

5.5 Conclusion

On the last day on the island we visited what is called the ‘life jacket graveyard’ that is found on top of a hill just east of Molyvos, along the Northern coastline of the island (See Image 5.11).

On the drive up the roadside is scattered with life jackets blown by the strong winds that buffet this coastline, but it isn’t until you reach the crest of the hill, and see the mountain of life jackets, that you get an overwhelming sense of the numbers of refugees and migrants who have attempted to come to the EU. Volunteers from all NGOs on the island had helped clean beaches and bring the jackets here, jackets worn both by those who survived and those who weren’t so lucky, and jackets that were mostly fake and actually made drowning more likely.²⁶³ A poignant memorial left behind that is hard to forget.

²⁶³ The CK-Team donated good life jackets to Turkish businesses to give out for free in the hope of making the trip slightly safer for those most vulnerable. When our team visited those businesses again we discovered they were sold for a profit.



Image 5.11- The 'Life Jacket Graveyard'

After nearly three weeks on the island I managed to gather a wealth of research on, not only UASCs, but also on the conditions that all refugees and migrants have had to face over the past year since the crisis really began on Lesbos. It has been particularly interesting to see how the deal between the EU and Turkey has impacted the situation there, but sadly that feeling of interest now is one of despair at the deal, a feeling that was shared by everyone I talked to and interviewed. Since the deal it is estimated that roughly 57,000 refugees and migrants are stuck waiting in Greece, and more than 8000 stranded on a handful of Greek islands,²⁶⁴ including Lesbos. Largely their fates are still unknown.

²⁶⁴ Other islands include Kos, Samos, Chios and Leros

Chapter 6: Comparing the Review of the Main Legal Instruments and Literature with the Fieldwork Findings

“Reality is, after all, too big for our frail understanding to fully comprehend. Nevertheless, we have to build our life on the theory which contains the maximum truth. We cannot sit still because we cannot, or do not, know the Absolute Truth.”

Subhas Chandra Bose

6.1 Introduction

The research demonstrates the extent to which law and theory failed to protect all refugees and migrants who were arriving in Greek waters and landing on Lesbos before and after the EU-Turkey deal on March 20th 2016. In this Chapter I will consider the relationship between the content of the main Legal Instruments and Literature, discussed in Chapter 4, with the findings from the Field Research on Lesbos, found in Chapter 5. Below has been divided into the recurring themes of this thesis and presented in a structured and systematic way in order to easily see where the failings are, and also where achievements have been identified.

6.2 Comparing the Legal and Operational Framework with the Findings

6.2.1 The Immediate Protection of Refugees and Migrants

With an estimated 3500 dead or missing in the Mediterranean in 2014, 3771 people in 2015 and 2,898 so far this year,²⁶⁵ the positive obligations of States to protect Article 2 of ECHR, EUCFR and Art. 6 of the ICCPR, the Right to Life, have clearly not been enough.²⁶⁶ Before the EU-Turkey deal, a lot of these deaths were a result of crossing from Turkey to the island of Lesbos.²⁶⁷ It took almost eight months from July of 2015 until the deal for the EU, Frontex and the Greek Coastguard to really be effective in their response and prevent deaths happening of this islands coastline.

Article 3 of the ECHR, like Article 7 of the ICCPR or Article 4 in the EUCFR, prohibits torture, inhumane and degrading treatment and punishment. On Lesbos I

²⁶⁵ As of July 12th 2016 (UNHCR 2016)

²⁶⁶ See (Hathaway, 2005, 450)

²⁶⁷ (Reuters 2016)

believe there was a very poor response to the crisis, or what Hathaway would describe as a 'grave quality,'²⁶⁸ in terms of the reaction from the government and the EU which led to thousands of people being forced to sleep on the streets of Lesvos, walk over 50km to the islands capital, and have very little access to food and water.²⁶⁹ After the EU-Turkey deal refugees and migrants faced²⁷⁰ terrible living conditions in Moria and ultimately, from my observations, a complete lack of respect and dignity.

Article 5 of the ECHR and the Right to Liberty and Security (like Art.6 of EUCFR or Art. 9 of the ICCPR) is in clear violation when considering what occurred in the closed detention centres like Moria after the EU-Turkey deal. Although now refugees and migrants are allowed to leave, when conducting my research everyone within Moria faced indefinite detention and it was the cause of many problems found from my fieldwork.²⁷¹

Article 8 of the ECHR is the Right to Respect for Private and Family Life, like Art. 7 of the EUCFR, protects families from interference without legal justification,²⁷² and the unity should be maintained and protected.²⁷³ During my time on Lesvos, I observed family unity, especially in the family camp, Kara Tepe. However in Moria, families were split up with men being separated. Before the EU-Turkey deal in my interviews I discovered that vulnerable cases, such as the elderly or disabled, were being split up from their families when there was not enough transportation. Finally, within the EUCFR Article 18 respects the Right to Asylum in the 1951 Geneva Convention, amended by the 1967 additional protocol. After the EU-Turkey deal, in both Moria and Kara Tepe, there was an obvious lack of information for all refugees and migrants about the asylum process and lawyers were not getting access to the detention centre. Within the convention this article does not have much scope,²⁷⁴ but a lack of information and lawyers is in conflict with Article 11 in the Charter, the Freedom of Expression and Information.

²⁶⁸ (Hathaway, 2005, 455)

²⁶⁹ See All Interviews

²⁷⁰ (Nicholson and Twomey 1999, 24)

²⁷¹ (Hathaway, 2005, 458)

²⁷² (Nicholson and Twomey 1999, 75)

²⁷³ (Hathaway 2005, 543)

²⁷⁴ (G. S. Goodwin-Gill 2008)

6.2.2 The Immediate Protection of Children and specifically Adolescents

Within the ICESCR, GC No.14, vulnerable cases, including children have the right to the highest attainable standard of health. I do not have much information on this before the EU-Turkey deal apart from the lack of protection in the crossing of the Mediterranean, but after the deal there was much more evidence of a poor standard. In part this was due to MSF protesting the indefinite detention of refugees within Moria, which saw all of their doctors withdrawing from the camp. Within Kara Tepe, the IRC, along with many other NGOs, were operating and doing the best job they could, and there was evidence of good health from my observations. However, the highest standard of health is doubtful considering the children appeared to be suffering psychologically, but that will be discussed further in Chapter 6.2.2.

Member States of the Council of the EU are obligated to provide immediate and temporary special protection to all vulnerable cases.²⁷⁵ Before the EU-Turkey deal this obligation was not really seen and instead the little immediate protection offered in those 8 months before March came from NGOs and volunteers on the beaches and in the water. After the deal I believe that this protection improved as the EU and the Greek authorities were intercepting nearly all of the arrivals in the sea, and when they couldn't, the Coast Guard was very quick to react.

The CPWG's application of the CRC²⁷⁶ during a refugee crisis highlights four key areas of protection: survival and development, non-discrimination, child participation and the best interest of the child. The observations I made provided examples of failings on all these accounts with a lack of care given to survival and development in Kara Tepe by having very little for the children to do, however this has been quickly improving with the help of NGOs, including the CK-Teams role. There were also issues of discrimination due to the dividing up of camps by nationality, which lead to a fractured society and as a result confrontations between nationalities, including children, were very common. Children, from my observations, did not have much participation in the decisions that effected them considering there was nothing for them to do but there was not enough research on this conducted to be sure. Finally, as to whether decisions were always made with the best interest of the child, I highly

²⁷⁵ (Council Directive 2001/55/EC 2001)

²⁷⁶ (Child Protection Working Group 2012)

doubt it, as children were being failed on many levels especially within Moria where children were left to shelter behind toilets for study.

In terms of adolescents before the EU-Turkey deal, there was very little identification and protection as they landed on the beaches of Lesbos. The number of arrivals, time-frame and lack of training made this nearly impossible for volunteers to judge whether a young person was an adolescent or not. After the deal, within Moria I found no evidence of education or professional training being given to the adolescent detainees according to the CRC, and in Kara Tepe, although there were some organised workshops, there was a real lack of participation from adolescents. There needs to be more research conducted in order to determine the levels of participation of adolescents and how they contribute to the decisions made that impact them most.

6.2.3 The Immediate Protection of Unaccompanied and Separated Children

Member States of the EU are to take all necessary measures in order to protect UASCs as soon as they arrive in their jurisdiction.²⁷⁷ Before the EU-Turkey deal there was very little effort from the State to do this both as the UASCs were arriving on the beaches, and when they were taken to Moria and moved on to the capital, Mytilene. The CRC requires identification at the earliest possible stage, but there was a lack of support to educate volunteers working on Lesbos on the best practices to deal with UASCs from UNICEF and the UNHCR. After the deal, FRONTEX, with help from the UNHCR, could do this much more effectively on the boats and in transit to Moria and making the European's Action Plan to protect UASCs much more effective.²⁷⁸ Identification was also made more difficult because some UASCs didn't want to be found and could easily slip through the very large net of 'protection.' Once found, whether or not they were quickly registered, given the correct documentation, and had the appropriate interviews conducted quickly, if at all, I cannot say.

The Right to Life and Survival and Development are to be the focus in protection of UASCs after they are identified.²⁷⁹ Within Moria UASCs have been detained since the crisis began and although the basic Right to Life was protected, the indefinite detention, terrible living conditions and a complete lack of information, because

²⁷⁷ See (CRC 1989) (Council Directive 2001/55/EC 2001)

²⁷⁸ (European Commission 2010)

²⁷⁹ (CRC/GC/2005/6 2005, IV.d.23)

nobody knew what was happening, leads to huge failures in protecting the UASCs survival and especially development. However, despite failings within Moria, since the crisis began NGOs like METAdrasi and Praksis, and more recently Save the Children have been doing the work the government or the EU hasn't, with the limited resources they had. The local mayors office were also seeking accommodation for UASCs, but they cannot react as quickly as smaller NGOs.

If Member States are to take all necessary measures it would therefore seem important to have a representative at the UNHCR protection meeting, either from police or government, and preferably both. However, there was nobody present and a fact jokingly recognised by UNHCR.

The CK-Teams protection meeting with Save the Children showed that the UASCs opinions were to be respected, were to be given a different selection of activities each day and ultimately their rights protected by all necessary legal frameworks discussed were to be respected; a positive note to conclude my research on UASCs on after so many failures in their protection.²⁸⁰

6.3 Comparing the Theory of Immediate Protection with the Findings

6.3.1 The Immediate Protection of Refugees and Migrants

In Chapter 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, a recurring theme from my interviews was the problem that these volunteers had with the Western 'voluntourists' who seek to fulfil this heroic act and ride in to save the day for refugees and migrants.²⁸¹ These findings agree with Tuitt's²⁸² problem with the way that refugees and migrants are presented to the western world, and ultimately portrayed as a people of hopelessness and despair. This 'othering,' discussed further in Chapter 4.3.1, is dangerous for the immediate protection of those arriving and the impacts were evident in the interviews I had with Aliya, Chloe and Jeroen, where untrained volunteers are left to decide the fates of individuals who they often don't give a voice to. They are somewhat blinded by their own 'epistemes,' an idea which mirrors the post-structuralist and post-colonialist

²⁸⁰ See Annex F

²⁸¹ See (Abidi 2016) (Haralambous 2016) (Jeroen 2016)

²⁸² (Tuitt 2007)

discourse of Foucault and Said²⁸³.

This depiction of refugees as a casualty of world, and a burden on the shoulders of everyone else²⁸⁴ leads to a necessity of receiving states to understand, calculate and respond to a problem based on a large-scale, ignoring the rights of the individual.²⁸⁵

This large-scale response takes time and was reflected by the reaction of the government and the EU in the eight months from the start of the crisis until the EU-Turkey deal. It was in those eight months, when Lesbos was used as an island of transit, that NGOs and volunteers came to the island to do what the big organisations and government weren't doing. It was here that Lesbos saw the power individuals and grass root charities can have on individuals and on big problems, creating a network of hundreds of volunteers across the island, and the world, through social media. In my final interview with Jeroen, from 'Better Days for Moria,' he admitted there were problems but ultimately they created something truly awesome for the refugees and migrants.

When the deal was struck between the EU and Turkey, we saw the 'mathematisation of space'²⁸⁶ discussed in Chapter 4.3.1 and the removal of choice and participation from all refugees and migrants, and there was an overwhelming feeling that refugees were expected to prove they were not migrants rather than being given the benefit of the doubt (See Chapter 5.2.3).²⁸⁷ The camps of Moria and Kara Tepe were a way of organising the crisis through division, segregation and complete control by the authorities. The effect of this on the Human Rights and the dignity of the individual have been disastrous, as ultimately their voices and experiences have been ignored. Dillon and Warner discuss this no-mans land as the 'Inter,' and a place where refugees and migrants are contained and can easily be brushed to periphery of political concerns.²⁸⁸ If we are to bring them out then the refugees and migrants need to be allowed to reclaim their voice. The WHO's RAMH, designed to prevent the onset psychological problems like PTSD, lists seven pre-requisites needed to immediately help new arrivals. Those being: access to a recreational area, reliable information, training of humanitarian workers in basic mental health skills, involving

²⁸³ (Said 1979)(Foucault 1970)

²⁸⁴ See (Dillon 1999)(Warner 1999)

²⁸⁵ (Nicholson and Twomey 1999)

²⁸⁶ (Sharp 2009, 31)

²⁸⁷ (Sztucki 1999, 70)

²⁸⁸ See (Warner 1999)(Dillon 1999)

communities in decision making, schools for children, organising cultural and religious events, and access to self-help groups.²⁸⁹ Apart from the last, which I have no evidence of either way, the rest were either completely lacking or minimal, and much more consideration needs to be given to the immediate implementation of these aspects from big NGO's, the government and the EU.

6.3.2 The Immediate Protection of Children and specifically Adolescents

In Chapter 4.3.2 The CPWG highlighted the importance of five elements in a child's survival and development, which comprise of physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual integrity.²⁹⁰ They highlight that often in a crisis the most vulnerable, including children, become forgotten. From my observations in Chapter 5.2.4 around Moria and Kara Tepe after the EU-Turkey deal I noticed a real lack of care given to any of these elements. Physically children were at risk from both adults and children, psychologically they had very little support, if any, emotionally they were very fragile and susceptible, socially they were not cohesive and lacked basic skills, and spiritually they did not appear well. The positives within Kara Tepe, and with the arrival of NGOs like Save the Children, were that the situation seemed to be slowly improving, but the response within these camps was not good enough. Before the deal, in camps like 'Better Days for Moria,' where children were coming through every day they were able to respond and adapt much more quickly and successfully. Hart's concern, examined in Chapter 4.3.2, with a paternalistic/maternalistic approach to protection was also observed,²⁹¹ with an overwhelming feeling that decisions were being made for children on Lesbos without their participation. For young children this problem manifested itself when volunteers were rushing to the boats to take children of, risking injury to the child or separation from their families. It was also evident in Moria, and to a slightly lesser extent in Kara Tepe. This overbearing approach is especially important when working with adolescents, and giving them more participation in decisions has been shown to further help to bring fractured communities and people together. Unfortunately in my research it was very difficult to find adolescents, even within Kara Tepe. I fear that they are even more forgotten than the youngest children, and their future survival and development is at a much

²⁸⁹ (Petevi, Revel and Jacobs 2001, 1-2)

²⁹⁰ (Child Protection Working Group 2012)

²⁹¹ (Hart 2002)

higher risk. From my research the UNHCR confirmed children had been given much, if any, access to psychological support.

The CK-Teams voluntary work at Kara Tepe gave some relief to young children, but there was no real help given to us in terms of organising our visits. It would have been good to see the use of technology, rosters and mapping in order to immediately identify children and get them to join our classes. It is possible it existed somewhere, but it was not made available to us in our time there. With over a third of refugees being children,²⁹² there was by no means enough support to implement the most basic immediate protection mechanisms at any stage of the arrival, and regardless of whether it was before or after the EU-Turkey deal.

6.3.3 The Immediate Protection of Unaccompanied and Separated Children

In Chapter 4.3.3 I discuss the UNHCRs process of treating UASCs from their arrival, followed by their screening, identification and rapid registration, to their determination and being assigned a legal guardian or accommodation and carrying out a BID if necessary. In the research I found that it was difficult to know what stage of immediate protection UASCs were at when they became trapped inside Moria. Some evidence in Chapter 5.2.5 showed that Guardians were given to UASCs who remained within Moria, and had therefore reached a stage of protection past the immediacy of mechanisms focused on in this thesis.²⁹³ Regardless of this, the conditions within Moria for UASCs seemed important to add and discuss within the scope of immediate protection mechanisms as they are now being taken there within hours of arriving.

Upon their arrival there were many problems with the identification and isolation of UASCs from those they were with. On the beaches, at ‘Stage-1,’ volunteers found the chaos and short-time frame difficult enough to cope with, without the identification of UASCs. When they tried they found difficulties in identifying adolescents especially on sight,²⁹⁴ which was a problem highlighted in Chapter 4.3.3.²⁹⁵ I found there to be a severe lack of knowledge and training given to volunteers at both ‘Stage-1’ and

²⁹² (UNHCR 2016)

²⁹³ (Howden 2015)

²⁹⁴ See Interview With(Fleischer 2016)

²⁹⁵ (Crawley 2011)(Connolly 2015)(Bhabha and Finch 2006)

‘Stage-2.’ In some circumstances the treatments of UASCs caused a lot of problems within volunteer groups and between the different stages of care and protection. This was especially the case when with MSF they were sending UASCs to Moria, with MSF assuming that they were not being protected and were potentially separating children from friends and distant relatives for no purpose, ultimately causing more harm. Volunteers did recognise that when the refugees and migrants arrived, all were facing exhaustion and that UASCs were found to be nervous and scared, as Connolly suggest they would be,²⁹⁶ so volunteers tried to the best of their ability to understand these feelings and not demand too much from UASCs. This clashed with the legal aspects of immediate identification, isolation and protection, but it was being done in the best interest of the child. If they made themselves known they could be helped, but in my interviews volunteers tended to respect the choices made by the adolescent UASCs arriving. Sadly, this means that criminal networks had much more freedom to act and exploit UASCs. This changed after the EU-Turkey deal when FRONTEX and the Coastguard were much faster to react and transport all refugees and migrants to be registered in Moria. Although this improved the immediate protection in some ways, it failed to consider the psychological conditions of UASCs and removed them of any decision-making ability.

