

# (Member) States' Approaches to Unaccompanied Minors Following Status Determination

## *Common Template for EMN Focussed Study 2017*

Final Version: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017

**Subject:** Common Template for the EMN Focussed Study 2017 on "*(Member) States' Approaches to Unaccompanied Minors Following Status Determination*"

**Action:** EMN NCPs are invited to submit their National Contributions to the Study to the EMN Service Provider by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018. If needed, further clarifications can be provided by contacting the EMN Service Provider (ICF) at [emn@icf.com](mailto:emn@icf.com).

## 1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The number of applications for international protection has significantly increased in the European Union over recent years, mostly related to the ongoing crisis in Syria. According to Eurostat, more than 1.3 million asylum applications were lodged in the EU Member States in 2015, and just under 1.3 million again in 2016, almost five times as many as in 2010. Within the larger group of international protection applicants, the number of unaccompanied minors has increased strongly as well, from about 10,600 in 2010 to over 96,000 in 2015, before decreasing to 63,000 in 2016. According to earlier EMN outputs, while most unaccompanied minors are considered to apply for asylum, a certain number of unaccompanied minors remain outside the asylum procedure.

The overall dramatic increase in people seeking international protection and the arrival of unaccompanied minors in particular resulted in substantial challenges for Member States, including as regards **integration** and **return** policies. Applicants granted international protection and/ or another status need to be integrated into their new host societies, and those who are rejected need to return, preferably on a voluntary basis. Finding the right ways to deal with unaccompanied minors in this regard can appear particularly challenging, not least because unaccompanied minors have child-specific rights and enjoy special safeguards under international, EU and national laws.

A number of studies have been carried out in recent years on integration and return policies and practices, not least by the EMN (see "Relevant sources and literature" below). The EMN has also examined policies towards unaccompanied minors in particular. For example, the (voluntary) return of unaccompanied minors was touched upon in a 2014 EMN study on *Policies, practices and data on unaccompanied minors*. In 2008-2009, a comprehensive EMN study on *Policies on reception, return and integration arrangements for, and numbers of, unaccompanied minors* dealt explicitly with the integration of unaccompanied minors, among other aspects. Some of the information included in these studies is somewhat outdated today, however. In addition, the 2016 EMN Annual Report on Migration and Asylum indicated that few Member States actively engaged in the return of unaccompanied minors. Overall, this suggests that an updated inventory of the experiences made in the Member States, and of the challenges at hand and any best practices, would be of importance for future policy-making – both with regard to integration and return measures for unaccompanied minors.

## 2 STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the Study is to inform the EMN's target audiences (e.g. practitioners, policy officers and decision-makers at both EU and national level including academic researchers and the general public) on **Member States' approaches to unaccompanied minors following a final decision on their asylum/ other status application**. Thus, the Study will not examine the specific status determination procedure for unaccompanied minors but rather what happens with unaccompanied minors **after its completion**, which, in principle, either consists of the protection status and hence a right to **residence** being granted, followed by integration into the new host society, or the (asylum) application being rejected, followed by the unaccompanied minors being obligated to **return**. In relation to the latter, the Study will also cover instances when an unaccompanied minor is ordered to leave the territory but the **return decision is not or cannot be enforced**. Statuses such as temporary and tolerated stay, those available to child victims of trafficking, as well as the situation of unaccompanied minors who disappear following a decision on status shall be included as well.

More specifically, the Study aims to:

### ★ With regard to **return**:

- › Examine Member States' approaches to **unaccompanied minors whose applications for asylum have been rejected and who are or cannot be (immediately) returned** or have disappeared following a decision on their application;
- › Describe the **legal and organisational set-up** in Member States with regard to the **(voluntary) return** of an unaccompanied minor, including information on the stakeholders involved, what their roles are, and what measures the Member States take when unaccompanied minors are issued an enforceable return decision, to encourage voluntary return;
- › Provide an overview of **challenges to return** and the measures taken to deal with such challenges, identifying good practices, including information and results of any AVR(R) programmes carried out for unaccompanied minors;

### ★ With regard to **integration**:

- › Examine integration approaches in the (Member) States regarding unaccompanied minors after positive decisions on admission or asylum/ other relevant procedures in key areas such as **housing, education and support in labour market entry**, including rights and entitlements awarded to unaccompanied minors (for example family reunification) and whether these are specifically geared towards unaccompanied minors. The Study shall also clarify in what way integration arrangements for unaccompanied minors are different than those for adults;
- › Describe the **organisational set-up** in Member States with regard to the **integration** of unaccompanied minors, including information on which stakeholders are involved and what their roles are;
- › Provide an overview of the **challenges to integration** and the actions taken to deal with such challenges, identifying good practices.

As many unaccompanied minors arriving in the EU are close to **passing the age threshold to adulthood**, the Study shall also examine whether there are any particular arrangements for unaccompanied minors who turn 18 around the point in time when they receive a final decision on status and what impact this may have on their integration trajectories or their return.

While most unaccompanied minors apply for asylum and hence this Study will focus on their situation after completion of the asylum procedure, it is important to keep in mind that not all unaccompanied minors who arrive in the (Member) States actually apply for asylum. If (Member) States receive unaccompanied minors outside their respective asylum procedures and have any other procedures in

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place to determine whether they are entitled to stay in the (Member) State or not, such procedures shall also be explored.

### 3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The overall focus of this Study are unaccompanied minors from third countries who, following status determination, are entitled to a residence permit, or are issued a return decision, and the approaches put in place by (Member) States to ensure their integration or (voluntary) return respectively. The scope of the Study may also include, at least in some Member States, any statuses given to unaccompanied minors who for some reason cannot be returned immediately (e.g. tolerated stay). Finally, the Study also aims to examine (Member) States' approaches to unaccompanied minors who have disappeared following a final decision on their application for asylum.

Thus, the Study does not cover the actual asylum or other relevant procedures in which the right of an unaccompanied minor to stay in a (Member) State is examined and decided upon.

### 4 EU LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

The European Union, together with its Member States, has been active regarding unaccompanied minors for many years. The existing EU policies and legislation already provide a general framework for the protection of the rights of the child in migration, covering aspects such as reception conditions, the treatment of their applications, and integration. The [EU Agenda on the Rights of the Child](#) (2006) and the EU Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010-2014) ([COM\(2010\) 213 final](#)) have been instrumental in raising awareness about the protection needs of unaccompanied minors, and in promoting protective actions, such as training for guardians, public authorities and other actors who are in close contact with unaccompanied minors. More recently, the European Commission (the Commission) called for a comprehensive approach to all children in migration, including unaccompanied minors, in its Communication on the protection of children in migration ([COM\(2017\) 211 final](#)), the European Agenda on Migration ([COM \(2015\) 240](#)), the Communication on the state of play of its implementation ([COM\(2016\) 85 final](#)), as well as the EU Action Plan on Integration of Third-Country Nationals ([COM\(2016\) 377 final](#)).

Legally, there are certain ongoing changes in relation to key provisions on asylum that address the situation of unaccompanied minors, notably the:

- ★ Recast **Asylum Procedures Directive** (2013/32/EU) which aims at fairer, quicker and better-quality asylum decisions, including greater protection of unaccompanied minors during the asylum procedure (which however is out of scope of this Study). In 2016, the Commission issued a proposal for a new Regulation establishing a single common asylum procedure in the EU and repealing Directive 2013/32/EU ([COM\(2016\) 467 final](#)), which aims at upholding and further enhancing a high level of special procedural guarantees for unaccompanied minors, such as early identification of their needs, provision of support and guidance, appointment of a guardian, and consideration of the best interests of the child in relation to minors in general.
- ★ Recast **Qualification Directive** ([2011/95/EU](#)), which aims to clarify the grounds for granting international protection, make asylum decisions more robust and improve the access to rights and integration measures for beneficiaries of international protection. It emphasises the obligation to take account of the best interests of the child (when relevant) and of gender-related aspects in the assessment of asylum applications, as well as in the implementation of the rules on the content of international protection. In 2016, a proposal for a new Qualification Regulation (COM(2016) 466 final) replacing the Qualification Directive, includes renewed provisions for unaccompanied minors in Article 36, such as appointment of a legal guardian, accommodation appropriate for minors, family tracing, as well as training for professionals working with minors.

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- ★ A proposal for a recast **Reception Conditions Directive** aims to further harmonise reception conditions in the EU ([COM\(2016\)467 final](#)), reinforce the assessment of the best interests of the child and ensure that reception conditions are adapted to the specific situation of children, whether unaccompanied or within families, with due regard to their security, physical and emotional care and provided in a manner that encourages their general development. The specific needs of children, in particular with regard to respect for the child's right to education and access to healthcare have to be taken into account.
- ★ The proposal for a new **Dublin Regulation** ([COM\(2016\) 270 final](#)) envisages new rules for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application lodged by an unaccompanied minor, clarifying that, in the absence of a family member or relative in another Member State, the Member State where the minor first lodged his or her application for international protection will be responsible, unless it is demonstrated that this is not in the best interests of the minor.
- ★ The revised **Eurodac Regulation** ([COM\(2016\) 272 final](#)) proposes to lower the age for taking fingerprints and facial images from asylum-seekers and third-country nationals from 14 years to six years. This will help identify children in cases where they are separated from their families. It shall also strengthen the protection of unaccompanied minors, who do not always formally seek international protection and who can risk harm when absconding from care institutions or child social services.
- ★ The proposal for Regulation transforming the existing European Asylum Support Office (EASO) into a fully-fledged **European Union Agency for Asylum** ([COM\(2016\) 271 final](#)) would expand Agency mandate regarding operational and technical assistance, including providing assistance to Member States in ensuring that all the necessary child rights and child protection safeguards are in place within the framework of their asylum and reception systems. The new Agency shall also assist Member States in developing training activities concerning the handling of applications for international protection made by unaccompanied minors, including as regards the assessment of the best interests of the child, specific procedural safeguards such as respect of the child's right to be heard and child protection aspects such as age-assessment techniques.
- ★ The main legal instrument regulating the EU return policy is the 2008 **Return Directive** ([2008/115/EC](#)), which lays down common EU standards on forced return and voluntary departure, emphasising that voluntary return is preferred, while acknowledging the inevitable need for efficient means to enforce returns where necessary. After the **Informal meeting of EU heads of state or government** held in Malta in February 2017 highlighted the need for a review of the EU's return policy,<sup>1</sup> the Commission published a **new EU Action Plan on Return**, along with an Annex listing the actions to be implemented by Member States to complete, along with a **Recommendation** on making returns more effective when implementing the Return Directive ([C\(2017\) 1600 final](#)),<sup>2</sup> specifying among others that decisions on the legal status and on the return of unaccompanied minors should always be based on individual, multi-disciplinary and robust assessments of their best interests. The Action Plan foresees the adoption of immediate measures by the Member States to enhance the effectiveness of returns when implementing EU legislation, in line with fundamental rights obligations. Based on the results achieved in the implementation of the Recommendation and depending on whether it is estimated that further action should be taken to substantially increase return rates, the Commission may present a proposal to revise the Return Directive.

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<sup>1</sup> Malta Declaration by the members of the European Council on the external aspects of migration: *Addressing the Central Mediterranean route*, 3 February 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Communication on a *More Effective Return Policy in the European Union – a Renewed Action Plan*, *op. cit.*

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In line with the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights** ([2012/C 326/02](#)), applying the EU *acquis* containing child-sensitive provisions, the principle of best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.

Finally, the EU has committed to a number of international conventions which have placed an obligation to take appropriate protection and prevention measures in relation to migrants and/ or children, including the [UN Refugee Convention](#) and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child ([CRC](#)), the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children ([HCCH](#)), and the Council of Europe's Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms ([ECHR](#)).

