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1.1. Location

Introductory Remarks

The standards and indicators included in this section refer to the location of the premises in relation to the environment. The location of the housing may have a strong influence on other aspects of the reception system, including the accessibility of relevant services (e.g. health services, legal aid or services related to the different instances of the asylum procedure). Therefore, the standards and indicators included in this section are closely linked to those of the following sections. This means that the choice of where to set up the housing should be made with full consideration given to other aspects of reception conditions addressed in the different sections of this document.

At the same time, the definition of some of the indicators used within this section (e.g. what constitutes a 'reasonable walking distance', an 'adequate duration of a journey' or 'regularity of organised transportation') would depend on the type of service to be accessed and the frequency of the need to access this service. For example, where children need to access school, access needs to be possible on a daily basis and the duration should be short. At the same, the duration of travel to facilitate the applicant's participation in the personal interview could be longer, in particular if transportation is provided by the responsible authority.

It is generally understood that housing facilities should be located in areas that are designated for residential use.

Standards and indicators

STANDARD 1: Ensure effective geographic access to relevant services, such as public services, school, health care, social and legal assistance, a shop for daily needs, laundry and leisure activities.

Indicator 1.1: Specific arrangements are in place for applicants with special needs.

- ***Additional remarks:*** *For example, applicants with substantially reduced mobility should not be expected to access relevant services by walking. Alternative arrangements should be made in such cases.*

Alternative indicators on ensuring geographic accessibility:

Indicator 1.2(a): The relevant services are provided within the housing. OR

Indicator 1.2(b): The facility is located at a reasonable walking distance from relevant services and the available infrastructure is safe for walking. OR

- ***Additional remarks:*** *This indicator should be developed in relation to a maximum specific distance, taking into account the national context and the environment, such as whether there is a footpath available, whether the area is very hilly, etc. — example, maximum 3 km to public services in general and 2 km to health care facilities and school.*

Indicator 1.2(c): Relevant services are accessible by public transport and the duration of the journey is reasonable. OR

- ***Additional remarks:*** *The assessment of whether the duration of the journey is reasonable would be made in relation to the type of service to be accessed and the regularity with which this service needs to be accessed by the applicant (e.g. the time needed for a child to go to school via the public transport, the time needed for the applicant to travel to the personal interview). Additionally, the regularity of the public transport itself should be taken into account, allowing the applicant to effectively avail themselves of the service by taking a return journey. Accessibility by public transport should be understood as transport costs being reimbursed or transport being free of charge when needed as a minimum for the following: health care and obtaining medication, the asylum procedure and legal assistance and education for children enrolled in school.*

Indicator 1.2(d): Relevant services are accessible through organised transport provided by the Member State.

- ***Additional remarks:*** *The provision of transport should be clarified by specifying the regularity of transport provided by the Member State.*

Good practice on defining the location of housing

It is considered good practice:

- to define the location of housing with the purpose of accommodating applicants in the longer term with a view to enabling interaction between the applicants and the local population, in order to avoid isolation and facilitate integration in the longer term;
- to limit the duration of the journey by public transport to a maximum of 1.5 hours or 1 hour for health care or shopping for daily needs;
- to involve the local resident populations in the definition of the location of a housing facility.

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