Training programme for employees working with UASC

Social workers, educators

Module 1: Introduction to general information about unaccompanied minors

Introduction

This module is a general Information about Unaccompanied Minors, providing key terms that professionals should use, a description of the general framework of the European Union for asylum, the procedures for applying for asylum as well as the protection status required from each member to provide for unaccompanied minors. Furthermore, it briefly presents the crisis in Ukraine and its treatment by the European Union, while at the same time describes the current situation of the countries in Greece, Austria, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain. It consists of five Units and some of the most important data are presented through statistics and graphs. The length of time working through the module is expected to take the learner 20'.

Objectives

In completing this module, the learner will be able to:

- Identify key concepts with regards to unaccompanied minors
- Address the migration situation through European lens.
- Acknowledge the regular procedure for asylum and the best interest determination.
- Gain an understanding for EU response to Ukraine crisis.
- Overview current migration situation in 6 EU countries.

Units

1.1 Key Definitions
1.2 European Union (EU) Migration Context
1.3 The asylum application process in EU
1.4 Conflict in Ukraine
1.5 Country Report (Greece, Austria, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium, Spain)

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

- Learn key definitions regarding Unaccompanied minors
- Gain knowledge about the context of migration to the European Union (EU) and entry procedures
- Be aware of six member States' approaches to unaccompanied minors
- Overviews of the war in Ukraine

Unit 1: Basic information referring to the EU level

Unit 1.1 Key Definitions

A "separated child" is a child under 18 years of age who is outside their country of origin, separated from both parents or from his/her previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives. This may, therefore, mean that the child is accompanied by other adult family members.

An "unaccompanied child" is a person below the age of eighteen, entering the territory of the Member States unaccompanied from both parents and other relatives or others responsible for them whether by law or by custom. It also includes minors who are left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the Member States.

A "refugee" is a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, has been forced to leave their country of origin and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country.

An "asylum seeker" is a person who has applied for asylum seeking protection from persecution and serious human rights violations in another country and is waiting for a decision to receive a decision on their asylum claim.

A "migrant" refers to any person who is moving or has moved away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, regardless of the person's legal status; whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; what the causes for the movement are; or what the length of the stay is.
(Khan, Bonet Porqueras and Zakoska Todorovska, 2019)

Unit 1.2 European Union (EU) Migration Context

Since 2015, Europe has been experiencing an influx of refugees and migrants trying to escape conflict, violence, insecurity and lack of opportunities. Europe is a destination for major migratory flows for a variety of reasons: from security, demographics and human rights to poverty and climate change. In recent years, Europe has had to respond to the biggest refugee crisis since World War II.

In 2015 alone, 1.25 million asylum seekers applied for asylum in the EU (Piotr and Bitoulas, 2016). In 2019, according to Eurostat (2020) there was a drop in asylum applications (612,700), while arrivals from the sea exceeded 120,000 (European Parliament, 2020).

In 2021, EU countries took 522,400 first instance asylum decisions. 39% of these decisions were positive:

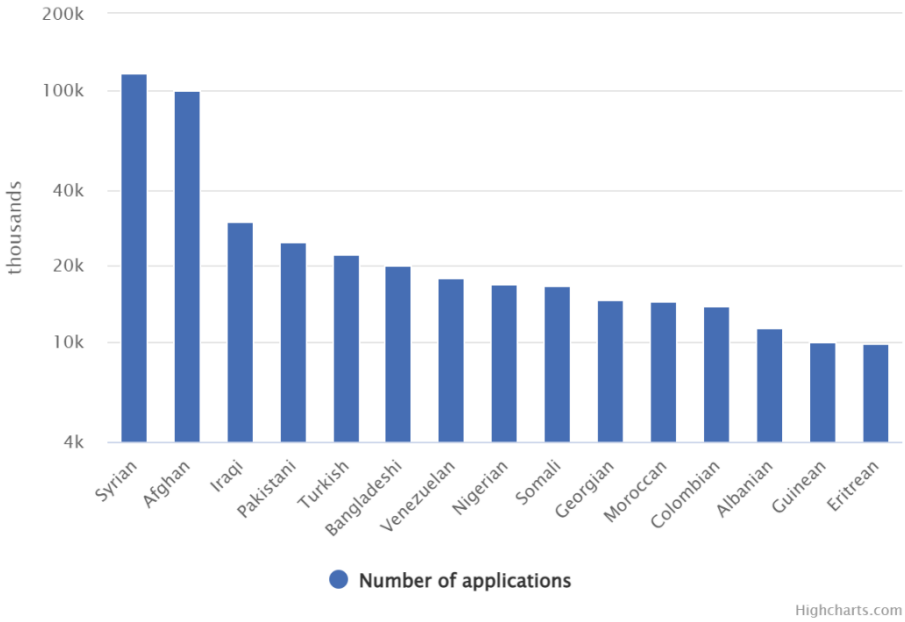
- 111,700 persons received refugee status,
- 63,000 were granted subsidiary protection status and
- 27,100 received humanitarian status.

A further 155,300 final decisions were made following an appeal, including:

- 15,900 decisions granting refugee status,
- 14,000 granting subsidiary protection status and
- 24,900 granting humanitarian status.

(European Commission, 2021)

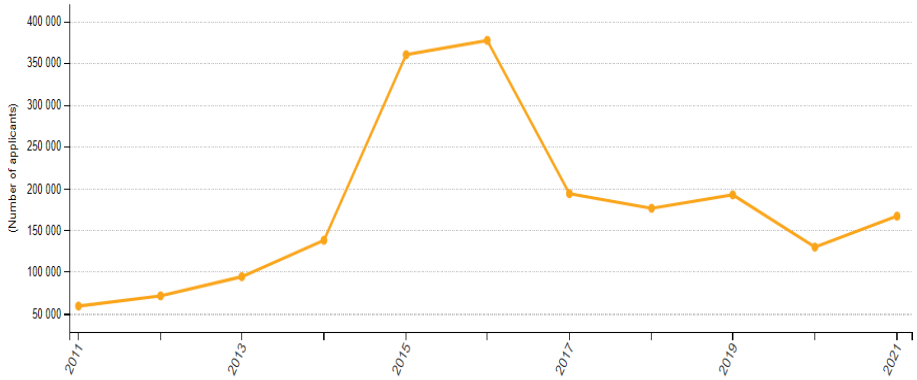
Nationalities of first-time asylum applicants (2021)



(European Commission, 2021)

Among the asylum applicants, thousands of children were identified, arriving in Europe from their country of origin alone or are separated from their families at the border for various reasons. And from there on they are really alone, which makes them an extremely vulnerable population group. Unaccompanied minor refugees are an increasingly acute issue, especially in recent years with large refugee flows entering Europe.

Number of first-time asylum applicants aged less than 18 years old in the EU, 2011-2021



(Eurostat, 2022)[1]

Among all migrants, children are a particularly vulnerable group requiring special care and immediate legal protection. The implementation of a European legal framework for asylum, including the treatment of refugees and unaccompanied minors started back in 1990; Treaty of Maastricht (1992) and the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) were among the most important efforts to introduce asylum policies.

[1] *Note: EU totals are calculated based on available Member States: 2011 - missing data for Croatia, Hungary, Austria and Finland, 2012 - missing data for Croatia, Hungary and Austria, 2013 - missing data for Austria.*

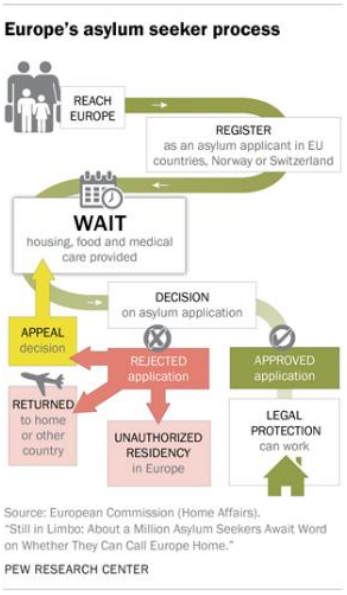
Unit 1.3 The asylum application process in EU

Unaccompanied and separated children in the EU find themselves in a variety of different situations. Some unaccompanied and separated children are seeking asylum or protection because of a fear of persecution, armed conflict or disturbance in their own country. Other unaccompanied and separated children are the victims of trafficking for sexual or other exploitation. Others have travelled to Europe to escape conditions of serious deprivation or human rights violations. Some children come to look for new opportunities or a better life. Unaccompanied and separated children also arrive in Europe seeking family reunification with family members already present. Children may be in transit from one EU country to another and their circumstances may also change over time e.g. they may be looking for family reunification and they may also have been trafficked.

- The asylum application process is now similar across the EU (Asylum Procedures Directive).
- Fingerprints of each applicant are taken and sent to a database called Eurodac (Eurodac Regulation). These data are used for identification of the country responsible for the asylum application. (Dublin Regulation).
- Materials reception conditions such as accommodation and food are provided to asylum seekers (Directive on reception conditions).
- The asylum seeker is called for a personal interview by a specialist official trained in EU legislation, with an assistance interpreter to determine if he is eligible for refugee status or subsidiary protection (Directive for recognition and directive on asylum procedures).

- Granting refugee status or subsidiary protection provides the person with certain rights, such as access to a residence permit, to the labor market and to healthcare (directive for identification).

- **IF** Asylum is not granted in the first instance to the applicant, he/she has the right to appeal before the courts against the negative decision.