## 5 PRIMARY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE STUDY

The Study will aim to address the following:

- ★ Provide an overview of the legal framework of international law and the EU *acquis* in relation to unaccompanied minors, provisions in place to address the human rights of unaccompanied minors and their fundamental freedoms when it comes to return/ integration and potential gaps;
- ★ Provide information on the legal framework and approaches of (Member) States to (voluntary) return of unaccompanied minors; describe the process (which actors and their roles) in relation to (voluntary) return; provide details of approaches that have been used specifically for the return of unaccompanied minors (e.g. AVR(R)-programmes specifically geared towards unaccompanied minors); describe reintegration measures in third countries; describe challenges and best practices concerning the (voluntary) return of unaccompanied minors, e.g. those who cannot be immediately returned;
- ★ Provide information on the approaches of (Member) States to the care/ integration of unaccompanied minors following status determination; describe the process (which actors and their roles) in relation to integration; provide details on approaches that have been aimed specifically at the integration of unaccompanied minors (e.g. education (including progression to third level), housing, guardianship, labour market entry); describe measures available to support unaccompanied minors in advance/ during/ as a follow-up to their transition to adulthood; describe outcomes, challenges and best practices concerning the integration of unaccompanied minors;
- ★ Describe the status(es) given (if any) to unaccompanied minors who are not granted protection (residence permit, visa) but who cannot be removed from a (Member) State;
- ★ Examine possible reasons for the disappearance of unaccompanied minors from guardianship/ care and whether this has any consequences on their permit to stay, plus measures in place to prevent and respond to disappearances and how effective they have been in practice.

## 6 RELEVANT SOURCES AND LITERATURE

### **EMN Studies**

- ★ EMN (2017): Family reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU plus Norway: National Practices. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00\\_family\\_reunification\\_sr\\_final.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/00_family_reunification_sr_final.pdf)
- ★ EMN (2016): The Return of Rejected Asylum Seekers: Challenges and Good Practices. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-studies-00\\_synthesis\\_report\\_rejected\\_asylum\\_seekers\\_2016.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-studies-00_synthesis_report_rejected_asylum_seekers_2016.pdf).

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- ★ EMN (2015): Policies, practices and data on unaccompanied minors in the EU Member States and Norway. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn\\_study\\_policies\\_practices\\_and\\_data\\_on\\_unaccompanied\\_minors\\_in\\_the\\_eu\\_member\\_states\\_and\\_norway\\_synthesis\\_report\\_final\\_eu\\_2015.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn_study_policies_practices_and_data_on_unaccompanied_minors_in_the_eu_member_states_and_norway_synthesis_report_final_eu_2015.pdf).
- ★ EMN (2015): Integration of beneficiaries of international/ humanitarian protection into the labour market: policies and good practices. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-studies-00\\_integration\\_of\\_beneficiaries\\_of\\_international\\_protection\\_eu\\_2015\\_en\\_final.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn-studies-00_integration_of_beneficiaries_of_international_protection_eu_2015_en_final.pdf).
- ★ EMN (2014): Good practices in the return and reintegration of irregular migrants: Member States' entry bans policy and use of readmission agreements between Member States and third countries. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn\\_study\\_reentry\\_bans\\_and\\_readmission\\_agreements\\_final\\_december\\_2014.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/emn_study_reentry_bans_and_readmission_agreements_final_december_2014.pdf).
- ★ EMN (2010): Policies on Reception, Return and Integration Arrangements for, and Numbers of, Unaccompanied Minors – an EU Comparative Study. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/unaccompanied-minors/0\\_emn\\_synthesis\\_report\\_unaccompanied\\_minors\\_publication\\_sept10\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/unaccompanied-minors/0_emn_synthesis_report_unaccompanied_minors_publication_sept10_en.pdf).

**EMN AHQs**

- ★ 2017.1209 – **On pull factors for unaccompanied minor asylum applicants** – requested 29 June 2017
- ★ 2017.1199 – **Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children followed by family members under Dublin Regulation** – requested 8 June 2017
- ★ 2017.1145 – **Return of unaccompanied minors** – requested on 3 March 2017
- ★ 2016.1071 – **Rules on family reunification of unaccompanied minors granted refugee status or subsidiary protection** – requested 27 May 2016
- ★ 2016.1067 – **Joint ad-hoc query COM & LU EMN NCP on statelessness: minors born in exile and unaccompanied minors (part 2)** – requested 4 May 2016
- ★ 2015.XXXX – **Detention and removal of minors** – requested XXX
- ★ 2014.523 – **Admission/ Residence and guardianship related provisions for unaccompanied foreign and/ or EU minors in vulnerable situations** – requested 18 November 2013
- ★ 2014.523 – **Safe centres for unaccompanied minors victims of trafficking in human beings** – requested 11 December 2013
- ★ 2012.439 – **Return of unaccompanied minors** – requested 13 November 2012

**Other studies and reports**

- ★ **European Commission** (2017). Compilation of data, situation and media reports on children in migration. [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights\\_child/data\\_children\\_in\\_migration.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights_child/data_children_in_migration.pdf)

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- ★ **European Commission** (2016). Child-specific Provisions in the Common European Asylum Package. [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights\\_child/ceas\\_provision\\_on\\_children\\_table\\_updated.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/rights_child/ceas_provision_on_children_table_updated.pdf)
- ★ **European Commission**, Directorate-General for Education and Culture (2016): Language assessment and integration of unaccompanied minors, Report for Peer Learning Activity in Dresden, May 31 – June 2 2016. [https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/peer-learning-dresden\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/peer-learning-dresden_en.pdf).
- ★ **House of Lords**, European Union Committee, 2nd Report of Session 2016–17 (2016): Children in crisis: unaccompanied migrant children in the EU. <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201617/ldselect/ldeduc/34/34.pdf>.
- ★ **IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre** (2016). Children and unsafe migration in Europe: data and policy, understanding the evidence base. <http://gmdac.iom.int/gmdac-data-briefing-5>.
- ★ **Save the Children** (2016): Children on the Move in Europe. Save the Children's response to the deepening child refugee and migrant crisis in Europe. <https://savethechildreninternational.exposure.co/children-on-the-move-in-europe>.
- ★ **10<sup>th</sup> European Forum on the rights of the child (2016)**: The protection of children in migration, 29-30 November 2016. [http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item\\_id=34456](http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=34456).
- ★ **Wadensjö, E. and Çelikaksoy, A.** (2016): Mapping Experiences and Research about Unaccompanied Refugee Minors in Sweden and Other Countries, Discussion Paper No. 10143, Forschungsinstitut zur Zukunft der Arbeit Institute for the Study of Labour. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp10143.pdf>.
- ★ **Fundamental Rights Agency** (2015). Guardianship systems for children deprived of parental care in the European Union. <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2015/guardianship-children-deprived-parental-care>
- ★ **Lemberg-Pedersen, M.** (2015): The rise and fall of the ERPUM pilot. Tracing the European policy drive to deport unaccompanied minors Refugee Studies Centre, Working Paper Series 108. Oxford Department of International Development, University of Oxford. <https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/files/files-1/wp-108-erpum-pilot.pdf>.
- ★ **Missing Children Europe** (2015). [Figures and Trends 2015 from Hotlines for Missing Children and Cross-border Family Mediators](http://missingchildreneurope.eu/Portals/0/Docs/Annual%20and%20Data%20reports/Missing%20Children%20Europe%20figures%20and%20trends%202015.pdf). <http://missingchildreneurope.eu/Portals/0/Docs/Annual%20and%20Data%20reports/Missing%20Children%20Europe%20figures%20and%20trends%202015.pdf>
- ★ **NIDOS** (2015). Reception and living in families: overview of family-based reception for unaccompanied minors in the EU Member States. <https://engi.eu/wp-content/plugins/download-attachments/includes/download.php?id=595>.
- ★ **UNICEF** (2015): Children's rights in return policy and practice in Europe. A discussion paper on the return of unaccompanied and separated children to institutional reception or family. [https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/childrens\\_rights\\_in\\_return\\_policy\\_and\\_practice\\_in\\_europe.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/childrens_rights_in_return_policy_and_practice_in_europe.pdf).
- ★ **Wadensjö, E. and Çelikaksoy, A.** (2015): Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Refugee Children in Sweden: An Outlook on Demography, Education and Employment, Discussion Paper No. 8963, Forschungsinstitut zur Zukunft der Arbeit Institute for the Study of Labour. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp8963.pdf>.

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- ★ **CONNECT Project** (2014): Identification, reception, protection of unaccompanied children, Identifying good practices in, and improving, the connections between actors involved in reception, protection and integration of unaccompanied children in Europe. [http://www.connectproject.eu/PDF/CONNECT-Project\\_Report.pdf](http://www.connectproject.eu/PDF/CONNECT-Project_Report.pdf).
- ★ **CONNECT Project** (2014): Reference document on unaccompanied children: a compilation of relevant EU laws and policy, [http://www.connectproject.eu/PDF/CONNECT-EU\\_Reference.pdf](http://www.connectproject.eu/PDF/CONNECT-EU_Reference.pdf).
- ★ **MinAs Project**. The project "In whose best interest? Exploring Unaccompanied Minors Rights Through the Lens of Migration and Asylum Procedures (MinAs)" is a research project carried out in four European countries (Slovenia, Austria, France and United Kingdom) in the period from June 2014 to December 2015. European Commission finances the project and its main aim is to identify and recommend better procedures and protection measures for unaccompanied minors: <http://www.minasproject.eu/>.
- ★ **Robinson, K. & Williams, L.** (2014): Positive Futures – A pilot project to develop and test a model to assist Appeal Rights Exhausted Care Leavers to consider Assisted Voluntary Return. Evaluation Report: <http://www.secouncils.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Positive-Futures-Evaluation-Report-Final-18-Aug.pdf>.
- ★ **UNHCR & UNICEF** (2014). Safe & Sound: what States can do to ensure respect for the best interests of unaccompanied and separated children in Europe. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5423da264.html>.
- ★ **ECRE & Save the Children** (2011). Comparative Study on Practices in the Field of Return of Minors, Final report. [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/legal-migration/pdf/general/return\\_of\\_children-final.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/legal-migration/pdf/general/return_of_children-final.pdf).
- ★ **Goeman et al.** (2011). Core standards for guardians of separated children in Europe. <http://www.corestandardsforguardians.com/images/22/335.pdf>.
- ★ **Council of Europe** (2010). Life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors. A handbook for front-line professionals. <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/545ca9e74.pdf>.

## 7 AVAILABLE STATISTICS

### **EU level**

Statistics are available through Eurostat on the number of asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors,<sup>3</sup> which may be indicative of the scale and, to a lesser degree, nature of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors in the EU plus Norway.

### **National level**

Subject to availability, the following statistical data sources would be very useful for this Study, and should be included insofar as possible:

- ★ Decisions on asylum applications by unaccompanied minors and/ or number of residence permits on grounds such as international protection, temporary/ permanent residence permits, etc. issued to unaccompanied minors, if possible disaggregated by status, gender, age group of the minors;
- ★ Number of asylum applications by unaccompanied minors who have been rejected;

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<sup>3</sup> Eurostat, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00194&plugin=1>



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- ★ (Estimated) number of unaccompanied minors not seeking asylum and their respective statuses, e.g. those who entered irregularly and victims of trafficking, etc.;
- ★ Number of unaccompanied minors issued temporary/ alternative statuses, tolerated stay, etc.
- ★ If available, data/ indicators pertaining to the integration of unaccompanied minors, for example, number of unaccompanied minors enrolled in primary/ secondary education, traineeships/ internships, training, labour market programmes or any other targeted measures; number of unaccompanied minors who have completed successfully any (civic) integration courses; number of unaccompanied minors registered with leisure associations (e.g. football/ cricket federation, scouting, etc.); number of cases of successful family reunification involving unaccompanied minors;
- ★ Number of unaccompanied minors with enforceable return decisions and/ or number of unaccompanied minors returned (voluntary and forced), including data on AVR(R)-programmes targeting unaccompanied minors;
- ★ Number of unaccompanied minors disappearing from care/ guardianship and/ or following a return decision;
- ★ Number of temporary/ permanent residence permits for unaccompanied minors on reaching 18 years of age may be available from immigration authorities and other competent authorities responsible for the protection of unaccompanied minors, such as child protection authorities, NGOs, etc.