Before the deal identification of UASCs was found to be very difficult in Moria, which was only a transit camp before refugees and migrants moved on further into Europe. Here UASCs had little trust in authorities and NGOs and could be easily lost amongst the thousands of arrivals. In order to gain the trust the guardian network (GNUM) really had to listen to the stories of UASCs, empathise with them and let them feel like they are in control. This approach mirrors the Connolly’s work on UASCs in the UK and demonstrates how important the small things are when dealing with these vulnerable cases.²⁹⁷ Although the rapid registration of UASCs as refugees was not discovered in the fieldwork, what was seen was the awful conditions in Moria that these children faced with indefinite detention, lack of access to lawyers, information, fighting²⁹⁸, alleged police abuse,²⁹⁹ overcrowded accommodation, and riots. They were found by Praksis to be acting out and displaying clear signs of

²⁹⁶ (Connolly 2015, 57)

²⁹⁷ (Ibid, 73)

²⁹⁸ I observed stone throwing and evidenced violence in the Archival research.

²⁹⁹ In Chapter 5.2.5 I discuss two cases where a Police Officer had been accused of hitting a UASC.

psychological problems discussed in Chapter 4.3.3.³⁰⁰

If UASCs were lucky and sheltered by METAdrasi, Praksis or Save the Children their conditions improved much more, and they received the rights they were entitled to. However, with some children still trapped in Moria for long periods there needs to be more attention given to the violations they face and be moved into satisfactory accommodation as soon as possible.

6.4 Conclusion and Further Research Questions

Through comparing the legal instruments and literature with the research undertaken I have attempted to illuminate how both law and theory failed to immediately protect the most vulnerable, and especially the UASCs. I found that the governments and NGOs were too big to react quickly, and when they did their decisions were somewhat political and based their negative obligation to resolving a problem, as opposed to focusing on their positive obligation to help individuals. The real success was the quick and effective work of the volunteers who came to the island, and despite some bad intentions and a lack of knowledge on how to work with vulnerable cases, they were quick to learn and worked to the best of their capabilities, utilising modern technology to improve communications that were vital to the immediate rescue efforts at ‘Stage-1’ and in transport to ‘Stage-2.’ Their failings were due in large part to a lack of support from the institutions obliged to help (except MSF from my observations), and what is needed is much greater efficacy between the large and the small institutions. If this can be done then we will start to see vast improvements in all forms of immediate protection.

This qualitative research is designed to highlight the experiences of the individuals on the island, and although there have been many failings listed, there needs to be more quantitative research conducted in order to complement the work of this thesis and to further expand the discourse. The other research questions that arose during my research and may be of interest for the future are listed below:

- Why are the UASCs arriving on Lesbos mostly composed of male

³⁰⁰ (Ajdukovic and Ajdukovic 2009)

adolescents?

- To what extent can technology be further harnessed to improve the immediate protection mechanisms in a future crisis?
- What happens to UASCs when they reach the age of 18 in the current refugee crisis and are they being protected?
- What are the long-term impacts of the EU-Turkey deal on the treatment of UASCs?

Chapter 7: Conclusion

“No deed of ours, I suppose, on this side the grave, is really unselfish: yet if one can put forth all one's powers in a task where nothing of reward is hoped for but a little child's whispered thanks, ... one seems to come somewhere near to this.”

Lewis Carroll³⁰¹

As I finish this thesis my phone is literally vibrating now with the CK-Team Whatsapp chat, reading the message ‘6 people rescued, 4 bodies found (2 children), 3 still missing.’ A grim reminder that despite the best efforts of volunteers, and the EU-Turkey deal agreed to prevent this sort of thing, people are still dying and in my opinion it shows after a year, not enough is being done.

With the scope of the thesis defined in Chapter 2, I was able to construct a clear framework in order to achieve my aim of considering the extent that refugees and migrants, children, adolescents and UASCs are being immediately protected as they arrive on Lesbos. Chapter 3 then laid out the ontological and epistemological standpoints that influence my research, and explain the methods behind a qualitative study and why it necessary to develop the discourse on the immediate protection of UASCs. By considering the legal instruments and literature on immediate protection in Chapter 4, I demonstrated a wealth of protection mechanisms that are either legally required or necessary. I was aware that in reality the immediate protection mechanisms discussed would not be perfectly applied on Lesbos, especially given the scale of the crisis, but I was expecting to see some level of success. In Chapter 5 I then presented my findings in great detail and found that the EU-Turkey deal in March of 2016 had had huge effects of the immediate protection of all refugees and migrants. In the 8 months before the deal I found that the response and effectiveness of small NGOs was amazing, but they lacked adequate training in the protection of vulnerable cases, and especially UASCs. After the deal the government and larger NGOs were able to immediately protect arrivals much more effectively, but were then forcibly detained and all refugees and migrants, and especially children, adolescents

³⁰¹ Famous children's book writer and author of Alice in Wonderland

and UASCs suffered. In the last Chapter, I ultimately found that there was a dramatic failure to react by the government, EU and large NGO's (except MSF), and this impacted the immediate protection of children, adolescents and UASCs especially. Small NGOs did what they could but they definitely needed more support and training from those legally obliged to help.

The amount refugees and migrants attempting to get to other countries is only expected to increase over the coming decades with the instability that faces the entire planet. Unfortunately we cannot rely on the reaction of big NGOs, governments and law to solve this issue alone. Lesvos has witnessed the power and positive impact volunteers from all over the world can have, but that does not mean that it is without its problems. In this thesis I have highlighted major issues that need to be considered within the discourse of not only UASCs, but also that of all refugees and migrants seeking protection for whatever reason. If there could be a more robust, rapid procedure to educate volunteers on what to expect, how to cope and most importantly how to work together with a vast array of people from all backgrounds and ideologies, then protection mechanisms can be vastly improved. Modern technology makes this more of a reality than it ever was in the past, and with a dedicated focus to implement this change then all people who wish to help will be able to do so with much more confidence and greater efficacy. Nothing is perfect, but if you give a voice to the victims, allow them participate in the decisions that are designed to protect them, then there will be much more chance of improving these immediate protection mechanisms in the future.

The crisis is but a shadow of what it once was, with those who made it to the EU left abandoned on the periphery. The immediate protection of all refugees and migrants, let alone children, adolescents and UASCs has been an embarrassment to all of us. The overwhelming failure to immediately protect adolescent UASCs on Lesvos is utterly unacceptable and as you read this, not far from here, they are left suffering detained in Moria, as 'Adolescents in Wanderland.'

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Annex

Annex A- Official Volunteering Documentation

**ΓΕΝΙΚΗ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙΑ ΑΙΓΑΙΟΥ
SECRETARIAT OF
ΚΑΙ ΝΗΣΙΩΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗΣ
ISLAND POLICY
ΣΥΝΤΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ
COMMITTEE**

**GENERAL
AEGEAN AND
COORDINATING**

ΑΤΟΜΙΚΟ ΠΡΟΦΙΛ PROFILE

Παρακαλώ συμπληρώστε και στείλτε
to the
στο e-mail:semko@ypai.gr

PERSONAL

Please fill in and return
e-mail:semko@ypai.gr

1	Details of volunteer Στοιχεία εθελοντή	Name/όνομα: George Wilcox
		Professional capacity/επαγγελματική ιδιότητα: Student
		Passport no/Αρ. διαβατηρίου: 308770030
		M/ F/ 'Ανδρας/Γυνάικα: M
		Day of birth/Ημ. Γέννησης: 28/11/1990
2	Contact details Στοιχεία επικοινωνίας	Professional qualifications and licences/ Επαγγελματικά προσόντα και άδειες: B.Sc from St. Andrews Drivers liscence
		Visa requirements/υποχρέωση θεώρησης: N/A
		Postal address/ταχυδρομική διεύθυνση: 255 Woodgrange Drive, Southend, Essex SS1 2SQ
		Web/ιστοσελίδα:
		Tel/τηλ.: 00441702600123
Fax/φαξ:		
		Email: george.william.wilcox@gmai

		I.com
		Skype: george_w_wilcox
3	Professional capacity / practicing certificate in force Επαγγελματική Ιδιότητα / άδεια ασκήσεως επαγγέλματος εν ισχύ	Post-grad Student
4	Activity-Previous actions Δράστηριότητα/Προηγούμενες δραστηριότητες:	N/A
5	Duration – detailed arrival and departure schedule Διάρκεια παραμονής – Ημερομηνίες αφίξεων & αναχωρήσεων:	10/04/2016-28/04/2016
6	Affiliation/ cooperation/ contact with organisation(s) already active in Greece Σύνδεση/συνεργασία με άλλη οργάνωση στην Ελλάδα:	CK Team Lesbos
7	Proposed voluntary action in Greece / Curriculum / Description Action Προτεινόμενη εθελοντική δράση στην Ελλάδα / Αναλυτικό πρόγραμμα /Περιγραφή δράσης	Nature of duties: Aiding CK Team Schedule Do not know
8	Proposed place of action and type of voluntary work Προτεινόμενος τόπος δράσης και είδος εθελοντικής εργασίας	Lesvos. Helping refugees in any way I can



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΝΑΥΤΙΛΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΝΗΣΙΩΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗΣ
ΓΕΝΙΚΗ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΙΑ ΑΙΓΑΙΟΥ
ΚΑΙ ΝΗΣΙΩΤΙΚΗΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗΣ
ΣΥΝΤΟΝΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF MARINE AND ISLAND POLICY
GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR THE AEGEAN
AND ISLAND POLICY
COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Βεβαίωση

Acknowledgement

κατάθεσης αίτησης για καταγραφή και πιστοποίηση
εθελοντή μη ενταγμένου σε Μ.Κ.Ο ή άλλης
εθελοντικής ομάδας μέλους

of receipt of application for Non Government
Organization (NGO) or Voluntary Group mem

Βεβαιώνεται ότι ο/η εθελοντής/τρια, με τα ακόλουθα στοιχεία:
This is to certify that the volunteer below:

Επώνυμο – Surname:	Wilcox
Όνομα – Forename:	George
Αρ. Διαβατηρίου/Δελτίου Ταυτότητας Passport or Identity Card Nr:	308770030

πέβαλε αίτηση καταγραφής και πιστοποίησης με αρ. πρωτ.: 10678
as applied for registration and certification under ref. number:

**Η παρούσα δεν αποτελεί βεβαίωση πιστοποίησης
και ισχύει για ένα(1) μήνα από την έκδοσή της**
**This is not a document for Certification
and is valid for one (1)month after its issue date**

Annex B- Ethical Consent Forms



Participant Debriefing Form

Working Title: *A report to further explore the immediate problems faced by unaccompanied, adolescent, female refugees **arriving on Lesbos, Greece***

Researcher(s) Name(s)

George William Denys Wilcox

Supervisor's Name

Dr. Carla Gomes

Nature of Project and possible upset

This research's main purpose is to critically analyse and assess the protection of unaccompanied minors on Lesbos, Greece. In order to do this I will ask you some questions about your experiences here on the island. I appreciate that it is not unusual for conversational interviews to stray into areas which make respondents feel uncomfortable. While you were at liberty not to address any of the specific questions I asked, my discussions may still have raised some difficult issues or memories for you. I apologise for this disturbance and would like to offer you our support in resolving this situation.

Please feel free to ask us for clarification about anything to do with the thesis, or anything contained in the briefing form.

What should you do if you have concerns about this study?

A full outline of the procedures governed by the University Teaching and Research Ethical Committee are outline on their website://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/utrec/complaints/

Contact Details

My Supervisor, Carla Gomes, can be contacted at:

Ius Gentium Conimbrigae

Carla Gomes

Faculdade de Direito da Universidade de Coimbra

3004-545 Coimbra, Portugal

e-mail: cgomes@fd.uc.pt

phone: +351910588567

Annex C- Interview Participation Information



Participant Information Sheet

Working Title: *A report to further explore the immediate problems faced by unaccompanied, adolescent, female refugees arriving on Lesbos, Greece*

What is the study about?

I invite you to participate in a research for a post-graduate thesis. The main purpose of this research is to critically analyse and assess the protection of unaccompanied minors on Lesbos, Greece. I am undertaking interviews as part of my E.Ma degree in the Department of Human Rights and Democracy at the EIUC. My interviews need to be conducted with a range of important actors in Lesbos, so I would like to talk to you about your experience of, and views on the immediate protection of unaccompanied minors.

Do I have to take Part?

No. You are free to participate or to choose not to. If you do decide to take part you will be free to withdraw at any time without providing a reason.

What would I be required to do?

You will take part in a conversational interview that may last between 30 and 60 mins.

Will my participation be Anonymous and Confidential?

This data will be used by students and supervisors involved in the course. However, if you wish, we will anonymise your responses so as to maintain your confidentiality.

Storage and Destruction of Data Collected

The data we collect will be utilized for future recommendations and used in my thesis. Any audio recording made will be securely stored by my supervisor and deleted if requested. You can be anonymised in all written reports in which your comments are discussed.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The data we collect will be utilized in my thesis, and if published, help to improve the protection of unaccompanied minors in the future.

Are there any potential risks to taking part?

There are no serious risks associated with your participation, although be aware that all informal, conversational interviewing bear the risk of raising uncomfortable issues. If this happens you must feel free to stop, withdraw from the interview or ask for a change of subject.

Consent and Approval

This research proposal has been scrutinised and been granted Ethical Approval through the University ethical approval process.

What should I do if I have concerns about this study?

Feel free to write to my supervisor at the University of Coimbra, an affiliate to the EIUC, to express any concerns you may have.

Questions

Do you have any questions you would like to ask before giving your consent to participate?

Contact Details

My Supervisor, Carla Gomes, can be contacted at:

Ius Gentium Conimbrigae

Carla Gomes

Faculdade de Direito da Universidade de Coimbra

3004-545 Coimbra, Portugal

e-mail: cgomes@fd.uc.pt

phone: +351910588567

Participant Consent Form

Working Title: *A report to further explore the immediate problems faced by unaccompanied, adolescent, female refugees arriving on Lesbos, Greece*

Researcher(s) Name(s)
George William Denys Wilcox

Supervisor's Name
Dr Carla Gomes
Faculty of Rights
University of Coimbra

The University of Coimbra attaches high priority to the ethical conduct of research. We therefore ask you to consider the following points before signing this form. Your signature confirms that you are happy to participate in the study.

What is Anonymous Data?

The term 'Anonymous Data' refers to data collected by a researcher that has no identifier markers so that even the researcher cannot identify any participant. Consent is still required by the researcher, however no link between the participant's signed consent and the data collected can be made.

Consent

The purpose of this form is to ensure that you are willing to take part in this study and to let you understand what it entails. Signing this form does not commit you to anything you do not wish to do.

Material gathered during this research will be anonymous, so it is impossible to trace back to you. It will be securely stored on a password-protected pc and destroyed at your request. Please answer each statement concerning the collection and use of the research data.

- I have read and understood the information sheet. Yes No
- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the study. Yes No
- I have had my questions answered satisfactorily. Yes No
- Do you wish to remain anonymous? Yes No

Only answer if the above is 'yes'- I understand that my data once processed will be anonymous and that only the researcher(s) (and supervisors) will have access to the raw data which will be kept confidentially.

Yes
No

I have been made fully aware of the potential risks associated with this research and am satisfied with the information provided.

Yes
No

I agree to take part in the study

Yes
No

Participation in this research is completely voluntary and your consent is required before you can participate in this research.

Name in Block Capitals _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Interview Transcripts

Interview With Thomas Fleischer- CK-Team Coordinator 24/4/16

G=George T=Thomas

G-First do you want to start by describing what you do and who you work for
T-yeah alright, my name's Thomas Fleisch and I am the CK Co-coordinator along with another co-coordinator of mine- chris. I do night coordination when landings happen and I also coordinate our efforts with the ck team during the day. We're mainly a first response team that finds migrants on the beach when they have been reported by other organisations that we work closely with and we transport them as quickly as possible to either the cheese factory, which is an operation run by our sister team called Border Line Europe, or we take them directly to msf where they can get clothing, information about their political situation and then get moved on, sadly, to Moria.

G- So when they arrive on the beach how do you prioritise between the different people arriving? What do you do?

T- Well what we do is as they arrive right away we mainly look for medical cases because those are always important so we can send our medic down there but we also look for nationalities, so we can call msf on which cultural mediators to bring up from Mytilene, so those are the two things we mainly look for. Of course medical being wet, or broken legs, as such and nationalities for the mediators.

G- Okay, and you also identify children

T- yes when a landing happens we post a total amount of people who arrive and in that we then post the amount of children that have arrived

G- and how do you work out if they're children or not, do you ask them their ages?

T- No, because we want to get this operation done quickly, and at the moment we don't want the coast guard arriving to early so we try to make them as quickly and as streamlined as possible, so we look for anyone under, this might sound vague, about a meter we go for children under 15 or 16. That's how we identify the children

G- and then once you have identified them you report everything to msf and to the landings chat?

T- Well what will happen is that it will already be put in the landings chat by another group but once we get there we recount and make sure then we post the update, and if its correct we keep it the way it is. Yeah.

G-and are you aware obviously unaccompanied minors is an issue and they're quite vulnerable. Does the CK team do anything to look out for unaccompanied minors?

T- Sadly no, because if you think about it, we try to do it as streamlined as possible and with most of the groups arriving you'' find one or two people who speak English and I have, I can speak enough Arabic but its hard to start talking about their life stories, and its hard to find out if they have their mothers or fathers with them, because we are trying to get them as quickly as possibly to msf or the cheese factory. So, no the language barriers big though.

G- yeah, yeah, so what do you think you could do to improve that, if you think it needs improving?

