



Save the Children



A TIDE OF SELF-HARM AND DEPRESSION

The EU-Turkey Deal's devastating impact on child refugees and migrants

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Acknowledgments

The report was written by Sacha Myers and Imad Aoun. Interviews with field staff were conducted by Sacha Myers and Imad Aoun. Case studies were collected by Sacha Myers. Photos are by Anna Pantelia and Sacha Myers. All are Save the Children staff.

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To protect the identities of those who participated in the research and the refugees and migrants we interviewed, all names have been changed or withheld, and all locations anonymised.

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Cover photo: Majida, 5, from Syria, is currently stranded in Lesbos with her mother, aunt and younger cousins. (Anna Pantelia/Save the Children)

“We know this is not legal [...]. We have a right to find safety in Europe, this is international law.

I keep thinking: ‘What is this - Europe? Really? Is this really Europe?’

We come from a country where there is lawlessness and we come here and it's worse. It's better to die at home, at war, than to suffer in this humiliating way. I should have just died in Syria.”

Tarek*, father of one from Syria, interviewed on Lesbos.

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Moria Camp, Lesbos. Sacha Myers/Save the Children.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March 2017 marks one year since the start of the European Union (EU) Deal with Turkey.ⁱ The Deal was introduced by the EU as a mechanism to reduce the number of “irregular” migrants and refugees arriving in Greece from Turkey, and continuing on to other parts of Europe, after the surge in numbers in August 2015.

As a result of the Deal, thousands of refugees and migrants are now stranded on five Greek islands: Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Leros, and Kos. They are unable to leave until their applications for asylum are processed.

Meanwhile, new asylum seekers continue to arrive on the islands. This is leading to congestion in the facilities on the islands and many refugees and migrants are now living in degrading, detention-like conditions with limited infrastructure and little information on their asylum cases. As a result, tensions are on the rise. Protests, demonstrations, violence and fires are now commonplace.

Of the 13,200 asylum seekers trapped on the Greek islands in these conditions, the United Nations estimates that 37 per centⁱⁱ, or more than 5,000, are children, including unaccompanied or separated children (UASC). Their childhoods have been put on hold as they’re held in legal limbo, waiting for the wheels of bureaucracy to turn.

This report outlines how the implementation of the EU-Turkey Deal is adversely affecting child refugees and migrants.

Interviews conducted with staff from Save the Children and our partner organization Praksis, who work on the islands, reveal the extent of physical and mental damage happening to child refugees and migrants as they spend their days behind barbed wire, without access to basic services, and under constant police surveillance. In addition to the traumatic events many children have already witnessed in their homeland, some have in the past year survived fires and seen dead bodies, while others have been caught up in or even arrested in protests, fights and demonstrations that frequently sweep the camps.

A Tide of Self-harm and Depression outlines the impact of the EU-Turkey Deal on children in eight key areas:

Depression and anxiety

According to the observations of our staff, children stranded in the camps for long periods of time are starting to show symptoms of depression, distress and anxiety. Concerning behaviour includes enuresis (bed-wetting), clinginess, nightmares, disturbing drawings with negative messages and disinterest in attending classes and activities.

Self-harm and suicide

One of the most shocking and appalling developments Save the Children staff have witnessed is the increase in suicide attempts and self-harm amongst children as young as nine. Suicide attempts sometimes happen in the camps in public, in clear view of children. Save the Children staff believe children are imitating each other and the adults in the camps.

Inhumane living conditions

Children and their families in the camps are often fighting for the bare basics – a blanket, a dry place to sleep, nutritious food, warm water to bathe and access to healthcare. As a consequence, children are stripped of their dignity: many are dirty, have developed rashes and skin problems and have almost no privacy whatsoever.

Increase in aggressive behaviour

One of the main trends seen by all Save the Children staff working with children in the camps on the islands is the increase in aggressive behaviour amongst children. Many lose hope that they will leave, which can lead them to become impatient, and verbally and physically aggressive.

Our staff said most unaccompanied children in the camps and hotspots have lost their patience and are not the optimistic children they originally met.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Save the Children staff have seen children – particularly those who are unaccompanied – turn to substance abuse as a way of coping with the seemingly endless misery they face.

Safety

Due to tensions in the camps, many children and their parents fear for their safety. Unaccompanied children are often targeted in fights and attacks because they are by themselves and lack a support network to protect them. Unfortunately, the police rarely intervene in fights or attacks. Instead, and in some cases, they have used unnecessary violence against refugees and migrants, including children.

Family breakdowns

The behaviour of parents and their ability to handle the stress of being detained on the islands is having a big impact on children, particularly those under 10 when they are developing quickly. Children can understand if the parent is coping or not, and this impacts their physical and mental well-being. It also affects the relationship between parent and child.

Smuggling and trafficking

For many people who have been stranded for almost a year, the wait has been too long and they are now looking for faster alternatives to get off the islands and make their way to safety elsewhere in Europe. Many are turning to smugglers and traffickers, seeing them as the only way out. This poses great risks for children, particularly unaccompanied children, who are in danger of being exploited and abused by traffickers and smugglers.

Widespread failure

In parallel, the European Union is portraying the EU-Turkey Deal as a model solution to the refugee and migrant “crisis”. It is using the Deal’s framework as a sound template for cooperation with other transit countries such as Libya and Egypt.

This is despite the fact that one year after the implementation of EU-Turkey Deal, thousands of children remain stranded in Greece in urgent need of safety, care and protection, and in some cases without full access to formal education. Not only that, but as this report shows, their mental health is rapidly deteriorating due to the conditions created as a result of this Deal.

The EU is now also trying to adopt even tougher measures for the implementation of the EU-Turkey Deal. The Joint Action Plan developed by the EU Coordinator for the EU-Turkey Deal calls for detention as the appropriate measure for the further success of the Deal.ⁱⁱⁱ The plan includes a proposal that asylum seekers eligible for family reunification, and vulnerable asylum seekers like unaccompanied or separated children, pregnant women, persons with disabilities and others, should no longer be exempted from the EU-Turkey Deal and should be subjected to the same considerations as other asylum seekers.^{iv} This will prolong detention periods on the islands, as more applications would need to be processed, and will cause additional tension and frustration, as one of the constant sources of anxiety is the threat of being returned to Turkey.

Recommendations

Save the Children calls on the EU and the Greek Government to take immediate action to protect the children stranded in the country and to prevent long-term harm.

We call upon **EU Member States** to:

- Honour their commitment to relocate and accept asylum seekers from Greece, with a plea to drop the nationality criterion for relocation, and reunify families separated by the current policies in place. A fair relocation mechanism should be established, and it should be based on genuine solidarity between member states, and taking into account preferences of both asylum-seekers and member states.
- Prioritise the immediate transfer of people from overcrowded sites on the islands to open facilities on the mainland that meet European law standards for reception, rather than pressuring Greek authorities to keep people on islands in substandard conditions.

We call upon the **Greek Government** to:

- End the illegal detention of child refugees and migrants and provide alternative measures which comprehensively protect the rights of the child.

We call upon the **Ministry of Migration Policy** to:

- Prioritize the identification and registration of unaccompanied children in the hotspots. Many are still not identified or are incorrectly registered as adults or as accompanied by another family.
- Jointly with the **National Centre for Social Solidarity**, urgently increase the accommodation capacity for unaccompanied children, including safe and appropriate community-based accommodation.
- Jointly with the **Ministry of Justice**, establish an effective and functional guardianship system for every unaccompanied child, and train guardians so they have the expertise and capacity to adequately support each child appointed to them.
- Jointly with the **Ministry of Education**, ensure the access of all children stranded in Greece to the formal schooling system, regardless of their legal status.

We call upon the **Ministry of Health** jointly with the **National Centre for Social Solidarity** to:

- Immediately transfer children with severe health and mental needs to appropriate care environments where they can receive the support they need by trained and experienced professionals. Also, funding must be allocated to mental health and psychosocial support programming in in all refugee accommodation facilities.

We call upon the **Reception and Identification Service** and **Asylum Service**, to:

- Immediately provide in all the hotspots, basic, consistent information, including legal information and age-appropriate information for unaccompanied children in coordination with the European Asylum Support Office.
- Speed up the asylum, relocation and family reunification procedures, while at the same time respecting necessary procedural safeguards.

INTRODUCTION

The EU-Turkey Deal

In March 2016, members of the European Council met with their Turkish counterparts “to [deepen] Turkey-EU relations as well as [address] the migration crisis”^v. The meeting culminated in what later became known as the EU-Turkey Statement (or “EU-Turkey Deal”).

The main premise of the Deal is that “[all] new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into the Greek islands from 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey. [...] Migrants arriving in the Greek islands will be duly registered and any application for asylum will be processed individually by the Greek authorities in accordance with the Asylum Procedures Directive, in cooperation with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Migrants not applying for asylum or whose application is deemed unfounded or inadmissible in accordance with the said directive will be returned to Turkey.”^{vi} Greece was therefore required to “[transform] the hotspots^{vii} [or main camps on five Aegean islands] into closed reception facilities to avoid irregular migrants absconding when they are subject to return decisions.”