**NB: The EMN Statistics Working Group is kindly invited to comment on the inclusion of statistics in the Common Template and to trial the collection of statistics in their (Member) State.**

## 8 DEFINITIONS

The following key terms are used in the Common Template. The definitions are taken mostly from the EMN Glossary v4.0.<sup>4</sup>

**'Absconding'** is defined as an "action by which a person seeks to avoid legal proceedings by not remaining available to the relevant authorities or to the court".

**'Applicant for international protection'** is defined as "a third-country national or a stateless person who has made an application for international protection in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken".

**'Application for international protection'** is defined as "a request made by a third-country national or a stateless person for protection from a Member State, who can be understood to seek refugee status or subsidiary protection status, and who does not explicitly request another kind of protection, outside the scope of Directive 2011/95/EU, that can be applied for separately".

**'Assisted voluntary return'** is defined as "voluntary return or voluntary departure supported by logistical, financial and/ or other material assistance".

**'Asylum seeker'** is defined in the global context as a person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than their own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments; and in the EU context as a person who

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<sup>4</sup> Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/docs/emn-glossary-en-version.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/emn-glossary-en-version.pdf)

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has made an application for protection under the Geneva Convention in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken.

**'Compulsory return'** in the EU context is defined as "the process of going back – whether in voluntary or enforced compliance with an obligation to return – to:

- ★ one's country of origin; or
- ★ a country of transit in accordance with EU or bilateral readmission agreements or other arrangements; or
- ★ another third country, to which the third-country national concerned voluntarily decides to return and in which they will be accepted.

**'Final decision'** is defined as "a decision on whether the third-country national or stateless person be granted refugee status or subsidiary protection status by virtue of Directive 2011/95/EU (Recast Qualification Directive) and which is no longer subject to a remedy within the framework of Chapter V of this Directive, irrespective of whether such remedy has the effect of allowing applicants to remain in the Member States concerned pending its outcome". Within the context of this Study, other statuses (than refugee status and subsidiary protection) are taken into account as well.

**'Forced return'** in the EU context is defined as "the process of going back – whether in voluntary or enforced compliance with an obligation to return – to:

- ★ one's country of origin; or
- ★ a country of transit in accordance with EU or bilateral readmission agreements or other arrangements; or
- ★ another third country, to which the concerned voluntarily decides to return and in which they will be accepted.

**'Integration'** in the EU context is defined as "a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States."

**'Irregular stay'** is defined as "the presence on the territory of a Member State, of a third-country national who does not fulfil, or no longer fulfils the conditions of entry as set out in Art. 5 of the Schengen Borders Code or other conditions for entry, stay or residence in that Member State".

**'Reintegration assistance'** is defined as "support - either cash, in kind or combined, provided by a host country to a returnee, with the aim of helping the returnee to lead an independent life after return."

**'Regularisation'** is defined as "in the EU context, state procedure by which illegally staying third-country nationals are awarded a legal status".

**'Residence permit'** is defined as "any authorisation issued by the authorities of an EU Member State allowing a non-EU national to stay legally in its territory, in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 265/2010 (Long Stay Visa Regulation)."

**'Rejected applicant for international protection'** is defined as "a person covered by a first instance decision rejecting an application for international protection, including decisions considering applications as inadmissible or as unfounded and decisions under priority and accelerated procedures, taken by administrative or judicial bodies during the reference period".

**'Return decision'** is defined as "an administrative or judicial decision or act, stating or declaring the stay of a third-country national to be illegal and imposing or stating an obligation to return".

**'Return'** is defined as "the movement of a person going from a host country back to a country of origin, country of nationality or habitual residence usually after spending a significant period of time in the host country whether voluntary or forced, assisted or spontaneous".

**'Subsequent application for international protection'** is defined as "a further application for international protection made after a final decision has been taken on a previous application, including cases where the applicant has explicitly withdrawn their application and cases where the determining authority has rejected an application following its implicit withdrawal in accordance with Art. 28 (1) of Directive 2013/32/EU."

**'Third-country national'** is defined as "any person who is not a citizen of the European Union within the meaning of Art. 20(1) of TFEU and who is not a person enjoying the Union right to free movement, as defined in Art. 2(5) of the Schengen Borders Code".

**'Tolerated stay'** also refers to the (temporary) suspension of removal of a third-country national who has received a return decision but whose removal is not possible either for humanitarian reasons (as their removal would violate the principle of *non-refoulement* or due to the third-country national's physical state or mental capacity) or for technical reasons (such as lack of transport capacity or failure of the removal due to lack of identification or the country of origin's refusal to accept the person) and for as long as a suspensory effect is granted in accordance with Art. 13(2) of Directive 2008/115/EC.

**'Unaccompanied minor'** is defined as "a third-country national or stateless person below the age of 18 years, who arrives on the territory of the Member States unaccompanied by the adult responsible for them by law or by the practice of the Member State concerned, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into the care of such a person. It includes a minor who is left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the Member States." Furthermore, within the context of this Study, unaccompanied minors approaching 18 years of age are generally understood to be in the final couple of years before reaching the age of majority, i.e. 16 to 18 years.

**'Voluntary departure'** is defined as compliance with the obligation to return within the time-limit fixed for that purpose in the return decision.

**'Voluntary return'** is defined as "the assisted or independent return to the country of origin, transit or third country, based on the free will of the returnee"

**'Vulnerable person'** is defined as "minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children, victims of trafficking in human beings, persons with serious illnesses, persons with mental disorders and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence, such as victims of female genital mutilation".

## 9 ADVISORY GROUP

An "Advisory Group" (AG) has been established within the context of this Study for the purpose of providing support to EMN NCPs during the development of the specifications for the Study, as well as the drafting of the Synthesis Report. In addition to COM and the EMN Service Provider (ICF-Odyseus), the members of the AG for the Study include EMN NCPs from BE, DE, FI, FR, IE, LU, PL, SE and the UK. EMN NCPs are thus invited to send any requests for clarification or further information on the Study to the following representatives of the AG:

- ★ COM: [Magnus.OVILIUS@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Magnus.OVILIUS@ec.europa.eu); [Maria.Zuber@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Maria.Zuber@ec.europa.eu)
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- ★ FR EMN NCP: [tamara.buschek-chauvel@interieur.gouv.fr](mailto:tamara.buschek-chauvel@interieur.gouv.fr); [christelle.caporali-petit@interieur.gouv.fr](mailto:christelle.caporali-petit@interieur.gouv.fr)
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## 10 TIMETABLE

The following tentative timetable has been proposed for the Study going forward:

Date	Action
3 <sup>rd</sup> August 2017	Advisory Group meeting to discuss the Concept Note for the Study
31 <sup>st</sup> August 2017	Circulation of <u>Version 1 of the Common Template</u> for the Study to COM and AG members
25 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	Circulation of the <u>revised Common Template</u> for the Study to COM, AG members and EMN NCPs
Mid-October 2017	Finalisation of the Common Template and official <u>launch</u> of the Study
31 <sup>st</sup> January 2018	<u>Submission of National Reports</u> to EMN Service Provider by EMN NCPs
28 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	Circulation of <u>Version 1 of the Synthesis Report</u> for the Study to COM and AG Members
15 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	Circulation of the <u>revised Synthesis Report</u> for the Study to COM, AG members and EMN NCPs
Mid-April 2018	<u>Finalisation</u> of the Synthesis Report for the Study and of the National Reports for publication on the EMN website

## 11 TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The template provided below outlines the information that should be included in the National Contributions of EMN NCPs to this Focussed Study. The indicative number of pages to be covered by each section is provided in the guidance note. For National Contributions, the total number of pages should **not exceed 40 pages**, including the questions and excluding the Statistical Annex. A limit of **40** pages will also apply to the Synthesis Report, in order to ensure that it remains concise and accessible.

## EMN FOCUSED STUDY 2017

# (Member) States' Approaches to Unaccompanied Minors Following Status Determination

Top-line factsheet [max. 2 pages, *please respect the page limits provided here*]

The top-line factsheet will serve as an overview of the **National Contribution** introducing the Study and drawing out key facts and figures from across all sections, with a particular emphasis on elements that will be of relevance to (national) policy-makers.

Please provide a concise summary of the main findings of Sections 1-6 below, for example, focussing on:

- Latest figures on the number and socio-demographic characteristics of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State, as well as evolution over time (2014-2016 and, where available, the first half of 2017);
- Top five main issues with regard to the care/ integration/ return of unaccompanied minors at present;
- Most important recent or planned changes to law, policy and practice regarding the care/ integration/ return of unaccompanied minors since 2014,<sup>5</sup> for example, as a result of the increase in the number of unaccompanied minors (and TCNs in general) seeking asylum in the EU between 2014 and 2016, the European Agenda on Migration,<sup>6</sup> etc.;
- Identified challenges and good practices, for example, as a result of the (Member) State coping with the large increase in applications from unaccompanied minors between 2014 and 2016, e.g. how were unaccompanied minors housed, educated, etc.

Any suggestions for EU level action on unaccompanied minors that might be useful for your (Member) State.

In the period 2014 to 2017, the number of illegal unaccompanied minors (UAM) has increased.

During the first 6 months of 2017, it has been notified a multy fold increase of illegal unaccompanied minors compare to the first six months of 2016. The total number of UAM applications for international protection were: 2014-10, 2015-5, 2016-171, 2017-262.

Throughout the observed period, the largest number of unaccompanied minors was from Afghanistan and Syria. The rest of the total number of unaccompanied minors are citizens of Iraq, Algeria, Pakistan, Eritrea and Bangladesh. Furthermore, compare to the previous years in 2015, it has been notified a slightly larger number of Turkish citizens, while in 2016 and 2017 there has been a slightly higher number of Kosovo citizens.

<sup>5</sup> As the previous EMN study on Unaccompanied minors was completed in 2014, the proposed reference period for the Study is 2014 onwards with some flexibility if (Member) States believe there to be a significant change to law/ policy/ practice outside this period.

<sup>6</sup> Communication from the Commission on a European Agenda on Migration, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/index_en.htm)

In practice, unaccompanied minors mostly do not possess the identification documents which creates a huge problem for the officials to identify the child. Furthermore, the other major issue is the age assessment. Quite often people who are physically grown up would claim to be underage to avoid staying in detention centre or to avoid filing for international protection and thereby depositing fingerprints.

The unaccompanied minors quiet often leaves social welfare facilities, whether they have expressed their intent to apply for the international protection or not. They mostly flee from the social welfare facilities within the first few days. Regardless of the treatment and the opportunities they have, such as applying for international protection or applying for temporary residence for humanitarian reasons in Croatia, unaccompanied minors have a predetermined plan to which country in Europe they want to go. Usually, it is one of the countries of Western Europe, therefore, they are not ready to cooperate or talk but to use the first chance to escape.

The problem is that such children, in their desire to reach the desired destinations, use all the means they are offered, and there is a great danger that they will be exploited and abused on their path, whether by smugglers or people dealing with trafficking in human beings. Furthermore, the problem is also that children do not trust authorities, but they trust criminals who offer them a "safe and a happy future" in one of the more prosperous countries of Western Europe.

During 2017 amendments to The Aliens Act were adopted to align it with European legislation on return. Currently, there is a new Protocol on treatment of unaccompanied minors under development. The aims of the new protocol are to improve and elaborate in detail the cooperation of state bodies, international organizations, civil society associations and all other actors involved in dealing with unaccompanied minors directly or indirectly.

In the past period, as an example of good practice to be emphasized is that unaccompanied minors should immediately be appointed with a special guardian. The guardian accompanies the minor at the police station when all facts and circumstances of the illegal stay are presented, defining the minor vulnerability as well as representing the interests of the minor.

Furthermore, an example of a good practice is that every unaccompanied minor is taken to an initial health examination where his health is assessed. The health assessment results present if the minor is suffering from any acute or chronic illnesses, and identify possible injuries that would suggest that minor is a victim of criminal offense. Another example of a good practice is the placement of an unaccompanied minor who is staying illegally in facilities within the jurisdiction of the ministry responsible for social and welfare affairs.

