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2.2 Registration, prioritisation, exemption

Registration
Safeguards for children should be applied as of the moment the child is identified. Many of the safeguards specific to the asylum procedure can already be applied at the making of the application, from which moment the child is considered an applicant. During the registration of the lodging, details including the biodata of the child, family links and contacts, and the current contact details of the child and the family should be collected.
The Eurodac regulation obliges Member States to fingerprint applicants for international protection above 14 years of age (57). Age assessments should not be carried out systematically for this purpose (58) On the contrary, to accept the age of the child, the benefit of the doubt should be broadly applied. An age assessment should only be conducted if there are serious doubts concerning whether the person is a child or not.

Prioritisation/adapting the duration of the procedure
The asylum procedures for children should be treated with high priority. Children's applications must be identified and it should be ensured that those with protection concerns are not kept waiting for long periods of time or put on hold (59). What is of importance when it comes to processing a child's application is to adapt the duration of the procedure: it may be in their best interests to have their application prioritised. In other cases, it would be in their best interests to benefit from a rest and recovery period before the examination of the application continues instead. The time a child's application is pending in the asylum procedure should be minimised.

Exemption from border/accelerated/fast-track procedures
The child should be exempted from border, accelerated and fast-track procedures when the adequate support required by children cannot be secured in the context of such procedures (60). A rest and recovery period should be granted when the needs of the child so require. EU+ States should further have mechanisms in place to respond to emergency situations that may require the transfer of a child/ children to a safer environment.

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(56) The EASO Training module 'Interviewing Children' is an interactive module for asylum case officers, aimed at enhancing their knowledge and skills in interviewing children, taking into consideration the age and maturity of the child, cultural variances and effects of trauma and/or distress. More information about the EASO Training Curriculum and the module is available at https://www.easo.europa.eu/training

(57) 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) [2013] OJ L 180/1. It should be noted that the current proposal to revise the Eurodac regulation foresees lowering the age to 6 years.

(58) For more details, see EASO, Practical guide on age assessment, 2018.

(59) Separated Children in Europe Programme, Statement of Good Practice, March 2010, 4th revised edition, p. 34.

(60) See Article 24(3) APD (recast).

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