T-I definitely think it needs improving but what you have to realise is that one thing that brought to msf they're also now have to change, you cant really find the unaccompanied minors anymore because the coastguard comes and picks them and

takes them to the detention centre very quickly so its even harder for them to find unaccompanied minors for example we had a case where msf only have 5 minutes to brief them on the situation on the island so they couldn't sort out through it but we have had situations where you see the lone male members or lone young people, unaccompanied minors in a sense, where there is a relative, I mean the friend, this boy was errr somebody, wait, a person that came this unac minor was travelling with friends. Erm.. older friends who took him with them when his family stayed in Syria
G- okay so this was one of the cases you or the ck team dealt with recently?
T- erm yes, but when I say dealt with is that we just about managed to id him before we had to send him to msf and we notified the head of msf mantamandos, we think this child here, he must have been about 5 or 6, has no parents with him, he's traveling with, I cant remember if it's a distant relative or friends of the parents, but due to the speed we tried to do it its not easy to convey all the info but we do in situations like that when we notice it because we have like an hour to talk while they're getting clothes to see what they're situ is like

G- yeah you get an idea, because you've been here how long? Like 2 months

T- Yeah about two months

G-How have you seen it change over time? Have you seen more people that have said b4 you arrived. Do you think its changed a lot? Do you think teams are working better? Not just for minors, but for transportation and id of people

T- ermm. So when I first arrived we worked in some ways a lot better because all these teams had been here for a long time for the arrivals, they knew how to work better, they knew how to do everything, but the situ changed and boats stopped coming as much, we now have teams out there, ours included, with no experience of refugees landing, so all that we tell them is theoretical of how to handle it but if its your first landing its quite an emotional thing, you miss some things. But in other ways because we have had so much time we get a lot of practice and other things, yesterday we had a landing practice, yeah, but in other ways I think it has deteriorated in that we no longer have first hand knowledge of an arrival but theoretically we have improved ourselves, and we have new ways of getting info out there and people get to know the situation even more.

G- What would you do to improve it if you could improve the situation at the moment, for beach landings and transport?

T- Well speaking of ck team first, I would say that response time. E.g. we have situations where they are in places that are really just inaccessible and they start dispersing amongst themselves going into the hills and we arrive there and we have to start land searches and its hard to find these people

G- do you always find them?

T- yeah since I have been here we find them eventually, if you spend enough time shouting they come to you. But in other ways I think that because less ppl are coming its hard to improve the situ because all the orgs here, especially the boat teams and the established ones, they are running up a really high cost and downsizing especially because the trend is less ppl are arriving which in my opinion potentially makes it harder to spot landings. But I do know that as ppl start regularly arriving again all the teams will flood back in. e.g. proactive, one of the boat teams, used to have two teams and patrol all throughout the night, so did seawatch, but now they have stopped they have 1 boat, they patrol from 4 to 8 because that is when landings are happening, but it also means when a boat arrives at 1 o' clock we only find out about it at 4. So sadly

the situ is not becoming as efficient as it could be but I do know that as soon as boats start arriving on a constant basis it will improve dramatically.

G- Do you think it will work as well?

T- I think it will work even better because we now have all these theoretical things and plans and we set up proper SOPS on how it works, but because we downsized, we are all just there in the background and if a landing does happen we all go to the place, but should boats start arriving again by the dozen every day, we now have systems in place, we will all start coming back and pitch in. There is a small allowance for training and getting used to the new situation for the new ppl that arrive, but otherwise it will be more efficient than the system there was b4.

G- Alright, and how many teams are there like the CK Tem working on the island?

T- So I have heard that there are 80 NGO like orgs on the island, but on our NE side which is a very hilly, rocky and cliff coast you have the CK Team doing transportation of arrivals and we count the different beaches, but then you have the boat teams, proactiva, msf has boat teams, seawatch, the brf. When I say teams I mean 1 now as they all downgraded. And the msf camp, and that our little sector, we are not that big in terms of looking at a map. That's a lot of orgs already, and if you think about it Lesvos is rather big. If you think about it from Skala to ? moylvos there is 10 or more.

G- do you think it would help if groups like ck and others in area if they had meetings every month or so talking about how to look out for vulnerable ppl or unaccompanied minors with info from UNHCR? Do you think its necessary?

T- we try to do a meeting a month anyway, but that's just to make things more efficient. E.g. on our part of the island, e.g. we average around a boat every 3 weeks. If we do have one we talk about it, we have a debrief like today, about to handle the situation. But I don't really know because what we do is of course I realise it is very important but for us it is we realise that once they get to Moria, or if they have time in msf, you find you have them look out unaccompanied minors there where unher can teach them how to do it. But for teams like us who have to speed through rocky terrain as fast as possible, bring them back use local drivers as well who we pay, its hard to start looking for unaccompanied minors, the situation we have, this kid who was with ppl, its hard to find out about it later when we talk to someone. There is a need but it is hard to put it into practice because when the situation is fast, these ppl need to get warm dry, info on island, there in CF or msf you can put, unher can teach us to put in place SOPs to find unaccompanied minors or vuln ppl. On the beaches its hectic, loud, chaotic, full of emotion. Its not possible there.

G- how does it work in the CF and MSF camp in terms of giving them info?

T- well the CF we have only had this from more recently, because of the CG increased responding time when they arrive faster. At CF we talk to 1 or 2 people, but its chaotic there you have 40 ppl trying to get clothes and we try to get them to msf where they have cultural mediators who can do it. But we talk to the English ppl and we make them aware, as we are not lawyers, we make them aware there is this side of the procoess, the UNHCR guys in the blue vests will tell you where you are staying in Moria, they are the ones who you find out what you need, they should start thinking about asylum and being registered. I know that msf when it has enough time, it err first of all geos through an explanation. When you go to Moria you can find out what every organisation is doing they have a little placard with a picture of organisations with their logo. Of course its Moria and its not really adequate but they let them know

what is what. If they have enough time, they let them know that they are going sadly to prison, but they are on an island, so technically there is no way they can go. We have ppl deciding not to go onto the bus and they walk off somewhere into the wilderness. They turn up eventually, and we, not convince them, but let them know about the situation, that they are on an island, as horrible as Moria, its kind of really the only option. Its sad but it really is the only option, despite how much I don't like it
G-Its hard to know what to say

T- It's a terrible system but there is nothing else they can do, they cant get themselves off the island, they cant speak Greek so they cant find a new smuggler and they have already spent thousands getting here. But what msf does it tells them about Moria, prison, and one day they will have an asylum interview. Msf aren't lawyers either so they don't explain that, but they do also in their own language, let them know about what the asylum process is. I mean of course every single case I have ever had the person had no idea what asylum was. We talked, and I asked about asylum, and he said what is asylum, and this guy was a good speaker. He could speak English pretty well, it wasn't that .. he didn't know the word, he thought he was here and now "I can live my dream" and start making them aware of their realities and msf. The coastguard I have no idea why, there have been allegations that the police in Moria are scamming ppl, but it could be possible why the coastguard arrive as quickly as possible, when they're outside after 5 minutes and the coastguard is honking his horn the whole time on the bus. Hurry up x2

G- I have one more q, its about the role of authorities and police in the area. What is opinion about how they have been reacting and what they have been doing here?

T- When you say the area do you mean the NE or Lesvos

G-The NE and Lesvos in general

T- When you say authorities do you mean the EU or the locals.

G- I mean the locals but also frontex if you have had any experience with them, eurorelief.

T- I think that ermm... first of all in some ways frontex does good work as you know. They are patrolling and they do save lives in the med. I don't know too much of what they do here. They have a very ominous presence here, they go round in an unmarked car, e.g. I know 3 estonian dudes, they are bulked out, they got out there cars asking do you know if there are any refugees. We say know we don't and they go off again, on the look out, on the prowl, to take them to moria or let them know. We have had the coastguard and the police just randomly driving by the CF seeing me and one of our volunteers, a british man of indian descent, and her embarrassingly asked how long have they been here, they meaning refugees, and was very embarrassed and he apologised, but they are on the lookout to get them to Moria asap. In Moria I go to the gate often enough when its not watched by police which is something I definitely don't like that now the police have taken an active role to keep us away from talking to the ones in Moria itself. Before you used to be able to go up to the fences, talk to them, pass stuff through, but now we have to be a bit sneaky and bring the guitar to play to them and the police looked at us like ' idont like this but I guess he is just playing music.' They are not fans of us at all handing out asylum, for example we know that the ploice in moria, had experience, don't want us handing out official unhcr and frontex guides to getting asylum and how to qualify as a refugee. Because this could bog down the process, but the refugees tell me they don't like the police., they go to them and tell them about medical problems and they say 'go over there,' 'the medical tent is somewhere that way,' they don't want to talk to them. Refugees,

alright, who can they ask? Eurorelief? I talked to one guy once who fancied himself camp organiser, some lowly guy getting a kebab outside of Moria, but even they don't have as much power as police, so refugees go to police, but police aren't always friendly with these ppl. They are not hurting them, they are not, I don't think they are creating crimes against humanity here. They are civil but they are not, none of the refugees find it helpful at all. In some cases they compare them to the police in turkey except without beatings.

G-one final question, what do you think would be the best thing to improve the situation here? What needs to be done if anything?

T- well that is a v broad q? I going with broad here first of all- let the refugees in, I read an article that in Germany they need 500,000 ppl for manufacturing. So I say open the borders but what else that astonishes me is that if ppl like me, like the ck team, like proactive had to do this? We are volunteers. We came here out of goodness of our harts. Maybe half of us are trained in some way like life guards, but the EU. Eu's answer to this whole crisis was to send FRONTEX, the EU border agency I mean they patrol the thing and send them back to turkey or pick them up and bring them here. But there is nobody coming at the beaches, I mean sure it would be pretty expensive. The plan was when the eu deal came to fruition they would send 2000 judges and lawyers here, but they haven't done that, but they were planning a 20 million a day budget, that's a lot. All the coasts we patrol here are dangerous, rocky, this is where ppl die. I have heard the worst stories from ppl here in December. Stories that haunt me, but ermm. EU doesn't seem to have an answer to that. Once they arrive, if they can, then we'll put them in Moria, register htem, and either send them back to Turkey or give them asylum. We are reactionary, we react to the process, we are not pro-active. We, the EU are not thinking there are no boats coming we should put more ppl at the beach, they are more like once they start arriving, we will see what happens. Eventually they will get to Moria. I heard from a local here when they first started arriving they were sleeping, you could see them in here in Mantamandos on the street. There was no eu, they reacted late, I think if the eu became more pro-active and places systems that can help them. I love being here but if there was a guy that could do it professionally I would be so glad not to be here. Someone with the know how, the language. Msf is one of the things that is good here, but they are also an NGO.

G-To finish the interview would you mind talking about one of the stories, if it is not too hard for you,....

T- yeah I can an army medical officer was there when 60 ppl capsized and everyone thrown in water with fake life jackets. He swam saving ppl and found a baby drowned trying to do cpr as he is swimming back, while refugees are grabbing hold of him and pulling him down. He has to kick them off him. He gets to the shore gives the baby to someone to save it, he sat down and he heard the baby crying. The EU is not doing enough.

Interview With Aliya Abidi- Lighthouse Relief Manager 23/4/16

G= George A= Aliya

G- So yeah, it's a semi structured interview, im not just going to ask questions for an answer for each one, and if it changes topic im mores interested to hear what you have to say. If you feel like talking about something more you can. To warm up do you mind introducing yourself and telling me what you have been doing since you've been here

A- Yeah, sure, erm... my name is Aliya, here on Lesvos, I do mostly shore line work erm... so yeah, but actually I spent the first two weeks just basically almost like crowd controlling, but that is a horrible word to use

G- as in when they were arriving?

A- Yeah, just sort of helping people understand what was happening or just errrrr prioritising the ppl who should be on buses first and stuff. Did quite a bit of that in the first few weeks here and then we went down to the beach. So I didn't really see boats or anything the first two weeks. But since then yeah I have been doing basically like errr shore line work but then also just like helping with volunteers and organising volunteers

G- when you said prioritising on the buses, how did you do it

A- it was really hard because there was a lot of ppl so b4 the big organisations were able to get there coaches, like chartered and stuff, ppl were walking, historically ppl who have done this route have walked themselves to Mytilene, and got on a ferry from there, so that was the route, the route didn't change just the numbers and the types of ppl making this journey changed, so what ppl couldn't handle watching, what became serious was who was making this walk because its like 50km to Mytilene, and it was families, young kids, elderly and they were on one road, so if you're driving you pass and notice everyone. So prioritising meant, there was only a few coaches available and even then at random times of the day so we had to choose who went on first, so it was basically families.

G- Sorry it was just the landing chat, okay, and then when did it start to change? When did the authorities and bigger charities arrive?

A- Well big agencies like MSF and UNHCR were here b4 a lot of volunteers were. It wasn't a problem of who got here first, it was a problem of who was able to put in place infrastructure the quickest, and that was what was taking time. I don't know enough about how it works to say why, coaches to Moria to register like that. That began to like late October, yeah late late October ppl were coming in, yeah I would say so. The nature of it was that there was so many ppl that you had to wait overnight in the North. That was the major problem, but yeah I would say the bigger agencies, really big ones, they were already here they just needed to get there stuff in order. The right paperwork and stuff, because transporting ppl who don't have papers is illegal. So for them to get around the way of doing that, volunteers were doing it at their own risk

G- So just picking up whoever you could

A- Yeah, so it was really good when the agencies made that step to actually be okay to transfer.

G_ and because obviously my research is focusing on UASCs did you play any part in finding children? Ages and things like that?

A- Yeah so it was really, really strange when we began to realise that that is, just how much we weren't servicing that issue and that need. So like the volunteers that were on the shore, 90% had never done any of that work or.... Erm... and had also not

worked on anything protected related b4 and in any system that deals with refugees coming in . ermm.. we were untrained

G- so the majority we just underprepared

A- Unprepared and untrained and erm uninformed about the system in place or the legal issues that ... yeah that exist. Erm ... so we.. the lighthouse guys, we realised it was an issue a couple of incidence brought it to our attention, so it was playing on our mind. So we asked unhcr responsible for the north to have a meeting with us, so we sat down and had someone explain what was possible, but also... this was October, November time, and he also explained that it wasn't clear

G- they didn't even know!

A- yeah, they knew what should happen and stuff, they could tell us what to do up until Moria, and obviously our involvement would be finished anyway, but he couldn't tell us much more about the process after that.

G- So what did they tell you?

A- yeah so basically he was, cause you know we were saying there are issues of id and isolating as well, and issues of like ensuring like errrr accompanied transport to Moria where they have to go. Errmmmm and like in an ideal world what should happen is the EU id's uasc and ermm. Informs the UNHCR site which is stage 2, and then accompany that person physically yourself to hand over to a person responsible on unhcr side. And what they would do is ensure they have a seat, the minor, would have a seat allocated to them on the coaches and the bus driver would know and ermm and then the transfer of that minor be done at Moria where a protection officer would come to a coach and take them from there. I THINK THERE WAS ALSO LIKE VARYING levels of info given, written info given, at handover, but not really sure how standardised they were. I never for a referral sheet for example. I don't think they existed.

G- so you just heard about them but never saw....?

A- Yeah, caus I remember asking if they were a part of it, but again because we were only really on the shore as soon as we handed them over to a unhcr site manager In that sense then they are technically not our problem

G- how did you try to identify uasc, because it seems like quite an impossible task, (LANDINGS CHAT)?

A- ermmm.... That was the problem because we didn't have err.. we didn't... its not.. its one thing having language speakers, its another thing having social workers who also speak the language Like... I think there were 2 different challenges.. the nature of movement is so quick and ppl are so eager to move on. So in some cases they are not looking for you to help them at that point they are looking to blend in a move on. So there is a challenge on that side, but then there is also a challenge on the volunteers side where you have short-term volunteers of various backgrounds and skill sets, lack of language, lack of training and then they realise, because obviously in a space like that, if you are looking to service that need then you need a dedicated work force that just concentrate on UASCs. We didn't have that and to try and focus volunteers on that, when they are scattered in their attention and overwhelmed by that many ppl they just want to do things for most number of ppl, and not focus on some ... the system we tried, the thing is you don't know and wont see every face, I wont be the one... the longer term volunteers should not be the one to always id, so we had to empower everybody to look out. We don't want to do more damage, by, this is a volunteer however well intentioned they may be they could be making it worse for that minor

G- yeah, yeah,

A- stressing them out, by asking them humiliating q's. You don't ask immediately What age are you? You know there is just certain sensitivity that you have to handle groups in, but you need uasc training and you cannot equip all volunteers immediately with that. So the system was the longer term volunteers knew the system, knew the protocol, knew a little bit from experience about the best way to handle things and there was a couple of us who spoke a bit of Arabic. Most of the problems, actually its not fair to say, it was a mixture of languages, but most we could was tell the Short Term volunteers 'if you think you are seeing something, get one of us and we'll take it from there. What I noticed one night was 3 different ppl had spoken to one girl, got various different stories, and I was worried she was getting more nervous and scared and it wasn't helping her. I mean she, in her case, she was one that actually looked like she maybe wanted the help, and was receptive, and it was harder w/ her the challenges with identifying and and isolating from my experience, either they will be with some sort of distant relative or they say they will be with some sort of distant relative.

G- because they needed some sort of protection?

A- yeah, but what also could happen is they attach themselves to ppl maybe from a similar community to them along the way. So it will be easier for them when ppl ask are you with someone? To the point that it is not immediate family or anything. Yeah, the other side of that is that young guys travel together an there is a mixed age range between the, We knew we were letting go, we knew that 14 year old boys go with 20 year olds. That was just very little we could do about it, obviously with the language barrier, and if you try and separate at that point its so immediate, if you try and intervene its often really not going to work out well. And so, so sometimes the best thing was just bring it up to the stage 2 guys, because especially December and January they had interpreters, they were pretty well equipped, they would also have a protection officer working there as well. So then maybe we just try to flag things up, it wasn't a direct transfer, it was more like we are not sure what is going on. Just trying to do what we could really, but not trying to make it worse. I was always conscious of making it stressful for ppl.

G- Yeah, it's not easy

A- yeah and you don't know what potential more harm you could do.