(Source, PEW Research center).

Due to the fact that the unaccompanied asylum-seeking child consists of a vulnerable situation he/she shall always be entitled to entry into the country of asylum. His/her request for recognition of refugee status shall always be considered in accordance with the procedure for determining refugee status.

Upon his/her arrival in the country of asylum, a legal representative should be appointed for the child. The claims of the unaccompanied child must be examined in a fair and age-appropriate manner. If it is confirmed that the child is an asylum seeker's every effort must be made to prioritize examination of his/her request taking into account the particularities of childhood.

In addition, an established independent and formally authorized body will appoint a Commissioner or Counselor, immediately after classifying the child as unaccompanied. The latter should have the necessary expertise in the field of child care, to ensure that the interests of the child are respected and that all their needs, legal, social, medical and psychological, are met during the refugee status determination process and until a durable solution for the child is found and implemented.

It is appropriate that all interviews with unaccompanied children be conducted by professionals and specially trained staff who have appropriate knowledge and experience of the child's psychological, emotional and physical development and behavior. This skilled staff shall have the same cultural background as the child as well as know their mother tongue, where possible. As far as possible, interpreters should be trained and have the necessary qualifications to work on refugee and children issues.

Children have the right to be informed in a manner appropriate to their age for the procedures, decisions taken on their behalf. This consultation process is particularly important for a permanent solution that will be chosen and for its implementation. In all cases opinions of the child must be evaluated and presented, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

When collecting, disclosing and maintaining the information that completes the child's file, particular importance is attached to its security welfare. The importance of how the information is used is emphasized: it should not be disclosed for purposes other than those for which it was collected (UNHCR,1997).

CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN SEEKING ASYLUM In order to ensure the continuity of care and taking into account the best interests of the child an ongoing and comprehensive process of best interests assessment shall be put into effect;

Upon arrival

- Immediate preliminary assessments
- vulnerability assessment
- special needs assessment
- risk assessment
- arrival medical screening and checks

After allocation

- comprehensive assessments
- special needs assessment
- risk assessment
- autonomy and resilience assessment

- medical screening and health assessment

Throughout the stay in reception

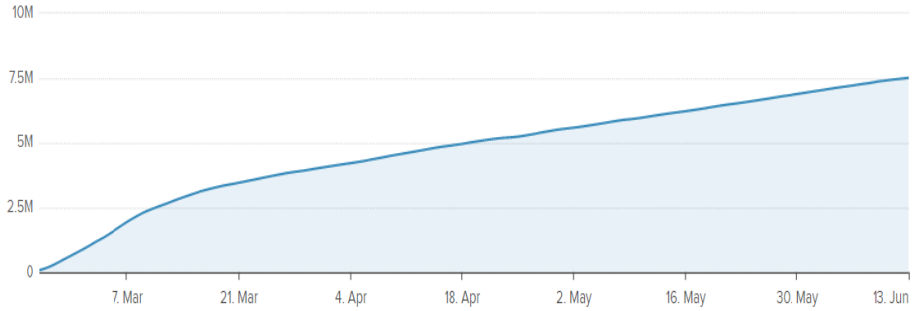
- regular assessments
- special needs assessment
- risk assessment
- autonomy and resilience assessment
- medical screening and health assessment

(EASO, 2018).

Unit 1.4 Conflict in Ukraine

More than 7 million people have crossed the border into Ukraine since the war broke out there, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Particularly, a total of 7,023,559 border crossings have been recorded since the start of the Russian invasion on February 24.

Border crossings from Ukraine (since 24 February 2022)



(UNHCR, data portal,2022)

The majority of refugees from Ukraine initially fled to countries in the immediate vicinity. However, border policies applicable to Ukrainian nationals have allowed refugees to travel. Refugees may choose particular destination countries. Others have decided to stay closer to home, waiting for the security situation to improve.

Children and women fleeing war in Ukraine are also at significant risk of family separation, violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking. They are in desperate need of safety, stability and protection. Many children on the move in and outside of Ukraine are unaccompanied or have been separated from their parents and family members (Unicef, press release, 2022).

Temporary protection for people fleeing Ukraine

Commission proposed to activate the Temporary Protection Directive (2022) for the first time since it entered into force in 2001, to provide rapid and effective assistance to those trying to escape the war in Ukraine. Under the proposal, those trying to escape the war will be granted temporary protection in the EU, which means they will receive a residence permit and access to education and the labor market. The Directive includes Ukrainian citizens, people from outside the EU, stateless people or people with residence permits in the country.

At the same time, the Commission is also proposing operational guidelines to help Member States' border guards effectively manage arrivals at the border with Ukraine, while maintaining a high level of security. The guidelines also urge Member States to set up special emergency support lanes for the delivery of humanitarian aid and recall the possibility of granting access to the EU for humanitarian purposes (Official Journal of the European Union, 2022).

Unit 1.5 Country Reports: Greece, Austria, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain

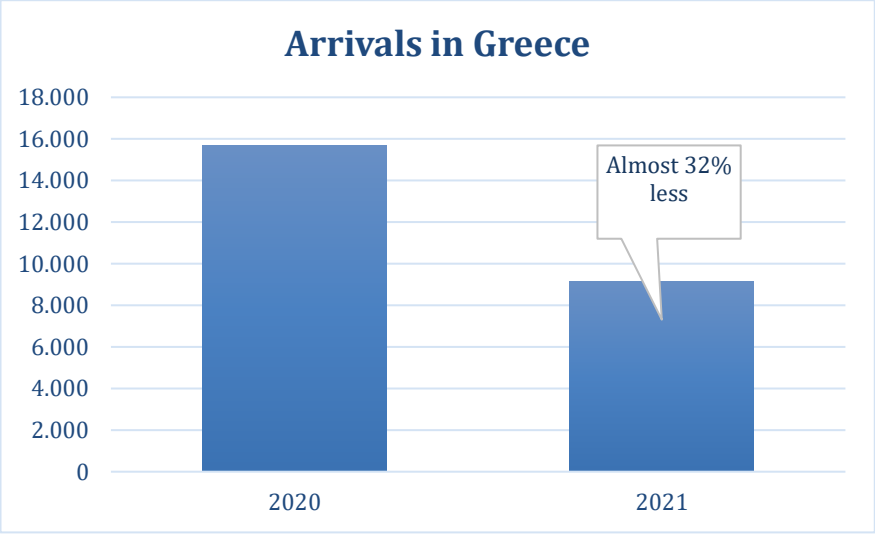
Five years ago, people fleeing violence in the Middle East and South and Central Asia viewed Greece as an entry point to Europe. Thousands lost their lives or have gone missing since 2015, and an increasing number of women and unaccompanied children continue to take perilous journeys in search of safety.

The refugee issue reveals the unavoidable gap between the *inclusive* logic of universal human rights and the nation state's prerogative *to exclude* undesirables. On the national level, several EU members states-initiated amendments to their asylum legislation since autumn. In most cases, these changes mean tightening legislation and restrictions on the rights of asylum seekers.

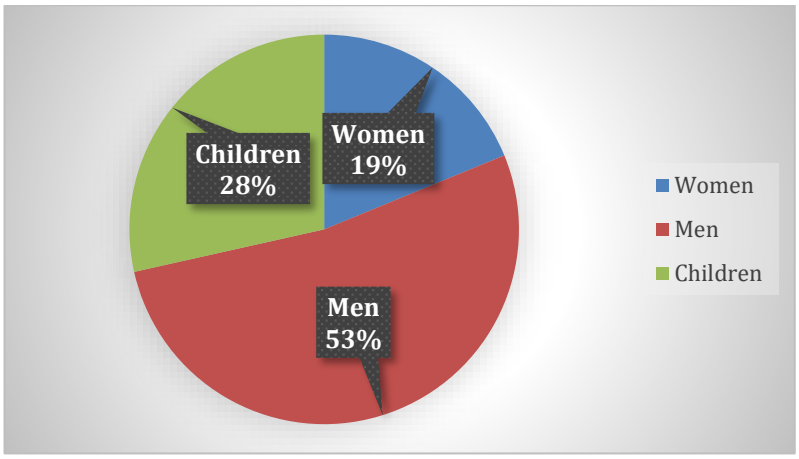
This unit indicates six respective reports of each above-mentioned country aiming to bring out the size of refugee arrivals in Europe and particularly in these countries with a general aim to raise learners' awareness about the refugee issue.

Today, Greece has become something like a holding pen for people seeking asylum, with thousands stuck in reception centres on the islands living in squalid conditions. However, in 2021 a decreased number of refugees arrived in Greece compared to the previous year.

Number of Arrivals: In 2021, a total of 9,157 refugees arrived in Greece and immigrants, i.e. 31.7% less compared to 2020 (15,696).