In what later became known as the 1:1 scheme, “[for] every Syrian being returned to Turkey from the Greek islands, another Syrian [already in Turkey] will be resettled from Turkey to the EU, taking into account the UN Vulnerability Criteria.”^{viii}

The official number of arrivals to Greece, across the Aegean, dropped significantly as the implementation of the EU-Turkey Deal began. The average number of monthly arrivals dropped from 1,904 in February 2016 to 114 in April 2016^{ix}. UNHCR reported that the average number of daily arrivals in February 2017 was 39 people per day^x.

In February 2017, the UN and the Greek Government estimated that there are 62,401^{xi} migrants and refugees still stranded across Greece: 37 percent - or 23,000 - are children. Nearly 13,200 people are trapped on the Aegean islands as a result of the EU-Turkey Deal. Many live in overcrowded facilities originally designed to host only 8,848^{xii} people.

As of 8 February 2017, 748^{xiii} people have been returned to Turkey under the Deal, including Pakistanis, Syrians, Algerians, Afghans, Iraqis, and

others. The returnees include men, women and accompanied children. However, this is well below the expectations of the EU and they are pressuring the Greek government to expedite the processing of applications and to ensure more asylum seekers and migrants, including vulnerable cases, are returned to Turkey.^{xiv}

The EU Family Reunification Directive, the Dublin Regulation, and the Relocation Scheme agreed in September 2015 could have offered the momentum required to provide safe and legal channels to thousands of asylum seekers. However, bureaucratic hurdles, discrimination based on nationality, and the unwillingness of EU member states to accept asylum seekers from Italy and Greece all put in question the true motives of an EU body primarily concerned with border protection, even at the expense of human rights and the protection of migrants, refugees and other vulnerable groups.

Annex I provides more information on Family Reunification and the EU Relocation Scheme.

“Fortunate are the people who managed to leave the camps in Greece. These are not camps – they are jails. And people have terrible lives there. I am afraid that they will all go mad and do something horrible. I am afraid that something very bad is going to happen there soon.”

Riyad* is from Syria and is traveling with his wife and two daughters aged one and two.

They were interviewed by Save the Children in Belgrade in August 2016, after they spent May and June in an island camp in Greece.



On 19 September 2016, a large fire caused extensive damage to Moria detention centre on the Greek island of Lesbos. The fire destroyed tents and housing units, and left many children and families without a place to sleep. Sacha Myers/Save the Children.

Life on the Greek Islands: Barbed Wire, Despair and Violence

“When we arrived here [in Moria camp] we were in the bus and we saw the barbed wire and my wife said to me they are taking us to jail.”

Daryan*, a Syrian refugee, describes the moment he arrived with his family at the hotspot in Lesbos in March 2016.

As soon as the implementation of the EU-Turkey Deal began, hotspots on the islands were turned into locked detention centres where asylum seekers were taken when they arrived on the islands. The hotspots were surrounded by tall fences topped with barbed wire, and the gates were guarded by police and military.

Over time, and due to the deteriorating conditions and growing protests in the closed camps, some camp authorities began allowing already registered migrants and refugees to leave during daylight hours. However, all migrants and refugees – regardless of registration status – were, and still are, prohibited from leaving the islands. This effectively meant that the Aegean islands were converted into de-facto detention islands.^{xv}

As asylum seekers continued to arrive, and the processing of asylum claims moved at a snail’s pace, camps began to fill up. Conditions deteriorated rapidly

and remain inhumane. In camps near the sea, Children and families are often forced to live in flimsy tents right on the water, exposing them to extreme weather conditions: sub-zero temperatures in winter and 35 degree-plus temperatures in summer.

“We were in shock when we saw the conditions in [the camp]. It was cold and the water was cold.... You had to wait 2-3 hours for a shower. The conditions were worse than in our country.”

Lina*, a single mother of two girls from Iraq.

Basic services in the camps remain overstretched. Children and families wait for hours to receive food, use the bathroom and wash their clothes. These conditions strip people of their dignity, forcing them to live in dirty clothes and to only wash every few days. Many people have told our staff they feel like trapped animals.

“Something really strange is happening here in [the hotspot]. In my country everything made sense, there was order and systems in place. But here there is no order. It’s all over the place. My son and my wife started crying when they told us our case was rejected. I felt that Europe was a big lie.”

Nizar*, is from Syria and was living in Moria detention centre with his wife and three children at the time of the interview.

As a result, tensions are high. Since the EU Relocation Scheme applies mainly to Syrians and Iraqis, other nationalities feel side-lined and neglected. The ever-present and growing threat of being returned to Turkey is also a constant source of fear and anxiety for many, and is only likely to increase if deportations accelerate under EU pressure. This toxic mix of uncertainty and frustration is leading to a range of incidents including inter-communal clashes, hunger strikes, self-harm, attempted suicides, and violence.

Annex 3 includes a list of the major incidents that have occurred on the islands since the beginning of the implementation of the EU-Turkey Deal, on 20 March 2016.



Kaso*, 2, Alaz*, 4, Ajwan*, 3, Kalan*, 6, and Dedo, 4, play outside the Child-Friendly Space (CFS) run by Save the Children and Praksis on Lesbos. Matt Crossick/Save the Children.

Life Before Greece: Bullets, Bombs, and Blood

“We all experienced the war but my middle child was the most affected. It was noon when he was playing outside with the neighbour’s children. It was prayer time and all the children went back into their houses. Then a bomb hit. We went outside and all the children he’d been playing with were killed. There were limbs everywhere and blood. We all started to cry, apart from Rasheed. He was just standing there with his hands over his ears. I went to him and felt that he was trembling. After that, he would wake up two to three times a night crying because of nightmares and he would say there is shelling, blood and monsters. I would put him back to sleep and it would happen all over again.”*

Rana*, 28, Syrian living in Leros.

Children arriving in the hotspots on the Greek islands have, in most cases, already experienced traumatic events, either back home, or along the journey to Greece. For those fleeing violence and wars, many tell tales of bombs that ripped through schools, homes, or playgrounds and buried friends and family under the rubble.^{xvi}

Children and families are then forced to cross several national borders unofficially, often with the help of smugglers or traffickers. Many are chased by police and police dogs, beaten, and shot at. They have to walk for days across mountains and forests in the snow, and are often detained by smugglers or police,

transported in overcrowded vehicles for hours and left without food or water for days.

Save the Children field staff working in the hotspots notice that in most cases, newly arriving children are quite reserved and shy. They are unwilling to partake in activities, and are generally difficult to communicate with. They keep a distance from others. Sometimes they spend days outside the Child Friendly Spaces^{xvii}, watching interactions and activities from a distance before they slowly make their way in and begin to engage with other children and social workers.

However, Save the Children field staff highlighted that in general, new arrivals are quite positive and optimistic, despite their reserved nature. They feel they have arrived in Europe when they land in Greece, and they expect their journeys to be easier from hereon. Upon arrival in the island camps, many do not understand the system or realize that they will likely remain in these camps for months. They still talk about their “on-going journey”, where they are going next, when they are planning to leave, how they are hoping to get there, and who is waiting for them. This optimism is generally reflected in their drawings – they are colourful, and often depict positive images or actions.

Older children, particularly those who are unaccompanied, also tell Save the Children staff they are happy when they arrive in Greece. They believe that their lives will be easier, now that they’re in Europe. But when they realise they cannot leave the camps or the islands, their hopes are quickly dashed.

“I spent four and half months in the hotspot, in a tent. The food was bad, the situation there is not good. I was scared all the time. Whenever anyone asked me anything I just shook my head.”

Zarak*, an unaccompanied child from Iran describes conditions at the hotspot in Samos.

DEVASTATING DAMAGE: THE IMPACT OF THE EU-TURKEY DEAL ON CHILD REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

Interviews conducted with Save the Children staff and refugee and migrant families on the Greek islands reveal the devastating impact that the EU-Turkey Deal has had on children's mental and physical well-being and their development so far. Self-harm, drug abuse and depression are just some of the many issues plaguing children stranded in limbo, as a result of the EU-Turkey Deal.



A toy stuck in the razor wire that hugs Moria camp in Lesvos, Greece. Anna Pantelia/Save the Children.