G-of course. You said there was a few incidence that brought it to your attention. Do you mind talking about those that came up.

A- yea, I don't know like the, I cant remember when things happened, but there were a couple of times when. Just small conversations w/ ppl that were using the camp for a couple of hours. Asking 'so like where are your parents and they would just point to some vague direction, but you couldn't really see a real interaction. Ermm.. just small things like that, the young guys that travel together as well, I mean you know Im really aware also that in a lot of communities and stuff, like a 16 year old boy would be treated as an adult, like that is just, they have to make their way in life. So I was interested in watching that dynamic and that they could take care of themselves. It was interesting because we also had a couple of volunteers from Sweden and Norway who were UASC... like had arrived through the same route years and years ago as underage boys, and were now like you know, had made it to Sweden, made their own way and were working and stuff, and had come here to volunteer, so that also like kind of you know renewed our, 'it happens' kind of thing. And then there was this one particularly bad night when there was a lot of disagreement amongst volunteers as

well. These two boys had come across on the boat and they were adamant that they were to be sent back, ermmm. So yeah, they were saying they had to go back to their family, and like we, that happens from time to time and ppl saying that their family is over the other side. We're being kept hostage, not hostage, but couldn't deal with being made

G- Captive?

A- Yeah

G- In Turkey,

A- yeah, yeah yeah. I never really understood fully what was going on there, so these two boys were really stressed out, like really stressed out. Volunteers couldn't agree on how to handle it. Obviously ppl like, ppl like, lighthouse guys were like there is absolutely no way. It was divisive, it was weird, some volunteers were telling them, telling some ppl they were allowed to go back, and like that's insane. But yeah, so, that kind of through up a lot of qs about what had actually happened in their sort of, in their history. About why they had travelled alone, and why they wanted to go back.

G- so they landed and instantly they wanted to go back? What happened?

A- Yeah, yeah they were taken to like, err, to the stage two

G- They were uasc, they were just 2 boys alone?

A- Yeah like not massively young, just like teenage

G- Yeah okay. Err. So only a few more qs, so not much longer. I was wondering how you thought how all the ngos in the area work together to solve the crisis, and how over time it has improved or got worse?

A – No I think it definitely improved. Ermmm... errr.... So there is a lot of different types of orgs that have everything from like really established, to not even ngos, unhr isn't one in that sense. I don't know what it is. A body or something. They are big and msf are huge. They respond to all situations and they are the ones with a level of expertise, but then you have a full spectrum, you have that all the way down to ppl coming as individuals from whatever walk of life and just pitching in. and in the beginning it was odd because it was like, it was such a unique situation that it was a level playing field for most ppl. It wasn't necessarily because you were with an established ngo you would have more answers, than the person who had come by themselves. And yeah you just had everything, all these different backgrounds, doing pretty much the same stuff, like trying to figure out the basic needs first and then the systems got.... And then you know ppl stayed, the consistency just meant that things got a bit better. Then ppl started showing up to meeting, ppl started having meeting. We had meetings about what to do if there was a mass casualty incident which was really necessary. Ermmm and those things brought some ppl together so we had, when we started the Mass Casualty meeting, I remember the second meeting that happened, we were talking about Korakus, that night, or the next night, we had like 3 boats in at once in that area that we talked about to do something wit. Looking back the response could have been a lot different and better, but at that time the only reason there was a response coordinated was because we had a meeting and met each other and that brought ppl more together. So I think like isolated incidents also help bring ppl together, and the consistency of that now you know each other a bot more, and you work together a bit more. Ermmm. Yeah I think it got better, I think that it took place because it was such a free for all, and so much money being offered to individual ppl. Ppl in the EU were so generous about just giving to anyone who said they were working on Lesvos. I think that made it a bit difficult at times because ppl came in not really wanting to understand the context of consistent volunteers that were here. They just wanted to implement something with there cash, but then it

worked both ways and some ppl were really respectful and didn't have an ego about it. They were willing to have ppl tell them what to do. Its just all of it, its just good and bad ppl, and the good and bad are all ... and you cant really pick and choose and say this worked and this didn't

G – kind of learning as you go as well?

A - yeah, definitely.

G - then I think its just 1 more question, but do you think now the situation of the protection of UASCs is good, or what do you think could be improved?

A – I think I have heard, I don't know to much about it, but err I think there are. I mean I know there are some houses where ppl are looked after. Errmmm... and I think, I just, it's it's errr, its not good enough actually. In the EU standard, its not good enough. Its not adequate because there is so many cases of missing kids, trafficked kids and stuff. Just in terms of numbers of cases, just know that must mean it is not good enough. But, yeah

G – I think it was 10,000 a few months ago. So what do you think for your team specifically, how do you think that could be improved for you guys, could you make it easier to ID?

A – Its so hard on the landings, because it also depends, if it's a difficult landing then you are not thinking about anything apart from ppls safety, so like you don't, there is no point in, like search and rescue is all you concentrate on, is getting ppl safely to land. Its always going to be the case. Yeah, on the easier beaches, with easier landings, its been so long since we have had many of them. I think there just having the right ppl on the beach, I know volunteers have good hearts and stuff. But if there is enough medical, and lifeguards then honestly nobody else should really be there apart from a dedicated protection officer. That's honestly, I would probably, ... failing that you could get ppl to spend more time at camps, like social workers and protection officers, to spend more times at camps then you really need to....

G - Spending time as in learning how to approach the situation?

A – Just spending time so you can learn where ppl are. I think identifying takes a long time in these situations. Even because ppl are not coming forward, so its going to be like one leg to push off, and I think that's still mainly the case, now even, so spending time at... Because that's what you don't have on the beach, it why its very hard for us to do this kind of work, because you don't have time

G – just, everything is going so quickly, yeah

A – its also because you're not meant to spend hours and hours with ppl on the beach. For ppl to gain trust, feel comfortable and open up a bit to say who they are you need time.

G – do the authorities do that at all? Or is that just NGOs?

A – You mean like, not in Moria, b4 moria?

G – Yeah

A – I haven't seen that. I mean we barely do it

G- Is there anything else you would like to say at all? Anything more?

A- No

G – If you think of anything

A- Yeah, well its not really directed at UASCs but I often wonder, like erm, what happens to the parents of the kids. Because obviously there is a lot of kids coming through. And I am relatively, im in the north, but I have seen parents come back and look for there kids. So it's a little bit different, but what do we do? What are the procedures? Like the few times I called for someone, like the red cross ppl said that, because its them deal with that happening, ermm... and they said that they don't close

the cases now. They used to have a time frame for closed cases to solve it, but now they keep them open so there is always a chance. But that is not very comforting for the parents, and they don't have any closure and you have to also, of the parents I met, there was no real support or closure for them. It takes time and stuff

G – there is a real lack of counsellors and things, especially those who speak Arabic.

A- Yeah, that's like one of the most traumatic ways to lose your children, like its not easy.

G – So they came back to the lighthouse to ask?

A- yeah, they came to the shorelines. Because they were getting like, they were using like social media and stuff to find pl. and that's always going to.. ppl obviously want to help and they say 'ooh, I think I saw that person' which is really unconfirmed, and the parents are sent on a wild goose chase based on this 1 FB message, and then end up in Skala. Not a lot you can do.

G – yeah its pretty messed up. Do you have any q's?

A- Did you do a similar thing with the Calais ppl?

G-

Interview With Chloe Haralambous- Borderline Europe CF Manager 25/4/16

G= George C=Chloe

G – do you mind describing what you do here?

C – errrrmmmm. Now or in the past year?

G – So over the past year up until now

C – when I came here in June there were no structures, refugees were arriving it was kind of a joke, but then refugees were arriving with 5000 arriving every day and a lot of them arrived in Korakas, under the village, and they would walk up 8km to the village here, rest here, and then continue on to Mantamados. Some of them would wait for a bus here, but the situation was there was about 3 or 4 buses operation, 2 from UNHCR and 2 from the coastguard and they were covering the whole island. which meant a bus would come somewhere like here once every 48 hours at which point like a thousand people were queuing and had accumulated. and the bus only seats 50 so then you decide who to put on the bus. You could put, errr, the most vulnerable cases disabled, pregnant, elderly women, but that meant splitting up families, the families they couldn't get on the bus. So most ppl would end up walking to Mytilene or waiting many many days for a bus.

G- from here to Mytilene

C- yeah, driving back from Mytilene was just a constant stream of ppl walking. So when I arrived there were no structures in place, it started off because ppl quite simply need to pass by my house. My mum and dad were giving out cookies and water. The things that the first volunteers could do was like handing out water and stuff.

G – yeah

C – errmmm... And then I met ppl from Borderline Europe, a German rights NGO, and errrr and they were really one of the first NGOs on the island. That was in early July. Errrrmm. And they, they did similar stuff, they had a paramedic with them, errr they would give ppl food, they would try to organise bus transports for them. For a long time the basic issue was there was no real space to operate out of. So the ppl were left in the village to sleep over night, usually congregate around the entrance to the village, and they would sleep in the little playground next door, and we would give the tarps and sleeping bags. Errrrmmmm. And then obviously the situation changed, a lot of NGOs came in and it became more structured, but still a lot of the attention went to Molyvos and Skala because also they are much more accessible places and have infrastructure for tourism which could act as infrastructure for volunteers. Not that for ppl here.

G- this was late summer?

C – yeah, this was by October I would say. So in the meantime what had happened was Borderline was looking for a space. That was really really difficult. Eventually they settled on the CF. and what happened was they can renovate the CF to make it a first aid for refugees and the day before it was going to open. The villagers got to the building site and did not allow us to enter

G- just because they were against the idea of having refugees there

C- yeah so close to the village. Where there is no logic there is no contradiction and this is something you have to learn about the village. Ppl were coming through anyway, ppl were peeing and pooing in the village because there was nowhere else to go. They were knocking on ppl's doors to ask for clothes and stuff. Errrrmmmm. So it wasn't as though we had brought them there, we were cleaning up the situation for the village, but no no no, for them it was somehow that once a permanent structure was

erected then the refugees would just stay. Even though it was clear looking at the CF that that wasn't going to happen.

G – eventually you managed to open it?

C – yeah but some months later. It was really really big, the village was divided in two. Ppl for the CF, ppl against. Very violent and very vicious. It was really bad. Really, ppl had entered a mass hysteria bout this thing. They had really gone crazy. Some of them genuinely thought, errrrmm, that the CF would become a hotspot. Thousands of ppl would gather here, that they would rape women and children, that they would steal and pillage the village, eerrrrmmm. Some ppl are very impressionable, other ppl had found themselves all of a sudden in positions of power and leading the opposition to us and to refugees, and to really enjoy that power. Though I don't think any of them were under any illusion that we had plans to house 5000 ppl in Kleo. And the other interesting thing was that they never really articulated it as a vocal opposition to the refugees. I mean some of them did. For the most part it was in opposition to the foreign NGOs that had invaded. Because this was also, compared to 2015 the 3rd memorandum had been signed, the gvmt of the left was no longer a gvmt to the left, and so you know. The EU made this statement it didn't give a shit about Greece or the Greek ppl. The island people had been totally dispossessed of social and political rights. All of a sudden this became a very proud region because it marked the contours of European territoriality even though those didn't coincide with countries of EU power. So for them it was like these ppl have left us, they abandoned us, they don't care about us but now because of the refugees have just descended on our land, they came to EU territory errr. So for them, it was a german ngo and so this kind of, this refusal to collaborate with, to decide to push them out, was a battle waged in 2 fronts, on the one hand they our kind of encroaching on us for the refugee, but what they saw to be a coloniser from northern Europe. Anyway, I said and was trying to explain to them that this would benefit the village very much, and we would employ ppl from the village because this is a village that is on its way out, its dying like really quickly depopulating.

G- a lot of elderly ppl

C- yeah. I believe they didn't want to have any of that, so I left for a few weeks, and when I came back msf had opened a camp in mantamndos.

G- when was that?

C– that was in July, they started of with just two tents and then they gradually expanded so in late October or early November it was done. And then they did in fact hire a lot of the villagers and buying from mantamandos, then the ppl realised they could make some money. The atmosphere turned, but the ppl who had been most staunchly opposed to opening this CF and made very public statements about it and what would happen were part of the village council and were still opposed to it. Anyway, long long battle, one day, long story short we just went and opened it. We said we are done waiting, we opened it and nothing happened. In the meantime, the work we had been doing was because there was no place to bring ppl and there weren't that many cars to transport ppl who had arrived in the village. because we had pick up, then together with matt, we also, a lot of the locals had seen that, so a lot of our work was based on transportation. So going down there were the medics making sure there were no severe cases and then transporting ppl from the beaches to mantamandos camp. Or to the village where mantamandos would send a big bus and take them to the capital.

G – the CF?

C – the CF ended up opening in January, b4 that that was what we were doing, after the CG opened instead of going to mantamandos they came to the cf. so CK has spotters on the beaches, there would be a boat landing, call us, we would send down transport, pick the ppl up, bring them to the cf, give them clothes, warm them up, give them tea, give them first aid medical care and triage, errmmm call an ambulance if necessary. And then, errmmm eventually a bus would come to mantamandos and transport them and stuff

G- so when they were in the cheese factory, when they came in, or maybe before, because I know that the CK team and other teams tried to find kids and count how many there are. Is it something you do in the cheese factory, would you clarify how many children there were.

C – yes, to let msf know and we would also let them know about vulnerable cases like single mums or uasc or ppl who were ill

G- so how did you find a uasc?

C – I mean it depends, you cant really, errmmm, it was usually evident, the person was very young and we would ask is this your father or your uncle and it would be quite clear. But then there are also certain situations in which you didn't want to ask. There was this 16 or 17 year old afghan boy who... you know wanted to continue his trip on his own, had an uncle somewhere, if he seems to be able to make the trip himself you then go to UNHCR and tell them this person is a UASC it means keeping him here for an indefinite period, then he becomes a warden of the state, and it may not be what is best for this person. We would usually tell msf, 'listen there is this person here, this 17 year old afghan boy, and then it's a judgement call. So you want to trust them to stay or do you think they are going to be fine to continue on this trip with friends with them. Because there are also different regulations for determining, maybe it's a child who is unaccompanied, in the case they don't have a mother and father, but the uncle is here, do you want them to be separated from the uncle, I mean....

G – yea yeah, its really complicated

C – so basically, we weren't the ppl making that judgment call. We would relate that to msf

g- okay, I know unhcr are coming tomorrow now, to give a talk on vulnerable cases

c- no they're not coming now

g- ah, okay

C- they're really great you know. Really reliable ppl (sarcasm)

G – have you had any sort of formal or informal advice on how to look out for it or how to act? Or is it something you learn as you go

C – yeah, there is, usually you don't want to like to make it clear to the rest of the group the person is going to receive special treatment because they are a vulnerable case. Usually you ask in private, or as privately as possible, and if it is the case you tell the driver and don't announce it to the group, or maybe you put them next to the driver and then you send them to msf, and they then know who to look for errrrmm. That's pretty much it

G – do you find there were problems, not with your staff, but because you get a lot of volunteers coming here to work who have never had experience with children b4 of vulnerable cases do you find that to be a problem?

C- the truth is, there weren't that many, not in the sense that there weren't ppl who were disabled or were elderly, but they were usually with their families, in which case you would approach, but you have the sense they are with their families and best equipped to take care of them. I mean we never had a case where msf or unhcr called us and said 'listen, there was this person who was a kid and along or whatever and you didn't tell us' that never happened. But errrr. I don't know, we were never very rigorous about it. If it was apparent, if you have a suspicion

G – it was difficult, especially the language barrier I guess. So how could you improve it from what you've experienced?

C – I mean I think that, that when necessary to have, yeah probably some person that's well equipped to do it, and I think that the stakes are higher now because of the asylum procedures. Then perhaps they would have a chance. There have been some really really horrifying moments when we had a group of ppl who arrived after the deal and they were travelling together and they were best friends, or cousins, and there was one guy who was 22 and then 2 other kids like 16 and 17 and then they had to be separated. Errrrmm. So these are really painful things nobody wants

G- and who separates them

C- unhcr. Errr

G – and do the police do anything about it....?

C – yeah possibly when they make an asylum application and prove they're a minor but also often a police officer doesn't believe them when they are a minor. If you look around 18 then the chances are that you know.... Errrrmmmm..... but I don't know, the other thing is they spent until recently we had had, we were very confident in the knowledge that ppl would spend a couple hours at the cf and then go to msf for like 10 hours in which case there would be more time to assess what the information was. For us it was reporting very obvious cases like 'this woman is travelling with a child and no one else with her, or this person is' and report those cases and the subtleties like 'this person is traveling with her uncles but she is actually errrrmm, that's not her parent its her uncle. There are things we would know if we found out, but we would perhaps say to msf, but we would never report to UNHCR ourselves.

G- and now, because ti know the last landing, when they came to cf they were instantly taken to msf then had 5 minutes at msf. B4 you had a lot of time ...

C – now we agreed with msf, they send us, basically they give out their procedures on fliers and big signs and stuff, like this is were you are, this is where you're going, the situation for asylum and if you fit one of these 15 categories that makes you an exception to the rule in terms of deportations. And they have cultural mediators to talk about this or that, and since, the CG said they wanted to come directly to CF, we asked msf to print that stuff for us and send there cultural mediators here.

G – how long will it take do you think to give them the info they need?

C – that's, as long as the coastguard gives us really, there is never enough time because these are very tough qs.

G- how have you seen the CG and authorities working together with the NGOs is it good bad? Has it got worse or better?

C- I think it really depends on the ppl, errrrmmmm some CG ppl are nice, some of there aren't. they tend to be much more obliging when the person they are talking to are Greek because you are one of them and you have more of a right to be here than some german guy, a CG guy has to speak very bad English to talk and understand this german guy and then they react and are more forceful to get over this humiliation, like Errr... but in general my experience with the CG hasn't been very bad, I mean

they have to take them to detention centres and that's a really awful thing and we don't collaborate in that sense. We never call the CG. MSF doesn't call them. They call their coordinator and then he maybe calls, for a while he wasn't calling but now he does. But they've never been violent to anyone at CF, I mean to me, and I usually like prefer to be the person who manages it.