As a suggestion, it is certainly a better that identification would be facilitated through the proposal to take fingerprints for children aged 6 and over via the changes in Dublin regulation, with the ultimate goal of facilitating the identification of unaccompanied minors after the escape and later facilitating family reunification.

All available resources must be directed at suppressing smuggling activities, both at the border and in the state territory. It is also necessary to actively combat trafficking in persons through preventive and repressive mechanisms such as educational programs for all involved in the proceedings and for unaccompanied minors immediately upon their arrival to prevent their escape from the state institutions competent for social welfare

affairs and care and to prevent them from becoming victims of traffickers.

## Executive Summary [max. 5 pages]

The Executive Summary of the **Synthesis Report** will provide an overview of the Study, as well as form the basis of an EMN Inform, which will have EU and national policy-makers as its main target audience. The Executive Summary will be prepared by the EMN Service Provider (ICF).

## Section 1: Overview of the international and EU legislative framework on unaccompanied minors [max. 5 pages]

This section of the **Synthesis Report** will briefly outline the EU legal framework guiding national legislation on unaccompanied minors. It will provide a mapping of the substantive and procedural provisions in the EU acquis that regulate the protection of unaccompanied minors. The section will also highlight how the EU acquis relates to the broader international legal framework on unaccompanied minors. This section will be developed by the EMN Service Provider, hence no input from the EMN NCPs is required here.

## Section 2: Overview of the situation of unaccompanied minors in the (Member) State [max. 3 pages]

This section of the Synthesis Report will provide an up-to-date overview of the national situation with regard to unaccompanied minors in the (Member) States, including figures on the scale and nature of the phenomenon, e.g. number of residence permits issued to unaccompanied minors, number of unaccompanied minors reunited with family in (Member) States, etc. The section further sets out the context for the Study by providing information on the overall approaches of (Member) States to the care, integration and return of unaccompanied minors as deduced from the latest changes to law/ policy and/ or practice concerning this group of migrant children. The section will be drafted on the basis of data available from Eurostat or other relevant sources and complemented by national data provided by EMN NCPs (in Annex 1).

**Q1.** Please provide an overview of the current **public debate** with regard to unaccompanied minors who have received a final decision on their application for asylum/ another status in your (Member) State.

N/A

**Q2.** Are unaccompanied minors that fall in this category a **national policy priority**, including those turning 18 years of age? Has this changed over the last few years, i.e. since 2014 onwards? Has there been a shift in focus within policy issues concerning unaccompanied minors?

Please see response to Q3. b.

**Q3. a.** Please provide an overview of **recent changes to law, policy and practice** in relation to what happens with unaccompanied minors after they have received a final decision on their application for asylum/ another status in your (Member) State since 2014 onwards. Please provide an account of such changes also in relation to those unaccompanied minors turning 18 years of age, as well as unaccompanied minors disappearing from guardianship/ care and/ or following a return decision.

N/A

**b.** Please indicate **any planned changes** to law/ policy/ practice regarding the care/ integration/ return of unaccompanied minors going forward.



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Currently, there is a development in progress of the new Protocol of Treatment of Unaccompanied Minors, which details the cooperation between state administration bodies, local and regional government bodies, public authorities, public institutions, foreign diplomatic and consular missions, international organizations and civil society organizations, including co-operation with religious organizations and organizers of humanitarian actions.

The purpose of the Protocol is to define each stakeholder responsibilities, the procedures and deadlines, with a view to timely and effective protection of unaccompanied minors and their rights and interests. The means of action to unaccompanied minors is based on the four key principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely the protection of the child's well-being, the protection from of all forms of discrimination, the right to life, survival and development, the right to participate and the free expression of one's own opinion.

A new protocol will be introduced in the system for unaccompanied minors via the "Life project" which management will be taken by the inter-sectoral body.

**Q4.** What **statuses** does your (Member) State typically grant to unaccompanied minors and in what circumstances (e.g. asylum, humanitarian protection, temporary/ tolerated status, etc.)? *Please do not provide details here on the different status determination procedures (as this is not the focus of the Study), but rather on what status(es) they result in for unaccompanied minors.*

The unaccompanied minor may be granted international protection or temporary residence for humanitarian reasons. Temporary residence for humanitarian reasons may be granted to an unaccompanied minor who has been recognised as: a victim of trafficking in the assistance and protection program, an unaccompanied minor who is abandoned or is a victim of organized crime or for other reasons has remained without parental care, custody or escort.

**Q5. a.** Please provide any further qualitative information available in your (Member) State on the **characteristics of unaccompanied minors**, as follows:

- Are unaccompanied minors **mostly close to the age of majority** when a final decision on their application for asylum/ another status is issued, or (much) younger?

Majority of the unaccompanied minors applicants for international protection are usually the age of 16-17. The data for a temporary residence under humanitarian grounds is only available as aggregated data which includes all underaged not only UAM.

- Are they **boys or girls** predominantly?

UAM applications for international protection are predominantly boys.

- Are they **resettled and/ or relocated** unaccompanied minors whose right to reside in your (Member) State has been clarified?

Until now, in the Republic of Croatia there have been 2 reallocated UAM and both of them have been granted a subsidiary protection.

- Please provide any other qualitative information available *not covered above, for example, unaccompanied minors not presenting themselves to the authorities, etc.:*

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No data available.

**b.** Please complete the Excel document in Annex 1 (including data as well as metadata) if you have **national statistics** on:

- Total number of accepted/ rejected applications for international protection filed by unaccompanied minors in 2014-2016 and, where available, the first half of 2017, disaggregated by sex/ country of origin of the minor;
- Total number of permits to stay issued to unaccompanied minors, including international protection, humanitarian statuses, temporary/ alternative statuses granted in 2014-2016 and, where available, the first half of 2017, disaggregated by status/ sex/ country of origin of the minor;
- Estimated number of identified non-asylum seeking unaccompanied minors (e.g. those who entered irregularly and/ or victims of trafficking), including those subsequently granted a status, in 2014-2016 and, where available, the first half of 2017, disaggregated by age/ sex/ country of origin of the minor;
- Total number of unaccompanied minors issued a return decision in 2014-2016 and, where available, the first half of 2017, disaggregated by age/ sex/ country of origin (return) of the minor;
- Total number of voluntary/ assisted voluntary/ forced returns of unaccompanied minors in 2014-2016 and, where available, the first half of 2017, disaggregated by country of origin (return) of the minor;
- Estimated number of unaccompanied minors disappearing from reception/ care facilities and/ or following a return decision in 2014-2016 and, where available, the first half of 2017, disaggregated by age/ sex/ country of origin of the minor;
- If available, data pertaining to specific integration outcomes for unaccompanied minors in 2014-2016 and, where available, the first half of 2017, if possible disaggregated by age/ sex/ country of origin of the minor (e.g. unaccompanied minors enrolled in primary/ secondary education, traineeships/ internships, training, labour market programmes or any other targeted measures; unaccompanied minors who have completed successfully any (civic) integration courses; unaccompanied minors registered with leisure associations (e.g. football/ cricket federation, scouting, etc.); cases of successful family reunification involving unaccompanied minors). *If such data are not available, please provide below any existing qualitative information in relation to outcomes for unaccompanied minors.*

*Please do not here include the Eurostat data mentioned above, as this information is available publically and can therefore be analysed centrally for the Synthesis Report.*

Please see attached.

**Q6. a.** Please provide a general overview of what happens with unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State **when they turn 18 years of age**, including a brief description of the approach (e.g. transitional measures/ plans) of your (Member) State:

- when an unaccompanied minor has received **a final negative decision** on his/ her application for asylum/ another status as a minor (please elaborate below):

If an unaccompanied minor becomes of age while waiting for the decision on the international protection application and receives a negative decision on the application he/she will be treated as an irregular migrant and return decision with a voluntary departure from EEA will be issued.

- when an unaccompanied minor is **granted a status as a minor** (please elaborate below):

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When an unaccompanied minor has been granted an international protection for humanitarian reason becomes of age, he/she remains as a legal resident until the expiration of the residence permit or a possible early termination of the residence permit. Also, the UAM have the right to stay in the special social welfare facilities up to the age of 21 including the regular education. In this institution, they are preparing for independent life since the special guardian is appointed only until the of 18.

Temporary residence under humanitarian grounds is granted for a period of one year and can be extended. When a third-country national who has been granted temporary residence under humanitarian grounds as an unaccompanied minor becomes of age, in each individual case all circumstances regarding conditions required for obtaining temporary residence based on serious justified reasons of humanitarian nature, will be taken into consideration.

**b.** Please describe how unaccompanied minors who are approaching 18 years of age are **identified** in your (Member) State so that transitional measures/ plans can be introduced as part of their care/ integration/ return. How often is this review being done, e.g. every month, etc.?

The method of assessing unaccompanied minors, who will soon become of age will be established by the new Protocol. In any case, for this part of the procedure the responsibility lays with a special guardian, a competent social welfare centre and a doctor.

**c.** When are **transitional measures/ plans** for those unaccompanied minors turning 18 years of age likely to commence in your (Member) State, e.g. how many months / years before? And for how long can such measures continue after the unaccompanied minor reaches adulthood, e.g. is there any age threshold?

Currently the Republic of Croatia does not have such measures but the measures will be introduced by the new Protocol of Treatment of Unaccompanied Minors. The rights of UAM and adults are mostly the same beside guardianship and accommodation so there are no transitional measures/plans.

UAM has right to be accommodated in social welfare facility until 21 years of age so in that period the experts will prepare them for independent life.

### Section 3: Care arrangements for unaccompanied minors, including after-care for unaccompanied minors turning 18 years of age [max. 10 pages]

*This section of the Synthesis Report will provide a factual, comparative overview of the care arrangements in place for unaccompanied minors in the (Member) States – including any transitional/ after-care available for unaccompanied minors turning 18. Whilst the aim of this section is to report on care measures available specifically to unaccompanied minors following status determination, some care provisions are accessible for unaccompanied minors without a determination on their applications/ 'legal' status. Where the provisions differ from those for unaccompanied minors without a determination on their applications, this should be indicated. If applicable, please also distinguish between provisions that apply to all unaccompanied minors, as well as those that apply to certain groups of unaccompanied minors, e.g. non-asylum seeking unaccompanied minors, trafficked children, etc.*

#### *Overview of care provisions and organisational set-up in the (Member) State*

**Q7. a.** What **priority** is given to the care for unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State (over their return, for example)? When does the care for unaccompanied minors commence, i.e. before or after status determination?

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Care for unaccompanied minors begins immediately. The body competent for social welfare shall appoint a guardian who is responsible for child's best interests and places them in an appropriate social welfare facility. Later the care for unaccompanied minors continues depending on the status they get.

Unaccompanied minors can be accommodated in an appropriate social welfare facility (for example children's home), reception center for asylum-seekers if they express intent to apply for international protection (but not children under the age of 16), detention centre for irregular migrants or some other appropriate institution.

Detention centre has facility for vulnerable groups and UAM but UAM can be accommodated there only for a short period of time according to the Croatian legislation. They are mostly accommodated in appropriate social welfare facilities.

The guardian is responsible for the best interest of a child, taking care about the contacts with a child, representing a child in administrative and judicial proceedings, making contacts with child's parents or other family members, making contacts with competent institutions.

Unaccompanied minors have right to residence, family reunification, accommodation, health care, education, freedom of religion, social welfare.

**b.** Please provide a summary overview of the provisions in place in your (Member) State for the **care** of unaccompanied minors following their status determination, including accommodation, guardianship, etc., indicating how the legal status of the unaccompanied minor defines his/ her specific care arrangements (e.g. refugees, unaccompanied minors not seeking asylum, etc.).

When unaccompanied minor is granted a status (temporary residence under humanitarian grounds or international protection) they have right to residence, family reunification, accommodation, health care, education, freedom of religion, social welfare, guardianship.