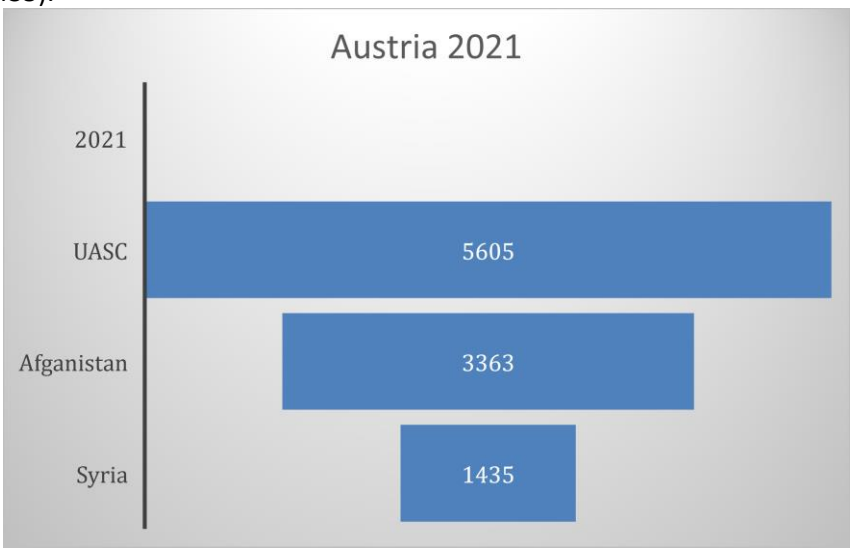
From them, 4,331 people arrived by sea (compared to 9,714 in 2020). Most new arrivals were from Afghanistan (20.2%), Somalia (19.9%) and Palestine (15.3%). About half of the people were women (18.8%) and children (28.5%), while 52.7% were adult men.



Greece's response to the situation in Ukraine until May 4, 2022: According to the Ministry of Civil Protection, until April 19, 2022, 21,028 people from Ukraine had arrived in Greece, including 5,975 children. Among recent arrivals, 53 unaccompanied or separated children have been recorded at the border crossing Promahona. Following the activation of the EU Temporary Protection Directive, Greece grants temporary protection status to Ukrainians nationals residing in Ukraine on or after 24 February 2022 as well as to their family members (AIDA, country report-Greece, 2021).

Austria

In 2021 was marked by another significant increase of 5,605 unaccompanied children, mainly from Afghanistan (3,363) and Syria (1,435).



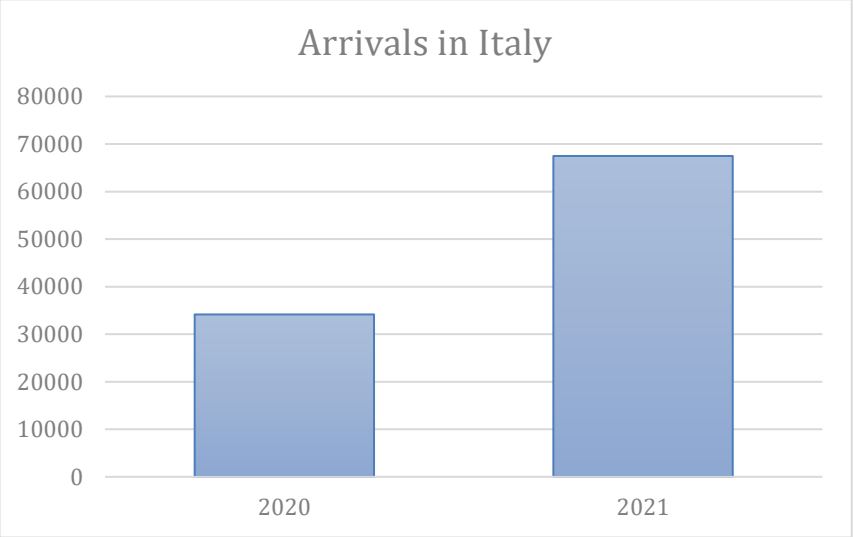
In 2021, a total of 3,778 final decisions involving accompanied minor asylum seekers were issued, out of which 3,104 granted asylum (i.e. the large majority of 3,097 at first instance) and 266 granted subsidiary protection (all of them at first instance). In 2021, six residence permits were issued. In 2021, around 4,500 unaccompanied minors disappeared after applying for international protection in Austria (AIDA, Austria, 2021)

The government emphasized that Ukrainians are different from other refugees which causes unrest in the refugee community. Third country nationals that resided in Ukraine before 24 February 2022 are allowed to enter Austrian territory legally and can plan their onward travel or regularization where the conditions of Settlement and

Residency Act have to be met. As of April 2022, 56,000 Ukrainians have been registered in Austria. The Ministry of Interior estimates that up to 200,000 Ukrainians will come to Austria in 2022 (AIDA, Austria, 2021).

Italy

In 2021, 67,477 persons disembarked in Italy, almost doubling the number of arrivals of 2020 (34,154) and representing an even more relevant increase when compared to 2019, when a total of 11,471 people reached the country. The main nationality of people disembarked remained Tunisian, who were 15,671 in total. Among the people reaching Italy by sea, over 31,500 came from Libya, more than 20,000 from Tunisia, 13,000 from Turkey and 1,500 from Algeria (AIDA, Italy, 2021).

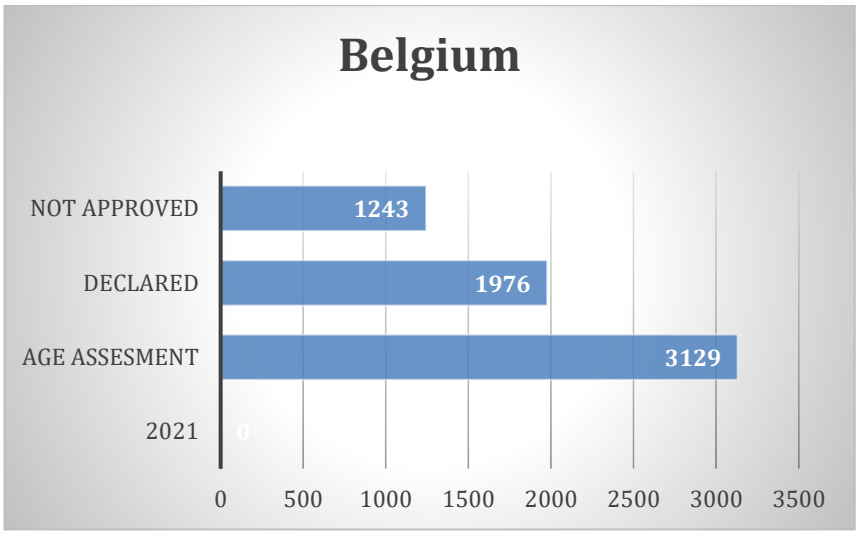


At least 32,425 persons, in 2021, were returned to Libya throughout 2021, and over 3,000 were returned in the first three months of 2022. Italy continued to play a role in supporting indirect push-backs, by providing the Libyan authorities with the means and technologies to improve tracing at sea. For the first time, however, a private boat's (Asso 28) captain was sentenced to prison for returning migrants to Libya (AIDA, Italy, 2021).

So far, more than 120 000 people who fled from Ukraine have arrived in Italy. Almost 94 000 have applied for a residence permit with the Police Headquarters. Almost all applicants have requested temporary protection on the grounds of Directive 2001/55/EC, activated specifically to cope with the Ukraine emergency.

Belgium

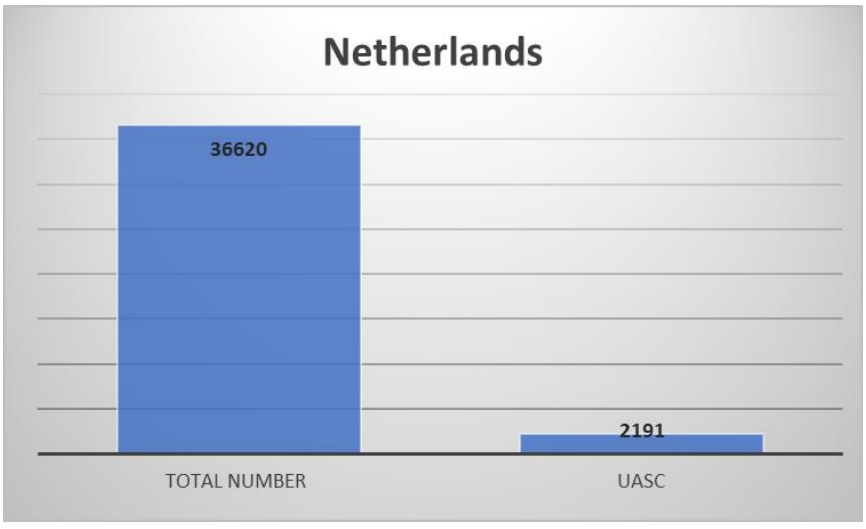
3,129 applicants declared being unaccompanied minors at the moment of their application for international protection. After age assessment, 1.976 of them were indeed considered unaccompanied minors; 1,243 were declared to be of age. These numbers concern the situation at the start of January 2022 (Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen 2021).



There are more than 1,000 unaccompanied Ukrainian minors in Belgium. Six months after the start of the Russian invasion, 1,043 unaccompanied minor refugees from Ukraine are registered in Belgium (Destandaard, 2022).