G – So you tend to do that now>

C – Yeah and also because im much more comfortable with lying to the authorities and a lot of ppl aren't.

G –I was wondering what you think of the overall experience of, I know that this has been happening for a long time, just not in this number, but since you have been here, what is the most positive and negative thing you have seen about how ppl have reacted?

C- well I think that the EU- Turkey deal was definitely like the most negative, errrrmm, then there are finer things of how You know humanitarianism was something that lived in the realm of legend to a certain degree like heroes who would be in S. Sudan or Sub-saharan Africa or where ever and now its become much cheaper, more accessible and safer because its in Greece, its in Europe, so you get a strange cast of characters coming down and playing heroes for a while. This doesn't bother me as much as it used to, because if you are actually in the end helping out the refugees then you motivations don't interest me very much. What bothers me is the contradiction which has become much more apparent now after the EU-Turkey deal. Ppl who were flooding to the beaches to help 'save' or 'rescue' the refugees and get a selfie. Whereas if you had been here during the summer when 30 boats were arriving during the day unescorted, people survived. They made it on their own, they made a choice, saying you rescued or saved the refugees treating them like, undermining their integrity. They are political agents, they actually made it without you.

G – and they think they're coming in like this white western saviour!

C – yeah, a more palatable form of colonialism. So that's quite crap, regardless, that thing only really upset me when those ppl were just dying to go and save the refugees on the beaches weren't there for them when they were being deported errrrmm.... And why it is that one can profess to care so much about human beings, or about ppl, without recognising the political context at stake,

G – like short term stuff not long term?

C – I don't think its long-term stuff, I mean that short term thing is like when you get to play hero, get to take the selfie, get to feel really wonderful about how kind you have been. But its also, you question, why is that kindness so divorced from a political dimension. Or is this kindness only possible because its divorced. And for me it drives me really crazy. Like hundred of ppl in Skala running with thermal blankets to rescue these ppl, and for deportations 20 ppl show up. That made me really disillusioned. I mean humanitarianism we have described is a relatively conservative concept, that relies on superiority, its always comfortable when the other person is powerless. When you have to reckon with them as a political subject then its hard. W

G- What would you recommend to improve that and try to attract or educate ppl on the reality of it?

C – I don't know, I don't think many ppl care. I've been battling with myself, I don't know. On the one hand I don't know if ppl know just how shit this deal is and what it subjects ppl to, and on the other hand I think ppl really really don't care. I don't

know. I mean what works for the world is a kind of refugee-porn. Look how destitute these ppl are, the detention centres and how horrific the situation is. Im sure many ppl wouldn't mind living in squalor, that's not the point, the point is they want to keep crossing into Europe. They want to go, they want new lives, it doesn't matter if it's a luxury camp or a deportation camp. Errrrmm.. so I think that's something that's much harder to change because it means trying to influence ppl's consciousness.. errrrmm.. which involves a degree of thought and ppl's political pedigree. If you're right wing you're quite happy to save ppl on the beaches and yet you also happy that ppl are being deported. Its contradictory. One of the most positive things is the solidarity that the group of ppl have shown, like if this had happened in Germany. I mean we do have a neo-Nazi part, Golden Dawn, the fact there haven't been more incidence of violence towards refugees is kind of amazing.

G – I, one final thing then, do you have anything you would like to say in terms of UASCs or vulnerable ppl, or in general things we haven't talked about?

C – errrrmm.... Listen, I mean I can say it, but I don't think that, the thing is that the language of UASCs, vulnerable cases, in the same way as the language that separates refugees from migrants, on the one hand seems like it couldn't be well meaning, but the way its deployed is also quite tricky. You can harness a great deal of sympathy for refugees and basically instrumentalise that to shed a negative light on economic migrants, like divorcing, consolidating, divorcing the violence of war from poverty and neglecting the geo-political context that war often leads to poverty, and poverty leads to war. Understanding ppl who are destitute have a choice and pl fleeing war don't and this is the sort of language this distinction facilitates even though at first glance it looks like its meant to help ppl. But we have seen with the EU-Turkey deal, they are all being sent back regardless. But they are failing because they're intertwined, they are made to live or made to die together, errrrrrrrmm.... So I think also the language of UASCs, even though its well meaning and I understand why it exists, it also tends to create this exception within the rule, like we are not being so barbaric because we are taking care of the women, or old ppl, and that kind of congratulates this liberal-western kind of humanitarianism. Conversely serves to facilitate ill treatment of the rest. So you know in terms of vulnerable case, like I said, with the Afghan 17 year old boy, he wants to continue, if he can give him a chance to continue. He should be allowed to continue. Kid who is traveling with her uncle and not with her parents should be kept with her uncle, errrrrrmm, so I think its very context specific. So I think that definitely, and it is also something very difficult to do when you're working with so many ppl, to understand the context to understand what would be best for the person.

G – so because you were saying you don't like this binary of ref/migrant, vuln/non-vuln person, would you prefer it if it was just referred to as one term and not divide it so much? How would you rather it be presented?

C – listen, im a leftist, and a pretty radical one, so for me I would prefer to let them all in, but, otherwise im not entirely sure. I think that definitely. Like I said I don't have and issue with the fact these categories exist, just the way they are employed. So If it's a case of helping vuln ppl, in a case where everyone is being helped, its not like we will pick these ones and leave the rest.

Interview With Alice Kleinschmidt- MSF Camp Manager 27/4/16

G= George A=Alice

G – do you want to explain your position at msf?

A- now, only from one month ago I became the camp manager of this camp, its mainly a first reception camp, like a transit camp. Before I was a crowd controller this means you work in distribution, you tell the ppl what's going on, you pick the ppl up from the shore, give first aid lets say, we don't have a doctor here, we call a doctor here, we are like one little transit camp in all the journey. The position before was mainly on shifts, we worked with 4 or 5 ppl on each shift, then you say 'you will distribute the blankets, you distribute the food, I will give the info, someone has to show the refugees the tent. Make sure there is tea and all this stuff and now as camp manager I am responsible for that we have enough supplies, blankets and sandwiches and stuff, and that ppl are not working more than 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week. The staff are occupied, staff managing because we didn't have many arrivals these days. Normally I'm responsible for everything going on in the camp, like the constructions, deal with the local authorities here. Work together and yeah, send a report every Monday to my supervisor

G- So when did you arrive here? In Lesbos?

A- The first time I was in here was July last year, 2015, and for volunteer was for Borderline Europe. The CF hadn't opened yet, we tried to have a space where we could start helping ppl because there was no mantamandos camp, nothing till we started there too.

G- and when did you move across to MSF?

A- okay I was in touch with borderline Europe till now really, but I started in October to really look for to work and come here, I started in like November last year?

G- That's when you started in your role as the person who would go to the beaches?

A- As a volunteer we started that in July, we were already on the boats started coming at landings where nobody could see them, but yeah I think in the beginning of September we had the bus transportation, which wasn't a lot in those days. We had little landings and then later happened, then maybe we got 10 buses a day with 50 people from Skala skami.... And provided them with everything and organised the transport to Moria

G- SO it was from skala originally?

A- so these days the main arrivals were in skala, there were many many boats, it was the easiest point to get. Then later in December, January, much more in February the like the beaches you are camping on now. They were put together with volunteers with pickups, I think the most pickups was in January February.

G- and in that time you would bring them back to here?

A- we nearly always bring them here, to make sure everyone gets a blanket because in Moria the distribution, the supply was not so good so we made sure everyone has eaten something, we had hot meals, everyone has hot meals and a NFI kit, and organised the transport. But some days from skala when we didn't have many arrivals they were equipped there well they sent directly the ppl on their bus.... Normally the ppl wanted to go to Moria to be registered, not now, but then

G – so when was it that you decided to stop sending your own buses to Moria?

A- when it became changed, after the deal, because its not. I mean also that's when msf doctors and translators stepped out of Moria to work, its not because they

wouldn't work in a detention centre, because they work in prisons all over the world, but its because it was totally unclear what the procedure was. How long would the ppl stay there? Whose going to be able to be admissible? That was unclear so we said we cannot work with that, we cannot tell the ppl we don't know and not care what happens for them. We stepped out there and we cut the buses to not help the police detain the ppl

G- now the CG comes?

A- now the CG, we have to inform if there's an arrival if they are not aware themselves, because mostly with the rescue boats they talk on the radio. They have to talk to the CG first who will inform FRONTEX, so its even before our, but sometimes we had arrivals they didn't know and then we called the CG saying we had ppl here and they picked them up 1-2 hours later, or 1 day later on the next shift, so it depends.

G- so when here, they come to the MSF tent, you give them food, clothing, water and also info?

A- yeah, the main thing we do now is we give them info on whats going to happen. That's why we get cultural mediators from mytilene, but they are not stationed here, as soon as we have arrivals we call them to come and to give, yeah, we have now some basic advice. We don't give really legal advice, but we say okay, if you're like the first reception b4 they talk to they also talk to the UNHCR of the N. response. We call him so they can come also to speak to the ppl, but mainly we are the first to say okay, if you have a family member in any state, you have to approach UNHCR so they can help you with that in Moria, we try to make them aware of something, you have the right to seek asylum. But we don't because its not our speciality, so we just give basic info. We say just please approach the UNHCR staff in Moria so that they can help you with the procedure. But we tell them they will be detained but we don't know for how long, I mean we tell them what we know and what we don't know. We try to not tell them they will get asylum to Greece. So the moment we, that they know where they are, we show them the map. I mean b4 it was much better because we had staff inside Moria so we can refer you to the doctors there and they can explain the journey to Athens. We now, its very reduced what we can say

G- so you think the processes have got a lot worse in.....?

A- we cannot help, we can give them a blanket but what the ppl want is to be clear how they can get off this island err.. if they can seek asylum ... if they will be sent back to Turkey and this is all stuff we don't know. We say the authorities will decide on that, even with family reunification. Unhcr was working on it, family reunification, but even Germany is saying no we will not. Maybe some in Europe will take, but from Syria if a husband in Germany wants his wife over they stopped all this procedure. So now I think when they are in Europe, they must normally under the Dublin agreement, they must take the wife or the husband in the first country they arrived. But still its something you have to proceed, to follow, to request the other country to take, it all takes a lot of time and they don't have a lot of spare so.

G – so the whole situation is pretty messed up

A- yeah, even b4 actually, now for us its difficult because we see the detention right here in the first reception centre, but even b4 the ppl go to Athens and idoemini and they were stopped. So what's better, they're stuck here, stuck there. I don't know

G- That's the problem, a lot of ppl don't know the right answer sometimes. In terms of UASCs, I know you said you don't deal with them but I do know sometimes you can tell when they come to the camp if they are unaccompanied or not?

A- yeah exactly, we should actually. We try to make some procedure with the UNHCR, they were based in skala b4, they're gone now and only one now. This N shore response guy is here. But b4 we actually talked like 10 times on the phone, okay we have this case, that case. We used to send these UASCs earlier to Moria

G- in a different bus?

A- if we had one, but normally we just said this bus plate number this, driver name this, telephone number this. We have 2 pregnant women names this, 10 UASCs. We made a little screening here, but sometimes there was a lot of buses so they came from skala they were from UNHCR so they were already. But lets say we are the shore where the first response is here, we normally didn't, I mean if it's a lot of ppl we couldn't actually ask, okay who is a UASC. But we should, I mean the procedure was we ask the ppl when they get here are there any UASCs, ppl with medical problems ... we managed to do it sometimes but sometimes we knew that they would not be taken care of in Moria and were a little bit like, okay, we can monitor it for UNHCR for there numbers but nothing would happen.

G- So why would, what did you think happened when they went to Moria?

A- I mean sometimes I think they were picked up and specially protected, and said okay, especially for the minors there was a different procedure and they were taken to another office, but I think sometimes when it was just full and there were many buses, they just put ppl inside Moria and would not do anything so... for UASCs, I mean for us it was also not always the very good idea to say we have UASCs because sometimes they were with uncles and other family members and if we separate then sometimes its actually not, in my opinion, not very helpful, but okay it's the law. We discussed it a lot with UNHCR, we said 'but they are with their friends, their families, if we separate them, we try to send them together and separate them never, but we know that in the official procedure they will be separated. But okay this is the law, we will not do anything about it, we normally say the times, not always, we say we have UASCs. If we do say we say this is them, this is their name, this is where they come from so please pick them up in-between the transit. On the days when we weren't sure what, if someone will receive them or whatever, we normally say 'okay they will find out in Moria.' The authorities will say are you a minor, how old are you and then ... so. ... lets say if it's a boat who capsizes and ppl have other things to do, we will not ask are you a UASC, where are your family members? They will be scared so the first thing we say is are you well? Get them dry clothes, so it depends a little bit. If its in the middle of the night you don't ask everyone's name, because we experienced sometimes the ... I know we had some days where we had a lot of UASCs, and they were just scared. Why would we ask them for their names and not all the others, so we said okay, the most important thing for us is to treat the ppl equally not regard their age, gender and so on. This is msf policy, because the actual protection for the minors will not take place here, so we don't do that.

G- you have to be careful about it

A- yeah, we tried to change a couple of times the procedure, a couple of times the unhr said we shouldn't take the names. Its problematic, so then we take the seat numbers in the bus to moria. Minors on seat 10-11 or something. But also im not dire if now we will have a meeting next week with UNHCR. We normally focus much

more on medical cases, disabled cases, family reunification, and now UASCs because then you should ask, is someone underage, with whom is he traveling, its already like a screening. I will discuss it with UNHCR to let them know if there is more we can do
G – so what is the best thing to do?

A – I think errr for them, if the procedure is clear now and I think they will still be separated and hosted in Moria, so im not very happy to. Because sometimes it was a problem when they travel with the uncle and stuff. There was some arguments.

G- so you had to try and separate them and sit....

A – no we never separate them, we say they travel together no, no no. also UNHCR see with whom they are traveling and try to et them together. So I think for here its good that unchr knows that we refer the cases, but we cannot actually help them or do the procedure here. We don't know how to do it, so we say okay we think there is a minor. We can ask if there is someone traveling alone. Because mostly they aren't travelling alone, but mostly they are with uncles or they are with friends but they are not alone. Then as a group I try to let, they stick together until the interview with the authorities, and then if they are to be separated its not my job.

G- otherwise you risk asking difficult qs...

A - yeah. And I have no answers for them. And also of course we, the most, the best thing is to I call UNHCR and you can make here some kind of pre-screen and monitor. They will come here to check

G- so, when you said you had phone calls discussing it with UNHCR, when did that start?

A – when I came here working the procedure was we call any UNHCR in skala, because the ppl came from there, so we have this and that medical case and we try to work together. And they told us please inform us when the bus is leaving so we know which time they go to Moria. So this is what we always did and will keep doing it, for the other things, a little bit later, they wanted exact numbers of nationalities. When they didn't have the boats in skala, in feb, when we had the arrivals here first, then they wanted the exact number of ppl, nationalities. So we can help ppl, its helpful because they can then separate ppl by nationalities and all this stuff. But I mean I have a good relationship with the UNHCR guy, we know each other, we try to help out because we know some cases might be helped so we try to give them the info and they can do ...

G- yesterday they had the meeting for the north right? Do you think it was a good meeting, was it good to have everyone in the area

A -im a little bit sceptical because mainly I didn't know exactly the meeting was for. I guess to know what actors are working where. This zone here is quite independent from the others, I don't know, because the other beaches, like errr.... Don't have separation, but we are naturally separated by rocks and by mountains, and errm I think it works well and sometimes its creating more chaos to send more vans from over there or doctors from there ... because if we have doctors and the system is working well here then I think it is good not to have other ppl involved. Sometimes other ngos wanted to help and got ;lost on the way. I mean its good to know there is a clinic in the IRC camp 24/7 we can call if we don't reach a doctor here. The msf ambulances are cancelled now, we have the doctor and the mobile clinic but it will take them 1 hour to come. But okay, for this it is good, also for the update on numbers, procedures, the protection officer yesterday came. I think it was good but also I have that every week and the meeting and the msf boss, our Michael, the field

course, also every day in Moria seeing where we could step in, what are problems. Monitoring the situation, seeing everyone that is there. Starting to send our doctors and psychologists into kara tepe, because of the 96% vulnerable cases there.

G – yeah I think psychologists is v important.

A – yeah, they say mental health is as important as normal health. Its part of the basic needs of everyone, especially in this situation of trauma, on this journey, it's a good idea. Ah, the protection officer, I don't know have you heard the meeting from yesterday. She also said 'yeah yeah, everyone inside Moria has the right to see a lawyer' No lawyer can get inside Moria. It was a little bit strange. I think I have nothing against UNHCR, I know great ppl who are trying to help who are lawyers, but I know that sometimes they are criticised by more monitoring than helping. Having to choose that or... but I will not... but I think they are doing the best they can, they are the ones there every day monitoring procedures. Okay, at the time when they should, or fight for the rights of the refugees, of course they should step back. Because if they fight to much and start a rebellion they will be kicked out of ...

G- Like yesterday

A – yeah. It was because they..

G – in the news a child got hit by a policeman, but I don't know if its true, it was in quotes in the website.

A – I only heard yesterday that everyone left because of the fires

G – not really sure what's happening now

A – yeah, my friend with UNHCR said the riot police went in, the ppl may sleep outside because they are afraid to go inside when there is fighting, and fires. I know some ppl wanted to go to Kara Tepe but its full now. If its clear, the protection officer of UNHCR said they want to start now registration for the ones interested in asylum. So you can process and they can move freely around the island. They say after 25 days they can move freely around but if you don't have paper you can get arrested. But they haven't started it yet, they wanted to start it one week ago, but the police haven't been giving out the paper.

G- ah, okay so they haven't allowed it to happen yet

A – no, I don't know what happened the officers weren't ready, the paper wasn't ready. The police had to issue this paper so nobody helped. And they should have some kind of paper. I think soon it will transition, and they can process this thing. For the minors I have no idea what the official procedure is, if they are taken to the apartments directly, or what is happening

G- I think first they go to Moria, as far as im aware, but then the, metadrasi and Praxis, can only take so many but I think I heard a statistic that something like 40% are uases. According to the UNHCR

A -yeah???? It's a lot

G- yeah, but there doesn't seem to be that many. So I cant understand the numbers.

