



Margaritis Schinas
Vice-President of the European Commission

Ylva Johansson
Member of the European Commission

Brussels, **04 JUN 2021**
Ares (2021) 2740217

Dear Honourable Member,

Thank you, and your cosignatories, for sharing your concerns on the risks of lead exposure in the temporary site of Mavrovouni and on the measures implemented by the Greek authorities in this respect. As you are aware, the Commission is following the issue very closely and continues to support as a priority the creation of the new multi-purpose identification and reception centre on Lesbos according to EU standards that will replace the temporary facility.

During the visit to Lesbos at the end of March 2021, Commissioner Johansson was briefed on this specific issue. Furthermore, the EU Task Force is working very closely with the Greek authorities on these issues. Commissioner Johansson intends to revisit Lesbos during the coming months.

Following the soil sampling and testing by the scientific experts of the Hellenic Survey of Geology and Mineral Exploration (EAGME) to control the safety and security of the temporary reception facility on Lesbos, the Greek authorities held an information meeting with all organisations active in the Mavrovouni temporary facility.

In response to the result of the sampling, the Greek authorities also took measures to prevent contact with contaminated soil, covering and fencing the area where the sample exceeding the threshold was taken, addressing the administrative zone and re-engineering the area of the former shooting range.

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The Commission is fully committed to helping the Greek authorities ensure acceptable health standards for the people who are temporarily housed in this reception facility. Independent scientific assessment should provide the necessary assurances for this. This is particularly important for groups at risk, such as children or pregnant women. Concerning the typologies for the lead level thresholds, the Commission trusts the expert assessment to apply the threshold for residential areas.

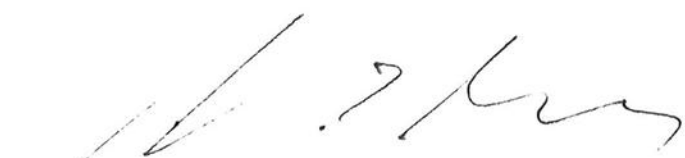
In your letter, you also point to continued concerns regarding several structures and areas indicated in the referenced report¹. In this respect, risk mitigation efforts continue in parallel to the works to substantially improve the conditions in the centre, such as providing a proper sewage, water and electricity network. You will find an overview of mitigation measures in the annex.

These various steps outline that broad mitigation measures have been taken with the aim of addressing any risks. This should again be confirmed by experts through follow-up testing. The results of this testing must again be made public in view of ensuring that nobody is exposed to health risks.

Ensuring that risks to the health and well-being of migrants are successfully mitigated is a vital component of the Commission's efforts. The Commission is following up on this matter in total transparency and will continue to do so.

Finally, we would like to emphasise that the Mavrovouni camp is a temporary accommodation solution. Our publically stated aim of ensuring that the new reception facility on the island is ready before next winter remains the highest priority.

Yours faithfully,



Margaritis SCHINAS



Ylva JOHANSSON

¹ *Greece: Lead Contamination Threat to Migrants Unresolved; People Still Accommodated in Camp's Contaminated Area; Human Rights Watch, 1 April 2021*