Netherlands

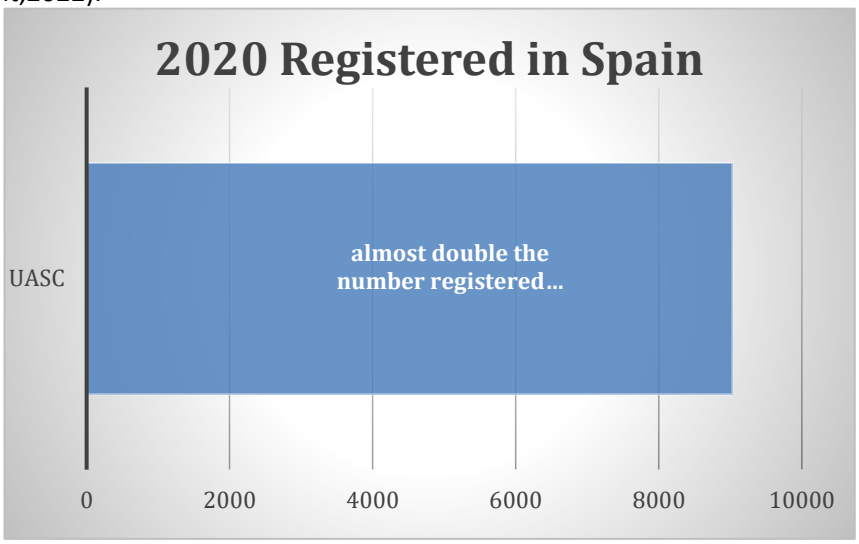
The IND, in its publication on Asylum Trends for December 2021, indicates that the total number of applicants was 36,620. It should be noted that the IND includes the number of applicants entering the asylum procedure because of family reunification in the total figure. The 5 most represented countries of origin in 2021, including family reunification cases, were Syria (14,904), Afghanistan (3,425), Turkey (3,215), Yemen (1,855) and Eritrea (1,576). * According to the IND Asylum Trends for December 2021, the total number of unaccompanied children was 2,191 (Dutch Council for Refugees, 2021).



At least 170 Ukrainian youngsters under the age of 18 have fled the war to the Netherlands without their parents, but many are not being registered or given a guardian. The figure of 170 has been derived from the number of youngsters who are registered with child protection services (Dutch News, 2022).

Spain

There were 9,030 children registered as unaccompanied foreign minors in Spain in 2020, almost double the number registered five years earlier. They represented less than a fifth of the total number of children under the supervision of the national child protection system. Moreover, less than two percent of these minors are living with foster families, due mainly to the bureaucratic complexity of the process to foster an unaccompanied child and the fact that most of these minors are close to the legal age when they arrive at the country (15-17 years), an age at which families are less willing to become custodians, regardless of the nationality of the child (Statista Research Department,2022).



According to the Spanish Ministry of the Interior, more than 130 000 people who have fled the war in Ukraine since March 2022 have received temporary protection in Spain. Of these refugees from Ukraine minors represent 36.1% (European Commission, 2022).

Assessment Activity

There are a number of ways you could do this:

- Questions with Yes/No answers
- True/False quiz
- Sentences with keywords left blank for the learner to complete.
- A practical task?

- **Bear in mind that the assessments will be live on the website, and some of them may be incorporated into the App.**

Module Summary

In completing this Module you have identified key definitions and concepts of unaccompanied minors, you have explored the EU context on asylum policy, assimilated the processes need to be followed for applying for asylum, taking into consideration the best interest of the child. You also have learnt about the EU determination towards the Ukraine crisis and updated your knowledge for the refugee situation in 6 EU countries.

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Training programme for employees working with UASC

Social workers, educators

Module 2: Legal framework at partner country level and general European framework

Introduction

Main points are:

- Guidelines on legal procedures and policies in dealing with Unaccompanied Children. The first sections outline children's rights within International and European context, while the following provide information on their social inclusion as well as integration approaches of six Member States.
- The number of Units contained within the module are 5, including audio material and two case studies assessed through a practical activity.
- The length of time working through the module is expected 90'.

Objectives

In completing this module the learner will be able to:

- Learning the main concepts regarding the rights of the children under CRC and EU fundamental Chart
- Understanding the legislative procedures for asylum under the CEAS
- Be aware of the steps to be done for the social inclusion of the UAMs.
- To identify violations of children's rights through case studies
- Name some good-practice examples of different EU countries

Units

2.1 *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (International framework)*

2.2 *The European Union legal framework*

2.3 *Steps for Social Inclusion of unaccompanied children in line with the CRC and European Directives*

2.4 *Cases studies from the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU)*

2.5 *Comparative study (Austria, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain, Greece)*

Unit 2: Legal framework at partner country level and general European framework

Unit 2.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (International framework)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989. It is a legally binding agreement that sets out the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of all children around the world.

The General Assembly resolution adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), making a historic commitment to the world's children. It is the cornerstone of the international legal framework applicable to Unaccompanied minors (UAM) and Unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) as well. It is nearly universally ratified and State parties cannot derogate from it, meaning that it applies even in emergencies, including natural disasters and armed conflict.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has set four global fundamental principles that guide the application, implementation and interpretation of the Convention and are underlying in every article of the Convention. In practice, these four principles are interconnected, cannot be applied without the consideration of another, and must be understood to be both normative (a right) and instrumental (a guide).

- **The principle of Best Interest of the Child**

Article 3, paragraph 1, (CRC, 1989) states "In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration".

- **The principle of non-discrimination**

Article 2 of the Convention (CRC, 1989) obliges States parties to ensure all the rights set forth in the Convention without discrimination of any kind, "irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status".

- **The principle of life, survival and development**

In the light of article 6 of the Convention (1989) which entails the inherent right to life, survival and development, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, (2000) is deeply concerned at the threat posed by the crimes and tortures committed against children; at the multiple instances of "social cleansing" of street children under the armed conflicts and at the persistent impunity of the perpetrators of such crimes, setting as a priority the judicial action need to be taken to affront such crimes. The General comment (2013) set the context of interpreting the "development" of the child in its broadest sense as a holistic concept, embracing the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development.

- **The principle of participation and respect for the views of the child**

In agreement with the Article 5, (CRC, 1989) States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving

capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

Additionally, Article 22 (CRC, 1989), entitles all refugee children and those seeking asylum, "whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents," to "appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance". It also specifically provides for family tracing and reunification of refugee children, for UASC whose families have not been traced.

Children's Rights under CRC

The rights of the child (every human being under the age of eighteen), (CRC, 1989, art 1) safeguarded in the Convention shall be ensured without any discrimination of any kind (CRC, 1989, art 2) and the best interest of the child shall be of primary consideration (CRC, 1989, art 3).

Article 6 (CRC, 1989)

recognizes that all children and young people have the inherent right to life and the governments shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of children.

Some General Comments that are relevant to Article 6 are:

- **General Comment 4** (2003), on adolescent health and development in the context of the UNCRC,
- **General Comment 7**, (2005), on implementing child rights in early childhood, and
- **General Comment 20**, (2016) on implementation of the UNCRC during adolescence.

Article 12 (CRC, 1989)

making sure children and young people feel able to express their opinions in all matters affecting him/her and to not be dismissed or regarded as invalid due to their age.

- **General Comment 12** (2009) specifically focuses on a child's right to be heard.

Article 13

The child has the right to freedom of expression, including the right to find out and share information and ideas of all kind.

Article 14

children are free to be of any or no religion. The article also covers the right to freedom of thought and freedom of conscience.

Article 15

Children have the human right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly.

Article 16

Children have the right to privacy and no child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his/her privacy.

- **Draft General Comment 25** (2020) specifically focuses on children's rights in the digital world, including consideration of how their right to privacy should be respected and protected online.

Article 17

The State shall ensure the right of the child to access to information and material from national and international sources.

- **Draft General Comment 25** (2020) particularly focuses on children's rights in the digital world, including opportunities and State obligations around the right to information.

Article 18

States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.

Article 20

This article recognizes the right of every child who is temporarily or permanently deprived of their family environment to special protection and assistance.

Article 24

Children have the right to the highest attainable standard of health care the right to be both physically and mentally fulfilled.

General Comments that are relevant to Article 24 are:

- **General Comment 3** (2003), on HIV/AIDS and children's rights,
- **General Comment 4** (2003), on adolescent health and development in the context of the UNCRC,
- **General Comment 9** (2006), on the rights of children with disabilities,
- **General Comment 15**, (2013) on the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health.

Article 26

Children have the right to benefit from social security and support

Article 27

The Contracting States recognize the right of every child to an adequate standard of living, to ensure children's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

Article 28

States shall achieve child's right to education "progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity"; primary education must be compulsory, and the development of different forms of secondary education must be encouraged and made "available and accessible to every child".

- General Comment 1, (2001), is about the aims of education from a human rights perspective

Article 30

Children have the right to share their culture, language and religion

Article 31

Children have the right to rest and leisure, to play and freely participate in cultural life and the arts.

- General Comment 17, (2013) is about Article 31 specifically.

Articles 37, 40

Every child accused of having broken the law should be guaranteed to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, to have legal assistance in presenting his/her case, not to be compelled to give testimony or to confess guilt, to have his/her privacy fully respected, to be dealt with in a manner appropriate to their age. Furthermore, he/she has the right not to be punished in a cruel or hurtful way.

Some General Comments that are relevant to Articles 37 and 40 are:

- **General Comment 8**, (2006), on the right to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel and degrading forms of punishment,

- **General Comment 10** (2007) on children's rights in juvenile justice, and

- **General Comment 24** (2019), on children's rights in the child justice system.

Children's protections under CRC

Unaccompanied or separated children in a country outside their country of origin are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Girls are at particular risk of being trafficked, including for purposes of sexual exploitation.