**c.** Please describe the procedure (if any) in place in your (Member) State to determine the **best interests of the child** about the care for unaccompanied minors following a positive decision on status. Is this set out in legislation or any other internal administrative regulations?

The best interest of the child is contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Act on Foreigners, in the Article Relating to Protection in the Return Procedure and the applicable Protocol on the Treatment of Children Separated from Parents-Foreign Citizens. The method of determining the best interests of the child will be regulated by the new Protocol. In any case, in charge of this part of the procedure are a special guardian, a competent social welfare center and a doctor.

The Act on International and Temporary Protection (2015) prescribes that all procedures shall be conducted in line with the principle of the best interests of the child. It means that the best interests of the child shall be assessed, considering: the welfare and social development of the child, and his/her origin; the protection and safety of the child, especially if the possibility exists that he/she is a victim of trafficking in human beings; the child's opinion, depending on his/her age and maturity; the possibility of family reunification, etc.

**Q8.** Which **national/ regional/ local authorities and organisations** (including NGOs where relevant) are responsible for the care of unaccompanied minors following status determination? Please describe the competent authorities responsible for the provision of accommodation, guardianship, etc., what their specific remits and roles are, any authorities specifically ensuring the principle of the 'best interests of the child' is considered, etc.

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Name of national competent authority/ organisation	Brief description (e.g. remit/ role, etc.)	Main activities/ responsibilities
Ministry of the Interior	The identification of a child determines where the parents or relatives are, determines the circumstances of illegal migration, determines whether a child is a victim of a criminal offense.	Issue a decision on return.
<i>Centre for social welfare</i>	Competent for accommodation and guardianship	The Center for Social Welfare appoints a guardian and decides about accommodation.
Social welfare institutions (Children's home)	Provide accommodation services and take care of the best interest of the child.	Take care about education, health care, integration into the community, prepare for return, prepare them for independent life.
Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy	Nominates a special guardian for the child, represents the child's best interest, evaluates the best interest for each individual child, decides on a permanent solution that is best for the child, participates in the family reunification, participates in organizing and executing the return.	Represents child's best interest.
Ministry of Health	Performs the first medical examination of a child before being placed in a social welfare institution, take care of the child's health, determines whether the child is ill, injured, and what are the child's psychological and physical conditions, and based on an examination, determines whether the child is/was abused.	Take care of your child's health.

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Ministry of European and Foreigner Affairs	It informs the country of origin of where the child is found if the child had not sought international protection, contacts child's parents or family members.	It exchanges information with the country of origin of the child.
Ministry of Science and Education	It organizes elementary school education for a child during the child's stay in the Republic of Croatia, and if necessary secondary education, which is not obligatory.	Organizes child's education.

**Accommodation arrangements**

**Q9. a.** Please provide information on the **accommodation** options available for unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State following status determination, as follows:

- Accommodation specifically for minors? **Y/ N**

In the premises of the Ministry responsible for a social and welfare.

- General accommodation with special provisions for minors? **Y/ N**

As part of the Reception Centre for Foreigners, a facility for vulnerable groups and minors has been established and it can accommodate the unaccompanied minors but only for the shortest possible time, as minors are accommodated as a rule in the accommodation managed by the ministry responsible for social affairs.

- Specialised accommodation for unaccompanied minors with specific identified needs? **Y/ N**

N/A

- Specialised accommodation for (unaccompanied) minors victims of trafficking? **Y/ N**

Accommodation is organized as part of a national shelters for children victims of trafficking separately from adults.

- Accommodation with a foster family? **Y/ N**

N/A

- Other types of accommodation for unaccompanied minors, e.g. accommodation with adults if the unaccompanied minor is over 16 years of age, etc.? **Y/ N**

Unaccompanied minors who are seeking international protection can be accommodated in the Asylum Seekers' Reception Centre after their 16th birthday.

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**b.** Please provide an estimate of the **costs** associated with the accommodation of unaccompanied minors, as well as how these are measured/ defined in your (Member) State, e.g. per day/ child, etc.

Approximately 150 HRK per day.

**c.** Please provide information on the **staff** responsible for the care of unaccompanied minors, for example, main tasks, any child-specific training received, etc.

At the Detention Centre for Foreigners, we have predetermined workplaces for social workers especially to work with minors who would be accommodated there.

**d.** What are the implications of unaccompanied minors' **transition** from the age of minority to 18 years of age for their accommodation arrangements up to that stage?

- Do these unaccompanied minors turning 18 years of age change accommodation, or do they stay in the same accommodation, for example, until they reach a certain age? If so, what is the age threshold?

UAM are accommodated in facilities for minors within the competence of the ministry responsible for social and welfare affairs and can stay there until the age 21.

- Does your (Member) State have any measures in place to support the unaccompanied minor before the transition, e.g. information provision, etc.? **Y/ N**

The minor will be informed by the special guardian of the changes that will occur when he/she will turn 18 years of age, such as a change of accommodation, that he/she will no longer be able to be accommodated in a facility intended for minors. A special guardian is present in all the important issues that decide on the rights and interests of the child. The decision on recognition as well as the cessation of special custody is brought by a welfare centre which has appointed a special guardian.

- Does your (Member) State have any measures in place to support the unaccompanied minor during the transition, e.g. pathway plan, personal adviser, etc.? **Y/ N**

During this phase, an unaccompanied minor has a designated special guardian who protects all his/her rights and interests. A special guardian is obliged to inform the child of all facts and circumstances in a manner appropriate to the age, maturity and understanding of the child (the rights, services and facilities available to him/her) and to provide the child with the right to express their opinions and wishes.

- Does your (Member) State have any measures in place to support the unaccompanied minor after the transition, e.g. formal follow-up or after-care service, open-door policy at accommodation facility, etc.? **Y/ N**

If an unaccompanied minor leaves the social welfare facility arbitrarily at the age of 18, the social welfare system (the social welfare centre, the facility in which it is accommodated) no longer has the measure to monitor that child.

**e.** Is there any research available in your (Member) State on:

- The **standards of accommodation** provided to unaccompanied minors? **Y/N**

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- The **effects** of accommodation arrangements on the integration of the unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18 years of age (as conducted by relevant authorities, academics, NGOs, etc.)? Y/ **N**

If yes, please briefly describe the main findings and conclusions of such research and provide a full reference to the source (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).

There is no such kind of research carried out by the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy.

*Guardianship arrangements*

**Q10. a.** Please describe the arrangements for **guardianship** of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State following status determination, specifying who can become a guardian to an unaccompanied minor, the guardian's role, e.g. legal representation, etc., which unaccompanied minors (e.g. asylum/ non-asylum seeking) are entitled to a guardian and until what age, etc.

The body competent for social welfare shall appoint a guardian until child turns 18. Guardian can be experts from centre for social welfare, experts who works in institution where child is accommodated or another person who is competent and appointed by the relevant ministry. Guardian has to be in contact with a child, represent a child in administrative and judicial proceedings, make contacts with child's parents or other family members if family reunification or return is possible, take care of the education, health care and other interest of a child.

**b.** What are the implications of unaccompanied minors' **transition** from the age of minority to 18 years of age for their guardianship arrangements up to that stage, e.g. are these unaccompanied minors still entitled to a guardian and until what age, or are they expected to become fully autonomous, also in terms of finances, etc.? What measures (if any) are in place to support the unaccompanied minor before, during and after the transition, e.g. information provision, informal follow-up with guardians, etc.?

Unaccompanied minors are children under the age of 18. The body competent for social welfare shall appoint a guardian until child turns 18. Unaccompanied minors are accommodated in special social welfare facilities where they can stay up to 21 years of age if they are included in the regular education system. In these facilities, they are preparing for independent life.

**c.** Is there any research available in your (Member) State on:

- The **standard of guardianship** provided to unaccompanied minors? Y/ **N**
- The **effects** of guardianship on the integration of the unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18 years of age (as conducted by relevant authorities, academics, NGOs, etc.)? Y/ **N**

If yes, please briefly describe the main findings and conclusions of such research and provide a full reference to the source (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).

N/A

*Consequences of a temporary residence permit on the care arrangements for unaccompanied minors*

**Q11.** What impact does the expiration of a **temporary residence permit** have on the above-mentioned care arrangements for unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State, e.g. unaccompanied minors disappearing from care, etc.?



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In our country, children usually disappear from the accommodation facility at the very beginning immediately after being accommodated and their escape is not related to an expiry of a temporary residence permit.

*Challenges and good practices*

**Q12.** Please indicate the main **challenges** associated with the care of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State experienced by both unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18 years of age, and/ or the competent authorities (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations, information received from competent authorities, NGOs/ IGOs, case law, etc.) and how these challenges could be overcome. Please provide references.

The main challenge is to keep the minors from escaping without escort. Most flee right after being placed in a social welfare facility or a few days after settling because they want to reach a destination, mostly in the Western European countries. The challenge is also the language barrier as well as the cultural and sociological differences. The guardian and other experts need to spend more time with UAM and try to talk with them about their best interests and find the way how to motivate them to stay and integrate.

**Q13.** Please describe any examples of **good practice** in your (Member) State concerning the care of unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18. *Please identify as far as possible who considers the practice in question as successful, since when the practice has been in place, its relevance and whether its effectiveness has been proven, e.g. through an (independent) evaluation. Please reference any sources of information supporting the identification of the practice in question as a 'good practice' (e.g. evaluation reports, academic studies, information received from competent authorities, NGOs/ IGOs, etc.).*

According to "Children refugees and migrants in Croatia", Save the children report, 2017, in principle most of UAM situated in Croatia consider that their basic rights have been respected inclusive of the right to food, accommodation, and security. They particularly emphasize the feeling of peace and security. They also say that the experts behave well towards them, with the remarks that they are some more and some less approachable. They also note that they are provided with additional facilities: computers, sports, etc., with the remarks that the once who are satisfied with all offered are in Croatia shorter. Some have a Croatian language course. In summary: they are in a safe, dry and warm place and have what to eat, drink and what to wear (at least basic).

#### Section 4: Integration of unaccompanied minors, including transitional arrangements for unaccompanied minors turning 18 years of age [max. 10 pages]

*This section of the Synthesis Report will provide a factual, comparative overview of the integration measures in place for unaccompanied minors in the (Member) States, such as access to education and employment – including any transitional arrangements in place for unaccompanied minors turning 18. The aim of this section is to report on integration measures available specifically to unaccompanied minors following status determination (and not to duplicate information covered in other EMN studies on general integration measures). Where the provisions differ from those unaccompanied minors without a determination on their applications, this should be indicated. If applicable, please also distinguish between provisions that apply to all unaccompanied minors, as well as those that apply to certain groups of unaccompanied minors, e.g. non-asylum seeking unaccompanied minors, trafficked children, etc.*

#### *Overview of integration provisions and organisational set-up in the (Member) State*

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**Q14. a.** What **priority** is given to the integration of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State (over their return, for example)?

In the Republic of Croatia, the right to integration is only given to persons who have been granted international protection. Act on International and Temporary Protection, The Foreigners Act, Protocol on the Treatment of a Children Separated From Their Parents-Foreign Citizen prescribe how to protect the best interest of the child.

The body competent for social welfare shall appoint a guardian who is responsible for child's best interests and places them in an appropriate social welfare facility. The guardian and other experts help to integrate UAM in the society trough education and during their stay in appropriate social welfare facility helps them to prepare for independent life.

**b.** Please provide a summary overview of the provisions in place in your (Member) State for the **integration** of unaccompanied minors following their status determination, indicating in particular how the legal status of the unaccompanied minor defines his/ her specific integration trajectory (e.g. refugee, beneficiary of subsidiary protection, other statuses granted, etc.).

According to Act on International and Temporary Protection assistance for integration in the society covers: drawing up a plan of integration for asylees or foreigners under subsidiary protection in view of their individual needs, knowledge, abilities and skills; providing assistance to asylees or foreigners under subsidiary protection for the realisation of the developed plan; supervising the implementation of the plan.

The Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia shall coordinate the work of all ministries, NGOs and other bodies who participate in the procedure of integrating asylees or foreigners under subsidiary protection into society.

