

**MANUAL OF STANDARD  
OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
applicable to the 'Pournara' First  
Reception Centre

28 July 2020

These Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) contain instructions for managing the ‘Pournara’ Frist Reception Centre. They define the role and processes to be implemented by personnel employed in ‘Pournara’, as well as those all involved within national and European bodies, international organisations, civil society (e.g. NGOs) as well as volunteers’ networks active in the centre. The procedures listed in this document are to be used for activities organised within the centre. In the event of discrepancies between this document and the applicable legislation, the latter shall apply.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALDO	Advanced Level Document Officer/ experts (Frontex)
ARC	Aliens Registration Certificate
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Repatriation
CAS	Cyprus' Asylum Service
CRMD	Civil Registry and Migration Department
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
Europol	European Union's law enforcement agency
Europol GOs	Europol Guest Officers
Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
Frontex TM	Frontex Team Member
JTD	Joint Debriefing Team
MoH	Ministry of Health
NFIs	Non-Food Items
RCD	Reception Conditions Directive 2013/33/EU
SSCs	Secondary Security Checks
SWS	Social Welfare Services
TCN	Third Country National

## I. INTRODUCTION

In order to cope successfully with rising migration pressure in Cyprus, the Cypriot government with EU support (European Commission and Union agencies) has established a fully-fledged first reception centre in 'Pournara' for third-country nationals arriving irregularly in Cyprus with the aim of managing incoming mixed migration flows more efficiently and effectively. This approach aims to achieving swiftly identifying, registering and fingerprinting arriving migrants, and channelling them to the relevant follow-up procedures.

This duration of the stay in a closed centre such as 'Pournara' for the purposes of identification should, in principle, not exceed 5 days. Any extension of stay must be in line with Article 8 of the Reception Conditions Directive 2013/33/EU (RCD), i.e. necessity of detention, an individual assessment and detention only for grounds laid out in Article 8(3) of the RCD.

There is an imminent need to streamline processes and ensure coordination between the different actors involved throughout the migration management chain, i.e. from first arrival to their channelling into the asylum or return procedures, while ensuring an effective crosscutting mechanism for vulnerable migrants. Concerning the asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups their referral upon exiting 'Pournara' will take place based on a comprehensive reception strategy, compliant with the relevant EU legislation and reception standards.

The Aliens Registration Certificate (ARC) should be issued first as the "unique identifier number" of a migrant, or at least at the same time (*but in any event not after*) with any other file number e.g. the asylum file number. The ARC should be issued electronically to all migrants been processed irrespectively of any follow-up legal status.

In order to help Cyprus enhance and fully align and streamline the registration and follow-up procedures, the Commission jointly with EASO, Frontex and Europol agreed with the Cypriot authorities on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the 'Pournara' centre as laid out in this document. These are to be considered as regular procedures; contingency procedures and relevant protocols should be developed in parallel, e.g. in the context of COVID-19 situation, for backlog management including an appointments' system and for asylum pre-registration in case of mass arrivals.

EASO, Europol and Frontex will support the Cypriot authorities throughout these procedures, as indicated in this document, within their legal mandates and in line with their respective operational plans agreed with Cyprus. Key actors remain the competent relevant authorities, in no way being substituted by the EU agencies. The European Commission contributes financially and operationally in addressing the migration management issues, including in relation to 'Pournara' centre, as deemed necessary.

## II. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

### General Principles

Identification and first reception procedures shall be carried out in the ‘Pournara’ centre. All third country nationals who enter the country without complying with the legal formalities shall be submitted to reception and identification procedures.

### Applicability of Standard Operating Procedures

The present procedures shall apply to all authorities and entities working within the ‘Pournara’ centre. This does not exclude the application of procedures described herein in other contingency cases of migratory flow management outside ‘Pournara’ (particularly at arrival points, in relation to the provision of information, commencement of TCN identification, etc.).

### Administrative Structure of ‘Pournara’ centre

The smooth operation of the centre shall be supervised by the Asylum Service centrally. It shall be headed by a manager who coordinates, provides guidance and monitors the work of the staff employed in ‘Pournara’ and ensures the proper functioning of the centre in cooperation with all other competent national authorities and bodies. On the basis of single authorisations issued by the Asylum Service, other entities, including non-governmental organisations, may have the rights to access for the provision of specific, upon request services and activities, without adversely affecting the operation of the centre.

PROCEDURE	ACTORS	
<p><b>0. For mass arrivals such as arrivals by boats, existing national protocols apply (i.e. ‘Nafkratis’ plan) at the point of disembarkation/ arrival prior to the transfer at ‘Pournara’ centre. In case of individuals, they are transferred directly to ‘Pournara’ centre.</b></p>		
<p><b>1. Transfer to ‘Pournara’ centre (procedure and details in annex I)<sup>1</sup></b></p>		
a.	TCNs presenting at Immigration Police branches across Cyprus	CAS
b.	Arrivals by boat	CAS
c.	Apprehensions across Cyprus	CAS
<p><b>2. Upon arrival at ‘Pournara’ centre of those migrants entering Cyprus illegally – at waiting area outside the centre</b></p>		
a.	Check of belongings and documents/ body checks according to the relevant Police directives [ <i>notably to ensure evidence collection and safety</i> ]	Police
b.	<i>Initial Medical check – based on usual visual indicators and identification of vulnerable TCNs</i>	MoH, CAS
c.	First general information regarding the procedure taking place at ‘Pournara’, rules during stay, provision of information on asylum procedure and voluntary return option ( <i>orally and with leaflets</i> ).	CAS, IOM AVRR project representative/ CRMD

<sup>1</sup> N.B.: During the COVID-19 pandemic, to protect the safety and security of the persons working or staying in ‘Pournara’, migrants having entered Cyprus irregularly (e.g. by sea) will first be transferred to an isolated quarantine site to undergo a 15-day quarantine period before being transferred to the ‘Pournara’ centre.