The Convention requires a child rights approach to child care and protection, meaning that the child should be viewed as a rights holder, not a beneficiary of adults' benevolence (GC No. 13, para 72 a). In relation with child's protection, the Committee on the Rights of the Child is responsible for monitoring states parties' compliance with the CRC and has developed 23 general comments (GCs) for this purpose.

Of the 54 Articles comprising the CRC, a considerable number of them are aimed at protecting the child from all forms of violence and exploitation. Article 19 of the UNCRC makes it clear that children and young people have the basic human right to dignity. This means they have the right to be protected from violence, just like everybody else. Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

Some General Comments that are relevant to Article 19 are:

- **General Comment 13**, on the right to freedom from all forms of violence,
- **General Comment 18**, on harmful practices against women, girls and children, and
- **Draft General Comment 25**, on how children's rights apply in the digital world.

Articles 32 and the following further elaborate on standards in relation to different forms of exploitation, including economic and sexual exploitation and child trafficking. Included measures also highlight the need for state intervention into family affairs, when is deemed necessary, by separating a child from a violent and/or neglectful family if it is in his/her own best interests (CRC, art. 9), providing for alternative care arrangements (CRC art. 20 and 21), ensuring quality standards for child care/child protection institutions (CRC art. 3(3)), and regularly reviewing decisions to place children in institutions (CRC, art. 25).

Guidance on the scope of States Parties CRC obligations to protect children against violence can be found in the CRC Committee General Comment No. 8 (2006) on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment.

The European Union legal framework

The European Union has several legal instruments and policies that protect and promote the rights of children. The EU legal framework is a strong basis for protecting children's rights and ensuring that their best interests are taken into account in all decisions affecting them.

European Convention on Human Rights

The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, better known as the "European Convention on Human Rights (1950)" was signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 and entered into force on 3 September 1953. The Convention guarantees certain rights and freedoms. contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and establishes an international tribunal which has the power to condemn States which do not fulfill their obligations.

The States which have ratified the Convention, known as the "States Parties to the Convention", recognize and guarantee fundamental rights, both individual and political, not only to their own nationals but also to any person within their jurisdiction. the right to life, the right to a fair trial, the right to respect for private and family life, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the right to respect for property. It prohibits torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, slavery and forced labor, arbitrary or unlawful detention, and discrimination in the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognized.

The Convention is evolving mainly thanks to the interpretation of its provisions by the Court. In its case law, the Court has turned the Convention into a living tool. Thus, it has expanded the concept of protected rights and allowed their application in cases that were not foreseeable at the time it was adopted.

The Convention also evolves when the Protocols add new rights, and applies at national level. incorporated into the laws of the Member States, which are obliged to guarantee the rights which it secures. Therefore, national courts are obliged to apply it. Otherwise, they are exposed to a sentence by the Court when someone complains that their rights have not been respected.

Treaty on European Union

Article 3 (3) of the Consolidated version of the **Treaty on European Union**, (2012), establishes the objective for the EU to promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child.

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU

Children's rights are also enshrined in the Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of European Union (2012).

More indicatively:

- Children shall have the right to such protection and care as is necessary for their well-being. They may express their views freely. Such views shall be taken into consideration on matters which concern them in accordance with their age and maturity.

- In all actions relating to children, whether taken by public authorities or private institutions, the child's best interests must be a primary consideration.

- Every child shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis a personal relationship and direct contact with both his or her parents, unless that is contrary to his or her interests.

Common European Asylum System

- Established in 1999 and consists of five legislative instruments (Directives, Regulations) and one Agency (EUAA), for the purposes of efficient asylum and return procedures, solidarity and fair share of responsibility and strengthened partnerships with third countries (europa.eu, n.d.).

More specifically;

- The **Asylum Procedures Directive** (2013) aims to make fairer, faster and better asylum decisions. Asylum seekers with special needs receive the necessary support for their claim and, in addition, greater protection for unaccompanied minors and victims of torture is ensured.

- The **Directive on Reception Conditions** (2013) ensures the existence of humane reception conditions (such as housing) for asylum seekers in the EU and the respect of fundamental rights of stakeholders. It also ensures that detention is applied only as a last resort.

- The **Recognition Directive** (2011) clarifies the conditions for the provision of international protection and therefore leads to the strengthening of asylum decisions. Also, it improves the access of beneficiaries of international protection to integration procedures.

- The **Dublin Regulation** (2013) strengthens the protection of asylum seekers in the process of determining the State responsible for examining their application and clarifies the rules governing relations between the States.

- The **Eurodac Regulation** (2013) allows access to EU law enforcement authorities in the EU database with the fingerprints of asylum seekers, in strict limited cases, for the purpose of prevention, detection or the investigation of more serious crimes, such as homicide and terrorism (European Commission, 2014).

<u>Steps for Social Inclusion of unaccompanied children in line with the CRC and European Directives</u>

The European Union has adopted several Directives on the inclusion and protection of unaccompanied minors, who are children under 18 years old who arrive in a country without being accompanied by an adult responsible for them. These Directives aim to provide a framework for the protection and care of unaccompanied minors and ensure that their best interests are taken into account in all decisions affecting them.

The inclusion of unaccompanied minors in line with the CRC and European Directives involves a comprehensive and rights-based approach, which prioritizes the well-being, protection, and integration of the child. It requires a collaborative effort among various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and community members. Here are summed-up steps and key elements of this approach:

Initial assessment and measures

- Age assessment in a scientific, safe, child and gender-sensitive manner, and, in the event of remaining uncertainty, should accord the individual the benefit of the doubt
- Assessment of particular vulnerabilities, including health, physical, psycho-social, material and other protection needs
- Provision with personal identity documentation
- Tracing of family members

Appointment of a guardian or adviser (CRC, arts. 18 (2))

- States shall appoint a guardian as soon as the unaccompanied or separated child is identified and maintain such guardianship arrangements until the child has either reached the age of 18 or has permanently left the territory
- In the case of a separated child, guardianship should regularly be assigned to the accompanying adult family member or non-primary family caretaker unless there is an indication that it would not be in the best interests of the child
- "Prompt appointment of a guardian is a key safeguard for a child's rights and overall wellbeing, protecting unaccompanied children and preventing child trafficking and other forms of child abuse and exploitation." (FRA and European Commission 2014, p. 55)

Legal Representation

- States shall provide unaccompanied or separated children with legal representation (CRC/GC/2005/6) when referred to asylum procedures or other administrative or judicial proceedings.
- UNHCR encourages States to provide qualified and trained legal representatives for the best interest of the child, considering the impact asylum procedures and decisions have in children's lives Papoutsi, Eirini (2020)

Access to asylum procedures (Directive 2013/32/EU)

- Asylum-seeking children, including those who are unaccompanied or separated, shall enjoy access to asylum procedures and other complementary mechanisms providing international protection

Reception arrangements, including integration measures for unaccompanied minors. Most (Member) States accommodate asylum-seeking UAMs in one or a combination of the following:

- Separate reception facilities specifically for children
- Designated area within the mainstream facility
- Foster families
- With relatives

Family Reunification

- Articles 9, 10, 20 and 22 of the CRC prioritize the entitlement of children to family life and States shall be focused on the tracing of the parents or other family members unless his/her best interests indicate otherwise (Papoutsi, Eirini (2020).
- Directive (2003/86/EC) sets out the conditions for family reunification of third country nationals in the EU with their third country national family members.

Accessing care and accommodation

According to the child's best interest, provision of accommodation is a crucial and necessary measure for their social inclusion. In most of the cases, unaccompanied children are hosted in reception centers until their asylum-seeking procedure starts or until their needs are assessed, and a care plan put in place. Once the actual asylum-seeking procedure starts or they have been appointed a guardian, UAC are transferred from reception facilities to local

authorities according to the redistribution scheme adopted in each country, and they are taken into care by local social services.
Local services of EU member States have the statutory duty to provide accommodation for UAC, according to the child's best interest. Usually foster care is the preferred type of accommodation for children under 12, as a medium for faster and better integration in the host society because of the security and safety provided by the family (Guerra and Brindle, 2017).

Access to healthcare and psychosocial support
UAC may be exposed to severe health risks during their journey and to high chances of exposure to exploitation, abuse and trafficking. They can also face poor living conditions and uncertainty in the way they may be welcome in destination countries (Guerra and Brindle, 2017). The right to health is enshrined in international law instruments as well as in European Directives providing a statutory context applicable to professionals on the field.

Table 9: International law instruments on the right to health

Instrument	Main provisions	Applicability
Geneva Convention, Article 23	"The Contracting States shall accord to refugees lawfully staying in their territory the same treatment with respect to public relief and assistance as is accorded to their nationals."	Refugees
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25 (1)	"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control."	Refugees and asylum applicants
CRPD, Article 4 (1)	"1. States Parties undertake to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability."	Refugees and asylum applicants
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 12 (1)	"The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health."	Refugees and asylum applicants
(Revised) ESC, Article 11	"With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to protection of health, the Parties undertake, either directly or in cooperation with public or private organisations, to take appropriate measures designed inter alia: "1. to remove as far as possible the causes of ill-health; "2. [...] "3. to prevent as far as possible epidemic, endemic and other diseases, as well as accidents."	Refugees and asylum applicants*
(Revised) ESC, Article 13 (1)	"With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to social and medical assistance, the Parties undertake: "1. to ensure that any person who is without adequate resources and who is unable to secure such resources either by his own efforts or from other sources, in particular by benefits under a social security scheme, be granted adequate assistance, and, in case of sickness, the care necessitated by his condition."	Refugees and asylum applicants*
Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 24 (1)	"States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services."	Refugees and asylum applicants

(FRA, 2019)
Article 17 (2) and (3) of the Reception Conditions Directive enshrines the right for applicants to material reception conditions that guarantee their subsistence and protect their physical and mental health and all the EU member states calling on EU Member States to comply with the directive. Article 19 stipulates that Member States must provide necessary healthcare. This includes, at least, emergency care and essential treatment of illnesses and of serious mental problems. Under Article 19, applicants who have special reception needs have a right to "appropriate mental health care", where needed. Concerning children, Article 23 (4) requires that Member States ensure that appropriate mental health care is developed and qualified counselling is provided when needed.
Under Article 30 of the Qualification Directive, beneficiaries of international protection have access to adequate healthcare under the same conditions as nationals of the Member State that has granted such protection, including mental health care (FRA, 2019).