UAM who has been granted international protection has right to residence, family reunification, accommodation, work, health care, education, freedom of religion, free legal assistance, social welfare, assistance for integration into society, ownership of real property pursuant to the 1951 Convention, and acquisition of Croatian citizenship pursuant to the regulations governing the acquisition of citizenship.

UAM who has been granted temporary residence under humanitarian grounds has right to residence, family reunification, accommodation, health care, education, freedom of religion, and social welfare.

**b.** Do the above provisions **differ** from those for accompanied minors, as well as for adults and if so, how?

Unaccompanied minors and adults have mostly the same rights. Difference is only that unaccompanied minors have guardian until they turn 18 and as an unaccompanied minor they have to be accommodated in appropriate social welfare facility. After they turn 18 they do not need guradian any more but they still have right to be accommodated in social welfare facility for the next three years where the experts help them to prepare themselves for independent life.

**c.** Please describe the procedure (if any) in place in your (Member) State to determine the **best interests of the child** with regard to the integration of unaccompanied minors. Is this set out in legislation or any other internal administrative regulations?

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There is no procedure for determining the best interests of children but Act on International and Temporary Protection prescribe what the best interests of the child in this procedure means.

See answer: 7c

**Q15.** Which **national/ regional/ local authorities and organisations** (including NGOs where relevant) are responsible for the integration of unaccompanied minors following status determination? Please describe in particular the competent authorities responsible for the provision of education, employment support, etc., what their specific remits and roles are, any authorities specifically ensuring the principle of the 'best interests of the child' is taken into account, etc.

<b>Name of national competent authority/ organisation</b>	<b>Brief description (e.g. remit/ role, etc.)</b>	<b>Main activities/ responsibilities</b>
Ministry of the Interior	Provides information on the rights and obligations of persons who were granted international protection and assist them in exercising their rights.	Experts gives information about rights and obligations of unaccompanied minors granted international protection, helping them to realize their rights and obligations, contacts with guardian and other institutions
<i>Centre for social welfare</i>	Competent for accommodation, guardianship and financial help	The Center for Social Welfare appoints a guardian and decides about accommodation, provide monthly financial help.
Social welfare institutions (Children's home)	Provide accommodation services and take care of the best interest of the child.	Taking care about education, health care, integration into the community, prepare for return, prepare them for independent life.
Ministry of science and education Schools	Competent for primary, secondary and higher education	Education and integration, special assistance for children who have insufficient knowledge of the Croatian language
Ministry of health	Competent for health care	Provide primary health care
Employment service	Resolving the issue of the problems related to employment and unemployment	Training and pre-qualification for job, learning how to make a CV, how to contact with employer, giving an information about the job.

**Access to healthcare**

**Q16. a.** When providing access to **healthcare** to unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State following status determination, how are the following aspects dealt with?

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- Is access to healthcare **automatic** for unaccompanied minors upon obtaining a permit to stay which is **not** covered by the Qualification Directive (as it is for refugees and beneficiaries of international protection)? Does this group of unaccompanied minors have the same right to healthcare as nationals of the (Member) State? **Y/ N**

Unaccompanied minors have equal treatment in health care as children who are nationals, which is the right to health care in the same scope as an insured person of compulsory health insurance. The costs are paid out of the state budget.

- Please describe what this access to healthcare **includes**, for example, emergency treatment, basic medical care, essential or specialised medical care, counselling, etc.? **Y/ N**

Health care also includes emergency medical services and regular medical services in acute and chronic health problems as well as psychological assistance if needed.

- Does the (Member) State undertake any form of **individual assessment** to ensure that the medical care provided to unaccompanied minors corresponds to the minor's specific physical, as well as mental health needs? **Y/ N**

Through the first initial health examination that is carried out immediately after the first interrogation at the police station and prior to the placement in the social welfare institution, a basic view of the minor's physical, psychological and mental health status is provided. After first examination, if necessary specialist examinations and other treatments are required. In summery hhealth care protection includes: specialist-consilial health care, hospital health care, the right to medicines established by the basic and supplementary list of medicines, dental aids found in the basic and supplementary list of dental aids, orthopedic and other aids identified by the basic and supplementary list.

- Please provide any **other important information** in relation to the healthcare available for unaccompanied minors *not covered above*.

N/A

**b.** What are the implications (if any) of unaccompanied minors' **transition** from the age of minority to 18 years of age for their access to healthcare, including counselling up to that stage? What measures (if any) are in place to support the unaccompanied minor before, during and after such a transition, e.g. information provision, etc.?

Applicant foe international protection UAM after they turn 18 they have the right only to emergency care. An adult who have been granted international protection have the same rights to health care as unaccompanied minor.

Unaccompanied minor who has been granted temporary residence under humanitarian grounds has rights to health care in the same scope as an insured person of compulsory health insurance and costs are paid out of the state budget. But after they turn 18 they are obliged to pay a compulsory health insurance by themselves.

Support to unaccompanied minor is provided by experts in the social welfare facilities where they have been accommodated.

**c.** Is there any research available in your (Member) State on:

- The **quality of healthcare, including counselling**, provided to unaccompanied minors? **Y/ N**

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- The **effects** of the access to healthcare on the integration of unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18 years of age (as conducted by relevant authorities, academics, NGOs, etc.)? **Y/ N**

If yes, please briefly describe the main findings and conclusions of such research and provide a full reference to the source (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).

No

**Access to education**

**Q17. a.** When providing access to **education** to unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State following status determination, how are the following aspects dealt with?

- Is access to education **automatic** for unaccompanied minors who have obtained a status which is **not** covered by the Qualification Directive (as it is for refugees and beneficiaries of international protection)? Does this group of unaccompanied minors have the same right to education as nationals of the (Member) State? **Y/ N**

Children irregular migrants have the right to compulsory primary education the same as children nationals.

- Does the (Member) State undertake any form of **individual assessment** to ensure that the education provided to unaccompanied minors is adapted to the age, level of education in the country of origin, degree of language barrier of the unaccompanied minor, etc.? **Y/ N**

Children are provided with the possibility to learn Croatian language. Children will attend the basic courses until they master the Croatian language. The Ministry for Science and Education is responsible for a detailed plan and program of education of the unaccompanied minors.

- Are any **special measures** to support access to education specifically for unaccompanied minors available in the (Member) State, in particular language training\*, guidance regarding the national education system, etc.? **Y/ N**

\* Are there specialised institutions for the language training of unaccompanied minors? Does language training take place in public schools, in specialised language courses for unaccompanied minors or minors in general, or within adult language learning programmes for foreign citizens?

In some municipalities, Croatian language learning is organized in an elementary school and in the other municipalities is organised within a foreign language schools.

- Do unaccompanied minors receive **education in accommodation centres**, or as part of the **mainstream schooling system**? Or are there **other education arrangements** for unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State? **Y/ N**

The Law on Education has stated, and the new Protocol will elaborate on the primary school education referring to persons accommodated in the Detention Centre for Foreigners.

- Please provide any other important information in relation to access to education for unaccompanied minors *not covered above*.

N/A

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**b.** What are the implications (if any) of unaccompanied minors' **transition** from the age of minority to 18 years of age for their access to education up to that stage, e.g. do unaccompanied minors have the possibility to continue compulsory education post-18, to progress to third-level education, vocation studies and training, etc.? What measures (if any) are in place to support the unaccompanied minor before, during and after such a transition, e.g. information provision, education pathway/ plan, personal adviser, etc.?

UAM has right to education as a Croatian citizen. The primary school is an obligation. If UAM is older than 15 and did not finish primary school he/she will attend adult education programs. The guardian is responsible to take care of UAM education.

**c.** Is there any research available in your (Member) State on:

- The **quality of education** provided to unaccompanied minors? Y/ **N**
- On the educational performance of unaccompanied minors? Y/ **N**
- The **effects** of the access to education on the integration of unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18 years of age (as conducted by relevant authorities, academics, NGOs, etc.)? Y/ **N**

If yes, please briefly describe the main findings and conclusions of such research and provide a full reference to the source (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).

N/A

#### *Access to (support to) employment*

**Q18. a.** When providing **access to employment**<sup>7</sup> to unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State following status determination, how are the following aspects dealt with?

- Is access to employment **automatic** for unaccompanied minors upon obtaining a permit to stay which is **not** covered by the Qualification Directive (as it is for refugees and beneficiaries of international protection)? What does the access include, e.g. internships, traineeships, vocational preparation, etc.? Is this subject to rules generally applicable to the profession and to the public service? Is this conditional upon obtaining a work permit, etc.? Y/ **N**

We do not have information on access to employment of unaccompanied minors.

- Is the access to employment for unaccompanied minors **limited** in any way, for example, open only to unaccompanied minors of a certain minimum age after status determination, or restricted for a certain period and/ or limited to a maximum number of days per year? Are these limitations for unaccompanied minors same as those applied to minors who are nationals of the (Member) State? Y/ **N**

We do not have information on access to employment of unaccompanied minors.

- Are any **special measures** to support access to employment specifically for unaccompanied minors available in the (Member) State, in particular vocational guidance, jobseeker allowance for unaccompanied minors not able to find employment, etc.? Y/ **N**

<sup>7</sup> Please note that this need not apply to unaccompanied minors who are still in full-time education.

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No

- Please provide any other important information in relation to access to employment for unaccompanied minors *not covered* above.

N/A

**b.** What are the implications (if any) of unaccompanied minors' **transition** from the age of minority to 18 years of age for their access to employment up to that stage? What measures (if any) are in place to support the unaccompanied minor before, during and after the transition, e.g. ongoing employment support as part of integration pathway/ plan, personal adviser, etc.?

We do not have information on access to employment of unaccompanied minors.

**c.** Is there any research available in your (Member) State on:

- The **quality of employment access support** provided to unaccompanied minors? Y/ N
- The **effects** of the access to employment on the integration of unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18 years of age (as conducted by relevant authorities, academics, NGOs, etc.)? Y/ N

If yes, please briefly describe the main findings and conclusions of such research and provide a full reference to the source (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).

There is no such kind of research carried out by the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy.

#### *Family reunification of unaccompanied minors*

**Q19. a.** Please provide here any updated information on the **possibility for family reunification** for unaccompanied minors since the 2016 EMN Focussed Study on "Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU plus Norway: National Practices," including any information on the effects of family reunification on the integration of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).

Nothing has changed in the family reunification for unaccompanied minors' regulation since 2016.

**b.** What are the implications (if any) of unaccompanied minors' **transition** from the age of minority to 18 years of age for their access to family reunification up to that stage, for example:

- Is there any cut-off of family reunification rights when unaccompanied minors reach 18 years of age? **Y/ N**

UAM has right to family reunification with parents until the age of 18. After they turn 18 they cannot exercise that right any more. According to law, family members are spouses, common law partners, minor children, parents or adopted parents of a minor children.

- Does your (Member) State have any measures in place to support the unaccompanied minor before, during and after such a transition (please specify these measures)? **Y/ N**

If UAM has parents and there is possibility of family reunification the guardian will cooperate with competent institution (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of foreign affairs) to make family

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reunification possible.

- Please provide any other important information in relation to family reunification for unaccompanied minors *not covered above*.

N/A

**c.** Is there any research available on the **effects** of family reunification on the integration of unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18 years of age (as conducted by relevant authorities, academics, NGOs, etc.)? Y/ N

If yes, please briefly describe the main findings and conclusions of such research and provide a full reference to the source (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).

N/A

*Social welfare supporting unaccompanied minors*

**Q20. a.** Does your (Member) State provide any **social welfare/ assistance** to support unaccompanied minors? Y/ N

If yes, please provide information on this below, citing any evidence on the **effects** of social welfare/ assistance on the integration of the unaccompanied minors where available (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).

Yes, UAM accommodated in social welfare facility has right to financial help (allowance). The guardian and other experts in social welfare facility provide care for their integration, (education, Croatian language, health care).

