

NET FOR U - Minutes
London 28, 29, 30 May 2013
Tottenham Court Road, London

28 and 29 May 2013 – Experts’ Meeting

The Meeting started with a general introduction (round table) of the participants and in particular of the experts coming from the Countries of the partners involved to give the possibility to have a general idea of the participating specialists.

COUNTRY	EXPERT	ROLE & E-MAIL ADDRESS
UK	Kamena Dorling	Migrant Children Project Kkadorl@essex.ac.uk
EL	Mariella Michailidou	ASSOCIATE COMMUNITY SERVICES OFFICER (Children) UNHCR ATHENS GREECE, MICHAILI@unhcr.org
	Katerina Giannikopoulou	SOCIAL WORKER, GREEK COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES, kgiannikopoulou@gmail.com , gcr1@gcr.gr
DE	Kerstin Birkoben	Sociologist/social worker, director of group home for unaccompanied minors, Hamburger Kinder-und Jugendhilfe (Agency for Children and Youth Services) Kerstin.Birkoben@hakiju.de
	Andreas Meißner	Educator/advocacy worker/social worker for Evin e.V., group home for unaccompanied minors in Berlin andreas.meissner@evin-ev.de
FR	Ms Magali Chemin	Specialized educator - La Croix Rouge (LAO: Home for reception and guidance for unaccompanied foreign minors)
	Ms. Marie Ortholary OR Ms. Nasrine Tamine	La Croix Rouge (Family Tracing Services)
ES	Ms. Yasmina Benhicheub	Director of Protection Centre "Lucentum" ybenchiheub@diagrama.org
	Ms. Blanca Serrano	Social Worker of Protection centre "Lucentum" bserrano@diagrama.org
IT	Serena Matarese	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy - General Directorate of immigration and integration policies, Division IV - Policies for the protection and integration of foreign minors smatarese.ext@lavoro.gov.it
	Monica Pedroni	Emilia Romagna Region MPedroni@Regione.Emilia-Romagna.it

After that, the Applicant proposed a brief presentation of the project NET FOR U mainly directed to the experts giving some inputs to start a common reflection on related topics and asking for expectations and objectives. The experts gave life to a round table composed by suggestions, territorial analysis, strengths and weaknesses of the national situations and practices activated in favor of Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (UFMs).

Thanks to this exchange many information about the situation of Unaccompanied Foreign Minors in Europe were raised:

- ❖ The UK Expert shared that there had been 6,000 UFMs in the UK in 2009, and roughly 3,000 UFMs arrive in the Britain each year. They primarily come from the countries like Afghanistan, Iran, and recently Albania and Vietnam, which has been a challenge to social workers. There are concerns about appropriate funding and service provision for UFMs. For example, there has been a change in provision of legal aid, which impacts UFM, in that when they turn 18 yrs old they having no state-funded access to an immigration lawyer to support the regularisation of the status. 20% of UFMs achieve refugee status in the UK.
- ❖ The Greek partners shared their experience that until very recently the asylum process was in the hands of the police. It is little done for the psycho-social assessment of UFMs as the fulfilment of their basic needs (accommodation and food) remains a priority, 'Guardianship' fails on the public prosecutor as a provisional guardian, who has little experience of working with UFMs and is usually overwhelmed with no supporting services. The Greek expert from UNHCR raised the need for a system of 'guardianship' within the Greek context, which is required for UFMs.