Access to education

Under EU law, children who seek asylum or have obtained international protection have the same access to education under the same conditions as nationals, or similar conditions. Whereas access to compulsory schooling is generally guaranteed, FRA's findings show that, because of practical barriers, access to post-compulsory education might be only on paper, especially for students who arrived after compulsory school age. In some EU Member States, asylum-seeking children initially attend classes in reception facilities, which isolates them and might increase stigmatization. Article 14 (2) of Directive 2013/33/EU requires that asylum-seeking children entering an EU Member State be included in education within three months. However, multiple transfers of accommodation, time lag in finding a school place and other administrative barriers mean that it sometimes took one year or more for children of compulsory school age to be enrolled in school (FRA, 2019).

Access to employment

UAMs granted international protection the recast Qualification Directive ensures that all (Member) States provide the following common rights, e.g. access to employment (Art. 26), access to education (Art. 27), access to procedures for recognition of qualifications (Art. 28), social welfare (Art. 29), healthcare (Art. 30), access to accommodation (Art. 32) (Grote, Müller and Vollmer, 2015).

Transition to independent life for young migrants turning 18

When they turn 18, asylum applicants are generally transferred to adult reception facilities. These are typically much bigger than child facilities and entail a drop in reception conditions and support services. Thus, in some cases, turning 18 resulted in homelessness.

For unaccompanied children, whether they are still seeking asylum or have been granted international protection, their transition to adulthood is the main challenge, as housing experts in all six EU Member States stressed. Upon turning 18, they generally change their housing arrangements and often also their location. They also experience a significant reduction in social support.

However, EASO's Guidance on reception conditions for unaccompanied children indicates that unaccompanied children who have reached the age of majority should be allowed to stay in the same place or area, if possible. If they transfer to an adult reception facility, this should be carefully organized, with the involvement of the unaccompanied child. (EASO (2018), p. 29)

Case Studies

Court of Justice of the European Union
PRESS RELEASE No 40/18
Luxembourg, 12 April 2018
Judgment in Case C-550/16
A and S v Staatssecretaris van Veiligheid en Justitie

An unaccompanied minor who attains the age of majority during the asylum procedure retains their right to family unification

Such an application for family reunification must however be made within a reasonable time, in principle within three months of the date on which the minor concerned is recognised as having refugee status PRESS RELEASE No 5/21

A minor of Eritrean nationality, who had arrived unaccompanied in the Netherlands, lodged an application for asylum on 26 February 2014. On 2 June 2014, she attained her majority. On 21 October 2014, the State Secretary for Security and Justice, Netherlands, granted her a residence permit for persons granted asylum, valid for five years, with effect from the date on which her application for asylum was submitted. On 23 December 2014, an organisation

in the Netherlands that works on behalf of refugees (VluchtelingenWerk Midden-Nederland), submitted an application for temporary residence permits for the parents (A and S) of the person concerned and her three minor brothers for the purposes of family reunification with an unaccompanied minor. By decision of 27 May 2015, the State Secretary rejected that application on the ground that, at the date on which it was submitted, the daughter of A and S had reached the age of majority.

A and S contested that refusal. According to them, it is the date of entry into the Member State concerned which is decisive in order to determine whether a person may qualify as an unaccompanied minor within the meaning of the EU Directive on family reunification. Conversely, the State Secretary considers that it is the date on which the application for family reunification is submitted that is determinative in that regard.

The rechtbank Den Haag (District Court, The Hague, Netherlands), which must decide the case, referred a question to the Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling.

In its judgment handed down today, the Court qualifies as 'minors' nationals of non-EU countries and stateless persons **who are below the age of 18 at the moment of their entry into the territory of a Member State and of the introduction of their asylum application in that state** and who, in the course of the asylum procedure, attain the age of majority and thereafter are recognised as having refugee status.

The Court recalls, in that regard, that the Directive provides more favourable conditions for refugees for the exercise of their right to family reunification on account of the reasons that obliged them to flee their country and prevent them from leading a normal family life. More specifically, refugees who are unaccompanied minors have a right to such reunification which is not subject to a margin of discretion on the part of Member States. In addition, even if the directive does not explicitly determine the moment until which a refugee must be a minor in order to be able to benefit from the right to family reunification, the Court finds that the determination of that moment cannot be left to each Member State. As regards, more precisely, the question as to what is the specific moment by reference to which the age of a refugee must be assessed in order for him or her to be regarded as a minor and be able therefore to benefit from the specific right to family reunification, the Court considered the wording, general scheme and objective of the directive, taking into account the regulatory context in which it is found and the general principles of EU law.

According to the Court, to make the right to family reunification depend upon the moment at which the competent national authority formally adopts the decision recognising the refugee status of the person concerned and, therefore, how quickly or slowly the application for international protection is processed by that authority, would call into question the effectiveness of the right to family reunification. That would go against not only the aim of the directive, which is to promote family reunification and to grant in that regard a specific protection to refugees (in particular unaccompanied minors) but also the principles of equal treatment and legal certainty. Such an interpretation would have the consequence that two unaccompanied minors of the same age who have each submitted, at the same time, an application for international protection could be treated differently as a result of the duration of the processing of those applications. In addition, such an interpretation would have the consequence of making it entirely unforeseeable for an unaccompanied minor who submitted an application for international protection to know whether he or she will be entitled to the right to family reunification with his or her parents, which might undermine legal certainty.

Conversely, taking the date on which the application for international protection was submitted enables identical treatment and foreseeability to be guaranteed for all applicants who are in the same situation, by ensuring that the success of the application for family reunification depends principally on facts attributable to the applicant and not to the administration (such as the time taken to process the application for international protection or the application for family reunification).

The Court clarifies, nevertheless, that in such a situation **the application for family reunification must be made within a reasonable time, namely in principle within three months of the date on which the minor concerned was recognised as having refugee status.**

Luxembourg, 14 January 2021
Judgment in Case C-441/19
TQ v Staatssecretaris van Justitie en Veiligheid

Before issuing a return decision in respect of an unaccompanied minor, a Member State must verify that adequate reception facilities are available for the minor in the State of return

Moreover, if adequate reception facilities are no longer guaranteed at the stage of removal, the Member State will not be able to enforce the return decision

In June 2017, TQ, an unaccompanied minor who was then 15 years and four months old, applied in the Netherlands for a fixed-term residence permit on grounds of asylum. In the context of that application, TQ stated that he was born in Guinea in 2002. Following the death of his aunt with whom he lived in Sierra Leone, TQ came to Europe. In Amsterdam (Netherlands), he claims to have been the victim of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, as a result of which he now suffers serious psychological problems. In March 2018, the Staatssecretaris van Justitie en Veiligheid (State Secretary for Justice and Security, Netherlands) decided ex officio that TQ was not eligible for a fixed-term residence permit, the referring court specifying that TQ does not qualify for refugee status or subsidiary protection. In accordance with Netherlands law, the decision of the Staatssecretaris van Justitie en Veiligheid constitutes a return decision.

In April 2018, TQ brought an appeal against that decision before the referring court, claiming inter alia that he does not know where his parents live, that he would not be able to recognise them upon his return, that he does not know any other family members and that he does not even know whether he has any such members.

The referring court explains that the Netherlands legislation draws a distinction based on the age of the unaccompanied minor. As regards minors under the age of 15 on the date on which the asylum application is lodged, an investigation as to whether there are adequate reception facilities in the State of return, provided for Article 10 of Directive 2008/115[1], 1 is carried out before a decision on that application is adopted, those minors being granted an ordinary residence permit where there are no such reception facilities. For minors aged 15 years or more on the date on which the asylum application is lodged, like TQ, such an investigation is not carried out, the Netherlands authorities appearing to wait until the minors in question reach the age of 18 in order subsequently to implement the return decision. Thus, during the period between his or her application for asylum and reaching the age of majority, the residence of an unaccompanied minor aged 15 years or more is irregular but tolerated in the Netherlands.

It is in that context that the referring court decided to refer questions to the Court on whether the distinction drawn by the Netherlands legislation between unaccompanied minors over the age of 15 years and those under the age of 15 years is compatible with EU law.