**b.** What are the implications (if any) of unaccompanied minors' **transition** from the age of minority to 18 years of age for their access to social welfare/ assistance up to that stage, for example:

- Is there any benefits cut-off when unaccompanied minors reach 18 years of age? **Y/ N**

They have the same rights as UAM as adults.

- Does your (Member) State have any measures in place to support the unaccompanied minor before, during and after such a transition (please specify these measures)? Y/ N

There are no specific measures but guardian and other experts are responsible to taking care of the best interest of UAM and to prepare UAM for independent life.

- Please provide any other important information in relation to social welfare for unaccompanied minors *not covered above*.

N/A

**c.** Is there any research available on the **effects** of social welfare on the integration of unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18 years of age (as conducted by relevant authorities, academics, NGOs, etc.)? Y/ N

If yes, please briefly describe the main findings and conclusions of such research and provide a full reference to the source (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations/ other sources or information received from competent authorities).



There is no such kind of research carried out by the Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy.

#### *Further monitoring of unaccompanied minors' transition to adulthood*

**Q21.** Further to any information on after-care already provided above, please describe any (other) **monitoring mechanisms/ reviews/ evaluations** ensuring the effective transition of unaccompanied minors to adulthood, including the types of measure(s) undertaken and the duration of the monitoring period after unaccompanied minors reach 18 years of age.

Unaccompanied minor can be accommodated in social welfare facilities until the age of 21. By their 21st birthday, the institution as well as the Social Welfare Centre, which has issued a child-care solution, has the possibility of monitoring it if it uses accommodation services. The status of unaccompanied minor in the social welfare system depends on the recognized status (subsidiary protection, asylum status).

#### *Consequences of a temporary residence permit on the integration of unaccompanied minors*

**Q22.** What impact does the expiration of a **temporary residence permit** have on the above-mentioned integration measures for unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State, e.g. possibility for education-related extension of a temporary residence permit originally granted on grounds of international/ humanitarian protection, etc.?

According to The Foreigners Act temporary residence under humanitarian grounds is granted for a period of one year and can be extended. When a third-country national who has been granted temporary residence under humanitarian grounds as an unaccompanied minor becomes of age, in each individual case all circumstances regarding conditions required for obtaining temporary residence based on serious justified reasons of humanitarian nature, will be taken into consideration.

Education of an unaccompanied minor will be considered when deciding on an application for temporary residence permit.

#### *Challenges and good practices*

**Q23.** Please indicate the main **challenges** associated with the integration of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State experienced by both unaccompanied minors (including those turning 18 years of age), and/ or competent authorities (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations, information received from competent authorities, NGOs/ IGOs, case law, etc.) and how these challenges could be overcome. Please provide references.

The main challenge is the fact that unaccompanied minors leave the Republic of Croatia since it is not their country of destination. By leaving the country so quickly and via suspicious channels, they are under enormous risk of becoming victims of human trafficking and exploitation.

There is need more systematic and quality work with unaccompanied minors in order to make them aware of dangers which they may face if they continue their journey, namely it is necessary to find means to motivate them to stay in the Republic of Croatia and integrate into the society.

**Q24.** Please describe any examples of **good practice** in your (Member) State concerning the integration of unaccompanied minors – including those turning 18 – identifying as far as possible who considers the practice in question as successful, since when the practice has been in place, its relevance and whether its effectiveness has been proven, e.g. through an (independent) evaluation. Please reference any sources of information supporting

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the identification of the practice in question as a 'good practice' (e.g. evaluation reports, academic studies, information received from competent authorities, NGOs/ IGOs, etc.).

Currently such information is not available.

## Section 5: Return of unaccompanied minors [max. 10 pages]

*This section of the **Synthesis Report** will report on the return arrangements for unaccompanied minors as stipulated in Directive 2008/115/EC (i.e. Art. 10, Art. 17) without duplicating information covered in the forthcoming EMN study on 'The effectiveness of return in EU Member States: challenges and good practices linked to EU rules and standards.'*

### *Overview of the return procedure and its legal and organisational set-up in the (Member) State*

**Q25. a.** Does your (Member) State foresee the **return** of unaccompanied minors? **Y/ N**

If so, please provide a brief overview of the provisions in place in your (Member) State with regard to the **return** of unaccompanied minors to the country of origin when the minor receives a negative decision on his/ her application for asylum/ another status:

- Possibility for an unaccompanied minor to return to the country of origin through a **voluntary return**? **Y/ N**

If yes, please describe the procedures/ processes under which an unaccompanied minor may be returned voluntarily to the country of origin according to national legislation/ policy and practice, including any challenges.

The return of the unaccompanied child for whom the decision to return is made shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions of The Aliens Act. Police officers are involved in the organization and execution of return. The Aliens Act and the Return Procedure (Voluntary, Forced) are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior.

If the child has not expressed intent to apply for the international protection or the application for international protection has been rejected, a return decision and a decision on prolongation of time limit for voluntary departure will be issued. Duration of voluntary return is determined in cooperation with a special guardian. A child has the right to free legal aid in the compound the suit and representation before the administrative court.

The volunteer departure will be postponed until the end of the administrative dispute. The Ministry responsible for social affairs, actually the Social Welfare Centre and the special guardian prepare return, contact parents or family, obtains travel documents, obtains a certificate from a diplomatic representative which guarantees that the child will be returned to a family member, a designated guardian or an appropriate reception institution in the country of origin, participate in the execution of the return.

- Possibility for an unaccompanied minor to return to the country of origin through an **assisted voluntary return**? **Y/ N**

If yes, please describe the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programme available in your (Member) State and the procedures/ processes under which an assisted voluntary return of an unaccompanied minor may be carried out, including any challenges.

We have no assisted voluntary departure. Project development and tender implementation

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are underway.

- Possibility for an unaccompanied minor to return to the country of origin through a **forced return**?  
Y/ N

If yes, please describe the procedures/ processes under which an unaccompanied minor may be subject to a forced return to the country of origin according to national legislation/ policy and practice, including any challenges.

Forced removal is carried out exceptionally if the conditions for the accommodation in the detention have been fulfilled or if a return decision or a decision on extending the deadline of the voluntary departure has passed.

Then a decision on the removal with entry ban in the EGP is issued and the order for expulsion decision and the decision on accommodation in detention centre, which is delivered to a special guardian.

Lasting of entry ban and lasting of accommodation in detention centre shall be determined in co-operation with a special guardian, as a rule, at the shortest time necessary for the execution of removal.

After the child has been placed in detention centre, the administrative court reviews the decision and may terminate the decision on the placement of the child in the detention centre. It is about judicial control of detention.

Before execution of removal, the Ministry of the Internal Affairs notifies about the forced removal the monitoring organization that conducts surveillance of forced removal and compiles the report.

**b.** Please describe the procedure (if any) in place in your (Member) State to determine the **best interests of the child** once a negative decision has been reached. Is this set out in legislation or any other internal administrative regulations? *Please cross-reference/ summarise here any aspects of the BID procedure for unaccompanied minors subject to a return decision already covered under the EMN study on return (see above) and provide any additional information).*

N/A

**Q26.** Which **national authorities and organisations** (including NGOs where relevant) are responsible for the return of unaccompanied minors? Please describe briefly the competent authorities involved in return, family tracing, etc., as well as any other stakeholders concerned, what their specific remits and roles are, any authorities specifically ensuring the principle of the 'best interests of the child' is taken into account in the return of the minor, etc.

Name of national competent authority/ organisation	Brief description (e.g. remit/ role, etc.)	Main activities/ responsibilities
Ministry of the Interior	Provides a decision on return, issues a decision on free legal aid, if it is a forced removal, informs the monitoring organization.	Return decision
Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social	Assessing whether departure	Evaluating and advocating

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Policy	is in accordance with the best interests of the child, organises the obtaining of a travel document, contacting a diplomatic mission through the ministry responsible for external affairs, coordinating to whom the child will be returned, accompanying the minor until he/she is returned to the parents, the family or the children's reception institution in the country of origin.	the best interest of the child
Ministry of European and Foreigner Affairs	It facilitates the organization of return by contacting the diplomatic mission or consular office, providing available information on the situation in a country of origin at the request of other bodies involved in the return process, if necessary participate in the establishment of co-operation between a foreign diplomatic mission, a consular office and a ministry responsible for social affairs.	Contacts with country of origin
Ministry of Health	Ukoliko se maloljetnik žali na zdravstvene tegobe pregledati će ga liječnik.	Health of the child
Organization for the monitoring of forced removal	After receiving the information from the ministry responsible for internal affairs, it will observe the forced removal and will compile a report.	Monitoring of the forced removal

*Enforcement of return decisions and key arrangements pre/ during/ post departure*

**Q27.** What is the estimated timeframe within which your (Member) State **implements** a return decision following a rejection of an unaccompanied minor's application for asylum/ another status? If there are delays (deviating from this timeframe), what are the usual reasons for such delays?

The voluntary departure period is usually given for a period of 7 to 30 days. It can be given exceptionally for up to 1 year. What will be the deadline for voluntary departure depends on

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personal and family circumstances and the ability to leave the country within a given time. In practice, everyone is escaping before the end of the procedure.

**Q28.** Please describe the measures (if any) taken by your (Member) State to:

- encourage **voluntary return** when an enforceable return decision is issued to an unaccompanied minor:

In order to support the voluntary departure there can be a decision on not issuing a return decision on entry and stay ban or return decision without entry ban, or a decision to cancel expulsion decision with entry ban and shorten the ban on entry and stay. The Ministry can obtain travel tickets, travel documents and make financial payments. The Assisted Voluntary Return is planned to start during 2018.

- **enforce** return decisions against unaccompanied minors; please clarify in particular how your (Member) State perceives the forced return of unaccompanied minors, as well as what is considered effective in this context:

If it is estimated that returning to the country of origin is the best interest of the child (assessed by a special guardian and ministry competent for social affairs), the child will be returned. The child will be returned to a family or the family member or the institution responsible for minors' care in the country of origin.

To whom the child will be transferred is the responsibility of the ministry responsible for social affairs who which be in contact with the diplomatic mission or consular mission.

The new Protocol on the Treatment of Unaccompanied Children is under development, which will provide for the establishment of a co-ordination body composed of experts from various ministries and which would assess the best interest for each individual child.

- mitigate any negative impact (please specify) of a return decision on the **well-being of unaccompanied minors**:

A special guardian will assess what is in the best interest of the child and may decide to stop the return.

**Q29. a.** Please provide an overview of key arrangements for the **return of unaccompanied minors** to the country of origin, in particular information, support, services and preparation before departure, safeguards for unaccompanied minors during the operation, transfer of custodial care, etc.

A police officer issues a decision on return and submits it to a special guardian. The police officer will provide a decision on free legal aid as well. A special guardian assesses whether a decision is in the child's best interests.

The Centre for Social Welfare calls for the assistance of a diplomatic mission to organize return and establish co-operation with parents and social services for the purpose of accepting the child in the country to which the child is returning. A special guardian will obtain travel documents for the child.

If assessing the child's well-being is threatened by the return process, a special guardian may, on the child's behalf, indicate intent to apply for the international protection. The special guardian can apply for a humanitarian protection if the child has not been granted international protection. A special guardian accompanies the child until is reunited with a

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parent, a family member, or a competent service. A police officer may provide assistance during return if deemed necessary. A police officer will inform the monitoring organization if there is the case of forced departure procedure.

**b.** Please describe the policy/ practice of your (Member) State with regard to **family tracing** in the country of origin, including when such measures are taken, which authority/ organisation is responsible, as well as the contribution and responsibility of the guardian.

A claim to trace the family can be submitted by a minor or a special guardian to the Croatian Red Cross. When deciding on filing the claim for tracing, the special consideration is given to the assessment of the best interests of the child, acting in accordance with the principle of "no harm", the security of the claimant but also of the traced person, protection of personal data and protection of the traced person.

The Croatian Red Cross will upon receiving a notification of the need to initiate a trace, provide a translator for the minor, will determine whether the initiation of a trace is in accordance with the will of the minor and whether there are enough elements to initiate the trace claim, depending on the circumstances of the separation or disappearance of the family members will gather information through the Red Cross and Red Crescent network, reporting the results to the minor and a special guardian.

