

# Recommendations on Dublin Transfers



# **Recommendations on Dublin Transfers**

**April 2023**

On 19 January 2022 the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) became the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). All references to EASO, EASO products and bodies should be understood as references to the EUAA.



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## About the guide

**Why were these recommendations created?** The mission of the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) is to facilitate and support the activities of European Union Member States and associated countries (EU+ countries<sup>(1)</sup>) in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). According to its overall aim to promote a correct and effective implementation of the CEAS and to enable convergence, the EUAA develops common operational standards and indicators, guidelines and practical tools.

These recommendations were originally developed in March 2019, and complemented with additional recommendations on Dublin transfers during the COVID-19 pandemic in July 2020. The current version is the result of the first full revision finalised in March 2023, which updated and merged the two previously developed sets of recommendations.

These revised recommendations were developed in parallel with the roadmap for improving the implementation of transfers under the Dublin III regulation endorsed in the meeting of the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum (SCIFA) on 29 November 2022. In part, these recommendations help to operationalise actions within the roadmap, but they also include standalone recommendations. In the roadmap Member States agreed to effectively use and implement these recommendations and associated tools.

**How were these recommendations developed?** These recommendations were drafted by the EUAA and a working group of Member States experts, based on the outcome of several thematic meetings of the EUAA Network of Dublin Units. The working group was composed of Tanja Balic (Germany), Alexandra Briasouli (Greece), Alexandru Cismigiu (Romania), Sabine Duvefelt (Sweden), Laura Jesaulkova (Latvia), Ivan Levente Papp (Malta) and Maria Cristina Tusti (Italy). Valuable input was provided by the European Commission. Before its finalisation, a consultation of the recommendations was carried out with all members of the EUAA Network of Dublin Units. The recommendations have been approved by the Management Board of the EUAA on 3 April 2023.

**Who should use these recommendations?** These recommendations are intended for all staff categories that are involved in the planning, organisation and execution of Dublin transfers. The majority of the recommendations are intended for Dublin case officers and staff in Member State authorities working operationally on Dublin transfers. Portions of the recommendations concern organisational aspects are directed more to managers, decision-makers and policymakers in the national determining authorities. Additionally, this tool is useful for any person working with stakeholders and partners involved in various parts of the Dublin transfer procedure.

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<sup>(1)</sup> The 27 Member States of the European Union, complemented by Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.





**How should I use these recommendations?** This guide is structured into chapters covering various thematic parts of the Dublin transfer procedure. Within the chapters you will find recommendations and examples of good practices along with additional notes and references to other guidance and tools developed by the EUAA Network of Dublin Units.

**How do these recommendations relate to national legislation and practice?** This is a convergence tool to promote the further harmonisation of the practices of the Member States and to support the cooperation between Member States to carry out Dublin transfers. It is not legally binding. The recommendations reflect commonly agreed best practices.

**How do these recommendations relate to other EUAA tools?** The recommendations on Dublin transfers should be used in conjunction with other available practical guides and tools. All EUAA practical tools are publicly available online on the EUAA website: <https://euaa.europa.eu/practical-tools-and-guides>

#### **Disclaimer**

These recommendations were prepared without prejudice to the principle that only the Court of Justice of the European Union can give an authoritative interpretation of EU law.





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## List of terms and abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
<b>Dublin III regulation</b>	Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast)
<b>DubliNet</b>	Secure electronic network of transmission channels between the national authorities dealing with asylum applications
<b>EUAA</b>	European Union Agency for Asylum
<b>Eurodac II regulation</b>	Regulation (EU) No 603/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on the establishment of 'Eurodac' for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person and on requests for the comparison with Eurodac data by Member States' law enforcement authorities and Europol for law enforcement purposes, and amending Regulation (EU) No 1077/2011 establishing a European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice
<b>Implementing regulation</b>	Commission Implementing regulation (EU) No 1560/2003 of 2 September 2003 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 343/2003 establishing criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national, as amended by Regulation 118/2014 of 30 January 2014
<b>Member State(s)</b>	Member State(s) of the European Union plus Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein applying the Dublin III regulation



# Key considerations for Dublin transfers

Conducting Dublin transfers requires considerable efforts on the parts of both the sending and the receiving Member State. The following general key considerations underly the successful execution of Dublin transfers.

## **Mutual trust and cooperation**

In the spirit of mutual cooperation, all stakeholders involved should view the success of the Dublin transfer as the fruit of a mutual effort, and act accordingly at all stages of the procedure.

## **Flexibility**

The organisation of Dublin transfers includes a lot of variables. Although well thought through procedures and careful planning can help to mitigate some of the issues that may arise, there will always be a risk of unforeseen developments. All involved parties should take a flexible approach that seeks practical solutions with minimum impact on others when dealing with such unexpected events.

## **Open and clear communication**

It is important for the success of Dublin transfers that the Member States are open and clear with each other in their communication. It is also important that they share all the relevant information in a timely fashion, without overburdening the other Member State with information that is not relevant.

## **Efficiency**

The Dublin procedure seeks to ensure that applicants for international protection have swift access to the asylum procedure. Developing efficient procedures for Dublin transfers is in the interest of the applicant as well as both the sending and receiving Member States.



# Cooperation

Arranging Dublin transfers can involve many different stakeholders within both the sending and receiving Member States. The exact organisational setup will depend on the Member State, whether the transfer involves a child, a family or vulnerable applicant, if the applicant is housed in a reception facility or not, etc.

## **Good practice: Dublin day**

The 'Dublin day' organised by the Dublin Unit of the Netherlands is a good practice for improving cooperation between national stakeholders. On this day, the Dublin Unit invites over 100 persons from partner organisations for a day of presentations and workshops on the common efforts in implementing the Dublin III regulation <sup>(2)</sup>. Such an occasion can serve as a good way to foster further cooperation, better understanding of the roles, challenges and needs of various stakeholders and thereby strengthening cooperation.

## **Good practice: information leaflets for stakeholders**

Dublin Units may prepare short information leaflets intended for the other stakeholders involved in the Dublin transfers, explaining how their contributions in the procedure help to achieve a successful Dublin transfer. Ensuring that stakeholders understand not only that they should perform certain tasks, but how these tasks contribute to the successful organisation of a Dublin transfer can contribute to strengthening the overall cooperation between the stakeholders. Such leaflets should be adapted to the needs of the different stakeholders. For example, the German Dublin Unit provides leaflets with information about the Dublin procedure to the local authorities responsible for various tasks related to Dublin transfers.

## Recommendation 1. Agree the tasks and lines of communication between national stakeholders in writing

When the modalities for the cooperation between stakeholders within a Member State are agreed and formalised it is easier to ensure the continuity of good practices and cooperation, for instance following staff changes in either of the cooperating organisations.

When procedures are formalised in writing it is also easier for all parties to suggest improvements, assuming that there is a framework to do so. Member State authorities should conduct recurring periodic reviews of such modalities between the stakeholders concerned. Such reviews can offer a possibility to discuss operational challenges and ways to improve the cooperation.

<sup>(2)</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) No 604/2013](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast).



Dublin transfers can involve many different stakeholders. There can be extensive cooperation between some while others are only involved in limited parts of the procedure. It is beneficial for staff working on Dublin transfers to have access to consolidated information on the tasks and lines of communication between the various stakeholders involved in the different stages of a Dublin transfer in one guidance document.

Ensuring that tasks, and lines of communication which have been formally agreed between stakeholders are available in a single operational document can greatly facilitate the task of providing such a consolidated overview to staff involved in Dublin transfers.

## Recommendation 2. Actively work to improve the cooperation between Member States on Dublin transfers

The organisation of Dublin transfers requires a considerable amount of practical cooperation between the Member States conducting the transfer. In order to streamline the practical cooperation, Member States may conduct different forms of agreements between themselves.