<b>3. Screening, Registration and Identification Procedure</b>		
<p><b>Screening</b> procedure is to support the identification of the nationalities of migrants, thus facilitating the returns as well as the referral of those who need protection. Each migrant for whom the country of origin cannot be proved or it is doubtful, is subject to the screening process to establish his nationality or ethnic origin by examining language, dialect, knowledge on his place of origin, behaviour, anthropologic profile and cultural aspects. The screeners could also collect some brief highlight information about the main departure areas, nationality and ethnicity pattern, age, gender pattern, religion and modi operandi. <b>Advanced Level Document Experts (ALDO)</b> are deployed and integrated within the screening teams, to enhance checks of the travel documents of irregular migrants. An essential part of the screening process also involves identifying potentially dangerous individuals who could pose a threat to European security on the basis of various risk indicators.</p>		
a.	<i>Recording of TCN data and document checks (if documented),</i> including an initial sift of incoming migrants on the basis of key risk indicators.	Police, Frontex, Europol
b.	<i>Fingerprinting and photo recording</i>	Police, Frontex
c.	<i>Encoding outcome of 3a and 3b in CRMD IT database</i>	Police/ CRMD
d.	<i>Registration and issuance of ARC</i>	CRMD
e.	<i>Checks against national databases, Interpol and Eurodac databases</i>	Police
f.	<i>Debriefing which is done voluntarily and anonymously</i> Subjects debriefed by Frontex and having any indication of any involvement in serious organized crime or terrorism, need to be clearly referred to the CY authorities for additional SSCs in coordination with Europol GOs. The debriefing aims at improving intelligence capacity (including personal data) of Frontex to better focus its activities; supporting Member States' authorities in criminal investigations; obtaining information from detected persons entered illegally to produce intelligence concerning country of origin, reasons for traveling, modus operandi, routes, involvement of facilitators, information channeled to national authorities. The interviews are conducted by the JDT which consist of CY Police officer, Frontex TM and interpreter. The key elements for a successful interview is the privacy and the confidence established between the experts and the migrant; thus the interviews are to be conducted without the presence of any other person. Europol will be notified by the police in case there is need for secondary security checks.	Police, Frontex
<b>4. Law Enforcement Control</b>		
a.	Secondary security checks (subjects selected based on risk indicators)	Police, Europol
b.	Possible development of further investigative actions when required by the national CY authorities	Police, Europol
<b>5. Medical Screening</b>		
a.	<i>Initial medical screening and assessment – which can be completed within the day and at the centre</i>	MoH
b.	Identification of vulnerable persons	CAS, MoH, SWS
c.	<i>Psychosocial support</i>	MoH

<b>6. Shelter Allocation in 'Pournara'</b>		
a.	<i>Shelter Allocation in 'Pournara', including in safe zone, infectious disease zone etc.</i>	CAS, SWS, EASO
b.	<i>Referral of vulnerable cases, including as concluded from previous steps</i>	SWS, CAS, EASO
c.	<i>Provision of NFIs</i>	CAS
<b>7. Conclusion of medical tests and assessment</b>		
a.	<i>E.g. mado test etc.</i>	MoH
<b>8. Channelling to asylum or return procedures</b>		
a.	Expression of will for asylum application	CAS, EASO
b.	Initiation of return process with the issuance of a return decision, AVRR/ Forced returns ( <i>once forced return process is initiated → transfer to pre-detention facilities or application of alternative to detention measures</i> ), encoding to a Return Case Management System.	CRMD, Police, IOM
<b>9. Asylum Procedure</b>		
a.	International Protection Application ( <i>provision of information incl. the basic rights and obligations of the person; registration/lodging</i> )	CAS, EASO, Aliens & Immigration Police
b.	Vulnerability screening, in the context of the asylum procedure ( <i>screening vulnerability form</i> ) and reallocation of shelter accordingly if needed.	CAS, SWS, EASO
c.	Collection of applicants' documents, including those kept by the Police as per point 2a, Dublin Questionnaire. CAS collects any documents an applicant possesses for the purpose of verification of his and his family identity, country of origin and family situation. Applicants obtain a receipt. Passport of applicants are kept by CAS.	CAS, EASO
d.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a file/F number in CAS IT database;</li> <li>• Issuance of a confirmation letter</li> </ul>	CAS (coordination), EASO, Aliens & Immigration Police
e.	Archiving of the files	CAS
g.	Scheduling of appointment for 1 <sup>st</sup> instance asylum interview.	CAS
<b>10. Reception Process for Asylum Seekers</b>		
a.	Shelter allocation outside 'Pournara'	CAS and SWS
b.	Provision of NFIs and timely provision of advances, coupons as relevant	SWS