

**15 Organizations urge the government not to vote in favor of the new asylum law,  
before its effective consultation**

In the face of the significant setback that the new bill brings on the procedural guarantees and rights of asylum seekers, it is essential to consult with asylum bodies in advance of the voting procedure.

Athens, October 31, 2019 - On Monday, October 28, the signatory organizations sent a joint memo to Members of the Hellenic Parliament on the draft law of the Ministry of Citizen Protection "On International Protection and Other Provisions" being debated in Parliament.

With this press release, we wish to highlight that the new provisions, incorporating three European Directives on international protection, on the reception and hosting of applicants for international protection, are a major setback, as they replace previous provisions which provided procedural guarantees on the rights of vulnerable groups with lower standard provisions, that do not take into account the reality in the field and can lead to violations of national and EU law.

Limiting the categories of vulnerable asylum seekers, introducing stricter deadlines, ineffective access to the appeals process and the unjustified extension of detention are some of the new measures that diminish the rights of international protection applicants.

In addition, there is a great risk that this bill may lead to a further deterioration of the reception and asylum system given that, the already understaffed administration, is called upon to undertake significant additional procedural obligations in the context of serious state deficiencies.

From our experience, we know that many of the provisions of the bill will have serious consequences on the lives of thousands of people, while not ensuring that their asylum procedures are speeded up or improved.

Finally, the vote of the bill as urgent – in a 5 day deadline- did not allow for sufficient study and submission of comments, while the bill's submission to the Parliament, immediately after the deadline, showed a rushing process of any comments made, with many of them being rejected, with no sufficient justification.

Trying to codify asylum legislation can be proven a positive act, given the real conditions that exist will be taken into consideration, while ensuring that the procedures are improved and the rights of those affected are protected.

For these reasons, we urge Members of Parliament not to continue with the Bill and the Greek Government to engage in meaningful dialogue with asylum bodies.

**The Organizations:** ActionAid Hellas, Arbeiter Samariter Bund (ASB), Γιατροί του Κόσμου, Δανικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες, Δίκτυο για τα Δικαιώματα του Παιδιού, Διοτίμα – Κέντρο Γυναικείων Μελετών, Defence for Children International Greece, Έλιξ, Ελληνικό Φόρουμ Προσφύγων, Ελληνικό Συμβούλιο για τους Πρόσφυγες, Generation 2.0 RED, HIAS Greece, International Rescue Committee Hellas, Praksis, Solidarity Now