Cooperation agreements between Member States can be formal bilateral or multilateral agreements. Agreements can also be less formal, or agreements limited, for example, to the ad hoc organisation of a single group transfer.

Member States should endeavour to continuously develop and improve on their existing agreements relating to Dublin transfers with other Member States. By conducting regular meetings between the partners that have signed such a cooperation agreement, it is possible to ensure that the cooperation is continuously strengthened and that common issues between partners can be addressed.

### **Good practice: bilateral cooperation agreements on Dublin transfers**

Having bilateral cooperation agreements between key partner countries on Dublin transfers offers a possibility to agree on such practical modalities and procedures that will benefit the authorities of both Member States and facilitate the organisation of Dublin transfers. Such modalities can include, for example, border crossing points that can be used for the transfer, convenient transfer dates for both the receiving and sending Member States, increased availabilities and contact information for different cases.

### **Good practice: liaison officers**

Having access to liaison officers in key partner countries can be a very good way to improve the practical cooperation around Dublin transfers and to address operational challenges in an efficient way. Liaison officers, for instance, can help finding practical solutions in urgent cases where direct communication between the Member States can contribute to solving time-sensitive matters. Deploying liaison officers can also help Member States to get a better understanding of the practical and organisational challenges facing their closest partners when conducting Dublin transfers.



## Family considerations

### Recommendation 3. Inform the receiving Member State of the birth of a child by transmitting the birth certificate

If it does not come to the attention of the sending Member State until after receiving an acceptance letter that a child has been born, there is no need to send a new request for the child. The sending Member State should, however, provide the receiving Member State with information about the birth with an official birth certificate or any other official document that provides information about the birth as soon as possible.

If the birth certificate or other official document is not directly available to the Dublin Unit in the sending Member State, they must nonetheless notify the other Member State of the birth without delay. They must ensure that all relevant documents are communicated as soon as possible to the receiving Member State.

### Recommendation 4. Allow for flexibility when a family member absconds

The members of a family should be transferred together according to the principles of family unity and the best interests of the child. If a family member absconds before the transfer, it is important that the sending Member State carries out a case-by-case assessment of whether the transfer of the remaining family members should still go ahead. This assessment is conducted in consultation with the receiving Member State, and considering relevant jurisprudence.

If a case-by-case assessment reaches the conclusion that the remaining family members should be transferred, especially if one of the family members has deliberately abandoned the family unit, the receiving Member State should show flexibility in allowing the transfer to go ahead.

As a general principle, if a child absconds the transfer of the remaining family members should not go ahead out of respect to the principle of family unity. In cases with adult couples, the transfer of the remaining spouse or partner should, as a general principle, go ahead even if the other spouse or partner has absconded.



## Health related considerations



### Dublin III regulation

#### Article 32

#### Implementing regulation

#### Article 15(a) and 20(1)

Annex IX of the implementing regulation is used in case the applicant has health issues and has given the consent for the exchange of this information. The form allows the sending Member State to provide the receiving Member State with all of the details of the medical treatment needed in order to prepare for the arrival of the person(s).

Annex IX should always be transmitted exclusively through DubliNet. As specified in the implementing regulation, the transmission of the common health certificate should be identified as type 7 (DUB7) unless it is included as an attachment within the documents of a transfer announcement (DUB6).



### Remember: processing of medical information

Article 32(3) Dublin III regulation sets out that:

The processing of personal health data referred to in paragraph 1 shall only be carried out by a health professional who is subject, under national law or rules established by national competent bodies, to the obligation of professional secrecy or by another person subject to an equivalent obligation of professional secrecy.

As such it is important to remember that, depending on the national organisational setup, the bodies that may access health related information may vary between the Member States.

## Recommendation 5. Ensure that all necessary medical information is included in Annex IX

The sending Member State should ensure that the receiving Member State is given all the necessary information on the medical care (diagnosis, treatment, etc.) needed by the applicant so that all appropriate measures can be taken by the receiving Member State. This information should be provided in sufficient time in advance.

Although the main intention of Annex IX is to ensure that the healthcare needs of the person to be transferred are met during the transfer, and on arrival in the receiving Member State, the inclusion also of medical information with a longer term perspective can help the authorities in the receiving Member State to plan accordingly, especially in cases of severe illness.





If the receiving Member State has any questions with regards to the medical care needed by the applicant such information should be provided by the sending Member State as soon as possible.

Member States should ensure that when required Annex IX is always filled out and transmitted, in a timely manner, to the receiving Member State. Sending the medical information in Annex IX always requires the consent of the applicant.

[Annex 2. Minimum information for Annex IX](#) of these recommendations provides further details on the minimum information that should be provided in the form.

## Recommendation 6. Flag serious medical conditions in the body of the DubliNet message and Annex VI

Member States should ensure that information on the key modalities necessary to respond to the medical needs of the applicant and which are essential for the transfer and initial reception of the person, are summarised in English in the transfer form (Annex VI implementing regulation). This ensures that the correct information can be forwarded to all relevant stakeholders involved in the transfer.

When the person to be transferred has a serious medical condition which would, for instance, require support during the transfer or special arrangements in the receiving Member State, this should also be flagged in the body of the DubliNet message and in Annex VI.

Such a communication should be limited to a short message. It should not provide any specific details on the medical condition but instead draw the attention of the receiving Member State to the fact that the applicant suffers from a serious medical condition. For example, such a message could be: 'NOTE: Serious medical condition – see further information in Annex IX'.

This information should be provided sufficiently in advance.

## Recommendation 7. Ensure that medical documents are as up to date as possible

Member States should ensure that any medical documents that are sent are as recent and as up-to-date as possible. How close to the transfer the documents may need to be updated will depend on the medical condition of the person to be transferred. While an update may not be needed for chronic illnesses, for other types of acute illnesses a more recent update may be needed. If Member States provide the relevant medical information exclusively through Annex IX, they should also ensure that the information is as recent and up-to-date as possible.



**Remember: prioritising medical cases in quick procedures**

Prioritising medical cases, thereby speeding up their processing, can allow Member States to avoid having to resort to additional medical examinations in order to provide up-to-date medical documents.

## Recommendation 8. Conduct a medical examination when needed to ensure that the applicant is fit to travel

In cases where there are indicators in the file that the person might have medical issues, a medical examination should take place close to the travel date in order to confirm that the person is fit to travel. In cases involving serious health conditions, the declaration that the applicant is fit to travel should be made by medical staff.

All applicants must be fit to travel before the transfer. Adding fit-to-travel confirmation documents in all files can be good practice but is not a requirement as such. The transfer notification form also includes a box where the sending Member State can indicate that all persons are fit to travel.

**Remember: airline requirements**

Some airlines require a fit-to-travel confirmation in the form of a MEDA-form for applicants to be transferred. You can consult this and other airline requirements in the Dublin Transfer Table.

## Recommendation 9. If the applicant does not give consent for the exchange of medical information, share only the essential measures needed to safely receive the applicant

In cases where the applicant does not give consent for the exchange of medical information, a description of the modalities necessary to meet the immediate medical needs of the person to be transferred should be referred to in Annex VI under 'any other relevant information'. This information should be strictly limited to what is essential to carrying out the transfer in a safe way for the persons and staff involved.



## Recommendation 10. Ensure proper medical care during the transfer

For urgent medical needs, such as cases where immediate treatment or continuous monitoring is needed, the sending Member State should ensure that the applicant has access to the medication and/or medical advice and support, including medical escorts, that is needed during the travel and hand-over to the receiving Member State.