A Pit of Despair and Depression

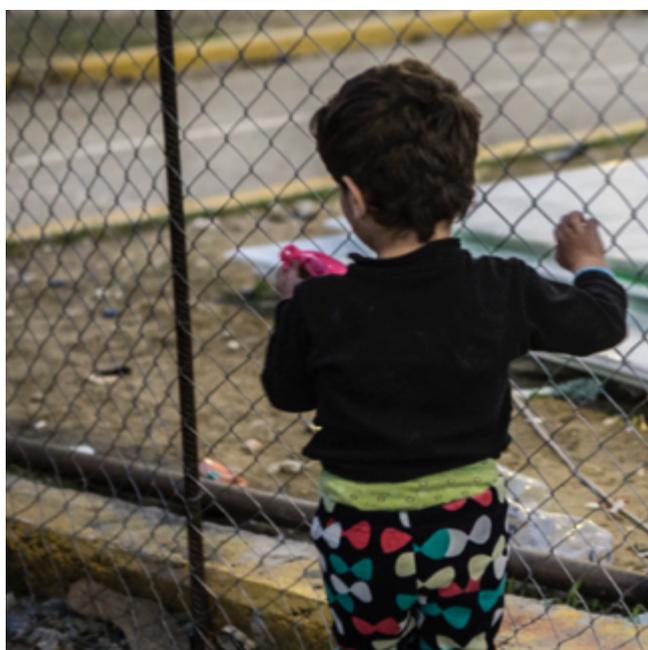
According to the observations of our staff, children stranded in the camps are starting to show symptoms of depression, distress and anxiety. Concerning behaviour includes enuresis (bed-wetting), clinginess, nightmares, disturbing drawings with negative messages and disinterest in attending classes and activities.

One Save the Children staff member who is also a trained psychologist said: “Earlier on, when the camps were open [before the EU-Turkey Deal], children were free. They were able to draw optimistic things that are colourful and imaginative: houses, flowers, sky, trees, birds. Now many drawings are limited, they draw cages, lines, people with negative emotions on their faces; and everything is in grey-scale or dark colours: black, grey, brown. The designs are very limited. These kinds of

drawings show limited experiences. Outside Save the Children activity areas, children have nothing to do, nothing to create, nothing to inspire them. In a space like this, they cannot develop mentally as they should. If they stay longer this will definitely affect their development.”

Another Save the Children child protection worker said: “A child, Tariq*, six, died in a fire in the hotspot in November. The next day, his closest friend who used to come to the Child Friendly Space with him showed up and said nothing the whole day, except: “Tariq is finished.” That was it: “Tariq is finished. Tariq is finished. Tariq is finished” - it’s all she said, and she repeated it with a blank look on her face. ‘Tariq is finished.’ You can feel it wasn’t a child speaking.”

“Many children have seen dead bodies in the hotspot. They talk about these things, there are drawings. One drawing shows a person wearing an Afghan flag, and someone from the EU, wearing an EU flag, setting fire to the Afghan flag. Some children have said that the hotspot “is hell”. They ask me if I’ve been on a plane, and they ask why they can’t get on a plane and go to Germany. Many of the teenagers are aware that this is the EU’s fault - that they’re here trapped indefinitely.”



Many children have been trapped on the islands for months now. Photo from Lesvos. Anna Pantelia/Save the Children.

Other children exhibit more severe symptoms. One Save the Children staff member gave an example of a 12-year-old girl from Syria who has constant nightmares and is terrified of living in the camp. She wets her bed at night. She doesn’t want to join the activities at Save the Children’s Child-Friendly Space

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(CFS) and she only spends her time with her mother. When she sleeps, she wants to sleep between her parents with her hands on them for protection.

Many social workers from Save the Children and our partner organization Praksis highlighted the absence of a routine in children's lives and stressed it had negative implications on their behavioural and mental development.

One Praksis staff member said: “Children in the hotspots are without a “normal” schedule. They don't wake up at a certain hour, get ready, go to school. For children to develop, they need this type of predictability to feel safe. They need a routine that guides their development and emphasizes areas that need to be developed. This doesn't exist now. They stay up late at night, they sleep until noon. They spend a lot of time around adults who are stressed and frustrated. This is not normal for their development. The Child-Friendly Space is the only suitable space for them in these hotspots.”

A Save the Children staff member said: “Children are very resilient, but so many of their basic needs are not satisfied in the hotspots. They have lost so many months of school, of normal life and of routine. I worry that if this continues, we will begin to see more issues, like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This can happen not only due to trauma they witnessed before arriving in Greece, but also due to the equally difficult environment in [the hotspot].”

A Cry for Help: The Tragedy of Self-harm and Suicide

One of the most shocking and appalling developments Save the Children staff have witnessed is the increase in suicide attempts and self-harm amongst children as young as nine. Suicide attempts sometimes happen in the camps in public, in clear view of children. Save the Children staff believe children are imitating each other and the adults in the camps.

Four staff from Save the Children and Praksis describe what they have witnessed:

“A few weeks ago, a 12-year old child from Afghanistan came to me and showed me his scarred neck and hands. He said he was trying to commit suicide – that he wanted to leave [the hotspot], his family is unhappy, and he wanted to die. In this case, the family is not being allowed to leave due to delays in their asylum application. After that, and every time he sees me now, he shows me his “new” scars and what he did “recently”. This child and his

family have been in the hotspot for more than seven months.”

“For adolescents specifically, between the ages of 14 and 18, they feel that self-harm is a way to be free: they choose how to treat their bodies, they feel that's one thing they can actually control. They cut themselves also to get attention. One day, in my 30-minute meeting with one unaccompanied child, two incidents of self-harm occurred in the rooms next to us.”

“Self-harm is now so common, it's almost as if it's a hobby for some children in the hotspots. A mother told us that when she was bathing her son, she found his hand full of scars, and it was obvious that he scarred himself. He said everyone was doing it, so why not try it. He's nine.”

“A 12-year old boy filmed his suicide attempt because he had seen other people do it. There have also been young children who have self-harmed because they saw others do it. For unaccompanied children, they are detained in a cell within the hotspot. It's a jail within a jail. Depression is to be expected in this situation, as well as self-harm.”



Musad*, 3, from Syria, is living in Lesvos, Greece, with his mother, her aunt and younger cousins. Anna Pantelia/Save the Children.

Living Conditions in the Camps: “They are living like animals”

Children and their families in the camps are often fighting for the bare basics – a blanket, a dry place to sleep, nutritious food, warm water to bathe and access to healthcare. As a consequence, children are stripped of their dignity: many are dirty, have developed rashes and skin problems and have almost no privacy whatsoever.

Two different Praksis staff members report on the conditions:

“Many refugees and migrants live in tents by the sea. They spent the whole winter with no beds, no electricity and there was snow. It was very tough. As a result, they don’t feel safe. They started a journey to get to a safe place and this is not what they expected. They get cold and most are going to the doctors because they have colds. They have no privacy. They don’t feel like they are human. People in the hotspot feel totally humiliated. They have to wait for three hours for a doctor and then they get turned away. It’s eating away at people’s self-respect and dignity. You see people – adults - crying all the time.”

“The living conditions have made them lose hope and made them feel like ‘animals’ and ‘objects’ - not exactly human, but inferior human beings. They are living like animals.”

“The consequences of detention are physical and psychological. They are living in crowded containers, and without hot water. It was very difficult to get access to the services in [the hotspot], you have to be fainting or almost dying to get access.”

A Save the Children staff member said:

“Families and children are still living in tents; the sewage system is terrible. It sometimes gets muddy and dirty, and it smells bad, so children can’t play football because it’s dirty. Women and children are afraid to go to the toilet, especially after sunset. They worry about rape, being attacked – the toilets are far, and in a very dire condition.”

Relatively small changes, however, make a big difference. Our staff have seen how children transform quickly once they are transferred from the detention-like conditions of camps and hotspots to hotels or apartments on the islands.

A Save the Children staff member said: *“I had the opportunity to see few kids leaving the hotspot or camp to go to hotels or shelters. Then you see a different person: because they are clean, they have clean clothes. If you’re clean and you have a clean environment then that’s important for the psychology.”*

Aggressive Transformation

One of the main trends seen by all Save the Children staff working with children in the camps on the islands is the increase in aggressive behaviour amongst children. Many lose hope that they will leave, which can lead them to become impatient, and verbally and physically aggressive.

A Save the Children staff member said:

“[Children] now attack each other, they hit each other, very hard, with the aim of hurting each other. This isn’t just a regular fight between children. They see many bad things [in the hotspots], they see fights, protests. They see violence. They become more violent because of the environment. If you live in a place like [the hotspot], you almost have to be aggressive, to be ready to protect yourself. There are many bad influences and bad images around them. Sometimes children come [to the Child Friendly Space] just to destroy [the materials and equipment there] then they walk out after they do.”

“He is very scared”

Farzin*, 12, and his father Babak*, are from Iran* and have been living in a camp in Chios for the past five months. They were asleep one night when a fire started in the camp:

Babak says: “Someone lit a fire in the camp but I don’t know who it was. I was very afraid to sleep again in the camp and we were sleeping in the car-park for 14 days. There were many families sleeping there. I wasn’t scared for myself but for my son. I’ve seen a big change in his behaviour. He is very scared. Ever since the time they burnt the camp he doesn’t sleep well and he has nightmares. I have the same symptoms. We share the room with seven people. I am afraid to leave my child alone around the camp because I have heard about a girl who was alone and someone was threatening her. And because of this I don’t want to leave my son alone. No one likes living in these conditions. I hate myself and Europe.”

