Workshop Discussion Paper

Workshop 2: Registration procedure

Workshop leads: Sebastien Revoy, Maria Papaioannou (EASO)

1. Background

The Asylum Procedures Directive (APD) distinguishes three different phases in the registration procedure: making, registering and lodging an application for international protection. Although these three stages are often conducted concurrently, it is not necessarily always the case.

Making an application for international protection is the act of expressing, in any way and to any authority, one's wish to obtain international protection. After an application is made, it must be registered by an authority competent for registration under national Law. The registration consists in recording the applicant's intention to seek protection. According to article 6 APD, an application must be registered no later than three working days if it has been made to an authority responsible for registering it, or no later than six working days in case the application has been made to other authorities (such as the police, border guards, immigration authorities and/or personnel of detention facilities). Under exceptional circumstances, when a large number of simultaneous applications make it very difficult in practice to respect the given time limits, it can be extended to 10 working days. Finally, art. 6 (2) APD states that a person who has made an application should have an effective opportunity to lodge it as soon as possible. Lodging an application for international protection means for the applicant to provide information/documents to complete the file created at the time of registering the application. Lodging of the application triggers the start of the first-instance examination. Member States may set rules on how and where lodging is to take place, and national set-ups for the registration procedure vary greatly from one Member State to another.

The registration procedure is intended to gather standard information about an applicant, with the objective of making the rights and obligations resulting from an application more effective. In practice, during the registration procedure the information is collected from the applicant (i.e. from his written and oral statements, and the submitted documents) and the consultation of various

databases (i.e. EURODAC, European Visa Information System, Schengen Information System, police records).

In addition, over the last years several Member States have engaged in streamlining asylum procedures through investing in a strengthened registration step at the beginning of the procedure. In particular, newly IT-identification tools are being developed and used during the registration procedure. Such tools include voice biometrics, image biometrics, reading of cell phone data and phonetic transcription of names in Roman alphabet (e.g. for Arabic or Cyrillic names).

The information collected during the registration procedure serves different purposes. It permits an asylum authority to make more informed assessments of the number and profile of applicants. It also permits to identify the special needs of vulnerable persons and to refer them for further assessment and/or support to national authorities. Finally, it allows the early identification of potential Dublin cases.

The key challenge of the registration procedure is the capacity to collect, in a timely manner, information about an applicant that is accurate and reliable. In addition, given the fast-evolving context and the unpredictable fluctuation of the number of individuals seeking asylum, registration procedures need to have the capacity to rapidly scale up, in case for example of a mass influx. Registration procedures can benefit from innovative strategies, tools and processes in order to respond to these needs challenges.

2. *Structure of the workshop*

- Kick of exercise
- Thematic introduction to the workshop by the workshop leads
- Splitting up in smaller groups for action-oriented discussions
- Discussions in smaller groups formulating recommendations
- Reporting back to workshop group
- Closing

3. *Key questions/issues to be discussed:*

- *What can be CSOs' roles in the registration procedure? How can CSO's support applicants prior and during the registration procedure? And how can CSO contribute in collecting information that is accurate and reliable during the registration procedure?*
- *How can registration procedures be conducted in a timely manner?*
- *How can registration procedures be rapidly scaled-up (e.g. in case of a mass influx)?*
- *What innovative strategies, tools (including IT tools) and methods can be used to increase the quality of the registration procedure?*
- *Should the registration procedures be the same regardless of the procedure or for specific cases (e.g. subsequent applications, border procedure, applicants in detention)?*