## Recommendation 11. Show flexibility when transfers cannot be conducted due to temporary medical issues

The time limit to transfer an applicant to the responsible Member State is not suspended if the applicant is temporarily unable to travel for medical reasons, for example if they are receiving critical medical care in a hospital. It is thus possible, in exceptional cases, that the deadlines to conduct the transfer would lapse before the transfer can be conducted.

In such cases, the sending Member State should provide the receiving Member State with all the relevant information before the lapsing of the transfer time limits, explaining the situation and when they expect that the applicant will be physically able to travel.

The sending and receiving Member States should consult each other on how to best manage the individual case. The receiving Member State should, within the legal possibilities of the Dublin III regulation, show a large degree of flexibility in dealing with such cases and strive to ensure in particular that both the principle of family unity and the protection of the best interests of the child can be maintained.



## Organising transfers



Dublin III regulation

Article 29

Implementing regulation

Article 8

### Recommendation 12. Ensure that case management systems allow for the prioritisation of cases

Dublin transfers are conducted under strict deadlines and often significant time-pressure. As such, ensuring that the case-management system used allows for the proper prioritisation of cases can help to ensure that resources are allocated effectively, and that actions are taken in a timely manner.

Cases involving children, applicants with a vulnerability, special needs or persons in detention should always be prioritised. If an applicant is more likely to abscond, prioritising their transfer can also contribute to a successful transfer. Transfers where only a limited time remains on the deadline should also be prioritised.

#### **Good practice: lodging applicants close to airports when a quick Dublin procedure is expected**

A good practice in Sweden is to screen and categorise applications for international protection according to how quickly it is deemed the case can be resolved in order to determine where the person is offered accommodation. This allows the authorities to place applicants who were pre-screened to have a quickly resolvable Dublin procedure, in accommodation located close to an airport to facilitate a quick transfer.

### Recommendation 13. Ensure that all necessary information is included in Annex VI

In order to streamline the information that is required to fill in the form Annex VI of the implementing regulation, Member States should respect the list of minimum information items that should be included in the form. You can consult this list in [Annex 1. Minimum information in Annex VI](#) of these recommendations.

If available, Member States should send documents in attachment. Sending travel documents or personal documents such as the laissez-passer, passport, residence permit or ID-cards (if not previously transmitted) in connection with the Annex VI can be helpful to the receiving Member State.



Annex VI provides a field where aliases can be provided, this field can be used not only for known aliases of the name of the applicant but also in case there are differences regarding the date of birth recorded in the two Member States.

#### **Good practice: importing the laissez-passer in Annex VI**

A good practice in Malta is to always import the laissez-passer together with the transfer exchange form in order to limit the risk that it gets misplaced. Scans of the data page of personal documents (passport, ID, residence permit), are also imported if they were not shared previously with the receiving Member State.

## **Recommendation 14. Calculate the notification period using agreed criteria**

The implementing regulation provides a timeframe of 3 days to notify the receiving Member State of the transfer. However, because of practical aspects or if the applicant has a vulnerability or health related issue, Member States can extend this deadline. The receiving Member State should provide the timeframe and modalities for each individual case in the letter of acceptance and the sending Member State should respect this timeframe.

Send the transfer notification before 12 p.m. (midday) (in the time zone of the receiving Member State) to increase the predictability and transparency of the process. This will also allow you to calculate the day of sending the notification as a full day.

When calculating the timeframe of the notification Member States should count working days (Monday-Friday), taking account of any public holidays in the receiving Member State.

Days when a particular border crossing or airport is closed to Dublin transfers should not be taken into consideration with regards to the calculation of the notification time period.



#### **Remember: example of a time calculation**

Assume the notification timeframe is 5 days. If the notification is sent on a Monday no later than 12 p.m. (midday) in the receiving Member State, then the transfer can take place on Friday, 5 working days after. If the notification is sent on Monday after 12 p.m. (midday) in the receiving Member State, then the transfer will (preferably) take place no sooner than the following Monday.



**Remember: information about modalities in the Dublin Transfer Table**

Different Member States apply different timeframes of notifications for different types of Dublin transfers. You can consult these in the Dublin Transfer Table. The Dublin transfer table also includes information on the public holidays of the Member States.

## Recommendation 15. Both Member States communicate clearly in cases of acceptance by default

**Dublin III regulation****Article 22(7) and 25(2)****Implementing regulation****Article 10**

In accordance with Article 10 implementing regulation, after an acceptance by default, the sending Member State has the obligation to initiate consultations with the receiving Member State regarding the organisation of the transfer. If requested by the sending Member State, the receiving Member State should confirm its responsibility in writing.

In cases of acceptance by default, the sending Member State is recommended to inform the receiving Member State that it has now become responsible and request information regarding the organisation of the transfer (such as the airport to which the transfer should take place, the preferred time slot, and how much notice is required prior to the transfer).

The receiving Member State has to react as soon as possible after the acceptance by default and provide details about the transfer. If the receiving Member State has any reason to refuse the transfer or has any other comments on the transfer, this has to be expressed as soon as possible and no later than 3 days prior to the transfer.

In exceptional situations, when a receiving Member State does not respond to requests to provide details about the transfer, the sending Member State can nonetheless proceed with planning the transfer using the general information provided by the receiving Member State in the Dublin Transfer Table. In such cases the receiving Member State must show full flexibility in allowing the transfer to go ahead in line with the modalities set out by the sending Member State.





## Recommendation 16. Provide information on any escorts accompanying a transfer

When a transfer is escorted Member States should provide information on the reasons for the escort and the specific tasks of the escorts. This information should be provided in the 'under escort' section of Annex VI implementing regulation.

This applies both to escorts for practical reasons, unaccompanied children, security reasons and medical escorts. Providing such information can help the receiving Member State to involve the correct stakeholders in a timely fashion.

If the information on the escorts is not available to the sending Member State at the time Annex VI is sent, this information should be transmitted separately over DubliNet as soon as possible. In order for the receiving Member State to clearly see that the message concerns information about accompanying escorts, Member States are encouraged to use the keyword '+escorts' in the subject line of the message.

## Recommendation 17. Ensure that all personal documents are transferred to the receiving Member State

The sending Member State should check if the person being transferred has personal documents in their possession. It is important for the efficiency of the procedure that all of these documents are transferred by the sending Member State to the receiving Member State at the latest at the time of the transfer. See also [Recommendation 13](#). Ensure that all necessary information is included in Annex VI on the possibility to include documents with Annex VI.

During a supervised transfer, the Member States may consider handing the documents to the flight crew with the instruction that they be handed over to the authorities in the receiving Member State upon arrival. In cases involving a transit without escorts, the flight crew of the first flight should hand the documents to the authorities in the transit Member State, which would in turn hand them over to the second flight crew.

If there are documents that have not been sent at the time of transfer, the sending of documents in each individual case should be agreed between the two Member States before the documents are sent. It is advisable to send these documents using recorded delivery, after consultation with the receiving Member State to ensure that the documents are sent to the right authority using a valid and up-to-date address.



## Recommendation 18. Ensure that the laissez-passers includes all relevant elements

The laissez-passers is a crucial travel document for most applicants. Airlines require information on the person to be transferred through the Dublin procedure. The laissez-passers, being issued by a Member State authority, is one of the documents an applicant can show to any entity or stakeholder in the procedure which attests that they are travelling in the framework of the Dublin process.

The sending Member State should issue the person to be transferred with a laissez-passers. A uniform format for the laissez-passers is set out in Annex IV implementing regulation.

With regards to the laissez-passers, Member States should:

- Use recent and clear photographs of a suitable size in order to avoid identification issues at border control;
- Ensure that any authorisation stamp/seal on the document match the date that the document was issued where possible, but in no instance pre-date the document;
- Include separate laissez-passers for accompanied children, unless the receiving Member State explicitly allows the inclusion of children in the laissez-passers of their parents.