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- ❖ The Italian expert from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies highlighted the work of her Department in this area, and how different systems operated for children who were asylum seeking or non-asylum seeking, and the role of the Ministry of Labour in regulating the documentation of this group. The other experts FROM Italy emphasized that within the Italian context, some UFM's were reaching the country via Greece. Many of the UFM's within Italy came from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Morocco; there are roughly 6,000 UFM's present in Italy and 2,000 UFM's 'disappeared' or applied for asylum. In their experience, they had found adults from a Bangladeshi background pretending to be minors, which then created the problems of Adults and Minors living together. The same expert underlined that 2/3 of Moroccan UFM's have been involved with the Italian Justice System, mainly related to drugs and violence.
- ❖ The Spanish partners stated the phenomenon of UFM's is recent within the Spanish context (1999-2002). There are reception centres operating for UFM's. The Spanish partners shared their experience of some children going to reception centres, whilst having family and relatives living in the country (thus not in actual need), so that they can have their documentation in place. After children reach the age of 18 yrs, they are no longer protected by the state. Integration is difficult, as practitioners have a very short period of time to work with them, within an environment they describe as hostile. Therefore, working with the aspects of integration is not always possible. The work with UFM's is very difficult.
- ❖ The German partners shared their context of UFM's. The German context is characterized by a federal governmental structure which grants discretion to individual states/regions of how to treat UFM's. Most UFM's reached Germany by passing through other countries. There are around 10,000 UFM's in Germany, and they primarily come from Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. Many of them have passed through Greece and Italy and fear to be returned to these countries. Russia and Chechnya. (??? I don't remember having mentioned these two countries, please erase) According to German legislation UFM's are officially authorized to represent themselves in their legal immigration procedures at the age of 16. Some states adhere strictly to this rule treating youth at 16 and above as adults without access to legal guardians and youth accommodation others provide more extensive youth appropriate services. Currently, about 11% of UFM get asylum status, others are given temporary status.
- ❖ The French partners also shared their context of UFM's. Within the French system, they do not discriminate between local and foreign children. There are roughly 8,000 UFM's within France. There are issues with age determination in France. There is little political interest regarding UFM's in France, as they are not prominent political issue for the main parties.
- ❖ The expert from the ILO - Geneva, raised again the need for legal guardianship - a concept which is strong in some systems, whilst weak in others and how do we facilitate transnational co-operation in this area. It has been also raised the issue of the difficulties to apply various national laws in line with the international framework and *whether they are linked or not?* There are many more girls are on the move than before and the average age of the UFM's is getting younger.
- ❖ The group raised the point that many UFM's migrate to the EU, due to a lack of opportunities in their countries of origin. Also, we highlighting the lack of shared practice between international development policies of member states towards countries like Afghanistan and Iraq, whilst immigration policy at a national which impacts minors from those very countries in a very different way.

Seeing the rich and interesting discussion, the partners decided to go on with the "open space" postponing the description of the toolkit to the following day of work.

The next morning Vanja Stenius (IPRS) proposed a general overview of the toolkit based on the gathered information thanks to the partners' contributions (see annex - Toolkit:presentation LONDON).

On the basis of this tool and the given inputs, three groups have been created to open a dynamic discussion where each person was able to speak about/reflect on each of the three topics or:

- 1) Need assessment and family tracing - "...*hints and suggestion for the toolkit*" (facilitators: *Vanja Stenius and Francesco Grandi*);
- 2) Age and adulthood - "...*at the age of 18...*" (facilitators: *Brian De Lord and Jitesh Odebra*);
- 3) Establishment and operation of the transnational networks - "...*what the project needs to implement a network and to create a qualitative tool for exchange and dissemination*" (facilitators: *Cedric Foussard and Laida Quijano*).

The facilitators collected all the experts and partners' suggestions (see annex for the first and the second groups "thematic groups"; the reflections regarding the third group have become the key points of transnational phase).

During the last part of the morning Francesco Grandi (Synergia) coordinated the referents of the first two topics in exposing the contents while Cedric Foussard (IJJO) explained the reflections concerning the 3rd thematic group emphasizing that all the participants' comments would have been the "supporting" base of the project website.



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30 May 2013 – Steering Group Meeting

Meeting called by: Istituto don Calabria (Applicant) _____

Facilitator: Sabrina Brutto _____

Attendees: Istituto Don Calabria (IDC), Europeace Youth (EPY), Istituto Psicoanalitico per le Ricerche Sociali (IPRS), Asociacion Diagrama (DIAFR), Fundacion Diagrama (DIAES), International Juvenile Justice Observatory (IJJO), Christian Association of Youth Villages (CJD), The Smile of the Child (SOC), Synergia.

The Meeting started with a presentation of the phase 3 "National experimentation" (see annex - Applicant). This phase is the most productive and demanding since as indicated inside the logframe, each partner has to realize national actions with different characteristics:

- A - Testing of the toolkit- In-depth assessment of the special needs of the minors, developing family tracing procedures;
and elaboration of individualized life-projects;
- B - Implementation of programs directed to the integration and the social inclusion of minors;
- C - Creation of a local network.

The Applicant underlined that the partners for the realization of these actions have not a dedicated budget for the coverage of teachers cachet and the choice was done to demonstrate to European Commission that the partners has internal knowledge and a strong expertise for the development of the planned actions.