Farzin: “The camp is not good. People are drinking and fighting and we don’t get a good night’s sleep. They drink at night and they go inside the rub hall (large white tent where they sleep) and they kick the doors and we cannot sleep. After sleeping in the car-park I got sick because it was so cold. I was very scared. They burnt the tents that were near ours.”

DEVASTATING DAMAGE: THE IMPACT OF THE EU-TURKEY DEAL ON CHILD REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

A Praksis staff member said: “Eleven and 12-year-olds see behaviour and they copy it. If they see someone saying they will cut their throat with the knife, then they copy it. We may not see the full impact of this now, but I think later on in life we will. How can we expect children to grow up every day with violence and for it not to impact them?”

“In one hotspot one time I saw a child getting annoyed with another child and his eyes literally turned white [rolled back in his head]. Children are getting so angry with each other that other children have to restrain them – the same thing that happens with adults.”

Our staff said most unaccompanied children in the camps and hotspots have lost their patience and are not the optimistic children they originally met.

Another Praksis staff member said: “We knew a 14-year-old boy who was very calm and easy to work with at the beginning. Then we began to see changes in his appearance and behaviour. He suddenly started shaving his hair and wearing a bandana. Overnight, he stopped hanging out with children and started hanging around with adults. Then he started causing trouble in (the camp) – starting fires and stealing phones. Then when the shelter opened [outside the hotspot], we recommended for him to be moved there. But he was not willing to go, he wanted to stay with his adult friends. But we convinced him eventually and since he moved [out of the hotspot] to the shelter, he has gone back to what he was like before.”

In a similar example, an unaccompanied child that Save the Children worked with regularly, turned 18 while in the camp, which meant he no longer qualified for relocation to a specialized shelter for children.

A Praksis staff member said: “He was one of the best children we worked with – always smiling and talking to us. But then he saw his friends moving to shelters and to Athens, while his appeal to move was rejected. The living conditions [in the camp] and the constant bullying were affecting him. He was arrested during an incident in

[the camp], and was accused of setting fire to the containers. We have not been able to see him since his arrest.”

Protests, fires and other forms of violence are not only causing children more distress, but they should also be seen as manifestations of children’s and adults’ psychological well-being. Most have been in overcrowded hotspots for months with limited information on their cases and futures, severe restrictions on their movement, and limited access to even basic services and amenities like bathrooms, showers, medication health services and formal education.

Escapism in Drugs and Alcohol

Save the Children staff have seen children – particularly those who are unaccompanied – turn to substance abuse as a way of coping with the seemingly endless misery they face.

A Save the Children staff member said: “Unaccompanied children try to find ways to survive in these very bad conditions. They want to be adults because they feel they will survive better. They start drinking alcohol, and abusing drugs [like] marijuana.”

A Praksis staff member said: “The conditions are turning children from young people who are calm and full of dreams to people who want to harm property, others and themselves. Being trapped and unable to fulfil their dreams. They say that they feel bad, then someone offers them a pill and promises it will make them feel better, and then it does and they start taking drugs. They could avoid these problems if the living conditions were better.”

“This place is like a prison”

Beyar* is on the brink of tears as he tells his story. He fled Sinjar, Iraq, in 2014 with his wife and four children when armed groups attacked his village. At the time of the interview, in September 2016, they had been living for more than six months on the island of Leros, Greece. Beyar says the conditions were so bad in the camp that he made the decision to take his family back to Iraq, despite the dangers he knows are awaiting them there.

Beyar: “We were taken to Moria [detention centre] in Lesvos. There were a lot of fights with sticks and stones and it frightened the children. So I asked for a transfer. Then we came here [to Leros].”

“Here it's so bad that I've seen people get stitches without an anaesthetic. I saw a four-year-old child get stitches in his lip without an anaesthetic. Generally, the situation is really bad. I have seen horrible things here and there is no help. A few weeks ago, there were reports of child abuse in the camp. The perpetrators are now in prison. I only let the kids play outside the container or when they are with Save the Children. Anywhere else we have to be with them. The problem that happened is a big problem and it makes me want to keep a close watch on my children. This really scared my children.”

“I have seen nothing to indicate that there is a future here for my children. It's been six months with no help and no [asylum] interview. That's why we are going back.”

Mina*, Beyar's seven-year-old daughter said: “There's nothing nice here so there's no good part of my day. This place is like a prison and I just want to go back home. I don't want to be here.”

The Endless Search for Safety

Due to tensions in the camps, many children and their parents fear for their safety. Unaccompanied children are often targeted in fights and attacks because they are by themselves and lack a support network to protect them. Unfortunately, the police rarely intervene in fights or attacks, and instead in some cases have used unnecessary violence against refugees and migrants, including children.

A Save the Children staff member said: “There was a fight that happened in front of the containers where unaccompanied children live, they [other boys in the camp] were throwing rocks at the containers of the unaccompanied children – at the door and windows. The unaccompanied children went to the police and explained what happened, but the police took no action. The police said it wasn't their problem. The unaccompanied children were very scared of where they lived, and had no confidence of being protected. They have lost their hope. Every day they are attacked in the camps.”

“When the camp was closed, there were no police at night and some unaccompanied and separated children sustained physical injuries as a result of a fight. When the camp is closed, people cannot get out and the police won't come in to help. The unaccompanied

children have to be in 24-hour survival mode, and this is very difficult. They sleep in shifts – two awake at a time – to watch to make sure people don't come and attack them.”

Another staff member said: “[The hotspot] is like a prison, children see police and army around all the time. The other day, children saw an old man being beaten up by police right in front of the Child Friendly Space, all the children were looking. Supervisors couldn't do anything to stop the incident. Children were looking at the staff, confusion in their eyes. This was traumatic for them.”



Majida, 5, from Syria, attends activities in our child-friendly space on Lesvos. Anna Pantelia/Save the Children.

Families at Breaking Point

Parents' behaviour and their ability to handle the stress of being detained on the islands is having a big impact on children, particularly those under 10, when they are developing quickly. Children can understand if the parent is coping or not, and this impacts their physical and mental well-being. It also affects the relationship between parent and child.

A Praksis staff member said: *“The parental environment plays a very important role at this [early] age.... I remember a family where the father didn't talk to anyone. We were concerned about domestic violence so we tried to help the family. We needed two-to-three days to establish a relationship with the family. You could see the children were desperate. Their clothes and physical appearances were bad and showing signs of neglect. One of the girls was a teenager and wanted to speak about the situation...she wanted to be separated from her parents and get married so she could escape the situation.”*

“We managed to persuade the father to go to the hospital to get help. We got to a point where the father was crying like a child. He told us everything that had happened to him, how he's neglected his children, and why he felt he couldn't continue. We worked for a month to explain how to manage feelings and find different ways to communicate and interact with others, and we got the father on medication.”

A Save the Children staff member said: *“Many parents are extremely disappointed, hopeless, depressed and stressed. They inevitably will pay less attention to their children. They're fatigued and frustrated - in some cases they've given up and this affects children who become dirty and more aggressive. Just last Wednesday, a family was moved out of the hotspot, but they were devastated and terrified that they wouldn't be able to track their asylum application that was still being processed in the hotspot. The parents were sitting on the pavement outside and sobbing. Their six-year-old child was trying to hug them and comfort them, then he started crying too, so the parents became more distraught and emotional that their child was trying to comfort them and was crying too. Seeing parents stressed makes children stressed as well.”*



Families stranded in Vial camp on the island of Chios say conditions are terrible and that the bathrooms are dirty and sometimes don't have water. Sacha Myers/Save the Children.

The Fastest Way out of Hell: Smuggling and Trafficking

For many people who have been stranded for almost a year, the wait has been too long and they are now looking for faster alternatives to get off the islands and make their way to safety elsewhere in Europe. Many are turning to smugglers and traffickers, seeing them as the only way out. This poses great risks for children, particularly unaccompanied children, who are in danger of being exploited and abused by traffickers and smugglers.

A Save the Children staff member said: “Many of the unaccompanied children have disappeared and have left the island with smugglers or by themselves. They are misinformed about Athens. They see it as the way out, no matter how much they are told it’s not as it seems.”

“The lack of information and options are driving unaccompanied and separated children to take smugglers and leave. It’s happened over the past three or four months. For some of them, they have been here for such a long time and they haven’t seen any change. Some are just going on their own on the ferry – hidden in large boxes and cars.”

Another Save the Children staff member said: “Unaccompanied children are forced to look for smugglers because they are trapped. They don’t realize how much danger they are putting themselves in, and the risk of trafficking.”



A drawing by a child attending activities in Save the Children's Child-Friendly Space in Moria, Lesvos. The drawing shows families who want to leave the island and go to Athens but are trapped under the sun, behind the barbed wire in the camp. Sacha Myers/Save the Children.