Findings of the Court

The Court states that, where a Member State intends to issue a return decision against an unaccompanied minor under the 'Return' Directive, it must necessarily take into account the best interests of the child 2 at all stages of the procedure, which entails a general and in-depth assessment of the situation of that minor being carried out. According to the Court, if the Member State concerned adopts a return decision without first being satisfied that there are adequate reception facilities in the State of return, the consequence would be that, although that minor was the subject of a return decision, he or she could not be removed in the absence of such facilities. Such a minor would thus be placed in a situation of great uncertainty as to his or her legal status and his or her future, in particular as regards his or her schooling, his or her link with a foster family or the possibility of remaining in the Member State concerned; this would be contrary to the requirement to protect the best interests of the child at all stages of the procedure. It follows that, if such reception facilities are not available in the State of return, the minor concerned cannot be the subject of a return decision.

The Court states, in that context, that the age of the unaccompanied minor in question constitutes only one factor among others in order to ascertain whether there are adequate reception facilities in the State of return and to determine whether the best interests of the child must result in a return decision against that minor not being issued. Accordingly, the Court states that a Member State may not distinguish between unaccompanied minors solely on the basis of the criterion of their age for the purpose of ascertaining whether there are such facilities.

The Court also holds that, in the light of the obligation for Member States to issue a return decision against any third-country national staying illegally on their territory and to remove him or her as soon as possible, the 'Return'

[1] *1 Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (OJ 2008 L 348, p. 98; 'the "Return" Directive'). www.curia.europa.eu*

Directive precludes a Member State, after it has adopted a return decision in respect of an unaccompanied minor and has been satisfied that there are adequate reception facilities in the State of return, from refraining from subsequently removing that minor until he or she reaches the age of 18 years. In such a case, the minor concerned must be removed from the territory of the Member State concerned, subject to any changes in his or her situation. In that regard, the Court states that, in the event that adequate reception facilities in the State of return are no longer guaranteed at the stage of the removal of the unaccompanied minor, the Member State concerned would not be able to enforce the return decision.

Comparative study: Austria, Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Greece

Austria

Austria transposed into national law the following directives:

- Austria complies with the provisions defined in Art. 25 of the recast Asylum Procedures Directive (2013/33/EU). After admission to the asylum procedure and allocation to a reception facility of the provinces, the Children and Youth Service Authorities take over the legal representation of the UAM in these matters (Art. 10 para 3 and para 6 Bundesamt für Fremdenwesen und Asyl-Verfahrensgesetz [Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum Procedures Act])
- In compliance with Art. 21 of the recast Reception Directive (2013/33/EU), Art. 2 para 2 Federal Basic Welfare Support Act states that family relationships, ethnic particularities and the special needs of vulnerable persons are required to be taken into account when assigning individuals to reception facilities (S. Heilemann, 2017).

Guardianship for UAM is regulated separately from the asylum or basic welfare support legislation. Instead, the respective provisions can be found in the General Civil Code. The courts have to appoint a Kinder- und Jugendhilfeträger [Children and Youth Service Authority] as the minor's guardian if a legal guardian is needed and no other suitable person (e.g. relative) can be found (Art. 209 General Civil Code).

With regard to **accommodation and care arrangements** the most important Austrian legal document is the Grundversorgungsvereinbarung (**Basic Welfare Support Agreement**), which defines the kind of reception conditions and maximum allowances to be provided for asylum seekers and other target groups of the agreement, including UAM. Basic Welfare Support Agreement means the Agreement between the Federal Government and the Provincial Governments, Pursuant to article 15a B-VG (Federal Constitutional Act), Concerning Joint Measures for the Temporary Granting of Basic Welfare Support to Aliens in Need of Assistance and Protection in Austria (Federal Law Gazette, 2018).

Article 7 of the Agreement recognizes unaccompanied minors as a vulnerable group in need of additional care and protection during their initial clearance and stabilization. If necessary, minors shall receive pedagogical and psychological support and will be housed according to their individual level of autonomy. Besides child-friendly accommodations, unaccompanied minors shall have daily structure (e.g., education, leisure, sports, group and individual activities, housework) and receive assistance with asylum processing questions about their age, identity, country of origin, the living situation of family members abroad, as well as family members' prospects and the potential for reunification.

An integration plan and a roadmap for every minor's educational and professional trajectory shall also be developed according to objectives of self-reliance. Particularly, the care of UAM comprises the development of an integration plan and preparation measures with regard to schooling, vocational training and employment (Art. 7 para 3 Basic Welfare Support Agreement). In addition, German language courses are provided at an extent of 200 teaching units per UAM (Art. 9 Basic Welfare Support Agreement Art 7 paragraph 1 No 2 and 4).

Integration Strategy

The integration strategy of Austria is based to the National Plan for Integration (2010) established in 2010 and has effect till today. In addition to this overarching plan, other, more targeted integration plans focus on certain topics or population groups have been launched through the 50-Points-Plan integration of refugees (2016) published in

2016. The integration action plan is implemented above all through a mandatory program called Integration Agreement.

Fields of Action

- **Language and Education**; The NAP highlighted the importance of German language skills as the basis for successful integration. The Federal State is to provide persons granted asylum and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status with German courses up to the A2 level; this applies to persons from the age of 15 and therefore includes unaccompanied minors. Persons granted asylum and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status are required to sign what is referred to as an "integration declaration". By signing this declaration, they undertake firstly to comply with the fundamental values of the legal and social system, and secondly to participate in and complete the German and values courses (Art. 6 para 1 Integration Act).

- **Work and Employment**; Asylum or subsidiary protection status: UAMs with asylum or subsidiary protection status have unrestricted access to the labor market (Hancilova and Knauder, 2011) . Besides access to vocational training and employment as outlined in the table above, UAMs accommodated in reception facilities in the context of basic welfare support can also take up auxiliary activities in the reception facility (e.g. cleaning, cooking) or carry out such activities on behalf of the federal government, the province or the municipality (e.g. landscape work). These activities are remunerated with a financial allowance but do not count as employment (Art. 7 para 3 Federal Government Basic Welfare Support Act).

- Health and social issues; Provision of mandatory health insurance.

Health care provisions for UAMs

Healthcare provision	UAMs receiving basic welfare support	UAMs in facilities of the Children and Youth Service Authorities
Emergency treatment	Must be provided in any case (Art. 6 para 4 Basic Welfare Support Agreement).	Is provided (Mancheva/Nonchev, 2013: 41).
Basic medical care	Payment of contributions of general health insurance (Art. 6 para 1 subpara 5 Basic Welfare Support Agreement).	If UAMs are accommodated in facilities of the Children and Youth Service Authorities then they are usually covered by the general health insurance.[113]
Specialised health care	Treatment that is not covered by the health insurance may be paid upon request (Art. 6 para 1 subpara 6 Basic Welfare Support Agreement).	No information available.
Psychological support / counselling	Provided if needed (Art. 7 para 1 Basic Welfare Support Agreement).	Access to psychological support depends on the respective policies of the provinces; in the context of trafficked children the Children and Youth Service Authorities may also offer such services (Mancheva/ Nonchev, 2013: 41). In the case of UAMs accommodated in the Viennese Youth Welfare Authority' reception facility Drehscheibe, access to psychological support is provided.[114]

(Koppenberg, 2014). With regards to the access to psychological support, a new project called RESET, funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs was introduced in 2021. It provides extra funding for organizations offering psychotherapy to refugees. (AIDA, 2021)

- **Housing** and the regional dimension of integration; Housing policy and integration activities are closely intertwined especially in municipalities which have small experience dealing with integration policies. Strengthening political responsibility for integration and establishing municipal councilors for integration affairs are deemed necessary.

In Austria, the **transition to adulthood** contains no longer entitlement to a guardian. In addition, UAM turning 18 years old have to move out of UAM-specific reception facilities. The relocation procedure might be challenging when social services have to be interrupted, like schooling and vocational training, socialization is cut and/or siblings separated from each other. In exceptional cases former UAMs can stay in their reception facility for a limited period of time (e.g. until they graduate from school). The Federal Children and Youth Service Act provides for the possibility of continued care and educational support for former UAMs under certain conditions but only up to a maximum age of 21 (Koppenberg, 2014).

Belgium

European Directives binding to National Law

- Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000, establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation; Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.
- Circular of Public Prosecutors of 11 October 2004; Ministerial Directive on the search for missing persons of 20 February 2002 adapted on 20 April 2003.
- Resolution of the European Council of 26 June 1997 on unaccompanied minors from third countries
- Regulation Dublin II (2003)
- EU Directive 2003/9/EC (Reception Act)
- EU Directive 2004/81 on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration, who cooperate with the competent authorities
- EU Directive 2004/83/EC (Qualification Directive)
- EU Directive 2005/85/EC (Procedures on Asylum)

The integration process in Belgium starts from the reception centers by the social workers and with the help of the guardian. During this period of time, unaccompanied minors develop a 'life project' that often involve an individualized approach for each UM, depending on his/her capabilities. Moreover, multiple projects are provided pertaining with the preparation for the adulthood, including management of their own budget and learn of preparing their meals with the aim to live independently and be sufficiently integrated in Belgian society. Education is one of the main steps towards integration. Besides education, UMs benefit from other social and economic rights: the right to welfare aid and benefits, access to health care and the right to work.

- **Education**;

Each child in Belgium, including unaccompanied minors, has the right to education in accordance with the law. The education is compulsory for primary and secondary education. For unaccompanied minors, the compulsory education takes into effect from the 60th day after registration in the "Foreigner's Register". In Belgium, integration process is under the auspices of the Regions and Communities. The Flemish Community has developed the so-called 'inburgeringsbeleid' (civic integration policy), which targets unaccompanied minors as well. The establishment of "reception classes" for newcomers, with the main aim of teaching the language as well as the socio-cultural system in Belgium, facilitates the access to the education system. In the French-speaking Community, third country nationals participate in "bridging classes" (classes passerelles), according a decree adopted on June 14, 2001 that links the pupils with the country's regular institutions, assistance providers or training organizations (De Bauche and De Bruycker, 2012).