## Recommendation 19. Provide information about applicants that may cause disruptions during the transfers

If the person to be transferred has a history of aggressive behaviour, or if previous transfer attempts were unsuccessful due to the aggressive or disruptive behaviour of the applicant, the sending Member State should provide this information to the receiving Member State so that it can make the necessary preparations. In such cases, the person should be transferred under escort.

### **Good practice: communication of issues at the departure**

If the applicant displays aggressive behaviour during the departure of the transfer, but the transfer can nonetheless go ahead, it can be good practice to provide this information to the receiving Member State. As such information would be highly time-critical, Member States are encouraged to make use of the alternative Dublin contact email for urgent messages. Such contact information may be found in the Dublin Transfer Table.



## Recommendation 20. Provide information about applicants that may pose a security threat

There might be cases where the sending Member State is in possession of information based on which there is a reasonable ground to believe that the transferee might represent a danger or threat to national security or public order. Sharing such information falls outside the scope of Article 31 Dublin III regulation and requires another legal basis in national or European law. In the event the Dublin Unit of the sending Member State is aware of such information, it is important to clearly identify and communicate it to the receiving Member State through the appropriate channels and according to the appropriate legal basis. These transfers should always be carried out with escorts.



## Preventing abscondence

Applicants that abscond during the Dublin procedure are one of the main challenges for conducting Dublin transfers. There are many different reasons that an applicant may choose to abscond, as well as several possible ways to mitigate this risk.

Ensuring that the applicant is provided with relevant information throughout the procedure is a crucial element for building trust and understanding between the authorities and the applicant. Depending on the national context, civil society organisations may provide a significant amount of assistance in this context.

Regular coordination is key to ensure that all partners consistently share the same message with the applicants. Applicants have the right to receive information regarding the Dublin procedure as soon as the application is lodged. It is therefore important not to wait to provide information on the Dublin procedure until the transfer phase of the procedure. The sooner in the procedure, and the more frequently adequate information provision measures are put in place, the better the chances will be to address the many misconceptions about the Dublin procedure.



### **Related tool: practical guide on information provision in the Dublin procedure**

This practical guide has been designed to support persons with varying backgrounds that have to provide information on the Dublin procedure to applicants. It offers an introduction to communication methodologies and suggestions on which information to provide during the various steps of the Dublin procedure. Frequently asked questions by applicants, a section on how to address common misconceptions regarding the Dublin procedure and numerous checklists provides the reader with hands-on support and practical tools.

## Recommendation 21. Proactively and continuously provide the applicant with information

It is important that applicants who find themselves in a Dublin procedure understand why they are in the procedure and how this will affect which Member State will be responsible for assessing their application for international protection. Article 4 Dublin III regulation sets out the detailed requirements on Member States with regards to information provision to applicants. With regards to the transfer procedure, Member States should proactively provide information to the applicant at several points during the transfer procedure.

- Notifying the transfer decision to the applicant

The notification of the transfer decision could be done in person so that the applicant can ask questions. The formal decision should be provided in writing. Within the formal decision,



Member States should also provide a detailed explanation of the reasons underlying the transfer decision and ensure that these are understood by the applicant.

- Additional information once the transfer decision can be carried out

Once a transfer decision is enforceable, a meeting could be organised to explain some additional elements of the transfer procedure. During this meeting, the Member State can provide information about rights and obligations, conditions on arrival in the responsible Member State, identify any health issues, sign consent forms and notices on rights and obligations. Any updates to personal/contact details can also be collected. This meeting can be particularly useful if a long time has elapsed since the initial transfer decision, for instance if there was a lengthy appeals procedure and suspensive effect was granted.

- Final meeting shortly before the departure

Finally, a meeting could also be organised shortly before the departure to address any last minute questions of the applicant and to provide them with the ticket and other necessary documents for the transfer.



#### **Remember: providing concrete information on the transfer modalities**

Ensuring that the applicant receives concrete information about the transfer can be a good way to reduce stress and build confidence ahead of the transfer. If, for practical reasons, a family has to travel on two different flights, it could be useful to explain to the applicants why this is necessary.

## **Recommendation 22. Provide information on conditions awaiting the applicant in the responsible Member State**

A common question from applicants that are due to be transferred to another Member State is what will happen to them in that Member State. Such questions are difficult to answer for the sending Member State since it may not have such information and cannot provide guarantees about procedures in another country.

In order to mitigate this issue, a short template to support the provision of oral information before a Dublin transfer has been developed within the EUAA Network of Dublin Units. Each Member State will provide the information on their Member State using this template. The EUAA will make all completed templates available to Member States so that they can be used to provide oral information to the applicants about what to expect, generally, in the receiving Member State ahead of the transfer.

The templates for oral information provision are intended to be used by staff as a means to support oral information provision to applicants. As it is important to explain and contextualise



the information contained in the templates, and as the templates will not themselves be translated, they are not intended to be provided in writing to applicants.

The template for oral information provision is complemented by a short, one-page leaflet containing important contact details for both the authorities as well as civil society organisations in the receiving Member State that may assist the applicants during their asylum procedure. A template for this leaflet has been developed within the EUAA Network of Dublin Units. This leaflet should be provided in writing to the applicants.

The templates are stored on the online platform of the EUAA Network of Dublin Units. Member States should keep the information on their Member State in the oral information template as well as the basic information leaflet up-to-date.

## Recommendation 23. Use alternatives to detention to ensure the effective access to the applicant for the transfer

In the context of Dublin transfers, it is important for Member States to know where applicants reside and that they can be reached by the authorities. Whether an applicant will reside in a reception centre or in private accommodation will depend on the way the national reception system is organised.

Applicants should only be detained as a measure of last resort, and they should not be detained for the sole reason that they are subject to a Dublin procedure. The Member States may, however, detain the applicant where there is a significant risk that they will abscond.

Some measures, that are less intrusive than detention, which can be used to make it easier for the authorities to reach the applicant in the time leading up to a Dublin transfer, include:

- the authority keeping hold of the personal documents of the applicant;
- requiring the applicant to reside in a designated place (for instance, a reception facility, community shelter or similar);
- requiring the applicant to report regularly to the authorities.

These measures can be used either individually or in combination.





## Re-scheduling transfers

	Dublin III regulation
	Article 29(3)
	Implementing regulation
	Article 9

In cases of delays, cancellations or postponements, the receiving Member State should show flexibility and try to enable the sending Member State to carry out the transfer without further delay. The sending Member State has to inform the receiving Member State without delay and agree on the new transfer time/date.

This is of particular importance for transfers that need special arrangements such as persons with special needs to ensure receiving Member State has the necessary time to prepare. Liaison officers can provide significant help in finding practical solutions, in particular in cases where there is a limited time available to conduct the transfer.

Erroneous transfers can, exceptionally, happen, for example if the transfer decision was overturned on appeal or review after the transfer was carried out (without suspensive effect).

Where an erroneous transfer has been carried out because the person should not have been transferred or if the transfer decision was overturned on appeal or review, the Member State that becomes aware of the situation should immediately notify the other Member State. The receiving Member State should proceed with the return as soon as possible and provide information on the applicant's whereabouts and the modalities of return.

### Recommendation 24. Show flexibility in cases of re-scheduled transfers

The receiving Member State should show flexibility, for example by applying a shorter minimum notification period compared with the original transfer if a transfer needs to be re-scheduled. The receiving Member State could also show flexibility, as far as their national procedures allow, for instance by accepting that the transfer be carried out to a different airport or border crossing point if this could help to facilitate the transfer.



# Voluntary transfers



## Dublin III regulation

### Recital 24

### Implementing regulation

### Article 7(1)(a)

For these recommendations, ‘voluntary transfer’ means that the practical modalities of the transfer are not directly organised by the authorities of the sending Member State, but that it is organised instead by the applicant themselves or other organisations (non-governmental organisations).