The hotspot on the Greek island of Leros is located on the grounds of a psychiatric hospital. Many families have been living in the centre for months as they wait for their asylum applications to be processed. Some families are choosing to return home because conditions in the center are so terrible. Sacha Myers/Save the Children.

DEVASTATING DAMAGE: THE IMPACT OF THE EU-TURKEY DEAL ON CHILD REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

“Quarrels, verbal and physical fights between people [...] were an everyday reality in the camp [in Greece]. At the beginning of last summer, the camp was set on fire, as a result of one of these clashes. Police and firefighters got involved, so the fire was put under control, and some people were arrested. But the flames reached our tent, and we were left without a “roof” over our heads. [After a while], we got in touch with a smuggler. He asked for 1,000 EUR to take us to Athens. Now we’re here in Belgrade.”

Riyad is from Syria and is traveling with his wife and two daughters aged one and two. They were interviewed by Save the Children in Belgrade in August 2016 after they spent May and June in an island camp in Greece.

“We've been here so long our minds are decaying”

Darya* and Fahim* arrived in Greece nine months ago with their two small children. They fled Afghanistan because it was not safe for their family and they lost their home. On 19 September 2016, when a huge fire ripped through the Moria hotspot in Lesvos, Darya and Fahim lost all their belongings, apart from the clothes they were wearing. They recounted their story to Save the Children the following day.

Darya: *“When the fire started we ran to the family compound (a fenced area inside the detention centre where families live). The crowds were outside the family area and [the police] started using teargas to control the situation. All the children were crying and my children got teargas in their face. Once we made it outside Moria, you could see all the kids were either quiet and silent or they were terrified and screaming.”*

“We lost all our money and our clothes, all our children’s things and my husband's documents. We're left with just the clothes we're wearing and that plastic bag. We have conflict at home, we come here and we lose our homes again.”

“Last night we slept under a tarp with blankets down the side. Even if we get a tent tonight we won't feel safe. When it starts to rain or it gets really cold, what am I supposed to do? Look at what I'm putting my children through. We are all worried it's going to blow up again because people are still angry and concerned about the situation. There's no sense of security here.”

Fahim: *“People here are so sick of the situation. Every single person is suffocating. Because we've been here so long our minds are decaying, they become rotten from within. And people are pushed to do things that they wouldn't normally do. Pushed and forced and in the end, that's what happens. It's an unsafe situation. This whole place is a ticking time bomb and I don't think anyone is paying attention.”*

“We talk about human rights in Europe but then they create this environment for families. They've created this environment for us. If you don't want us here, why are you dragging on the process? Isn't that against what you call human rights? Why don't you pay attention when terrible things are happening on your own continent?”

“Death will actually happen here [in Moria]. It feels like we need someone to die before the media will actually pay attention to what's going on here.”

Is the Damage Irreversible?

There is ample evidence showing children can recover from traumatic experiences – the damage is not irreversible^{xviii}. Research in other contexts like Bosnia^{xix} suggests that the earlier we start helping these children, the better the outcomes. As a first step, we need to end their exposure to stressors and negative stimuli – recovery can only start when children are removed from the unsafe and unstable environment in the camps.

Vital social structures - like family, community, school – also need to be in place. Children need boundaries and routine to develop a sense of belonging and feel safe. This is the philosophy behind Save the Children's Child-Friendly Spaces in the camps. They provide children with purpose, and a place to be every day.

A small percentage of children will possibly need specialized care, or medication, and they might need more time to recover.

It is important to also support the parents, who are often experiencing the same issues. We need to help them deal with this so they can support their children.



Safa* and Bari* are stranded on Chios with their third sibling and parents. They have been through so much since the war started in Syria, but, according to their mother, they feel living in the camp in Chios is the worst part so far. Their asylum application has been rejected and they don't know what will happen to them next. Sacha Myers/Save the Children. Sacha Myers/Save the Children.

CONCLUSION

The European Union is portraying the EU-Turkey Deal as a model solution to the refugee and migrant crisis. However, one year after the border closure and the implementation of the Deal, the child refugees and migrants stranded in Greece are in urgent need of safety, care, protection, basic services, adequate and accessible information on their rights, access to formal education and durable legal solutions.

The interviews with Save the Children staff and refugee and migrant families shine a burning light on the horrific reality of life under the EU-Turkey Deal. Research shows that child refugees are more likely to have higher levels of behavioural or emotional problems, including aggression and other affective disorders.^{xx} Daily exposure to the traumatic events that characterize the hotspots and camps – as a result of the EU-Turkey deal - is accumulative. Therefore, with each passing day that children remain “detained” in inhumane conditions in Greece, with little to no positive alternatives in their lives, they become more likely to turn to negative coping strategies. These could include harming their own bodies, drug and alcohol abuse. For some, this may lead to attempting suicide. It is important to recognize that self-harm is a way of expressing difficult feelings when children and adolescents become numb and de-sensitized over time due to the unbearable situations they find themselves in. Some children fled wars and violence, only to be met with different, but still harmful, types of toxic stressors in Greece.

This accumulation of toxic stress^{xxi} can lead to long-term mental health issues like depression, extreme anxiety and even related physical problems like heart disease. In the long run, if things remain unchanged, Save the Children's child protection experts warn that we may face a rise in long-term mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CALL FOR ACTION

There are a number of immediate steps that need to be taken in order to improve the support and protection offered to children stranded and detained on the Greek islands, one year after the implementation of the EU-Turkey deal.

Principally, Save the Children is calling on EU Institutions and Member States, and the Greek Government to take immediate action in order to end the dangerous deterrence policies and practices in Greece derived from the EU-Turkey deal. These are proving to damage children's well-being and integrity.

Instead, they must develop and implement effective policies to protect children and respond effectively to their needs. The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in any process, particularly when it comes to the circumstances of unaccompanied and separated children.

We call upon EU Member States to:

- Honour their commitment to relocate and accept asylum seekers from Greece, with a plea to drop the nationality criterion for relocation, and reunify families separated by the current policies in place. A fair relocation mechanism should be established, and it should be based on genuine solidarity between member states, and taking into account preferences of both asylum-seekers and member states.
- Prioritise the immediate transfer of people from overcrowded sites on the islands to open facilities on the mainland that meet European legal standards for reception, rather than pressuring Greek authorities to keep people on islands in substandard conditions.

We call upon the Greek Government to:

- Immediately end the illegal detention of child refugees and migrants and provide alternative measures which comprehensively protect the rights of the child.
- Implement durable legal solutions for children stranded alone in Greece. These include access to asylum, and to relocation and family

reunification processes, particularly for unaccompanied and separated children.

- Immediately transfer refugees and migrants from the islands to appropriate facilities on the mainland as a way to end their exposure to stressful and adverse environments in the overcrowded and substandard front-line reception facilities. Unaccompanied children, pregnant women, children with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups should be prioritized.
- Make all efforts necessary to ensure the national child protection system is equipped to integrate child refugees and migrants. Only by providing sustainable, integrated solutions can we ensure a continuum of protection for children.

We call upon the Ministry of Migration Policy to:

- Increase the capacity of the Reception and Identification Service by recruiting trained and specialized child protection staff who can establish an effective mechanism for identification and registration of unaccompanied and separated children, Best Interests Assessment, and referrals.
- Prioritize the identification and registration of unaccompanied children in the hotspots. Many are still not identified or are incorrectly registered as adults or as accompanied by another family.
- Provide reliable information to unaccompanied children to ensure they have access to asylum and family reunification procedures and are informed in a child-friendly manner about their rights.

We call upon the Ministry of Migration Policy jointly with the National Centre for Social Solidarity to:

- Urgently increase the accommodation capacity for unaccompanied children, including safe and appropriate community-based accommodation.
- Allocate special funding for mental health and psychosocial support programming and integrate mental health and psychosocial

support into health services being provided in all refugee accommodation facilities.

We call upon the **Ministry of Health** jointly with the **National Centre for Social Solidarity** to:

- Immediately transfer children with severe health and mental needs to appropriate care environments where they can receive the support they need by trained and experienced professionals.

We call upon the **Ministry of Migration Policy** jointly with the **Ministry of Justice** to:

- Establish an effective and functional guardianship system for every unaccompanied child in order to provide procedural safeguards regarding decisions and actions affecting them in the short and the long-term.
- Train independent guardians so they have the expertise and capacity to adequately support each child appointed to them.

We call upon the **Ministry of Migration Policy** jointly with the **Ministry of Education** to:

- Ensure the access of all children stranded in Greece to the formal schooling system, regardless of their legal status. This can happen by appointing the required education and administration staff and by removing existing barriers that prevent children from attending formal schools (including a lack of coordination between the competent authorities, strict admissions rules, demands for multiple documentation, absence of cultural mediators and interpreters and scarcity of school places).

We call upon the **Reception and Identification Service** and **Asylum Service** to:

- Immediately provide in all the hotspots, basic, consistent information, including legal information and age-appropriate information

for unaccompanied children in coordination with the European Asylum Support Office.