So the actions to develop during the coming months will be the following (as indicated inside the Application Form proposed and approved by the European Commission):

JUNE-NOVEMBER 2013 -----

A - Testing of the toolkit - In-depth assessment of the special needs of the minors, developing family tracing procedures and elaboration of individualized life-projects. Each partner has to realize 40 individual assessment interviews for need assessment and try to develop eventual family tracing. The project foresees also the elaboration of 30 individualized life projects for Unaccompanied foreign minors so tailored projects which involve all the life dimensions of these minors, such as: school, training, work, leisure time and so on. Actions. To improve these actions partners have to assure the data protection chosen modality that could meet the stakeholders' requests and this means also that if formal documents from the Applicant are necessary they'll be produced. If necessary, the Applicant could also ask for communications from the European Commission.

JUNE-NOVEMBER 2013 -----

B - Implementation of programs directed to the integration and the social inclusion of minors. NET FOR U wants to expand the line of intervention without fixing on the topics of the toolkit. For this reason, to answer to the minors' needs, each partner should implement:

- 2 language courses with a duration of about 15/20 hours;
- 1 course on specific issues that you think could be really useful for your minors so courses on: human rights, legal issues, harmful life styles, prevention. As far as the language courses, also here the activity should have a duration of 15/20 hours;
- 1 exchange event to improve interaction between unaccompanied foreign minors and the local migrant communities to create a link among the cultures.

If some partners are implementing connected actions there is the possibility to join them but before it's fundamental to have the positive evaluation from the European Commission. ***For this reasons*** it has been asked to the partners to prepare a detailed plan of action to send to the funding Body (***deadline: third week of July***)

JUNE 2013-JANUARY 2014 -----

C - Creation of a local network - It's fundamental also work directly *on and with* the territory and for this reason, NET FOR U requires the realization of 2 meetings among stakeholders considered as key persons to implement actions answering to the real needs of minors and of course this part of the project would create the basis for the sustainability of future activities after the end of the project.

After the explanation it has been requested to each partner to explain doubts related to the detailed activities asking them to focus besides on the real needs and necessities of the UFMS. The objective of the project is in fact to better answer to the national situation giving the possibility to model and adjust the contents of the activities directly aimed at minors.

Some doubts and results coming from the argumentations were:

1. In what structure or facility are we going to use the toolkit? Some partners manage diurnal centre or residential ones so they could put in place directly in their own structures the different works; as explained during the 1st SGM the other ones have to create/implement specific links with organizations that could develop the planned activity;
2. Is it going to be a manual focusing on awareness and issues plus a set of tools the practitioners



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- can use? These are the key characteristics of our tool.
3. Rather than reinventing the wheel, we want practitioners to integrate these tools with their existing ones
 4. Is it possible for the social worker to put resources in place that can remain in place once the child is out of the system at age 18 e.g. internships, housing, education etc...so as to develop life projects for them.
 5. Children with no stable or stress-free attachments, therefore how can we use these principles to guide our building of relationships? Long-term migrants have cultural stagnation- survival and protection of identity as a migrant. No way describing himself –therefore, how can we introduce a notion of an inclusive society and identity? Including their voices, making identity an essential part of where we are going. Particularly in relation to transition into adulthood.
 6. Being treated as immigrants rather than children..-main aim and objective is the integration of minors. So, how can we run courses that facilitate this aim? What can we do to ensure this? This is one of the major “challenge” that we face.

Moreover each partner, thinking about its own national/territorial state proposed reflections and key issue towards the creation of targeted offers. The partners agreed that it's fundamental to answer to what is most urgent.

Some partners' reflections:

PARTNER	DIFFICULTIES at National level	Suggestions and ideas for the experimentations
CJD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Federal administrative structure giving discretion/flexibility of implementation to 16 individual states o Legal differentiation between UFM under and above the age of 16 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a guideline for national authorities on how to implement Dublin III with respect to family tracing • Cooperate with project partners from Greece on focus groups with youth (country of transit vs. country of destination) • Presence of language course already implemented for the involvement of UFM • Connection with other projects mainly on identity and job integration • Attend regular expert meetings already in place in larger cities
DIAES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Unaccompanied Migrant Minors number is reducing in Spain, specially in some regions that used to receive minors from Canary Islands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIAGRAMA coordinates many Centres where the action will be implemented • Psychosocial Competences course will be implemented.
DIAFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Regularization and residence permit as a basic problems; o Ethical difficulties; o No special centers for UFM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course of rights • Re-thinking on the free time in the centre • Language course already exist but they could implement them
EPY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Immigration control as major problem; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actions will be implemented in peripheral areas of London - WEST LONDON • Work on inclusive identity in a discriminated society
SOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Difficulties in applying the international standards o Difficulties/gaps from the beginning (practices such as identification and registration of UFM etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance to have a real approach that could “face” all the problems that these minors have and are related to their basic needs • Need to have useful tool for the direct work with the target group • Provision of information on children's rights, on existing available services for UFM
IDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Difficulty of precise identification of the age of UFM and of the residence permit o Long time for requests of the asylum and once older to be allowed to stay o Difficulties to have adequate resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of projects that have autonomy as finality and not the age of majority (see experimentations in Ferrara and Bologna) • Contact cultural - Implementation of the difference over the use of