The receiving Member State is responsible to ensure that the fingerprints of the person are registered in Eurodac <sup>(3)</sup> upon arrival also in cases of voluntary transfers.



## Remember: information about voluntary transfers in the Dublin Transfer Table

You can consult the Dublin Transfer Table to find additional information on whether a Member State accepts incoming voluntary transfers, as well as any specific modalities that may apply for these types of transfers.

## Recommendation 25. Notify the receiving Member State also in cases of voluntary transfers

The unannounced arrival of applicants could cause problems in the receiving Member State, for example in relation to the accommodation needs or medical issues of the arriving applicants. It should therefore be ensured that the responsible Member State is informed about the voluntary transfer.

The Dublin Unit should notify the receiving Member State of the voluntary transfer, along with the practical modalities. The standard transfer notification form (Annex VI implementing regulation) should be used to communicate details about the transfer.

<sup>(3)</sup> See [Regulation \(EU\) No 603/2013](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on the establishment of ‘Eurodac’ for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person and on requests for the comparison with Eurodac data by Member States’ law enforcement authorities and Europol for law enforcement purposes, and amending Regulation (EU) No 1077/2011 establishing a European Agency for the operational management of large-scale IT systems in the area of freedom, security and justice (recast), (OJ L 180, 29.6.2013), (Eurodac II regulation).



## Recommendation 26. Provide clear instructions to applicants also in cases of voluntary transfers

Applicants should be instructed by the Dublin Unit in the sending Member State about which airports they are expected to fly to and from (or where to go in case of land transfers) and by what time they need to arrive.

Once the applicant or the organisation that is planning the transfer has made the necessary arrangements for the travel, they should inform the Dublin Unit in the sending Member State of arrangements. The information could include travel time, arrival times and place of arrival. This information should be communicated to the receiving Member State through Annex VI.

The sending Member State may furthermore ask the applicant or organisation taking care of the practical modalities to provide the ticket number, booking reference or boarding card to the authorities of the sending Member State so that they are able to confirm that the applicant travelled as planned. The sending Member State can then communicate this information to the receiving Member State via DubliNet.

## Recommendation 27. Provide travel documents after the voluntary transfer has been agreed

If applicable, the sending Member State provides the applicant with travel documents such as the laissez-passer only after the transfer has been arranged. In order to minimise the risk that documents are lost, they should ideally be provided to the applicant on the day of departure or be provided to ground staff of the air carrier so that they can be handed to the applicant at check-in on the day of travel.

## Recommendation 28. Refrain from using voluntary transfers in specific cases

Member States should not apply voluntary transfers for cases that raise special considerations e.g. security concerns or for applicants with severe medical conditions which would require assistance during the transfer. If the sending or receiving Member State detect such concerns, they can request a departure under escort or a supervised departure instead.



## Arrival to the responsible Member State

**Dublin III regulation****Article 29(1)**

### Recommendation 29. Provide notification to the sending Member State on arrival

When the transfer is carried out with escorts, no notification from the receiving Member State is needed.

When the transfer is carried out as a supervised departure (but without escorts) the receiving Member State should inform the other Member State if the applicant did not appear at the agreed point of arrival or if the transfer otherwise experienced complications. In cases of a supervised departure (but without escorts) the receiving Member State does not need to confirm to the sending Member State that the applicant successfully arrived in the responsible Member State.

When the transfer is carried out as a voluntary transfer, the receiving Member State should always inform the sending Member State about the successful transfer, or about the fact that the applicant did not appear within the set time limit.



#### **Remember: marking the transfer in Eurodac**

It is the obligation of the receiving Member State to register the transfer in Eurodac upon the arrival of the applicant. It is important to have procedures in place to ensure that this is always carried out in a timely way irrespective of whether the transfer was escorted, supervised or voluntary.

## Communication using DubliNet



### Dublin III regulation

**Article 35(4)**

### Implementing regulation

**Article 18**

All the information related to the Dublin case should be communicated between the sending and the receiving Member State through DubliNet with the use of the forms that are provided in the implementing regulation.

The information that is shared through DubliNet should only be shared between the national access points of the respective national Dublin Units and not by other organisations involved in the transfer procedure.

Member States exchange large numbers of messages over DubliNet. To ensure an efficient management of the system, especially with regards to time-sensitive requests, it is important to ensure that the subject line of the DubliNet message allows the receiving Member State to easily identify which case the message concerns and the key information contained within the message.

By the time a transfer is being organised, many messages will already have been exchanged over DubliNet. By this stage, both Member States should have records of information such as the reference numbers used in both Member States to identify the case. This allows for more detailed subject lines compared with the first exchanges of messages.



### **Recommendations on the operational and technical use of DubliNet**

The EUAA Network of Dublin Units has developed a set of recommendations for Dublin practitioners that work with DubliNet. The recommendations provide useful tips, good practices and recommended practices to ensure efficient and safe communications through DubliNet.

**Remember: shrinking the size of the document to be transmitted**

Member States have different limitations on the size of emails that can be transmitted via DubliNet. The standard form is available in 23 languages, which can make the email quite large. If the message contains several attachments (e.g. a photograph of the applicant, a copy of the travel document(s), other relevant documents) there is a risk of delivery failure due to the size of the email. In order to avoid unsuccessful or late delivery, it is possible to shrink the size of the standard form.

Member States that are sending the transfer notification should select the languages of both the sending and the receiving Member State when preparing the form. In practice, select the 'Originating State', which is the sending Member State, and the 'Destination State', which is the receiving Member State on the first page of the form, and then click 'prepare document'. This way the size of the document will be reduced.

## Recommendation 30. Use a clear subject line in DubliNet messages allowing easy identification of the transfer case

The subject line of the email sent through DubliNet should, when it concerns a transfer, be made up of the following:

- The letters used to identify the sending Member State (AT, BE, etc.).
- The code DUB6.
- The reference number of the case in the sending Member State.
- The reference number of the case in the receiving Member State. (If the reference number in the receiving Member State is unknown, the Eurodac number or other references such as a visa number can be used instead, if available).

The subject line should be written in one line. Blank spaces, underscores or other dividers should be used between fragments in order to make the subject line easier to search. If using keywords, there should not be any spaces between the + and keyword used (see further information under [Recommendation 31](#). Use keywords in the subject line in DubliNet messages to allow identification of the content). If the reference number has changed during the course of the Dublin procedure any previous reference numbers should be included in the body of the message.



**Remember: example of a DubliNet subject line**

In a case where Germany is the sending Member State and Romania is the receiving Member State, the subject should be the following:

DE + DUB6 + Reference number of the case in Germany + Reference number of the case in Romania + keyword

## Recommendation 31. Use keywords in the subject line in DubliNet messages to allow identification of the content

In order for the receiving Member State to identify more easily what the DubliNet message concerns, keywords should be used in the subject line, where possible. The most representative and informative keywords to identify the main elements of the message should be used. Keywords are added to the end of the subject line.

The sender of the message is free to include any keywords that they consider would help the other Member State in identifying the key information. Although it is possible to use multiple keywords, the excessive use of large numbers of keywords can make it more complicated to understand the main elements of the message.

Member States should always mark urgent cases using the '+urgent' keyword so that they are identified accordingly by the receiving Member State.

A non-exhaustive list of keywords relevant in the context of Dublin transfers is provided in [Annex 3. Keywords to use in DubliNet messages for Dublin transfers](#).

## Additional communication channels beside the use of DubliNet

	Dublin III regulation
	Article 35(4)
	Implementing regulation
	Article 18

The Dublin III regulation as well as the implementing regulation establish clear obligations on the Member States to use DubliNet for any communications regarding the individual cases of applicants. Throughout the years, the use of DubliNet has gradually expanded to also include other types of communications of a more organisational nature between Dublin Units.