- Provide unhindered access to the asylum application process to all children stranded in Greece who should be supported by a cultural mediator, interpreter and legal advisor, and prioritize vulnerable children in order to access durable solutions in accordance with the best interests of each individual child.
- Speed up the asylum, relocation and family reunification procedures, while at the same time respecting necessary procedural safeguards.

EXAMPLES OF SAVE THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES IN GREECE

Save the Children has extensive programmes across Greece directly helping children, mothers, and families. We are one of the leading organisations for child protection and nutrition in Greece, and our programmes are primarily focused on identifying and assisting the most vulnerable families. Our programmes include:

- **Child and Youth Friendly Spaces (CFSs)** where children and youths can engage in psychosocial and non-formal education activities in a safe and stable environment, and in the presence of trained professionals;
- **Mother and Baby Areas (MBAs)** where pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers can care for their children and breastfeed privately in the presence of experts who support them with their nutrition and health needs;
- **Case management support**, where case workers, social workers, psychologists and lawyers provide one-on-one support for the most vulnerable families and children;
- **Shelters** for unaccompanied children, where they are accommodated and provided with basic assistance like food and health care. Teachers, social workers, psychologists and lawyers also provide the children with education support, psychological counselling, and legal information and assistance. Children in the shelters participate in recreational

activities on a regular basis, including excursions to the nearby towns and cultural and historical sites in Greece;

- **Learning centres** where children and youth attend classes and activities designed to prepare them for integration in the Greek school system.

Save the Children has helped children like 15-year-old Nabil*, who was separated from his family in Turkey. Save the Children staff provided Nabil with counselling and legal support to reunite him with his family:

“Since I came here I've really enjoyed spending time with the staff. They're all good and they taught me the guitar. If they see you sitting by yourself they come and talk to you. I really enjoy speaking with them and spending time with them,” Nabil says.

“They (Save the Children) have been helpful in the sense that I've been able to get a lawyer and get in touch with my family. Everyone said it would take months to do this but it was less than a month and now I'm going to see my family. Save the Children helped me do this.”

Save the Children also assists children negatively impacted by violence in the camps.

Lina* and her two daughters, Rukia* and Noora*, were in a camp in Chios when a big fire started. Since then they've been moved to an apartment on the island:

“The girls were sleeping when the fire started. I cannot describe the fear the girls felt at that moment,” Lina recalls. *“We were very tired afterwards, so were the people who had their homes burnt.”*

“The girls suffered from psychological problems. Even now when Rukia wants to go to the kitchen or bathroom, she has to go with me or I have to wait for her outside the door. In the camp, she couldn't bear being alone. And also in the apartment now as well. Both girls were exceptionally anxious. I wanted psychological sessions and thank goodness they are better now.”

“I cannot forget what Save the Children and [its partners] Arsis and Praksis have done. The attention you showed to the girls. The psychosocial support the girls received has helped a lot. They (Save the Children and Praksis staff) come every Friday and the activities they do with the girls have helped them a lot.”



Yazan, 3, is stranded on Lesbos with his parents and four siblings. His mother says: *“[Save the Children’s Mother Baby Area] is a haven for me, I come by every single day with Yazan. We’re here from the time it opens until it shuts in the afternoon. I trust the staff there – I can leave [Yazan] with his brother for a few hours (at Save the Children’s Child Friendly Space) while I sit and relax with other women nearby [in the MBA].”*

ANNEX ONE: EU RELOCATION SCHEME AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION

The ineffectiveness of the EU-Turkey Deal is coupled with inefficiencies in other schemes meant to legally and safely move migrants and refugees to EU countries. Primarily, **family reunification under the Dublin Regulatory System**, and the **EU Relocation Scheme**.

Family reunification is meant to reunify family members (including unaccompanied children) in Greece with the rest of their families already settled elsewhere in the EU. This is a heavily bureaucratic process and in the majority of cases, takes almost a year to conclude. The lack of political will amongst EU Member States, and the inconsistent definitions of unaccompanied and separated children across Europe, hinder the process of family reunification. Also, many children arrive in Greece without their official documents, which causes further delays.

According to the Greek Asylum Service, 940 family reunification requests were implemented in 2016, out of the 4,727 requests submitted in the same year.^{xxii}

The EU relocation scheme was devised by the EU in September 2015, after the number of migrants and refugees arriving in Greece increased drastically. The scheme promised to move 106,000^{xxiii} asylum seekers from Italy and Greece to other EU member states. However, only certain nationalities are eligible, namely Syrians and Iraqis, but not Afghans and many others.

Data from November 2016, shows there were almost 24,000^{xxiv} asylum seekers eligible for relocation under this scheme in Greece. In February 2017, just 8,790^{xxv} of them have been relocated. The scheme is set to expire in September 2017.

Relocation and family reunification could have offered the momentum required to provide safe and legal channels to thousands of asylum seekers. However, bureaucratic hurdles, discrimination based on nationality, and the unwillingness of EU member states to accept asylum seekers from Italy and Greece all put in question the true motives of an EU body primarily concerned with border protection, even at the expense of human rights and the protection of migrants, refugees and other vulnerable groups.

ANNEX TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To collect the information presented in this report, we conducted in February 2017 interviews with ten staff working with Save the Children and our partner organization Praksis, on the islands of Lesbos, Leros, Chios, Samos, and Kos. Save the Children has been operational on these islands since late Summer 2015.

Field staff interviewed include:

- **Child Protection Managers or Coordinators:** Tasked with the overview of activities with children, including the psychosocial activities in the Child Friendly Spaces, the non-formal education programmes, and the one-on-one case management work with individual children that require additional or specialized support.
- **Case Managers:** Trained in the identification and ongoing management of sensitive cases and one-on-one support for vulnerable children and families.
- **Child Friendly Space Animators:** Trained staff in the Child Friendly Spaces who design and implement activities with the children.
- **Child Friendly Space Supervisors:** Supervising Child Friendly Space Animators and all activities in the space.

Staff interviewed were selected based on how long they have been working in the island camps, and their experience with child refugees and migrants. The range was six to 18 months. Individual interviews lasted for one hour.

We also used content from interviews we conducted during 2016, with more than 20 refugee and migrant families who discussed with us conditions in the camps and hotspots and the impact on their children.

The information from Save the Children's staff and the families we interviewed was then analysed and separated into themes that correspond to the main issues arising amongst children who have been stranded on the islands as a result of the EU-Turkey Deal.

The findings were shared with Save the Children's Senior Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Technical Advisor, Dr Marcia Brophy, who provided input and feedback.

ANNEX THREE: LIST OF MAJOR INCIDENTS ON THE ISLANDS SINCE MARCH 2016

Reporting period: March 2016 to February 2017.

Date	Location	Incident	Source
22.3.2016	Chios, Vial	Two groups of independent activists were apprehended and interrogated for hours by police for standing on a public street outside the Vial hotspot in Chios.	https://refugeetrail.wordpress.com/2016/03/
31.3.2016	Chios, Vial	A protest against the conditions at Vial by members of the local community, volunteers, and activists. Refugees came out to meet them, shouting "Freedom," "Asylum," and "No Turkey."	https://www.thenation.com/article/the-eu-has-turned-greece-into-a-prison-for-refugees/ https://refugeetrail.wordpress.com/2016/03/
1.4.2016	Chios, Vial	A fight broke out between Afghans, who have been marginalized by the asylum process, and Syrians, whose claims to asylum are more likely to be processed faster. Six people were hospitalized and around 600 migrants left the camp.	http://time.com/4292323/chios-greece-island-refugees/ https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/04/14/greece-asylum-seekers-locked https://sputniknews.com/europe/201604011037329689-greece-chios-migrants-violence/ http://www.ndtv.com/world-news/new-clashes-in-greek-island-hotspot-ahead-of-planned-migrant-returns-1296239
3.4.2016	Chios, Vial	The first deportation of 66 people to Turkey on the basis of the EU-Turkey Deal. Alleged violations of the deported persons' human rights. Protest to show opposition to the Deal and the treatment of asylum seekers..	https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/04/19/eu/greece-first-turkey-deportations-riddled-abuse https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/04/19/eu/greece-first-turkey-deportations-riddled-abuse https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2016/apr/04/greece-boats-arrive-in-turkey-dikili-in-pictures
5.4.2016	Lesvos, Moria	Migrants and refugees protest against the EU- Turkey Deal inside Moria camp on Lesvos.	http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3525984/Turkish-coast-guard-intercepts-dozens-migrants-Aegean.html/
6.4.2016	Chios, Vial	Anti-refugee protesters invaded the town hall and disrupted a council meeting. The next day, a mob attacked solidarity activists and refugees at the port.	https://www.thenation.com/article/the-eu-has-turned-greece-into-a-prison-for-refugees/
20.4.2016	Chios, Vial	People refused the distributed food and protested against conditions in the camp.	http://www.alfavita.gr/arthron/apokalypsi-89-peinasmena-paidia-poy-trefontai-ashima
26.4.2016	Lesvos, Moria	Frustrated migrants & refugees clashed with police at the Moria detention centre: shortly after the Dutch and Greek Migration Ministers toured the former army camp. Plumes of smoke billowed from the compound. A police spokesman said garbage bins were set on fire and the unrest spread from there. Aid workers said tensions had been building in the camp for days but it was unclear what triggered the unrest in the centre, which came soon after a visit by the Dutch and Greek migration ministers, Klaas Dijkhoff and Yiannis Mouzalas.	http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2016/04/26/lesvos-police-teargases-refugees-in-moria-camp-after-they-throw-water-bottles-at-migration-minister/ http://www.lesvospost.com/2016/04/blog-post_399.html https://www.rt.com/news/340999-refugees-police-violence-greece/
13.5.2016	Samos, Vathy	A fight involving about 200 men raged for several hours in the Vathi hotspot on Samos. According to aid workers with Boat Refugee Foundation, a Dutch NGO that provides health care at the facility, 14 people were hospitalized, including some with broken arms and legs.	https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/05/19/greece-refugee-hotspots-unsafe-unsanitary
16.5.2016	Lesvos, Moria	Protest by refugees and migrants, riot police deployed.	http://www.politikalesvos.gr/sto-kolastirio-tis-morias-binteo/