A-maybe 14% or something

G- just a couple more q's. one q I had was, the last landing you had about 5 minutes in order to give info, food, water, clothes b4 the CG....

A -okay it was ermmm... they came and I ... they arrived at korakus they went to CF, I was already there. They were changed there, given some kind of food, here for the cultural mediators they came a little bit late, but they had like 20 minutes with them, 15 minutes maybe, so the main basic thing is okay but not to deal with individual q's. which is in a way not something that our cultural mediators can really do because they will say please go to Moria and ask authorities. We cannot deal with it, we can hear

them out but the answers no. So, it was okay, I exaggerated a little bit, we gave NFI kits to everyone. Non-food item kit- shampoo, towel, a bag for some things, a toothbrush.

G-Does it have any info in as well?

A - no we don't hand out fliers, we have a card with basic numbers here, because actually the info is for the lawyers. We normally say ask UNHCR. Just some general stuff. (shows me card) And we also, this is new, we have posters to hang up in CF that MSF is providing so, and general info, also some fliers, because okay you can look at the website, but would you understand the hotline for asylum in Greek. And many languages. Its not super efficient, I mean every individual should be dealt by a person with UNHCR and referred to a lawyer, but some haven't had that. But at that time you are right, the guy from UNHCR was knew, I forgot to call him , he should have been here to make maybe first screening. That wasn't very well, I didn't inform what time the bus left, I saw him later and said Im sorry I forgot to tell you because we had a pregnant lady, family re-unification. We didn't have minors, but other issues like, but then anyhow the CG bus, we had very few arrivals and we said they go directly to authorities. Hopefully the pregnant will be put in Kara Tepe, anyway so its not a big deal but of course it helps to, If we see the ppl first we can spot something. But one Christian family, they asked but 'im Christian, I cannot be sent back to turkey,' they had no idea they would be detained. We told them that but we couldn't say you are from Syria and Christian you will get asylum, we have to tell them we don't now you have to talk to authorities. Same with UASCs I guess. Even if we know something, we are not lawyers so we have to keep it very basic.

G – do you think it would help, do you think there is another way to approach that and look at finding info from other orgs. Like UNHCR, or ppl in Moria gave you info to give them, or does it not matter because they are going into Moria anyway.

A – We had, I mean we have now some, I will show you on the desk some info of the basic info to give out. It says about where they are, main numbers, ... we could give that out but actually the first we cannot say anything, we just reassure and don't want to confuse them and maybe we can say how to not get sent back to Turkey. But we are discussing it because now information, some info should be given b4 they are detained. Mainly we want to do it face to face and answer q's but now if the comes so quickly its of course good to give some fliers.

G – so this is something you will do?

A – I mean very two weeks this is changing, we had posters, we have fliers and we have because, if we think it helps, but now is so confusing, and the papers they should have got at Moria, they should but actually they do not. Its more confusing them if we have accurate procedures, yeah, but if we write you must or you will. Also they told me they get a paper now with the name written in "please show up, or be present every morning to see if your interview will start. Some officers give it to every person even to babies and some officers just give it to the adults. Ppl are super confused, why do my children have no paper, and the same will happen if we put out some info. Of course they have the right to seek asylum, you can tell them 100 times but the important thing is to have them inside Moria helping.

G- it sounds incredibly confusing

A - Yeah. I know also Kester was working on, he knows all the procedures and the rights. It's a little bit something in-between we want to do. Some info, some numbers. Contacts, where they could go. So this is what I meant by it changes every week. So

lets say we give the the address of the minors officer in athens we will do it, but as of now the procedure is totally unclear.

G- what is your opinion on the future of this situation? How will it develop, improve get worse?

A -..... Mmmm..... yeah..... it's a lot of errrrrr.... For me I think is if the procedure is clear for everyone. Of course its bad ppl will be sent back to Turkey but its much worse if they don't even know what will happen. I hope that this, will the border open in Macedonia? Will they be sent back? All these rumours. In turkey they are sending ppl back to Afghanistan? If it was clear, you will be protected until...? You will be sent here on...? I hope that it will be clearer, at least from the authorities here on Moria. They can say here is your paper, because b4 it was clear, you get your paper, then buy your ticket to Athens.

G- this was when msf started the camp?

A – yeah exactly, at least it was clear. We could say this is where you buy your ticket, or ask for help, this is where you can go if you don't have money for your ticket. But even then it was changing a lot, like the NGO that provides money for the ticket was gone. So now I hope it will get a little bit more clear, so we can say first you go here, first reception then you get your paper, with that you can I think it will get clearer but of course for the ppl not getting the right to go to Germany or to wherever, because so many times they have made these deals for so many refugees to countries but they only pick up a few. Its just mostly for image, for saying yeah, we dealt with it. Of course the EU-Turkey deal something happened actually, starting the deportation and stuff. But even b4 in Germany ppl were going to be deported, Germany were trying to make them contract with Afghanistan to send ppl back. Even Norway or Sweden had deported ppl to Afghanistan, so the focus in here is just one focus in a bigger puzzle. Deportation has taken place for many years now. So all this things I don't believe its ... its all political ... of course they say now if someone in Turkey appears in the ECtHR fearing for their life in Turkey, then in some day, in some years they will stop it, but if tis political and they want it they will get it. So yeah.....

G- So do you have any final remarks, or anything you would like to say?

A- maybe its not bad UASCs have a different procedure to protect them, but its also putting ppl out of ... like the aboriginal children you know what they did, I would like to know better what's getting out of these minors. I know two of them living and working on the olive fields in Kleio, so I would like to know how they see the situation. Is it good they start a new life very young. Its not fun, also being detained. If they have an uncle in Germany or somewhere, maybe they will be better off going there.

G – and err, so from the north where they are landing, also landing round in the south, they would bring everyone to Moria at that time?

J – yeah, they would bring everyone to Moria or Kara Tepe. Kara tepe they closed it for registration for the Syrian and Iraqis. They sent them to Moria and kicked all the other ones out.

G – when was that?

J – errr.. that was, yeah, October, end of October, beginning of November and so all the afghans and Iranians they have been kicked out and ended up next to the official camp, were waiting much longer for their registration

....

Sorry ...

G – that's alright ... don't worry

J –so ... she wants to leave so...

G – yeah so, they kicked everyone out of kara tepe. The afghans

J – no no no, the ppl they stopped registering the Syrians and Iraqis at kara tepe and they moved them to Moria to register. In the beginning they registered syrainas, afghanis, Iranians, Iraqis, all together but then they start to make errr.. attention.. so then Pakistani not, then irani not, then afghani not. So they were making there way back to only Syria and Iraqis and errrrr..... in the meantime this place filled up like crazy. I just saw some photos on the google drive of how it was and how it became. Its crazy.

G – so how many ppl were there?

J – around 2 or 30000. Errr we have an estimation by numbers that around 250,000 to 300,000 ppl passed our camp

G – wow, 250-300,000

J – yeah, we are not exactly sure but like close to 300,000 I think passing through this place in 5 and a half miles.

G – so once they landed they were just dropped of

J – they were dropped off in the UN and MSF buses. They would get there, at least they got their registration ticket, and then they had to wait, and then they ended up at the olive grove next to Moria, sitting without toilets, without water, without food, without anything

G – and this was everyone including all the vulnerable cases as well?

J – there were grandpas and grandmas and sick ppl, disabled ppl, blind ppl, deaf ppl, ppl ... its crazy

G – so everyone. So that's when your charity kind of started helping those....

J – we came together as a whole group of ppl at the right moment, the right time and just got along with each other very well, and err..... and it just happened. But it was a lot of fighting and errrr crying and whatever to get it really up. It was errr, the Greek rules, or the greek government are also not very co-operative and err.

G- so its tough with the gvmt and the police to keep it going for as long as you did?

J – yeah, basically everything we did, everybody hated it. It was like managing ppl to get safely on the bus instead of being ripped off with taxis so we made enemies with taxi drivers. Then we started to co-operate more inside. We basically provided the whole inside of Moria of everything. But in the end there is no acknowledgment for that because look what happened yesterday. It's a lack of what we did next to it. We did something awesome. Really something awesome and that's gone now. Okay there are many other organisations now trying to do something, but if they are not being let

in what do you do? And as long as that system keep sin its place we are going to see more of these riots.

G- and its since the deal with Turkey, that it kind of started being less popular I guess?

J – I really don't know, because now the doors are open for ppl for the asylum application, so these ppl they go out. Maybe it gives hope to the other ppl, I hope, they only hear what they want to hear but the doors are open again. They let ppl out again.

G – I heard they haven't let anyone out yet as far as I know ---

J – yeah, yeah they do. Every day. Even yesterday

G – really. So ppl can leave now, they have got the forms

J – yeah you find the ppl are walking around, if they couldn't leave they also end up in Kara Tepe. And im not talking about the, everybody, only the ppl that their application paper, that they applied for, but I see the doors many times opened. Its very hard to see. No I want to show you the pictures from b4. This was b4 and this was a between day, and this is what it turned into. So that's a lot of work just paying off

G- and I saw the massive sign, you know above your entrance, 'better days for Moria

J – yeah it was from German guys made that, and we tried to find another one. Yeah we basically decided to leave that one as a backstab towards the gymnt they could have

G – so that's why its still up

J – and its very heavy to take away. This is the kids tent before and after.

G – wow, its amazing, its incredibly well designed.

J – this point we came in the camp and they gave us, the two ladies who started it, they moved to Sweden and England, and we continued for them and in the end they pulled out because, here we come to the subject exploitation. I don't want to blame them, but they did things, motives, point of views about working with kids and that was to keep their funding. And we absolutely refused so we tried to co-operate and explain and what it was turning into.

G – so by that do you mean they were taking photos of it and advertising it?

J – on facebook and look what the kids do. And funny funny. And the only things like later we found out, we found out, naturally that something was not right with the thing what happened around that. And in that period of time better days for Moria was getting stronger and stronger. Errr. But also because we errrrr... We Advocated for errrr trespassers to have ppl with photo cameras who had to identify themselves where they come from, and what purpose they use it and blah blah blah. And that grew also in the organisation and, so that was also our part. Because we made a lot of enemies a lot many ppl were not happy with us. So these two ladies pulled out and from that point it was a complete rollercoaster. You have to think about hundreds of journalists a day, no you didn't see that, hundreds of journalists day

G – coming for interviews and ...?

J – thousands of volunteers passing in a couple of, every week there were knew volunteers, so every time we had to tell the same story over and over over over over over over again. So we made some signs, also writing no photos, no videos, no pulling the kids out of the tent with toys and candy for your freaking photos so you can do whatever your going to doing with it. We had ppl pulling kids from the car, on the road. We had a lot of things going on, so that's where we realised the exploitation. We also in the beginning made photos like unaware, not trying to errrrr... Yeah, not

like like, we just But not like all the time with permission, so we always asked for permission and if you do that you realise that also many pl they wont, they don't like to be photographed, and its also very dangerous to photograph and put them on social media. We found out that errr, that errr, we found out that geo-tagging in your photos needs to be switched off, I mean think about it, you know. Nobody realised this stuff and if you try to explain this to ppl in a proper way they start to get aggressive, because they don't get what they want and so yeah, we really found out the hard way what child protection is, but I think we did an awesome job by feeling it maybe as a father and mother natural, I don't know. So we switched our policy, put a fence behind a fence saying this is a kids place. Anyone who comes here leaves there phone in the bucket, so they can be with the kids.

G – so you secured the area

J – we had to. We had to. We had ppl coming in sticking cameras through just little holes in the tent just to film inside. Errrrr.

G – make you realise how bad ppl can be.

J – and there are a lot of them x2. With all the the respect, some people are just so respect-less that I just think 'what the fuck are you doing?' and for what reason are you volunteering because its slowly turning into a Disneyland. The amount of toys we had been given were ... you wont believe it. Im not even talking about the second hand toys, but also about the new, and everything you buy here on the island like toys is so expensive.

G – because they know ppl want to buy them for kids?

J – they were already expensive. We got like boxes full of little cuddly toys of 5 euros each. We saw the most craziest things going on with kids getting cuddly toys like this big. Push wagons for barbies, whatever. Its crazy and at one point we started to get, to reject everything. Just keep it simple, if you come bring food, if you come bring something of benefit. At one point, I don't know how many, we also took some stuff that was useful for them. Like a ball or whatever, we gave away thousands of balls. You cant imagine. Footballs costing 12-30 euros each, times the amount we gave them away, everything we gave away within a half day was gone. It just disappears and most of the time we found it in the trash. The amount of money being wasted on kids stuff. Its way beyond bizarre.

G – so did it improve once you started telling ppl we don't want photos, we don't want all of these gifts.

J – no, it slowed down but it didn't stop because many ppl started to find a sneaky way to do it. Like from up above, or way beyond, or far away from the tent with their telelenses or whatever. We were like for a tent, a study subject for Save the Children. We for the last 3.5months been monitored by Save he Children, UNHCR, msf, IRC, you name them. They were in front of the tent putting in ppl under fake pretences to ask us what we're doing, why we're doing it, for what we're doing it and blah blah blah.

G- So they were very suspicious?

J – of what we were doing, yeah. The only thing is like when they really found out what we were doing it scared the shit out of them

G – because you were doing a much better job than they were

J – yeah, it sounds like im lying but its really realistic you can ask her (his wife). We didn't like to, we did an amazing job, but with that also came a lot of decoding of what the big organisations are really doing and

G – so what do you think the problems with these big organisations are?

J – they're too big. They're too slow. They're too official and in that way if you have to like errr. What we did we did out of ourselves, so we were free to move. If I decided to ask for something it would be there, maybe the quickest, the same moment as I say it then 30 minutes later they came to bring it. With these organisations, someone makes a decision, it has to go through these hands and these hands, then some ppl are too lazy to respond. We have been given literally the group Praxis, who worked with save the children, we have been giving them huge amounts of sketch books, markers, I have to photos, I make photos of everything to prove it. You can see them walking away with 4 huge bags full of brand new stuff. Because why, STC have been asking them for sketchbooks and markers and it took them months and months. And I said don't you have so many volunteers as we have here coming in all day, and they said 'no.' Slowly it was closing down. They said STC didn't allow any giving of anything whatsoever. They weren't allowed to take toys, they weren't allowed to take whatever so err.....

G – so I guess on the one hand is this slow organisation that don't get too much done too quickly

J – I don't say that they don't get too much done. As for the crisis they are just way too slow. Look how it happened, they responded a whole 9 months later. 9 months later they started to come and then they started all to claim that it was their property. That's sick. That's like waiting 9 months let the ppl just suffer, and then trying to come in and claim everything.

G- and also ignoring the work you you have done in away and brushing it under the cover

J – they didn't like what we are doing because we are very open minded ppl and we speak also very open minded about it and I think its also, it needs to be done like this or you cant get anything done

G – if you expect it to happen again, what do you think the best thing to do if this crisis starts again. You said your NGO has a lot of problems with voluntourism in a way. How can you improve on that?

J – that's a difficult one, because if you really want to eliminate that you're only cynical option would be a closed camp, or at least a safe space where you have to have pl entering with permission. The ony thing is what are you creating, I think like how we did it with 'better days for moria' was a pain in the ass, but it worked in one way because it was open, and it was protected, but it was also errrrr yeah, free, but in such a way that only free for what was really necessary and all the other things we kick out. I think for the next crisis it needs to be, there needs to be more ppl. Sorry for saying it, but not giving a fuck and just go. Quit your things, open up everything and make sure how you want to do, that you do it in that way, but with respect for, as much as you can, because some ppl are so as I said b4 disrespectful, that you also have to act in that way back. I don't know how STC and all these organisations deal with this, I know they have a screening process which makes it much easier. We started to do that half a month ago

G – so you were screening for vulnerable ppl?

J – no no no, basically the authorities wanted volunteers to be registered, so that where we also followed this fine line. Everyone in our group got registered through the group and everybody who wants to come in new has to id themselves.

G - - I guess you really don't know who you're getting sometimes

J – you don t believe what happened. Really, It will blow you mind. Its absolutely no lie, but we had a lot of different agendas passing through this place. We had a lot of

secret agents walking over there all the time. Trying to see who is who. Who is doing what. Being screened, telephones being tapped. You won't believe what happened there.

G – so they spy on ppl just trying to do something to help ppl?

J- listen, there is a lot at stake for what we saw. So there are many interests. If you look at it from turkey and the ppl smugglers. If you know what they did to this person, okay it's messed up. I have seen the most expensive cars in the last year driving around so that means there is money going on and there is a lot of money coming in. So in the end, in the end it is just one big money making machine over the backs of children, over the backs of vulnerable women, scared ppl, sick ppl.

G – so when you had, sorry just a few more questions

J – no im fine, im absolutely fine, I must be checking my surroundings all the time because I ... I can explain later why but ... crazy stuff. Still now it's terrible.

G – so when you have kids in the school area, were you aware they were unaccompanied or did you ever have or come across issues like that

J – we face things like parents dropping, these parents presumably, dropping their kids off and just being gone all day and leaving the kids with us. And in the end of the day or the evening they came to pick them up. I assume unaccompanied were being trafficked, I really really didn't think about it, because we were basically doing a happy thing in a chaotic thing. Not realising this was happening. It could have easily been that we, yeah, had a lot of UASCs. I cannot tell you that for sure

G – I think yesterday for the first time the UNHCR gave a meeting up north to protect UASCs, so a year after it happened, and now nothing is happening now they are saying how to do it.

J – I, as I said b4, we have been a studying for STC. They came by, they offered us the whole world, trainings, and info and blah blah blah and whatever they promised to us. They literally promised us the world, but when it comes to the reality we won't see anything. Nothing. Nothing. Ppl would pass by, ppl would have meetings with us, ppl would send us protection staff, ppl would send us training dates and whatever, and in the end I found out through others that they were training going on somewhere here in Mytilene. So I said listen, if I have to wait 2.5 months for something I didn't even ask for, just what has been offered, yeah, forget it. I'm not even going there now because we were going on the right track with everything that we did naturally and we could basically tell them stuff.