### Recommendation 32. Ensure all Dublin transfers related communication uses appropriate channels

All requests, replies and written correspondence pertaining to individual cases in the Dublin procedure, as well as any communication containing personal data must only be exchanged over DubliNet.




























The Member States are expected to ensure the continuous operation of their national DubliNet access point. Even in the case of unplanned downtime, no alternative means of communication in the cases mentioned above may be used. Deadlines for sending a request or reply are also not suspended during any interruption of service.

Member States are allowed to use alternatives to DubliNet when communicating information which is not related to the processing of individual Dublin cases. This can include, for instance information about the opening hours of border crossing points, temporary capacity limitations or other types of organisational information related to the Dublin unit or partner authorities.

In order to make it easier for Member States to manage the large amount of information sent over DubliNet that relates to the processing of individual Dublin cases, Member States should not send information of a more general or organisational nature over DubliNet. Such communications should instead be sent through the additional Dublin contact email set out in [Recommendation 33](#). Designate an additional Dublin contact email. Separating these communications into an ordinary email account will also allow Member States a larger degree of flexibility in disseminating information received through this channel.

In cases where there is a need to receive a particularly urgent reply from the partner Member State involved in a transfer, Member States may also use the additional Dublin contact email to flag that a message has been sent over DubliNet which urgently needs the attention of the

other Member State. This can also be done to remind the Member State if it did not get a reply despite multiple attempts over DubliNet. Such messages may not include any personal data of the applicant but should include the reference numbers of the case in order to allow the partner Member State to identify the corresponding case. The additional Dublin contact email should only be used for this purpose in exceptional circumstances.

Type of communication	DubliNet	Additional
Any communication including personal data of the applicant		
Transfer notification and Annex VI and IX		
Communicating that the transfer is cancelled/postponed		
Communicating that the applicant has absconded		
Notification of appeal with suspensive effect		
Modalities of the transfer		
Reminder after multiple attempts through DubliNet (no personal data)		
Flagging of a DubliNet message requiring the urgent attention of the partner Member State (no personal data)		
Information about general restrictions on transfers		
Information about arrival times or public holidays		
Information about temporary issues with individual border crossing points		
General questions on practical modalities such as available capacity, required escorts or similar		
General modalities for group transfers (no personal data)		
Information that DubliNet is not operational in your Member State	-	

#### Legend



Preferred channel for this purpose



The additional Dublin contact email is preferred over DubliNet for this purpose



This channel not to be used for this purpose

## Recommendation 33. Designate an additional Dublin contact email

Member States should designate a functional mailbox where they can receive the information set out in [Recommendation 32](#). Ensure all Dublin transfers related communication uses appropriate channels. The Dublin Transfer Table provides a section where this email account may be provided.

In addition to the functional mailbox, Member States may also provide an optional phone number that can be used for bilateral contact when needed. Member States can also indicate in the table which types of requests they are open to receiving phone calls about.

Member States may also indicate the standard opening hours of their offices in order to give an idea of their normal working hours to other Member States.

**Figure 1. Contact information**

Bilateral contact information for Dublin transfers			
<i>Please note that any communications including personal data of applicants must always be sent exclusively through DubliNet. The contact details below are intended primarily for urgent exchanges of practical information between Member States with regards to the transfers.</i>			
Dublin Unit			
Additional Dublin contact email	dublinunit@interior.ms	Phone number (opt)	+1 123 456
Accepted issues by phone		Office hours	
Information about urgent cases	Yes	Monday	08:30 - 17:00
Clarification of minor issues	Yes	Tuesday	08:30 - 17:00
No reply on a request	No	Wednesday	08:30 - 17:00
Other issues (specify below)	No	Thursday	08:30 - 17:00
		Friday	08:30 - 17:00

## Recommendation 34. Use the same structure for written communication regardless of the channel

When writing messages using the additional Dublin contact email account to flag a message which was sent over DubliNet, it is important to make use of the same overall structure for the subject line and content as for regular DubliNet messages (removing any personal data). The reference number of both Member State and the phase of the procedure that the case is in should be included in order to help the partner Member State to identify the corresponding case. No personal details of the applicant(s) may be included in any message that is not sent over DubliNet. The additional Dublin contact email should only be used for this purpose in exceptional circumstances.



## Dublin Transfer Table

Although the responsible Member State has a duty to cooperate in facilitating the transfer, all Member States have some practical limitations regarding the modalities for receiving incoming transfers. Limitations may for example regard the arrival times and places (airports, land border crossing points, etc.) as well as special dates on which transfers cannot take place, such as public holidays. Member States should keep such limitations to a minimum and ensure that information on such modalities is kept up-to-date and communicated in the most efficient way to all Member States.

The Dublin Transfer Table has been created to gather key information on the specific modalities that apply in the Member States to facilitate the organisation of Dublin transfers. The table is constructed to contain data that does not change very often in order to limit the need for updates. Information of a more ad hoc or temporary nature can be transmitted using the additional Dublin contact email set out in [Recommendation 32](#). Ensure all Dublin transfers related communication uses appropriate channels.

The table can be found on the Dublin Platform of the EUAA.  
(<https://euaa.europa.eu/member-area>)



**Figure 2. Dublin Transfer Table**

Dublin Transfer Table

This template is intended to facilitate the consultation with the responsible Member State on the time of arrival in line with art. 8(2), of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1560/2003. It does in not in any way alter the meaning of or give an interpretation to this article.

Transfer planner (to Generic MS)						
Border crossing	Capital International Airport			Airport		
Date of planned transfer	10-05-23			Wednesday		-
Closure day of the specific BCP	Timezone	Open from...	...until	Family	Med/Vul	Notes
BCP exceptionally closed this day	CET	Closed	Closed	Pref	Pref	

Modalities for Dublin transfers		
Standard modalities		
Notification time (days)	5	
Notification reschedule (days)	3	
Voluntary transfers		Modalities for voluntary transfers
Accepted	Yes	
Notification time (days)	5	
Group transfers		Modalities for group transfers
Accepted	Yes	We accept overbooking of maximum 50% of the total agreed transfer slots for each group transfer.
Accepted method	Air & Land	
Prior agreement required	Ad Hoc	
Overbooking accepted	Yes	
Max persons per transfer	7	
Notification time (days)	14	
Family transfers		Modalities for family transfers
Notification time (days)	5	
Perferred arrival times:		
As early in the day as possible		
UAM transfers		Modalities for UAM transfers
Notification time (days)	7	
Perferred arrival times:		
Monday - Thursday preferred arrival days		
Medical/vulnerable transfers		Modalities for medical / vulnerable transfers
Notification time (days)	7	Please provide information if person has reduced mobility/need of wheelchair in order to facilitate transfer.
Perferred arrival times:		

The main transfer table is an Excel file where the information is stored on Member State specific tabs. Each Member State is responsible for keeping its own information up-to-date so that it can be accessed and used by the other Member States.

The country specific tabs include information on border crossings as well as transfer modalities in the Member State in question. When another Member State is planning a transfer, the information in the table can be used to facilitate the considerable logistical tasks involved.

Apart from the Member State specific tabs, the Dublin Transfer Table contains two additional tables:

- Airline Information Table
- Transit Information Table.