ANNEX THREE: LIST OF MAJOR INCIDENTS ON THE ISLANDS SINCE MARCH 2016

17.5.2016	Chios, Souda	40-50 migrants and refugees on hunger strike asking for international protection and relocation to other countries.	https://www.thenation.com/article/desperate-syrian-refugees-begin-hunger-strike-in-greece/ http://news.in.gr/greece/article/?aid=1500079110
17.5.2016	Samos	Ongoing tensions in the crowded hotspot in Samos.	https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/05/19/greece-refugee-hotspots-unsafe-unsanitary
31.5.2016	Lesvos, Moria	People are protesting. Police used teargas to break up the protest.	http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/overcrowding-poor-conditions-fanning-tensions-greek-refugee-hotspots-997696337
1.6.2016	Lesvos, Moria	A serious fight broke out overnight among some of those detained in Moria and a large area of the camp was set alight. Women and men, including families with young children, fled and spent the night in nearby fields or the town of Mytilene. Many returned to find that the fire had destroyed their tents and their few belongings.	https://www.newsdeeply.com/refugees/community/2016/06/06/refugee-women-on-greek-islands-in-constant-fear http://www.ekathimerini.com/209241/article/ekathimerini/news/dozens-injured-in-clashes-at-lesvos-migrant-camp http://www.kathimerini.gr/862076/article/epikairothta/ellada/apokaidiakai-xaos-sth-moria http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugees-hospitalised-after-huge-fire-and-clashes-at-lesbos-detention-centre-amid-warnings-over-more-a7062016.html
2.6.2016	Samos	Protests erupted. 6 people were injured, 25 were detained and 2 containers were burned down.	http://observers.france24.com/en/20160603-photos-samos-greece-migrant-refugee-clashes
2.6.2016	Lesvos	A protest broke out at a reception centre for migrants in the area of Moria near the island's main port, leaving several people injured and widespread damage at the camp.	http://www.ekathimerini.com/209279/article/ekathimerini/news/tensions-simmer-on-lesvos-after-migrant-riot
6.6.2016	Chios, Souda	People living in Souda camp started a fire, protesting their detention. Several reporters and local volunteers report that Golden Dawn supporters took advantage of yesterday's tensions at Souda and attacked some volunteers and asylum seekers. A volunteer was taken to the hospital.	https://medium.com/@AreYouSyrious/ays-daily-digest-refugees-afraid-for-their-security-in-camps-37a1c6a78c0d#qime9tdjp http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/06/refugees-greece-chios-fear-violence-160622125507719.html
7.6.2016	Chios	People protesting.	http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/789455/migrants-set-fire-to-greece-camp
15.6.2016	Lesvos	Conditions are worsening at refugee centres on the Greek islands, with police using force to quell dissent and calling residents "dogs", according to sources inside the camps.	http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/overcrowding-poor-conditions-fanning-tensions-greek-refugee-hotspots-997696337
24.6.2016	Lesvos, Moria	Police violence against unaccompanied and separated children.	http://mdmgreece.gr/en/press-release-reported-incident-police-violence-towards-unaccompanied-minors-moria-reception-center-lesvos/ http://www.ekathimerini.com/210005/article/ekathimerini/news/doctor-s-of-the-world-accuses-police-of-violence-against-migrant-children
9.7.2016	Leros	Local media report that approximately 200 people, left the Hotspot and walked to the city centre, asking to leave the Hotspot because they are afraid for their lives. Then, tensions erupted between the locals, asylum seekers, police and NGO members.	https://www.thenationalherald.com/129557/migrants-on-leros-clash-with-greek-riot-cops/
14.7.2016	Leros	Children from the Leros hotspot were taken to Amygdaleza detention centre in Athens. Most of them were accused of rioting in the Hotspot.	https://medium.com/@AreYouSyrious/ays-8-7-fear-of-more-violence-in-cherso-and-leros-refugees-beaten-in-hungary-1414ba1431ce#.ibpywser3
16-17.7.2016	Lesvos, Moria	Tensions erupted at Moria during the weekend. Extended detention and the uncertainty made people furious and angry, triggering fights.	http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/jaz-ohara/refugee-crisis_b_9538874.html
24.7.2016	Samos	A 19-years-old Syrian was arrested for raping a 34-years-old Syrian woman.	http://en.protothema.gr/syrian-refugee-rapes-woman-16-times-at-samos-hotspot/
5.8.2016	Chios, Vial	Tensions erupted at Vial. Protest ended after riot police intervene. A policeman was slightly injured.	http://www.newsit.gr/topikes-eidhseis/Xios-Traymatistike-astynomikos-sti-VI-AL-Efage-petra-sto-prosopo/640492 http://www.zougla.gr/greece/article/xios-entasi-ke-episodia-sto-hotspot-me-metanastes

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9.8.2016	Chios	Tensions erupted again. People complained about their extended detention and for the late responses on their asylum applications. Volunteers and asylum seekers denounce police violence and ill treatment.	http://newpost.gr/ellada/552674/epeisodia-me-prosfyges-sto-hot-spot-sth-xio-binteo
2.9.2016	Kos	Fire broke out in a housing unit earlier today. Firefighters extinguished it in time. No injuries were reported. Due to the smoke two children were taken to the hospital.	http://www.news.gr/ellada/koinonia/article/278657/xespase-fotia-se-katavismo-prosfygon-sthn-ko.html
9.9.2016	Chios	Tensions erupted. Some people set fire to mattresses protesting about the living conditions and the delays in processing asylum applications. Protest stopped after police intervened. No reports of injuries.	Confirmed by Save the Children field teams
13.9.2016	Chios	Attacks on refugees and migrants in Chios.	Confirmed by Save the Children field teams
14.9.2016	Chios	Tensions erupted on Chios as a group of locals, were protesting the delayed decongestion of the Hotspot, and they tried to attack Souda camp. Riot police intervened.	http://greece.greekreporter.com/2016/09/15/police-use-tear-gas-on-chios-residents-protesting-migrant-situation/ http://tvxs.gr/news/ellada/epeisodia-sti-xio-se-poreia-kata-ton-prosfygon-binteo
16.9.2016	Chios	Local residents on Chios sprayed with tear gas by police as they protested against the Souda refugee camp on the island.	http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3792576/Turkish-coastguards-ried-drown-Fist-fights-locals-sprayed-tear-gas-Greece-refugee-arrivals-DOUBLE-1-000-one-week.html
20.9.2016	Lesvos, Moria	Fire broke out in the camp.	http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-37413710
20.9.2016	Leros	Fire broke out on Leros, near the Hotspot.	http://www.skai.gr/news/greece/article/324995/upo-elegho-i-fotia-sti-leroi/
22.9.2016	Chios, Souda	Tensions erupted: The daily politischios.gr claims that Algerians with drinking problems caused the fight. Also, families asked to be moved to other sites. 4 people were slightly injured and taken to the hospital. 15 were arrested and will probably be moved to a mainland detention centre and then deported.	http://www.politischios.gr/koinonia/nyhta-entasis-sti-soyda-me-petropolemo-kai-prosagoges
28.9.2016	Lesvos, Moria	Greek police say four Pakistani teenagers were arrested in a refugee camp on the eastern Aegean island of Lesbos on charges of raping another teenage boy.	http://www.efsyn.gr/arthro/omadikos-viasmos-asynodeytoy-prosfyga
29.9.2016	Chios	Chios residents protest against more migrant camps on Island.	http://greece.greekreporter.com/2016/09/29/chios-residents-protest-against-more-migrant-camps-on-island/
8.10.2016	Chios, Souda	Tensions erupted once again at Souda, which remains overcrowded and its facilities do not protect people from weather conditions. Riot police intervened. Three people were arrested.	http://www.politischios.gr/koinonia/ektetamena-epeisodia-kai-fotia-sti-soyda
20.10.2016	Chios, Vial	Tensions erupted once again at Vial. People blocked the camp's entrances, protesting the delays in the determination of their status. People also protested yesterday for the same reasons. Increased police presence on site, but still no need to intervene.	http://www.athina984.gr/2016/10/20/chios-diamartyries-prosfygon-sti-Vial/
24.10.2016	Lesvos, Moria	EASO mobile office was burnt down as a result of a protest.	http://www.thetoc.gr/koinwnia/article/eksegersi-kai-fwitia-sto-hotspot-tis-morias-sti-lesbo
24.10.2016	Samos	Tensions erupted at the Hotspot and riot police intervened. Two Afghans were arrested.	Confirmed by Save the Children field staff
26.10.2016	Chios, Vial	A woman attacked members of the UNCHR staff after asking about the progress of her asylum application. Tensions escalated as people started to burn blankets. The police intervened.	http://www.newsit.gr/topikes-eidhseis/Kazani-poy-vrazei-i-Xios-Ekapsan-koyvertes-sto-hot-spot-oi-metanastes-meta-ta-aimatira-epeisodia/668413 http://www.newsit.gr/topikes-eidhseis/Epeisodia-me-ksylo-kai-traymatismoys-sto-hot-spot-tis-Xioy/66831