**c.** How does your (Member) State interpret the term '**adequate**' **reception facilities** in the country of origin, as one of the requirements for removing an unaccompanied minor from EU territory according to the Return Directive?<sup>8</sup> Does your (Member) State return unaccompanied minors to care centres or parents, relatives, etc.?

The Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy, in co-operation with other ministries, examines the circumstances in which the escorted child resided, returning to the country of origin. A special guardian has the authority to repatriate the child and hand the child to family members, relatives or the competent social service.

**d.** Please indicate any **special/ transitional arrangements** for the return of unaccompanied minors approaching 18 years of age. *Please do not cover here any aspects of the return of former unaccompanied minors, i.e. adults, as this is subject of a separate EMN study on return (see above).*

The Ministry of Demography, in the situation of returning unaccompanied minors, acts in accordance with the applicable legal regulations defining this area.

**e.** Please provide information on the **follow up** of unaccompanied minors once they have returned, such as duration of such follow up, competent service, etc.

There is no follow up of unaccompanied minors after they return to their country of origin or join a family in one of the EU members.

<sup>8</sup> Art. 10(2) of Directive 2008/115/EC stipulates that before removing an unaccompanied minor from the territory of a Member State, the authorities of that Member State shall be satisfied that s/he will be returned to a member of his or her family, a nominated guardian or adequate reception facilities in the State of return.

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f. Please elaborate on any **existing cooperation arrangements** between your (Member) State and countries of origin when it comes to the return of unaccompanied minors, such as bilateral readmission agreements concerning unaccompanied minors.

The Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy does not have such data.

**Q30. a.** Does your Member State provide any **reintegration assistance** to unaccompanied minors returning to their countries of origin (*please cross-reference/ summarise here to any aspects of the reintegration support for unaccompanied minors already covered under the EMN study on return (see above) and provide any additional information*)?

- through **voluntary return**? Y/ N

If yes, please describe the kind of supports available before, during and after the voluntary return of an unaccompanied minor.

Prior to return, minors are offered opportunities such as free legal aid, the possibility of administrative disputes, the possibility of delaying or abolishing the ban on entry and stay, the possibility of obtaining travel documents, tickets, financial support. Reintegration in the country of origin for now is not within the competence of this ministry.

- through **assisted voluntary return**? Y/ N

If yes, please describe the kind of supports available under the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programme available in your (Member) State before, during and after the assisted voluntary return of the unaccompanied minor.

Croatia still does not have an Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) scheme.

- through **forced return**? Y/ N

If yes, please describe the kind of supports available before, during and after the forced return of an unaccompanied minor.

It will be foreseen in the new AVR scheme.

**b.** Please describe the **monitoring mechanisms** (if any) in place in your (Member) State to ensure the effective reintegration of unaccompanied minors, including the types of measure undertaken and the duration of the monitoring period.

We do not have a monitoring for the reintegration in the country of origin for now.

#### *Alternatives to return*

**Q31.** Does your (Member) State provide for any **alternative solutions to stay** for unaccompanied minors, such as regularisations, etc.? How do you **inform** unaccompanied minors of such possibilities to stay following a negative decision on their application for asylum/ another status?

N/A

#### *Dealing with unaccompanied minors who cannot be immediately returned*

**Q32. a.** Please describe the procedure of dealing with **unaccompanied minors who are not/ cannot be returned immediately** in your (Member) State, specifying the circumstances whereby the enforcement of a return decision has been deferred/ postponed, for how long such a deferral/ postponement is possible, where

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unaccompanied minors are housed during the deferral/ postponement period, whether unaccompanied minors have the possibility to be granted a status/ right to stay in the (Member) State (e.g. tolerated status), etc.

There will be a temporary postponement of forcible departure. A temporary deferral of time will result in a temporary deferral, which cannot be longer than one year.

There will be a temporary postponement of execution of removal. A temporary deferral of time will result in a temporary deferral, which can not be longer than one year.

Obligations such as depositing a travel documents, documents and travel tickets, deposit of certain financial means, ban on leaving a specific address for accommodation, and reporting to a police station at a specified time may be set for a juvenile.

A decision will determine which of the above obligations is appropriate to the circumstances of the case in time to forceful departure. Against the lighter measures an administrative dispute can be initiated.

With regard to the application for a lighter measure, the ministry responsible for internal affairs can provide accommodation and maintenance, make financial payments and other material grants, establish agreements with other state bodies, international organizations and civil society organizations.

Minors will be accommodated in the premises of the ministry responsible for social affairs.

**b.** What is the impact of a deferred return decision on the **well-being** of unaccompanied minors (as cited in existing evaluations/ studies/ other sources or information received from competent authorities, please provide references)? Does your (Member) State provide any state-guaranteed healthcare, including counselling, guardianship, etc. to the unaccompanied minor during this state of limbo?

A non-guardian juvenile immediately appointed a special guardian who protects his rights and interests, who regularly visits and visits a minor, makes sure that all decisions are made in the best interest of the child so that the child without escort has adequate care, accommodation, nutrition, clothing and footwear, and health care in accordance with the regulations on health care of aliens. A special guardian works on a more durable solution in the interest of the unaccompanied child, advising him about the realization of certain rights. There is a commitment to assisting a non-escorted child in reaching contacts with civil society organizations carrying out activities aimed at supporting foreigners.

**c.** Please provide any other information available in your (Member) State on the **well-being** of unaccompanied minors during the above-mentioned state of limbo, such as instances of unaccompanied minors transferred to another reception facility because of disciplinary reasons, unaccompanied minors involved in incidents, number of consultations with psychologists, school absenteeism or school drop-out rates, etc.

During the stay of an unaccompanied child in the territory of the Republic of Croatia independent of his status, a special guardian takes care of all his rights and interests. A special guardian has the power to take all measures to protect children. A special guardian takes care that the child is accommodated in the premises and in the detention centre that are customized and specialized for juveniles.

*Challenges and good practices*

**Q33.** Please indicate the main **challenges** associated with the implementation of the return of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State experienced by both unaccompanied minors, including those turning 18, and/ or competent authorities (e.g. based on existing studies/ evaluations, information received from competent



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authorities, NGOs/ IGOs, case law, etc.) and the measures (that could be) taken to overcome these challenges. For example, do boys face different challenges than girls (and vice versa) when it comes to return and if so, how does your (Member) State deal with such challenges?

Challenges in these circumstances are that most unaccompanied minors do not have the documents to prove their identity. Also, the execution of the return hampers the frequent escape of unaccompanied minors from social welfare facilities. In our country, we do not have many girls, they are mostly in the company of the family members.

**Q34.** Please describe any examples of **good practice** in your (Member) State concerning the return of unaccompanied minors. *Please note that, in order to comply with children's rights and EU policy positions,<sup>9</sup> good practices in return of unaccompanied minors should only include voluntary return following a robust, individual BID procedure with all procedural safeguards, as well as holistic support, preparation and reintegration assistance.*

*Please identify as far as possible who considers the practice in question as successful, since when the practice has been in place, its relevance and whether its effectiveness has been proven, e.g. through an (independent) evaluation. Please reference any sources of information supporting the identification of the practice in question as a 'good practice' (e.g. evaluation reports, academic studies, information received from competent authorities, NGOs/ IGOs, etc.).*

N/A

## Section 6: Disappearances of unaccompanied minors from guardianship/ care facilities and/ or following a return decision [max. 5 pages]

**Q35.** Is the **disappearance of unaccompanied minors** an issue in your (Member) State? If so, can this be linked to i) the decision on their application for asylum/ another status in terms of the point in time, i.e. before/ after a decision on status is issued, and ii) in terms of the outcome of the procedure, i.e. positive/ negative decision?

Escape from the social welfare facilities is a big problem. Unaccompanied minors escape unrelated to the decision about their status. Mostly they escape immediately in the first few days after being accommodated in open-type facilities with a view to arriving at a destination country that is most commonly one of the countries of Western Europe.

**Q36.** If your (Member) State has recorded cases of **unaccompanied minors disappearing from accommodation facilities and/ or guardianship care** following a decision on status, what are the possible **reasons** for such disappearances (e.g. running away from guardianship/ care facilities, expiration of a temporary residence permit, etc. as cited in existing evaluations/ studies/ other sources or information received from competent authorities, *please provide references*)?

Also, what are the **consequences** of their disappearance on their permit to stay? For example, can their status and/ or residence permit be withdrawn?

Children are fleeing because they want to get to the destination country, or have no intention of staying in our country. If the child has filed a request for international protection, he will

<sup>9</sup> For example, the Commission Recommendation on making returns more effective when implementing the Directive 2008/115/EC, C(2017) 1600 final, see above.

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not be dismissed because his/her escape. The same is in the case of granted humanitarian residence. Stay will not cease to exist due to leaving the country.

**Q37.** Does your (Member) State have any procedures/ measures in place to:

- **Prevent and react** to disappearances of unaccompanied minors from guardianship/ care facilities, e.g. support services, national hotlines for missing children, missing persons alerts in the Schengen Information System, Missing Children Europe and its member organisations, fingerprinting/ photographing unaccompanied minors as an aid for tracing, etc.? **Y/ N**

After the child leaves the social welfare facility, the employees of the social welfare facility would inform the police without delay and police also without delay announce the search that is visible in the SIS.

- **Report and respond** to disappearances of unaccompanied minors from guardianship/ care facilities, e.g. protocols among authorities, standardised procedure for dealing with disappearances, etc.? **Y/ N**

The unaccompanied minor's escape is immediately reported to the police which call for a search. If the is found, the police inform the social welfare facility from which the unaccompanied minor escaped and a minor's guardian who will take him/her back to the facility.

**Q38.** If your (Member) State has cases of **unaccompanied minors disappearing following a**

to decrease the **risk of such disappearances**, as well as any **follow-up measures** in case of disappearances.

N/A

**Q39.** Please indicate the main **challenges** associated with the disappearance of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State for the competent authorities, as well as the minors themselves and the measures (that could be) taken to overcome these challenges. For example, do you have evidence of instances of disappearances of unaccompanied minors linked to any negative consequences for the minors (e.g. exploitation, radicalisation, etc.)? *Please base this information on existing studies/ evaluations, information received from competent authorities, NGOs/ IGOs, case law, etc. and provide references.*

N/A

**Q40.** Please describe any examples of **good practice** in your (Member) State concerning the issue of disappearances of unaccompanied minors. *Please identify as far as possible who considers the practice in question as successful, since when the practice has been in place, its relevance and whether its effectiveness has been proven, e.g. through an (independent) evaluation. Please reference any sources of information supporting the identification of the practice in question as a 'good practice' (e.g. evaluation reports, academic studies, information received from competent authorities, NGOs/ IGOs, etc.).*

The Ministry of Demography, Family, Youth and Social Policy does not have examples of good practice.

## Section 7: Conclusions [max. 7 pages]

*This last section of the **Synthesis Report** will outline the main findings of the Study and present conclusions relevant for policy-makers at EU and national level. (Member) States should include any overall conclusions from their National Contribution in the top-line factsheet above rather than duplicate information in this section.*

### Annex 1 National statistics (in Excel)

**Q41.** With reference to **Q5.b.** above, please complete the following table with national statistics on the (estimated) number of unaccompanied minors in your (Member) State, if available.

Please provide here a brief explanation of the metadata, describing for example the population covered, the method used to reach the estimates, any caveats as to their likely accuracy, etc. It should be noted, given the differences in methods used to make the estimates, that it will not be possible to synthesise this information to produce a 'total EU estimate' for the Study.

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*Please provide your answer by completing the Excel document provided below. NB that statistics provided in another format (e.g. Word) would not be processed centrally.*

*Please do not here include the Eurostat data mentioned above, as this information is available publically and can therefore be analysed centrally for the Synthesis Report.*

*To the extent possible, the statistics provided here will be presented under the main sections of the Synthesis Report (rather than as an annex as they are requested in this Common Template).*



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