**Figure 3. Airline Information Table**

Dublin Transfers: Airline Information Table												
<i>This table is intended to provide up to date information on the requirements from airlines that can be used for Dublin transfers</i>												
<b>Airline name (ICAO/IATA)</b>												
Main base(s) of operations:						Updated:						
Max transferees per flight			Required forms			Escorts required	Notes					
DEPU	DEPA	MEDA	DEPU	DEPA	MEDA	Case dependent						
2	2	1	Form (see note)	Form (see note)	Form (see note)							
Contact details												
Email					Phone							

Several airlines impose their own security and practical requirements when organising Dublin transfers. Understanding which airlines have which requirements can be a complex endeavour. This table provides information on the requirements for Dublin transfers for the airlines most commonly used for Dublin transfers. The information about all airlines is contained in one consolidated worksheet within the Dublin Transfer Table. All Member States should update this section of the table with information on their main airline partners used for Dublin transfers.

**Figure 4. Transit Information Table**

Dublin Transfers: Transit Information Table									
<i>This table includes basic information of use to the organisation of Dublin Transfers with a transit</i>									
<b>Country</b>									
<b>Airport name (ICAO/IATA)</b>									
Maximum transits / day		-		Escorts required?		No		Prior permission needed?	
								Updated	
Minimum transit time between flights:				Maximum transit time between flights:					
Transit opening hours			Who to contact				Notes		
Weekday	From	Until	Responsible authority						
Monday									
Tuesday									
Wednesday			Email						
Thursday									
Friday			Phone						
Saturday									
Sunday									

Given limitations in the availability of commercial flights it may not always be possible to organise a Dublin transfer through a direct flight between two Member States. In such cases, it may be necessary to make use of a transit airport to change between flights. Using transit airports for Dublin transfers often involves practical considerations and modalities specific to the transit airport.

The transit Information Table gathers these modalities for the most common transit airports. It also contains the contact information of the respective authorities responsible for transit authorisations to reduce the workload when conducting Dublin transfers using transit airports. Member States should update this section of the table with information on the main airports used for transiting Dublin transfers within their Member State. The information about all transit airports is contained in one consolidated worksheet within the Dublin Transfer Table.



#### Remember: transit form

[Council Directive 2003/110/EC](#) on assistance in cases of transit for the purpose of removal by air includes a form (in Annex I) which may be used also in cases involving Dublin transfers with a transit. A Word version of this template may be downloaded on the online platform of the EUAA Network of Dublin Units.

## Recommendation 35. Ensure the continuous update of the Dublin Transfer Table

The Dublin Transfer Table is updated by Member States directly on the EUAA Dublin Platform. Member States validate the information at a minimum on a quarterly basis in order to ensure that the information is up-to-date. Between these periods, Member States can update the Dublin Transfer Table whenever there are changes to any of the information contained within the table for their Member State. Member States should designate a person within their organisation as responsible for conducting these updates.

Given the operational information contained within it, access to the Dublin Transfer Table is restricted to Member States authorities. It may be accessed on the restricted area of the EUAA website in the EUAA Network of Dublin Units Members Area. Staff in Member State authorities may request access through their National Contact Points of the EUAA Network of Dublin Units.

## Recommendation 36. Ensure that all relevant staff have access to the Dublin Transfer Table

Member States should ensure that all relevant staff have access to the Dublin Transfer Table which is stored on the EUAA Dublin Platform. If any staff member needs access to the EUAA Dublin Platform, their Member State can reach out to the following email to request that access be granted: [dublin@euaa.europa.eu](mailto:dublin@euaa.europa.eu)





## Group transfers

Group transfers can be carried out both over land and by air and involve the transfer of multiple applicants at the same time. If group transfers are carried out successfully, they can help to considerably reduce the administrative workload of the authorities, compared to conducting multiple individual transfers. Group transfers further offer the ability to conduct transfers within optimum time frames for both the sending and receiving Member States.

Member States making use of group transfers should undertake certain measures to ensure that the procedure is as effective as possible.

### **Good practice: conducting group transfers, especially between key partners**

It is a good practice to conduct group transfers in order to transfer a high number of persons more effectively, especially between key partner countries. Such group transfers can be conducted either over land or by air and offer a greater planning flexibility compared to regular scheduled flights.

### **Good practice: standing times for weekly group transfers by land**

A good practice to note is the provision in the bilateral agreement between France and Germany which allows for twice weekly group transfers of applicants on specific designated border crossings (by land). The recurring nature of the transfers means persons can be transferred with considerably more success and less administrative work than would otherwise be the case.



### **Remember: modalities for group transfers in the Dublin Transfer Table**

Different Member States have different practical modalities in place with regards to group transfers. It can regard the type of transfers that are accepted as well as the type of prior agreement that would be required in order to be able to conduct a transfer to that country.

Depending on the organisational circumstances in each Member State, there may also be practical limitations with regards to the maximum number of persons that can be transferred at one time.

You can consult the modalities relevant to the different Member States in the Dublin Transfer Table.



## Measures to improve the success of group transfers

Member States conducting group transfers should take steps to ensure the success of the transfers. These steps may, inter alia, include:

- Overbooking the transfer, if the capacity of the sending Member State allows it, to ensure that the intended number of applicants are transferred. In these cases, a reserve list of applicants is notified to the receiving Member State along with the list of intended applicants to transfer. If a Member State intends to transfer 20 persons to a Member State, they could provide the notification for 40 persons, for instance. If any of the 20 persons initially intended to be transferred cannot be transferred, because of medical reasons, abscondence or other reasons, a person from the reserve list would take their place.
- Selecting applicants that are highly motivated to be transferred, for instance in cases of family reunification.
- Selecting applicants that are easily available to the authorities and therefore less likely to abscond.

As group transfers are always escorted they can also be used to transfer applicants that might be complicated to transfer on a regular scheduled flight.

## Main elements for agreements between Member States on group transfers

When group transfers are carried out, there should be an agreement between the Member States. This agreement can either be a formal bilateral agreement or an ad hoc agreement for a specific group transfer. The agreement may contain special arrangements related to the following:

- the timeframe of notifications (need for extended timeframes);
- the minimum/maximum number of applicants that can be transferred as a group;
- whether people with special needs can be transferred as part of a group transfer;
- a list of the necessary information required by the receiving Member State prior to the transfer;
- the format of the list of persons who will be transferred on the group transfer, and by when such lists should be communicated;
- the use of a reserve list to be used if any of the persons on the main transfer list are unavailable to be transferred on the day of the transfer;
- the deadline for the final list of applicants to be transferred.



# Conducting Dublin transfers during crisis situations

Dublin transfers are the aspect of the Dublin procedure that have been proven most susceptible to impact from external circumstances and crises. The Dublin practice has seen multiple exceptional situations in the limited time since the creation in 2016 of the EUAA Network of Dublin Units. The Syrian civil war, the COVID-19 pandemic and the large influx of Ukrainians following the Russian invasion of Ukraine are some of the main examples.

Although different crises can affect the organisation of Dublin transfers in different ways, they also have some common characteristics. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the EUAA Network of Dublin Units drafted an additional set of recommendations for Dublin transfers during the pandemic. As the COVID-19 pandemic is slowly evolving into an endemic situation, this set of recommendations will be replaced with the lessons learned below.

## Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic

No prior crisis has had such a fundamental impact on Dublin transfers as the COVID-19 pandemic has had. During the peak of the pandemic, Dublin transfers ceased almost entirely as Member States imposed strict travel restrictions (on all forms of travel) in an attempt to contain the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic affected virtually every aspect of life in Europe, including the work and life of the staff of Dublin Units involved in carrying out Dublin transfers. Below is a list of key lessons regarding Dublin transfers learned from the pandemic.

### Organisational aspects

- The pandemic had a significant impact on the number of available staff members as staff members also risked becoming infected and having to quarantine. In this respect, it is important to be prepared for staff shortages, and limitations in the ability of staff to carry out tasks as efficiently as usual.
- When faced with high staff turnover, it is important to have a flexible training organisation that can quickly train new staff members as well as provide the necessary training sessions to enable existing staff members to carry out new tasks.
- If a considerable number of staff members are working remotely, the use of alternative modes of internal communication such as chat-apps or similar may facilitate internal communications.
- Allowing staff to borrow some of the technical equipment from the offices can help to ensure an efficient work environment during long, unanticipated periods of working from home.