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27.10.2016	Chios, Vial	Tensions erupted at Vial. Riot police intervened. Asylum Service employees and NGO workers evacuated the camp for safety reasons.	http://www.politischios.gr/koinonia/bradia-epeisodion-sti-bial
8.11.2016	Samos	Tensions erupted yesterday at the Hotspot. Samiakoslogos.gr reports that locals attacked refugees. Tensions ended after riot police intervened. Two people, slightly injured, were taken to the hospital.	http://samiaki.tv/entash-sto-hot-spot-ths-samoy/
9.11.2016	Chios	Storm hits Chios. Strong wind destroyed some tents. Tension grew among migrants and refugees in the camp, and things escalated quite quickly. It all resulted in a fire, and one container being burned down.	http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2016/11/10/refugees-migrants-set-fire-in-chios-hot-spot-protest-conditions-in-samos-video-picts/ Video by a local TV-channel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsRkZRAHyg .
9.11.2016	Samos	Tensions erupted on Samos yesterday, after the rainy and stormy weather destroyed people's tents.	http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2016/11/10/refugees-migrants-set-fire-in-chios-hot-spot-protest-conditions-in-samos-video-picts/
17-18.11.2016	Chios, Souda	Tensions erupted on 17/11. Golden Dawn supporters threw Molotov cocktails into the camp. Police on site did not intervene. Also, on 18/11, Golden Dawn members attacked the camp and threw stones. A Syrian was taken to the hospital. Police did not intervene.	http://www.huffingtonpost.gr/2016/11/18/metanasteutiko-chios_n_13074096.html
19 - 20.11.2016	Chios, Souda	Tensions ongoing. during the weekend about 100 people fearing a third attack by locals refused to re-enter the camp, instead taking shelter in a nearby car park.	http://www.huffingtonpost.gr/2016/11/18/metanasteutiko-chios_n_13074096.html
21.11.2016	Samos	Fight erupted between Moroccans and Afghans. Two people were taken to the hospital.	https://samiakienimerosi.blogspot.gr/2016/11/2_21.html
25.11.2016	Lesvos	Two Kurdish refugees from Iraq died in an explosion at the Moria refugee camp. The explosion was caused by a fire, which soon spread to neighbouring tents. Several people were injured: a woman with her child were referred to a hospital in Athens and at least 10 people, with minor burns, were taken to Mytilene hospital.	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/25/fire-breaks-out-at-lesvos-migrant-camp-moria
29.11.2016	Samos	A young Iraqi alleged being tortured by the police.	http://www.efsyn.gr/arthro/vasanismos-prosfyga-sti-samo
15.2.2017	Chios, Vial	Frustration among the local populations in Chalkeios village due to the transfer of containers in the Vialhotspot for accommodating the asylum service premises.	http://www.politischios.gr/politiki/epi-podos-polemoy-sto-halkeios-giata-konteiners
23.1.2017	Chios	A 27-year-old Syrian man attempted suicide.	http://www.cnn.gr/news/ellada/story/64771/xios-treis-apopeires-aytoktonias-prosfygon-se-mia-evdomada
24.1.2017	Lesvos, Moria	A 22-year-old Egyptian man was found dead in Moria due to pathological reasons.	http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2017/01/29/lesvos-second-refugee-dies-at-the-hot-spot-of-moria/
25.1.2017	Samos	A 41-year-old Iraqi died in hospital after suffering a cardiac arrest.	http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2017/01/29/lesvos-second-refugee-dies-at-the-hot-spot-of-moria/
27.1.2017	Samos	Four people attempted suicide.	http://infomobile.w2eu.net/2017/01/29/death-in-greek-camps/
29.1.2017	Lesvos, Moria	A 46-year-old Syrian was found dead in his tent in Moria. The cause of death of the man was found inhaling the fumes of a makeshift stove.	http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2017/01/29/lesvos-second-refugee-dies-at-the-hot-spot-of-moria/
30.1.2017	Lesvos, Moria	A 20-year-old Pakistani was found dead. The causes of the death were not confirmed.	http://news.trust.org/item/20170130132902-hxw4b/?source=gep
30.1.2017	Lesvos, Moria	A 30-year-old Afghan man, living in the same tent as the 20-year-old Pakistani who was found dead, was transferred to a local hospital. He was poisoned by carbon monoxide emissions from a makeshift stove.	http://www.keeptalkinggreece.com/2017/01/31/alarm-in-greece-as-four-migrants-die-in-refugee-camps-in-a-week/

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3.2.2017	Lesvos, Moria	People protested in Moria about the deaths in the camp.	http://www.politischios.gr/koinonia/ston-dromo-metanastes-kai-prosfyges-sti-lesbo-gia-toys-thanatoys-sti-moria-binteo-foto http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2017/02/04/509046/Greece-Lesbos-Moria-refugee-camp-protest
6 – 12.2.2017	Samos	UNHCR regularly received reports of incidents of self-harm, suicide attempts, and panic attacks on Samos.	http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/53740.pdf

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ⁱⁱ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Operations Portal – Refugee Situations. Accessed on 13/03/2017:

<http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179>

ⁱⁱⁱ European Commission, 2016, Joint Action Plan. Accessed on 27/02/2017 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/december2016-action-plan-migration-crisis-management_en.pdf

^{iv} Ibid.

^v European Commission, 2016, EU-Turkey Statement. 18 March 2016. Accessed on 04/02/2017:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18-eu-turkey-Deal/>

^{vi} Ibid.

^{vii} Under the EU-Turkey Deal, five camps, or “hotspots” on the Aegean islands were transformed into closed reception facilities to avoid irregular migrants absconding when they are subject to return decisions. In some hotspots, certain migrants and refugees are given daily passes to leave and return to the camp before a certain hour. No one is allowed to leave the island until a decision has been made on their case. European Commission, 2016. Accessed on 04/02/2017: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-1221_en.htm

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^{ix} UNHCR, Operations Portal – Refugee Situations. Accessed on 02/02/2017:

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^{xiii} Fourth Report on the Progress made in the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement, 08 December 2016). Accessed on

12/03/2017: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/20161208/4th_report_on_the_progress_made_in_the_implementation_of_the_eu-turkey_statement_en.pdf

^{xiv} The Guardian: Greece side-lines officials who blocked expulsion of refugees to Turkey: Under pressure from Europe, Greek MPs vote to change composition of committees that held up planned deportations., 17 June, 2016. Accessed on 25/02/2017.

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^{xvi} Save the Children, 2017, Invisible Wounds: the impact of six years of war on the mental health of Syria’s children. Accessed on 12/03/2017: <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/invisible-wounds>

^{xvii} A Child-Friendly Space, or CFS, is a safe space where children and youths can engage in psychosocial and non-formal education activities in a safe and stable environment, and in the presence of trained professionals. Activities in Save the

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Children's CFSs are also used to identify trauma and vulnerability in children, and then either refer the child to other specialized organizations, or follow up one-on-one with the child and their family through.

^{xviii} Fazel, Mina et al., 2012, Mental health of displaced and refugee children resettled in high-income countries: risk and protective factors, *The Lancet*, Volume 379, Issue 9812, 266 – 282, [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(11\)60051-2/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(11)60051-2/fulltext)

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^{xxi} Toxic stress “can occur when a child experiences strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity—such as physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence, and/or the accumulated burdens of family economic hardship—without adequate adult support.” Centre on the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2017.

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http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights_child/data_children_in_migration.pdf

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*Names have been changed for protection purposes.