G – were they willing to listen?

J – yeah, they came by, they said we hate to admit it but you have been doing better than us from the beginning and I said yeah, okay. We can do something about that. Hire me if you hire me, or my wife, we can make a change, but you have to realise that a lot of your stuff is going to stop. The expensive rental cars, rooms, they are nice, all this stuff and then it started to change because then they saw that you were not with them, and really were doing what we needed to do.

G – just to help ppl suffering?

J – because STC basically rented Praxis to look after the kids. So I cannot judge that, but it's crazy if you think about it. But in the meantime coming around and offering the world to ppl, that's like, I don't think that works very well because it creates a lot of distrust. At least from my perspective.

G – there seems to be this huge divide between the big NGOs and the small organisations.

J – do you know how much money they pumped into this island by setting up their structures. No idea, a lot. Millions. If it's not more. These camps, they they they, the

transition camps all being built for what now? Now its stopped? I don't think so. But its like huge amounts of money and for the UNHCR for STC, IRC.

G- yeah it just seems like they throw it away in some respects

J – I don't think they throw it away, that's for the future to show. The only things is like here we come again to the point, they use a lot of sad pictures of minors for their reasons. I think that's totally wrong because they are, they pretend that they give their info. Like if you read the papers of the un junior staff about how to approach positive and negative imagery. They do it all the time. I was reading this stuff because it was given to me by somebody. I don't know who anymore. I was reading this stuff and its like written in a way that you ... yeah, you can go left or right. It stays the same, so that's where we decided okay, absolutely not. If you, the only photos we would like to make is if ppl bring something that we make a photo of them bringing it for them to eerrrrr.... To show to ppl. Just leave them alone.

G – ppl treat it like a zoo

J – yeah, we had a lot of lying and errrr and photos of myself showing up somewhere on websites claiming they were the owners of those photos and im like, why the hell are you volunteering. What's the point. And

G – Did you notice many psychological issues with the kids? I was wondering how you addressed it

J- you wont recognise it straight away. Sometimes you have the feeling something is not right. Earlier on when they were coming and going within a couple of days we. It was so hard to do something with it or really analyse it, but there are a lot of kids travelling who don't have any clue what is happening to the,. First of all they are bombed or whatever is happening to them and second they are just travelling and like making bizarre trips.

G – and now they are locked up in Moria. Some of them.

J – some of them are yeah, some of them if they are Syrian or Iraqi they will end up in kara tepe and basically continue their journey. Yeah I think these kids are being traumatised for life and I think that will also show later in life. Not now. When they go to Germany or wherever they end up like in the mainland there are many camps existing now. These ppl are, already predicted, they will be there a couple of years. So when a child sees this happening and has to face all this racism or whatever is happening, exploitation whatever. And later in their, in their later years when they get beyond puberty it will show. Errr I hope not but I think if you look in the future you can see this coming and then you get the the the common comments in Europe. Look at that there you have another Moroccan or Syrian idiot you know. And im like what the hell are you talking about you don't know shit what happened to them. Nothing. It's a very difficult subject. Very difficult. ... yeah I strongly believe in what somebody said 'problem, reaction, solution.' I strongly believe in it so we create a problem, wait for a reaction then 'we' offer the solution. I think it was always like this and I think we have been warned about it many times, but still I think everybody rather likes to be dumbed down.

G – one last q

J – don't worry, we don't have much to do.

G – so I was wondering if ... when it happens again, whether its in Greece or wherever, do you think it would be helpful to have advice on UASCs from a group with info ready. Would that have changed how you started?

J – how we started was just a reaction. I think for the future, and we could do mostly something like this again, with all due respect that I would leave it to professionals.

Errrrrr... im willing to co-operate with these professionals but im, I learned that its you can do a lot with enthusiasm and happiness and straightforwardness but errrrrrrrrrm Its very, I realised it's a very delicate subject to work with. Errrrrrrrrrm so yeah, we are thinking about it a lot like, what are we going to do are we going to do this with better days somewhere else, or do we stay here. We chose to stay here, but I realised that most of the work really needs to be done by professionals, and as far as I don't have a stamp on a paper of at least, through better days for Moria I was the child protection officer. That's the only proof I have. Registered with lawyers and blah blah blah, but still it needs a professional approach in working with traumatised kids. It's a very difficult topic.

G- Yeah I guess the language barrier as well makes it even more complex.

J – in one way we never had a problem with that because kids are very errr, curious, they want to learn English so, or German or, we had a Portuguese volunteer within a couple of hours these kids were peaking words in Portuguese and we also had many translators so it was not really a problem. Sometimes yes but that was more to do with mama and papa. But the kids, you just show them what you want, they pick it up straight away, but most of the times what we did, we just let them, we found out. We gave them possibility to draw, or to paint, or to do play dough or whatever. We started like later, very soon realising that its not about us, like what we want them to do, its about them, so that's why it became their place. The only thing was we were like the papa, and mama, cleaning it, saying no, but we really only offered space for them to do what they want and protecting their intellectual property ... errr all this stuff its very hard to do, its very hard.

G – sounds like you did an amazing job

J – yes we did. It's a shame, it sounds ironic, it's a shame that it stopped but I think, I think when things are finished you have to look for something else what comes. We also thought about like changing BDFM to wherever they go, the only thing is like what are you doing then. are you chasing the same ppl again. With all the respect, not that I don't want to help them. All these ppl who pass through to Europe basically pass through our place. So the possibility of seeing the same faces again is quite big. Errrr, but then you know that most of these camps are not paradise, what we had was not paradise but it was close to. And so so then meeting these ppl and kids in this, in different atmospheres errr... yeah maybe not good circumstances after they left our place, its really hard to think about

G – yeah I think, well I don't know how many have gone missing from Lesvos, 10,000 kids have gone ?

J – they estimate, its way higher, we know only from this island hundreds of kids just vanished. Just vanished. Soooo, its its, they, the last ... the last two or three weeks was when the camp was operational we were notified by a doctor who saw something strange in a hotel. And errrrr he reported that to the police and that was a possible child trafficking case. Errrrr.... The kid was just standing in the morning from being pulled out of a hotel, escorted by somebody into a car, without any word, without waiting, without saying goodbye. One looked Greek and the other did not ... errrr and the other two were small and just went in the car they closed the door and they went off. And they tried to find out was it school kids, because at 8 schools basically start, then fathers also bring kids to school, but the next day it didn't happen so I notified the police and we had part of the number plate but I never found out what happened. It happens, it happens. In one way its good to have the closed camp because we know so many kids disappeared from the sure, from the coastlines towards the camp. Many

many kids just disappeared and vanished from the, and idf I think of that as a father
its shocking. But it's the sad reality.

Interview with Marios Andriotis- Senior Advisor to the Mayor, Lesvos, 26/4/2016

G=George MA=Marios

G- So to start is it alright to describe your role?

MA- yes, im the senior advisor of the major of Lesvos this is my role. Mainly I take myself into a coordination of ngos, communication, errmmm. Int. relations. Im responsible for the press office municipality and I believe that's about it.

G- and also you advise on the protection of UASCs

MA- there is nothing in the municipality for UASCs, we just try to facilitate because responsible for the care of uasc is the ministry for migration, centre minister of migration, and the centre of gvmt. We have no legal implications in the In uasc. But we have already filed a proposal for the EU funding in order to create a guest house for uasc in Mytilene. So you can understand that we are here to facilitate and to provide solutions, but we are not legally gazed in anything that has to do with uasc. I mean procedural wise.

G – when did you request funding for the...

MA- it was about two months ago

G – and you're waiting to hear back because the EU is very slow?

MA- no it doesn't have to do with red tape, but there is a certain date we wait for the answer for our admission. A deadline.

G and why did you request it? Why was it done through this office instead?

MA- first of all we believe its important to have errrrr such an infrastructure in Lesvos because 40% from what we know from the data given to us from UNHCR. Over 40% are children arriving here, uasc, and we already have 4 different accommodation centres so we would like to concentrate on having a facility for uasc. So mainly this was out target.

G – so I currently work up in the north. I volunteer on the beaches and im looking at how uasc can be protected as soon as they are arriving and being taken to the camps, and I was wondering from what you have seen while being here, how you have seen that working and how effective you think the ngos and the gvmt are in recognising it?

MA- you see in the beginning when we had 275 boats arriving (every day), to be honest with you it was very difficult. The volunteers everywhere receiving boats, wake up parties here and there, ppl grabbing children and separating them from their families. There wasn't any concrete procedure even though legally there is, it wasn't followed, so right now things are a lot better, because all refugees are picked up at sea and then transported to Lesvos either to the harbour of mytilene or molyvos, so when they arrive they arrive in an organised fashion, they get medical treatment and then we separate them according if they are UASCs, so errrr.... Given the circumstances and the situation right now, the procedure is effective. Its according to errrrr.... Human rights, especially for UASCs things are very errrr.... UNHCR and NGOs are very careful what they are doing and follow their procedures and they I think the ministry is supervising everything that has to do with UASCs pretty well.

G – so it started last year, a lot more boats started arriving last year,

MA – exactly, it was the crisis, it was the first month of the crisis we were unprepared. Lots of volunteers arriving here, we didn't have any registration process

for volunteer groups and NGOs. It was difficult. Yes, but errrrmm after 6 months. 5-6 months with the help of UNHCR and the central gvmt we managed to errrrr organise things properly. So you have to address things, prioritise first, immediate accommodation centres and then we needed transportation, then we had to see separately about UASCs and children.

G- and do you think in 6 months it was quite successful the way you reacted to everything???

MA- yes, you can see it outside the window. The situation in Lesvos, in Mytilene, especially now Mytilene, has nothing to do with September 2015, or the summer of 2015, when we have a maximum accommodation capacity of 7000 refugees. And we have our municipal accommodation centre with children friendly space, women friendly space. The living conditions there are excellent so errrr.... Given the circumstances the err.... The complexity of this issue, of this refugee crisis, I believe that we responded. It's a small miracle to be honest with you.

G – and what would you say, obviously its amazing how well the island reacted, I think is it up for a Nobel peace prize potentially?

MA- this is something that we do not like to think. It's a Nobel prize, someone gives that to you, you do not volunteer, help or support ppl to get a nobel peace prize.

G – of course. (he is given lunch). So just a few more q's

MA – its something you don't think. You don't help refugees for it. It's the highest order of course, to be respectful for the Nobel prize, and it isn't something you have in mind.

G – yeah and if you do then you shouldn't be getting it in the first place

MA – Exactly

G- so if it started again how could you improve? What areas would you improve?

MA- possibly our effort to internationalise the errr.... problem. Err..... and errr... try to sensitize the international community and their path. We weren't prepared, and we weren't trained for such a large-scale humanitarian crisis. So we did things that errr.r.... we are not trained in administering humanitarian crisis. And we would know exactly what are the steps for the crisis. So we did things mainly from the heart and common sense. We saw ppl living outside and we said we had to create an accommodation asap. We needed to expand the capacity of the accommodation so, and then we needed to errmmm establish an effective transportation system

G – like piece by piece?

MA – yes. Piece by piece. With the help of the UNHCR errrrmm we had a UNHCR plan to create small regional accommodation centres to facilitate the operations of the official report. So the plan was there but for a small municipality its very difficult ot do

G- how do you think the ngos, the foreigners, the locals, the police and gvmt work together?

MA- given the circumstances again and for so many stakeholders the collaboration and cooperation was excellent given the circumstances of the event. Because if you have local authorities, NGOs, volunteer groups and Everybody coming in. it was a sensitive situation and everyone has different agendas and its very difficult to cooperate. But I think that we balanced pretty well-being in close co-operation with every NGO. Most of them were willing to cooperate and be part of this UNHCR plan

we had and errr from our experience if you errr our responsive ... for the volunteers for international ngos would have been very different if we were totally abandoned so we are thankful for the presence of the international community. But there were certain cases with ngos and volunteers arriving with a different agenda and a different mid set and thinking probably that they are Down in Africa something like that and errr Those are countries that do not have a firmly established rule of law. Its something different when ppl are arriving in an EU country errr.... In crisis.. errr and a country that is not central Africa or something. You do not have to bribe anybody to do your job, you just have to follow legal procedures and respect the local community, the host community, and they keep the equilibrium because its very important for the locals to see that everything is organised properly and the authorities are respected by the volunteers and everything is going according to plan. Except from Errrrmm ..., just very few cases, in general the cooperation was excellent G- Good, then just two more qs if that's okay. For the future, how do you see Lesvos changing now with the situation that's going on now, its turning into more helping those on the island as opposed to helping those coming?

MA- we are considering to readjust our strategy because in the beginning we had to facilitate their journey. It was more like a transit point, than a permanent, or relocation centre. Now we have to see if we can errrrmm... establish new facilities inside the accommodation centres to facilitate a long stay, probably two or three months until they get relocated. Errrrmmmm..... and errr this is something not difficult given what we have been through. We can handle it, but we are really concerned about the p-Turkey agreement, we don't know exactly how it is going to be. If it is visible at all if Turkey is going to deliver its promise so we are going to have to wait a few days from Turkey and see. The practical implementation of the treaty and errrrmmmm..... G- because I guess if something goes wrong in Turkey or anything then once again

.....
MA- exactly, exactly. We are, this is something we are doing over remit. We are just a local municipality and errrr. We have to take care of the local community. So we need to think forward errrr and be able to adjust to every situation.

G – okay, and then just the last q now. Have you been happy with the EU's response in terms of the crisis?

MA_ you see, yes, in the beginning, we know it takes a long time for the EU to react and respond because errrr.... The union is based on errrr..... on consensus, procedures and errrr..... it is given that it is a very , an inherently complex situation given the refugee crisis, it takes some time and we knew that from the beginning and this is why we wanted to step in and do our part in order to buy some time for the EU to decide. And come up with a plan to help us, but errrrr the response was really slow. And we think that despite the fact that we have been saying that the key for the better management of this crisis lies in Turkey, And this agreement is of course is in accordance with what we are saying, it is wrong to force refugees who make an illegal and dangerous crossing of the Aegean and then be sent back. This is a small and important detail and the difference between our approach and the EU approach. But we hope that in the end common sense will prevail the, every EU member state will pitch in and serve the burden of the administration of this crisis.

Annex D- Kit List

For yourself:

Paperwork and health:

- certificate of good health (sometimes required by NGOs)
- record of vaccinations
- first-aid/personal care kit:

- preferred nonprescription painkiller
- hand cream
- sunscreen
- cold/flu treatment
- baby wipes
- nail clippers/file
- tweezers
- dry shampoo (if you have long hair)

Electronics:

- unlocked GSM phone (confirm unlocking with your home provider), in some kind of waterproof case, even if it's just a plastic bag
- phone charger, car charger and backup battery
- electric kettle (if you'll be staying a while; bring the tea or good instant coffee you like too)

Work kit (most of this is available on the island):

- waist bag or small backpack
- work gloves and rubber gloves
- headlamp (more useful than flashlight/torch--get one with red lights too, so you don't blind the people you're working with; also, one built into a hat is a good option)
- pocket knife or multi-tool
- tape / cable ties (zip ties) / rope
- hi-vis vest (those yellow/reflective vests you see everyone in)
- binoculars, if you will be working with receiving boats
- Permanent marker pens and a small notebook
- thermos or mug
- business cards or printed contact details
- energy bars (if you particularly like one kind)

Clothing and comfort:

- warm clothing, in many layers (it's hot in the sun during the day, but quite cold at night)
- a good rain coat (also good against wind)
- sturdy hiking boots or shoes, preferably waterproof
- wool socks and long underwear
- wellies or other tall rubber boots if working on the beach
- slippers (hotel room floors are cold)
- hot water bottle
- eye shade and earplugs, in case you work nights

Hmm...that's a lot of stuff! Some volunteers swear by vacuum-seal bags, to make more room in your suitcase.

For refugees:

Check for any special needs on the [LesVol.Info Goods page](#). This may include weather-specific items, or urgent medical supplies.

For many items, it's better to buy on the island, to support the local economy. A few items are hard to source, however.

MEDICAL		GENERAL	
BRING	BUY ON LESVOS	BRING	BUY ON LESVOS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehydration salts (electrolytes) • Any specific/technical gear (surgery tools, blood-pressure cuffs, etc) • Emergency blankets • Wheelchairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paracetamol • Aspirin • Band-aids (plasters) • Heating creams • Antiseptic solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wool socks • Wool long underwear • Sleeping bags (in any kind of quantity) • Sleeping pads • Tents (in quantity) • Good quality shoes (in quantity) • Baby carriers/slings • Wool blankets • Rain ponchos (in quantity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoes • Cotton socks (call Giannis, +30 697304566; he can bulk order) • Waterproof gear • Underwear • Backpacks • All food and utensils (good standard items, for in your car: cereal bars, Nutella, bananas, juice packs) • Cooking supplies (pots, pans etc) • Diapers (sizes 1-3)

For shops on Lesvos, see the [volunteer map](#); scroll down to see the 'Shopping' section (yellow pins); or see the same data on [LesVol.info Places page](#).

Also check in the [Lesvos - shopping locally](#) FB group and the [Aegean Shopping Directory](#).

If you bring shoes, tie them by the laces, label them clearly with the size, and add a pair of socks, if you can.

It's also worth noting what is **NOT needed** (as warehouses are stocked for the winter): clothes for babies and children under the age of 6, diapers, hygiene pads, baby milk, baby wipes, teddy bears and women's summer clothes.

If you're bringing a huge quantity of something, such as in a pallet or container, see the [FAQs](#). For smaller loads, some airlines allow you to bring extra luggage free of charge for the cause, so ask before. (More details in the [FAQs](#).)

Annex E- Boat Landing Procedure

1. **Coordinate:**

a. Choose a safe spot to land (no big rocks, proper depth) and signal the boat to that spot. Be aware of people signalling on other spots as well to the same boat.

b. Assemble the volunteers. Divide people in groups:

i. wetsuits

ii. medics

iii. people on shore (with blankets/clothing/water/etc)

2. **Stay calm.** When you will be calm, the refugees will be calm as well. Do not run, shout, or scream unless there is a severe emergency. Remember, we are here to assist the refugees, not get in their way.