- Having in place provisions that allow staff to work from home some of the time makes a transition from partial work from home to full-time work from home much easier.
- Establishing clear workflows with all stakeholders that are normally involved with Dublin transfers, as well as new stakeholders, notably within the health sector, that need to be involved because of the pandemic can contribute to quick upscaling and maintaining efficiency.
- Providing regular updates to stakeholders on how the situation is evolving and its impact on Dublin transfers can help to strengthen internal cooperation. For instance, providing a table of COVID-19 transfer requirements in other Member States to the authorities in charge of conducting Dublin transfers can greatly facilitate their work.
- Ensuring that the information from the EUAA Network of Dublin Units and/or bilateral information from Member States or stakeholders is disseminated through the organisation to those that need it is particularly important in exceptional situations.
- To avoid becoming dependent on external service providers, it can be beneficial to setup a dedicated internal provision of key medical services such as testing.

### **Operational aspects**

- Acquiring the consent from applicants to share medical data at an early stage can contribute to smoother procedures.
- Having sufficient stocks of medical supplies required for the participants in a Dublin transfer (masks, sanitiser, etc.) is essential for the safe organisation of transfers.
- Information provision measures should be devised to provide accurate and up-to-date information to applicants on the health regulations to follow.
- Ways should be devised to ensure that applicants to be transferred are exposed to a minimum number of contacts to minimise the risks of contagion during transfers.
- Maintaining centralised and up-to-date information on transfer restrictions and rules in the different Member States, transit airport and airlines is important to ensure efficiency.
- Conducting group transfers using charters can be an efficient way in conducting Dublin transfers even when faced with limited availability of regular flights.

The EUAA Network of Dublin Units may also play a role in safely conducting Dublin transfers during a pandemic. Through discussions in the network, Member States can consider agreeing on certain decisions for example:

- Modalities on how to best exchange information about the pandemic as well as restrictions on Dublin transfers. These modalities can also involve how often to exchange information, common formats for the information exchange, etc.
- The development of specific mutual guidelines or recommendations tailored to ensuring safe Dublin transfers despite the ongoing pandemic.



## Internal considerations within Member States

When an exceptional situation occurs, it is important for Dublin Units to make an assessment of the situation and its potential impact on the possibility to carry out Dublin transfers. Having a strong base organisation, contingency planning, digitalised workflows and well-functioning cooperation mechanisms with key stakeholders are some important factors to ensure the resilience of the organisation through exceptional situations.

Exceptional situations often imply a need to rapidly modify the number of staff members working on Dublin transfers, depending on needs. Increasing staff numbers quickly will involve challenges with regards to inter alia training of new staff, whereas decreasing numbers quickly will involve issues related to the retention of key skills, contacts with stakeholders, etc.

Agile working methods such as the possibility for workers to have remote access to key systems and databases that may be needed to perform necessary tasks whilst working remotely has proven an important factor in maintaining business continuity.

## Considerations for the cooperation between Member States

By maintaining the general principles of mutual trust and flexibility, Member States have shown that they can find pragmatic solutions which allow for the continuation of Dublin transfers. Even if transfers are rendered more complicated as a result of an exceptional situation, it may be possible to maintain some Dublin transfers.

The EUAA Network of Dublin Units can provide an important forum for managers and senior staff in Dublin Units to discuss and exchange on ways to address common challenges when an exceptional situation arises. One way to address common challenges together can be through the development of joint guidelines and recommendations of the network.

The EUAA Network of Dublin Units can also play a role, for instance, with regards to compiling information on challenges and possible ways to address them. It can also gather expert input, including from key European and international stakeholders, on topics that are of particular relevance to the ongoing crisis situation.





# Annex 1. Minimum information in Annex VI

Minimum information to be filled in the Annex VI form	
Cover page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Originating State (sending Member State)</li><li>■ Destination State (receiving Member State)</li></ul>
Page 1	<p><b>Data identifying the person to be transferred</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Reference number in sending Member State</li><li>■ Reference number in responsible Member State</li><li>■ Family name</li><li>■ First name</li><li>■ Date and place of birth</li><li>■ Nationality(ies)</li><li>■ Sex</li></ul>
Page 2	<p><b>Data regarding the transfer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Type of transfer</li><li>■ Date of transfer</li><li>■ Means used to transfer</li><li>■ Location of the transfer (place of arrival)</li><li>■ Planned date and time of arrival</li></ul>
Page 3	<p><b>Data regarding the transfer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Travel documents</li></ul> <p><b>Other data regarding the person to be transferred</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Family members accompanying (if applicable)</li></ul>
Page 4	<p><b>Other data regarding the person to be transferred</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Assistance needed upon arrival, other than health related (specify) (if applicable)</li><li>■ Family members in the receiving Member State (if applicable)</li><li>■ Language(s) spoken by the applicant</li></ul>
Page 5	<p><b>Health condition of the person(s) to be transferred</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Confirmation that all persons appear fit to travel (if applicable)</li><li>■ Any other relevant information on the persons e.g. consent not provided by the applicant, information on vulnerability, medical condition, special needs, escorts, reference to Annex IX</li><li>■ Electronic signature</li></ul>





## Annex 2. Minimum information for Annex IX

Minimum information to be filled in the Annex IX form
<b>Cover page</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Originating state (sending Member State)</li> <li>■ Destination state (receiving Member State)</li> </ul>
<b>Page 1</b> <p><b>Data identifying the person transferred</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Family name</li> <li>■ First name</li> <li>■ Date and place of birth</li> <li>■ Nationality(ies)</li> <li>■ Sex</li> </ul> <p><b>Information regarding the transfer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Type of transfer</li> <li>■ Means used to transfer</li> </ul>
<b>Page 2</b> <p><b>I. Information provided by the transferring Member State</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ General evaluation of the person's health</li> <li>■ Whether the evaluation was provided by medical staff</li> <li>■ Medical diagnosis, treatment and medication used and treatment (if applicable)</li> </ul>
<b>Page 3</b> <p><b>II. Information relevant during the transfer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The person is accompanied/assisted during the transfer</li> </ul>
<b>Page 4</b> <p><b>III. Considerations to be taken into account upon arrival</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Medical assistance for special needs upon arrival</li> </ul> <p><b>IV. Consent of the person</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Consent of the person concerned</li> </ul>
<b>Page 5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Any other comments</li> <li>■ Electronic signature</li> </ul>



## Annex 3. Keywords to use in DubliNet messages for Dublin transfers

Keyword	Description
+abscondence	Indicating that the message concerns an absconded Dublin transferee
+cancellation	Indicating that a transfer is being cancelled
+charter	Indicating a message concerning a group transfer
+detention	Indicating that the case concerns a third-country national or stateless person in detention
+escort	Indicating a message concerning information about accompanying escorts
+family	Indicating that the message also concerns children for whom the applicant is responsible
+further info	Indicating that the message contains a large amount of information
+medical	Indicating that the case concerns a person with a serious medical condition which would require for instance support during the transfer or special arrangements in the receiving Member State
+security	Indicating a message concerns the transfer of an applicant that can pose a security risk due to violent, disruptive, or aggressive behaviour.
+suspensive effect	Indicating that the message contains information about suspensive effect (either start or end of the suspensive effect)
+UAM	Indicating that the case concerns an unaccompanied minor
+urgent	Indicating that the message concerns an urgent case
+withdrawal	Indicating the closure of a Dublin case where the responsibility for the asylum procedure shifts to the sending Member State (e.g. because of a national court decision)







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