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Political trend to consider the phenomenon as transient with the consequence in the definition of stable structures o Lack of ethno-psychologists and ethno-psychiatrists 	<p>the term inclusion instead of integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of projects to recognize the cultural differences between the different immigrant groups: eg to grasp the difference from the Maghreb to the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis or vice versa • Training courses work
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Conclusions (the main ones):

- Using workshops and focus groups to gather fresh material on identity, expectations, aspirations, job integration, education etc... with UFM's;
- Create a list so as to have a very specific and targeted program;
- Having a framework through that weaves through all aspects of the services we offer to young people so that they don't fall through the net.
- Define Target practitioners;
- Re-thinking family tracing within extended context;
- Encourage practitioner to question their own beliefs, increasing their acquaintance;
- Guidelines for practitioners - identify key sources: where is the young person in all this?
- A transversal toolkit can lose specificity but we are hoping to provide guiding principles across the board.

Following the partners' suggestions and national situations and exploring in details the timesheet, the partners agreed to ask for three months more for a better implementation of the actions so with the following plan:

- i. experimentations with a postponed closure - January 2014;
- ii. next Steering Group Meeting in Hamburg during the last weeks of the new year (CJD and SOC will make a proposal for the dates) - January 2014;
- iii. closure of the toolkit (after the national experimentations) and realization of the evaluation phase, in charge of Synergia - March;
- iv. realization of the final Conference - among April and May.

Basing on these shared conclusions it has been requested to the partners to:

- use the months of July and August to create useful links with all the stakeholders for the implementation of the national phase;
- create a detailed and realistic **plan of actions** for the national experimentations to propose to the European Commission for the approval in the lights of all the national needs; send this national operative plan to the Applicant within the third week of July (partners);
- create a unique operative plan and forward it to the European Commission for the evaluation (Applicant);
- give start to the experimentations - September 2013.

After the lunch break, Cedric Foussard proposed the characteristics of the phase 2 "Transnational network" and some key points gathered during the thematic groups with experts.

- Switzerland conference organized by the Children's Rights Institute spoke about unaccompanied minors when they reach adulthood - Good link with the project and the transition of UFM's;
- Find something that is good form the outset and doesn't have to be worked on every day;
- Importance of a contacts list of stakeholders to create;
- Mini website to be linked to partners ones but held on the IJJO domain so we don't have to pay for it every year and it already drives a lot of traffic to it.

After a lively exchange, the partners decided that the IJJO will be in charge of:

1. creating a section NET FOR U on the IJJO Webpage - It has been decided to create a section directly on the IJJO webpage concerning the project and the subject of study (similar model than IJJO conference, MHYO etc). The group disagreed to have a separate webpage like CRAE, ITACA since they think the project will have more visibility on the IJJO website directly.

The section will be divided in subsection such as:

- main subsection: description of the issue;
- project presentation and update of the project;
- country reports;
- glossary;
- forum;
- events (?);
- document of interest: standards, reports;
- newsletter.



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2. Newsletters - In the light of the arguments among the participants the conclusion has been the creation of n.5 with a simple approach: case study, article, interview. Each newsletter will include also the development of the problem.

The timetable will be:

1. 15th September 2013: Introduction and General Content (IDC);
2. 15th November 2013: Needs Assessment (DIAES);
3. 15th January 2014: Family Tracing (DIAFR);
4. 15th March 2014: Life Project and Transition into Adulthood (EPY);
5. 15th May 2014: Conference and Conclusions (IJJO).

Crosscutting issue> Identity, racism, and prejudices

Content of the newsletter: the lead of the newsletter will be in charge of obtaining from the others partners the following:

- Introduction /definition of the issue: Questions to the readers. Make the reader think about the issue;
- Interview of experts;
- case study;
- good practices;

Moreover the IJJO will work on:

- Agenda of event;
- document of interest;
- Forum (we have to define a question);
- Evolution of the project (strong cooperation of the Applicant).