3. **Make a corridor** with all the people in the water, so it is clear for the people on the boat where they should land. Clear people out of the middle.

4. When the boat is really close to the shore, ask if the refugees **stop the engine:**

a. Arabic: *halas al maharrak*

b. Farsi: *motor ro chamoesh konid*

5. One person in the water should **turn off the engine:** pull off the red cord or push the button. Turn the handle so you can lift the engine up, so it does not hit the rocks when the boat is pulled ashore. This is very important but can be dangerous.

6. The boat has to **land with the front on shore.** The boat has to be pulled ashore as far as possible. This helps the people to get ashore dry. (Be careful! The handle at the front of the boat is often weak and breaks therefore use the rope for pulling.)

7. **Do not puncture the boat!** When you do this, it makes a loud noise that scares the people on the boat (remember that they come from war zones!). Moreover, people lean on the inflated front of the boat and start tumbling over each other. People in the back get scared by the sound and may jump off from the side.

8. Getting people off the boat: people should only come off the boat **one by one in the front of the boat.** Volunteers in the water keep the people calm in the boat, for example by saying:

a. Arabic: *schwei*

b. Farsi: *aram*

Stop the people from getting out on the sides of the boat for reasons of stability of the boat and to avoid them getting unnecessary wet. Make sure that all the bags in the front of the boat are taken out off the boat so people don't fall over these.9. **It is not necessary to take the children off first. We only do this when the sea is rough or when the people on the boat are panicking. In this case, we take them to avoid them being crushed in the middle of the boat. Parents may try to pass the children, if it is not an emergency, tell them to keep the children and offer to help take their bags to get them out of the way. **DO NOT TAKE CHILDREN FROM THE SIDE OF THE BOAT!** We have seen volunteers falling over the rocks in the water while carrying children. This is something we want to avoid at all times. **Don't walk away from the boat with children!** Always keep them in contact with their parents, just take a step back from the boat and keep

the children facing their parents. (Whenever a large wooden boat comes and will land further from the shore, try to get as much volunteers in the water and make a chain, through which you pass along children and bags, and guide the adults towards land.)

10. When you are facing the boat from the beach, **medics should be on the side of the boat that is closest to the medical post** so they don't have to go through the crowd when they need to transport people. There is one medic doing the triage in the line. People who need medical attention go one way; people who are stable go to the other side where other volunteers with blankets and clothes will take care of them.

11. Remember that it is a **team effort** on the beach. Be courteous to one another and help each other.

Annex F- Save the Children Protection Meeting Forms

Dear Volunteers,

Thank you very much for attending the training today and for your willingness to support the UAC in Mantamados camp.

We are very appreciative of your support to Save the Children in providing recreational activities and supporting the Praksis teams in their care-taking shifts.

As discussed today, Save the Children has strict safeguarding procedures to ensure the children we are working with are protected from harm. As part of our safeguarding procedures, you have signed the Code of Conduct and a Declaration of criminal record.

As a volunteer working in Manatamados, Save the Children will provide coordination, support and training.

In return, we ask all volunteers to adhere to the Save the Children Policies and Procedures.

Attached is the Save the Children Media Policy, and the Operating Regulation of the Camp, agreed by Praksis, MSF and Save the Children.

The other document attached is related to the rules for Volunteers regarding the Child Safeguarding Policies we have talked about in the training this morning.

We seek your agreement that while volunteering inside Mantamados, you will follow the instructions of Save the Children, MSF and Praksis.

We thank you again for your important support.

We are going to call you this evening for the last updates about tomorrow and to make sure everything is clear.

Best Regards, [Giulia Spini](#)

Child Safeguarding Policy – Rules for Volunteers

All Save the Children staff and representatives must:

- report concerns that a child is a victim of child abuse or sexual exploitation immediately in accordance with Local Procedures;
- undertake induction and training on the child safeguarding policy which is relevant and appropriate to their position;
- cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns and allegations;
- respond to a child who may have been abused/exploited in accordance with the Local Procedures and in accordance with their best interest and safety;
- identify, minimize and attempt to avoid potential situations of risk for children;
- identify and avoid potential situations, which may lead to staff behavior being misinterpreted;

Staff and others must never:

- hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children;
- have sexual intercourse, or engage in any sexual activity, with anyone under 18 years of age, regardless of the age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of the child is not a defense;
- develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive;
- act in ways that may be abusive or place a child at risk of abuse;
- use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
- behave physically in a way that is inappropriate or sexually provocative;
- have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home (unless necessary and previously agreed with managers that this is for the safety of the child);
- sleep in the same bed as a child with whom they are working;
- sleep in the same room as a child with whom they are working (unless necessary and previously agreed with managers that this is for the safety of the child);
- do things for children of an intimate, personal nature that they can do for themselves;
- condone, or participate in, behavior of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse;
- discriminate against, show unfair differential treatment to, or favor particular children to the exclusion of others;
- act as negotiator in or assist the process of financial settlement between the family of a child victim of sexual abuse or exploitation and the perpetrator; or
- spend excessive time alone with children away from others (including in vehicles) or spend time in a child's home unless exceptional circumstances apply and they have the prior approval of their line manager.

OPERATING REGULATION OF THE CAMP

Introduction

PRAKSIS, Save the Children and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) are humanitarian Non-Governmental Organizations implementing emergency relief programs for the refugee populations that enter Greece, including inter alia projects for the protection of children, the provision of psychosocial support and medical care. In the context of their activities in the island of Lesvos and to serve the best of the child, the three Organizations have joined forces to provide temporary, open type, accommodation and care for the unaccompanied minors under administrative detention at the Reception and Identification Centre of Moria.

The aforementioned programming will stand as an emergency measure to provide an alternative to the detention of unaccompanied minors, for a certain amount of time until the competent authorities ensure their transfer from the MSF Camp in Mantamados to more appropriate long-term accommodation facilities.

Specifically, the duration of stay of the minors at the camp is set, initially and on a trial basis, to three weeks up to a month.

This document regulates the accommodation status of minors at the camp and states your rights and obligations relating to their accommodation. It is important to understand the terms in the accommodation regulation and clearly state your agreement, provided that you do agree, by signing at the end of this document. Your signature denotes the acceptance and compliance by your part with the accommodation rules for the full duration of your activities at the camp.

For the facilitation of the above procedure, the program coordinator will answer with the help of an interpreter to any question you may have.

1



Special Terms: CHAPTER ONE “Reception and accommodation conditions” Article

1 Beginning of Accommodation

During the first week guests will meet privately with program staff members so as basic information can be collected about their background (social, medical, legal). These meetings are confidential and the information provided by the minors is private. Also, children will participate in group meetings with the other guests of the camp and staff of the Organizations for the purpose of acquaintance, better cooperation of all and resolution to potential problems. The participation to these meetings is obligatory for all guests. Additionally to the scheduled meetings, staff members responsible for the operation of the camp may convene meetings whenever necessary to resolve issues that may occur. During these meetings you as well have the opportunity to put forward for discussion matters that concern you. Throughout the children's accommodation, their administrative documents should be kept by and be available to PRAKSIS scientific staff members.

Article 2 During the accommodation

Throughout the accommodation period, guests may seek free of charge the assistance by the Organizations scientific staff members for any kind of medical, psychological, social, legal or other issues they might encounter.

It is essential for the guests to cooperate with the Organizations staff so they can benefit from the services provided. Their regular participation to private and group meetings with staff members is considered necessary and substantial. These meetings aim to better accommodation and care for the children in site and relate to matters of living together, recreational activities as well as medical, legal, social and cultural issues. 2



Guests and staff members ought to abide by the operating regulation, respect other guests living together and cooperate both with them and camp staff for a well-ordered stay.

All guests ought to abide by the quiet hours as they follow: In the summer period (1 April - 30 September): 15:00-17:30 and 23:00- 07:00. During these hours any activity that can disturb the common peace of the neighbourhood and the

camp inhabitants should be avoided.

The camp “gates” open in the morning at 08:00 and close in the evening at 21:30. It is not allowed to enter or exit the camp during the time that the gates are closed.

Throughout the minors’ stay at the camp, Organizations staff is required to keep an Entry - Exit logbook in daily basis. Each minor is required to declare the hours leaving or entering the camp in accordance with the above schedule and sign-in and out accordingly.

Using any kind of violence (physical, verbal etc.) among the guests in the camp as well as the usage of drugs is not allowed. Moreover, it is not allowed to smoke, consume alcohol and any kind of psychotropic substances. Discuss with the program coordinator about problems you encounter during cohabitation.

It is not allowed to come to the camp under the influence of alcohol or toxic substances as well as the usage of these at the camp spaces.

Guests and staff are requested to take care of the camp facilities: they are an accommodation place for many people. If damages are caused, the people responsible will take care of their repair.

Organizations reserve the right to request the transfer of the beneficiaries to another shelter, if extremely serious reasons arise. 3



11. Guests should promptly inform the program coordinator for any problem that may arise on the conditions in the camp.
12. Guests should take care of their personal hygiene and maintain their tents and common areas clean.

13. Guests should cooperate with the accommodation centre scientific staff and discuss their problems in order to be supported accordingly.
14. Guests are committed to comply with the referrals to other services or to participate to activities held by the Organizations for their recreation and psychosocial support as well as to abide by the camp schedule.
15. Guests have not the right to choose among tents. Their assignment to tents is conducted by the Social Service in the most appropriate manner, by gender and family ties. But in the case of particularly serious reasons and if the camp scientific staff deems necessary, then tents or beds may be changed.
16. Guests may use the available lockers for safe storage of their personal belongings.
17. At the camp are allowed only games aimed at recreation and not at financial transaction.
18. Any type of transaction or provision of services among the minors, as well as between the minors and the staff, with economic countervalue is prohibited. In case of such behaviour the camp managers will consider the deletion of persons involved from the Guest / Staff list.
19. It is prohibited to use electrical, flammable or explosive materials and devices (e.g. camping gas) as well as any other device that can cause damage to the site or endanger the physical integrity of the guests.
20. Weapon possession and the preparation of improvised weapons in the camp is strictly prohibited.
21. It is not allowed to prepare food and drinks as well as eating in the tents where the guests sleep, except from the case of temporarily ill patients for which the camp manager has agreed to.



- 11.
22. Guests are provided with basic meals and snacks at certain time and place The

camp staff will inform you about the time and place.

23. It is not allowed to move furniture and utensils inside the tents or other areas of the camp.
24. It is not allowed for friends and acquaintances of the guests to visit and stay in the rooms at any time of the day. If deemed necessary, there should be communication and agreement with the camp managers.
25. Guests during their stay at the camp may have with them only their personal items and clothing. The Organizations cannot be held responsible for the loss of items and money.
26. Camp staff has the right to enter the tents where the minors stay so as to ascertain the actual and physical condition of the guests.
27. Guests have access to the camp provisions (computers, baths and other consumables) but not to be misused. Camp staff will inform you about each activity's schedule.
28. Camp guests should respect and abide by the instructions of staff.
29. Any personal information concerning any of the guests is confidential.
30. The return to the shelter will be made until 21:30.
31. Guests should abide by the operating regulation of the camp and cooperate in order to have a well-ordered cohabitation.

Article 3

Usage of common areas

As common areas are considered all areas of the camp where guests have access, except from the tents intended for sleeping.



22.

Given that you are going to live together with other people at the camp, respect, collaboration and solidarity are elements that should characterize your behaviour and will help you have a well-ordered cohabitation.

CHAPTER TWO “completion of accommodation time” Article 4 Leaving - ending the participation in the program Guests leave the camp when they come of age by decision of the Organizations.

When leaving the camp you can contact the scientific staff of the shelter in order to be provided with the appropriate support in the context of the provision of our supportive services.

Article 5 Αρθρο 5 «Penalties and ending of provision»

I.

In the event that guests leave the camp without previous notification to the Organizations and without any signs of contact within 24 hours, PRAKSIS is obligated to notify in writing the competent police authorities of the guests’ disappearance.

If for any reason you need to be absent beyond the scheduled return to the camp, you should inform in advance, either by phone or in person, the camp managers for your impending absence. Otherwise and if communication efforts with you prove fruitless, you will be deemed to have abandoned the camp and not going to return to it and your seat will be available to another minor in need for accommodation.

If some guests repeatedly do not abide by the accommodation rules, as described in article 2, and do not comply with the instructions of staff, the Organizations may request their removal from the camp, by written notice (in a language they understand). Specifically, beneficiaries shall be excluded from the camp on 24 hours notice also in cases when it ascertained to be:

Systematic violation of the Operating Regulation. 6

II.

•



- Attempt to deprive other guests of personal items (theft / destruction).
- Causing unjustified damage to camp areas.
- Use of any type of violence (verbal, physical etc.) and in general any kind of harassment and (dangerous) behaviour that may threaten the health and life of other guests (staying there).
- Use of alcohol or any kind of psychotropic substances inside or outside of the camp. If the guests deny to leave from the camp, the Organizations have the right to request the assistance of police authorities for the accomplishment of the removal procedure from the camp. The Organizations are also obligated to contact the police authorities in situations when violent actions, threats or abuse among guests of the shelter occur. In such circumstances the Organizations can exercise all legal rights provided to the them under applicable law. Following the removal of guests due to not abiding by the regulations, it is not allowed to re-enter the camp. CHAPTER THREE - Communication between staff and volunteers of the Organizations and the unaccompanied minors who are accommodated at the camp. The unaccompanied minors are refugee children - who constitute a particularly vulnerable social group - from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Palestine and other countries, victims of physical and psychological violence, torture, wars, civil conflicts, discrimination and racism. Given the particular vulnerability of the minors, Organizations staff and volunteers should be especially careful in how they communicate with them. Any communication relating to the goals, rules and the general context of the accommodation as well as the next steps and rights of the children, should be strictly based on the above special conditions. 7



Additionally, the following are expressly forbidden for staff and volunteers working

in the camp:

- It is forbidden to use any kind of violence (physical or verbal) against the minors.
- It is forbidden to behave in any racist manner or discriminate based on political, religious and cultural characteristics of the minors.
- It is strictly forbidden to use effusive physical contact with the children (e.g. caresses, hugs, kisses) as well as any misleading or offensive behaviours, but having in mind, at any time, the religious and cultural differences.
- It is forbidden to provide the children with any kind of legal information or promise about their next steps. Such information will exclusively be provided by the legal counsel and coordinators of the program.
- It is forbidden to dress (e.g. shorts, revealing shirts etc.) that can cause inconvenience to the children and insult their religious and cultural traditions. The camp is a workplace and the manner of dressing is also important so as to build a relationship of trust with the children.
- It is forbidden for journalists and strangers to enter the camp, as well as to take any picture or video inside the areas of the camp. Staff should also:
 - Inform promptly the legal counsel and the coordinator of the camp, by phone that will be provided, in case of medical emergency, use of alcohol or drugs, exercise of violence or disappearance of minors.
 - Inform the rest of the staff about incidents in his/her shift (verbally or written, making use of the logbook kept as “Shift Reports”), individual cases of minors, his/her initiatives and actions as a representative of the intervention.
 - To observe rigorously the confidentiality of any personal information concerning the minors, unless the disclosure of such information to a body is deemed necessary either because the integrity or life of his-/herself or other 8



person's is threatened or because it is deemed necessary for his/her individual interest.

The undersigned hereby declare that I fully understand the rights and obligations, both of unaccompanied minors and mine, in order to work at the camp of the Organizations and also I assume the responsibility to abide by them throughout my participation and work at the camp.

9

Date

Signature

Media and Visibility guidelines Save the Children in Greece Response

As a leading independent humanitarian organisation working for children, communicating during a humanitarian crisis is a critical part of Save the Children's mandate to be the voice for children. We believe that by communicating in a compelling way what children are facing will increase our ability to have a lasting effect on the lives of children, and can help many more children than we can reach through programme delivery alone.

The perception of our impartiality, neutrality and independence remains key to ensure the safety of our staff, partners, beneficiaries' as well as the sustainability of our humanitarian operations.

Below is list of external communication rules and guidelines which each staff member and volunteer on Save the Children's Greece response must read and understand. Any breach to these communications rules can hamper our activities or put the lives of the beneficiaries at risk.

Contact information of the Information and Communications Manager:

Sacha Myers | Information, Communications and Media Manager | Save the Children in Greece | Mobile: +30 6931221281 sacha.myers@savethechildren.org

- 1.) Do not speak directly to journalists or any media organisations that approach you. The Greece response has official spokespersons who can speak to the media. Please contact the Information and Communications Manager if journalists or the media contact you to set up an appropriate spokesperson.
- 2.) Do not take any photos of refugees and migrants during your work in the field without asking their permission first. (This especially applies to unaccompanied minors)

PLEASE NOTE THAT SAVE THE CHILDREN HAS A STRICT ANONYMITY POLICY IN REGARD TO PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS:

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- 3.) Do not post pictures of children refugees or adults that identify their faces on any form of social media (e.g. Facebook, instagram, twitter, pinterest, snapchat etc) or share these pictures externally. It is Save the
- 4.) Children's policy not to share pictures of the refugees and migrants which identify them, in order to protect their identities.
- 5.) Should you wish to post photos of refugees or migrants (that do not identify them) on social media, please contact the Information and Communications Manager to sign off on the photos.
- 6.) If you wish to post a status on social media of an experience you have had in your work do not use the real name of the refugee or migrant you are referring to. It is Save the Children's policy to change the names of all refugees and migrants in all public communications that concern them. We have a list of pseudonyms in case you need this.
- 7.) Do not refer to specific locations that the refugees and migrants have come from if you choose to post statuses that refer to them in your social media. It is fine to mention the country they are from but not specific locations.
- 8.) If you choose to write an article or blog about your experience volunteering with Save the Children please contact the Information and Communications Manager for support and for sign off.
- 9.) Please note that all public communications (not including private social media as described above) on Save the Children's response in Greece has to go through a strict sign off process. This is in order to protect the beneficiaries and to ensure that we can continue our work in Greece.