- **Access to Social Welfare**

The Belgian State in regard with the Article 22 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 20 November 1989 provides social aid by the Public Social Welfare Centers to all the people including unaccompanied minors who cannot afford a life in dignity. However, for those accommodated in facilities the assistance is provided in kind (accommodation, food, clothing, psycho-medical-social assistance and a small daily subsistence allowance). (http://www.ibz.be).
Once granted with a refugee status or subsidiary protection they can access welfare protection, schooling, juridical and psychological assistance, benefit from housing in specialized accommodation, and join a foster family, which would allow them to integrate socially and culturally (European Commission, 2021) .

- **Access to medical care**

Constitutional basis Article 23 of the Belgian Constitution of 1994 establishes that "everyone has the right to lead a life in keeping with human dignity […] To this end, the laws, federate laws and rules referred to in Article 134 guarantee economic, social and cultural rights, taking into account corresponding obligations, and determine the conditions for exercising them. These rights include among others: the right to social security, to healthcare and to social, medical and legal aid" (Koppenberg, 2014). Once a third country national applies for international protection in Belgium, the Federal State becomes responsible for the provision of health care. Asylum seekers have the right to access health care which is free of charge, however they are not integrated in the compulsory national health insurance scheme for Belgian citizens. Whether the unaccompanied minors are EU citizens or not, they have the same protection under Belgian law. Article 10§1 of the Law of 24 December 2014 states that "the guardian ensures that the minor goes to school and receives psychological support and appropriate medical care". Therefore, unaccompanied minors have access to healthcare under the RIZIV-INAMI scheme.
Unaccompanied minors are allowed to register to the national health and disability insurance (AMI – ZIV) after 3 months of school attendance or exempted of school attendance by an official body when living in a collective reception center. They therefore should be registered to the AMI – ZIV before arriving to the ILA – LOI. Fedasil determines fixed fees for psychological care, applicable for all expenses of psychological care at the exception of the ILA – LOI managed by CPAS – OCMW. In this case, the CPAS – OCMW usually follows the existing rules of payment of psychologists. Those who are undocumented minors still obtain this right, till they lose the status of UAM (AIDA, 2021).

- **Access to work**

Unaccompanied minor in Belgium have access to a student's job under specific conditions;
1. possession of a residence document (registration in the foreigners' register)
2. Obtain of a student work contract
3. Issuance of type C work permit where necessary
4. 20 hours of work at most in a weekly basis and the job has to be compatible with studies
5. The minor has to be 15 and be in full-time education or have finished the curriculum

(EMN 2009).

Italy

Legal framework

The legal system in Italy, offer a protective framework for the most vulnerable children travelling unaccompanied, regardless of whether or not they apply for international protection. The safeguard and protection of unaccompanied foreign minors are ensured by several provisions, among which mainly the Unified Text on Immigration (Legislative Decree n. 286/1998), its implementing regulation (D.P.R. n. 394/1999); regulation 535/1999 concerning the tasks of the Committee for Foreign Minors, whose competences since 2012 have been transferred to the General Directorate for Immigration and Integration Policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; (integrazionemigranti, nn.d.) . Under Italian immigration law, minors cannot be expelled and have the right to education, regardless of their or their parent's/responsible adult's immigration status. Moreover, they are entitled to obtain a "minor" residence permit (permesso di soggiorno per minore età), which may be converted to an "adult" permit when they become adults (18 years old). They provide for the appointment of a legal guardian and the

recognition of unaccompanied children's fundamental rights such as the right to protection, health, education, adequate living conditions to ensure their wellbeing and social development, etc. (Grigt, 2017) .
Moreover, Italy is the only European country which, in 2017, with the approval of Law no. 47, the so-called Zamba Law, (integrazionemigranti, nn.d.) adopted legislation specifically aimed at unaccompanied foreign minors, introducing significant changes to the existing legislation with the aim of strengthening the protection tools recognized by the Italian system in their favour. In particular, the aforementioned law, explicitly introduces the absolute prohibition of rejecting UFM at the border, which cannot be ordered in any case.
Law no. 47/2017, moreover, establishes at the General Directorate of Immigration and Integration Policies the (National Information System for Unaccompanied Minors) which, through the census of the presence of UFMs on the Italian territory, allows to constantly track the movements of UFMs with reference to their placement in reception and their taking into care by the territorially competent social services and to manage the data related to their registry.

Integration strategy
Italy's first recognition of certain legislative acts to regulate migrant integration procedures in the Italian community was realized in 1998, through the Legislative Decree No. 286/1998 ("Consolidated Act of provisions concerning immigration and the condition of third-country nationals"). A set of rights (education, health, social integration, etc.) were enshrined for the first time in a unitary legislative framework. Legislative Decree No. 286/1998 was amended by the so called "Bossi-Fini Law" (Law No. 189/2002) and "Security Package" (Law No. 125/2008), which established, among others, more restrictive provisions concerning the expulsion and detention of migrants.
The so called "refugee crisis" in the context of the Arab Spring, was a turning point of the Italian policy on migration mostly due to the highest number of non-EU citizens looking for economic opportunities and international protection in its history. The focus was on security," by intensifying border controls making an arbitrary distinction between applicants for international protection and irregular migrants at border crossings (Ibrido and Marchese, 2020).
Since 2012 the Integration Agreement (European Website on Integration, n.d.) was introduced, addressing asylum seekers of International Protection having a residence permit with a minimum validity of one year. Specifically, they have to sign an agreement with the State which, inter alia, requires them to acquire an adequate knowledge of the Italian language. Within the framework of this Agreement, the State provides a language and civic education course for asylum seekers over 16 years of age, who are required to have a residence permit.
The renewal of the residence permit prerequisites the completion of integration goals assessed through a credit system. Specific categories are, however, exempted from this requirement, either by law (such as victims of trafficking, unaccompanied minors and disabled migrants) or de facto, since their permits cannot be withdrawn (such as the beneficiaries of international or humanitarian protection, family migrants, long-term residents, and the family members of EU citizens).

Integration Plan

- **Interreligious dialogue**

The recently signed National Pact for an Italian Islam, which the State and the Islamic communities undertake to implement over the next few years, establishes a new institutional phase of collaboration with the principal representatives of the Muslim communities in Italy, aiming to facilitate the recognition of Islam, promote transparency, mutual respect and prevent radicalization.

- **Language training**

Learning of the Italian language represents a right but also a duty, since it constitutes an essential prerequisite for a concrete path towards social integration, fundamental for the interaction with the local community, for access to the labor market and public services.

- **Access to education and recognition of educational titles and qualifications**

Access to education represents one of the pillars with regards to social integration. The Italian school system is universal and free and pays attention to those who are more vulnerable, such as unaccompanied foreign minors

who suffer from a high rate of school dropout. An important factor facilitating social integration of persons entitled to protection is the recognition of degrees and qualifications acquired in the country of origin (Ministry of Interior, 2017)

- **Access to employment and training**

In Italy, several special programmes have been put in place to support unaccompanied minors in accessing the labour market. One of such promising practices from Italy is project Pathways for education, employment and integration of young migrants, coordinated by Ministry of Labour and Social policies (2016- 2019). The project is based on the provision of an individual integration plan (which includes tutoring, counselling, 591 career guidance, job orientation and a 5-month internship in a private company), aimed at supporting unaccompanied minors and young migrants to gain self-sufficiency and access to the labour market (Trunk, Sebastio and Melillo, 2022).

- **Access to healthcare**

For what specifically concerns minors, healthcare is always guaranteed, together with the attribution of the pediatrician, regardless of their legal status. Before 2017, UAMs had limited rights to access health services. Following the passing of Article 14, paragraph 1 of Law 47/17, registration of all UAMs became obligatory in the national health system (SSN), irrespective of their legal status. The intervention of cultural mediators is required in all decisions concerning the minors' health and education needs. (Id. art. 14(3).) Law no. 47 of April 7, 2017) (Barn R, Di Rosa RT, Kallinikaki T. 2021).

- **Access to housing and legal residence**

Following the 2020 reform, accommodation of beneficiaries of international protection is carried out in the SAI system, System of accommodation and integration (Sistema di accoglienza ed integrazione). SAI is a publicly funded network of local authorities and NGOs which accommodates unaccompanied children – under some conditions also after they become adults, beneficiaries of international protection and, in case of available places, applicants for international protection and people who have obtained some other residence permits for specific reasons, among which beneficiaries of national protection (AIDA, 20220).

Netherlands

General framework

Unaccompanied minors who need protection are granted asylum, just like adult asylum seekers. But because of their age a number of special measures apply:

- Foreign unaccompanied minors are assigned a guardian until their 18th birthday.
- Foreign unaccompanied minors under the age of 15 are placed with foster families by the Nidos Foundation . Those aged 15 and over, and those under 15 who cannot be placed with foster families, are given accommodation by the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA). They are housed in small-scale reception centers with 24-hour supervision.
- The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) has special interview rooms for children under 12 (for example with toys). Certain staff members are specially trained to interview children and question them in a manner appropriate to their age.
- Unaccompanied children in the Netherlands have the right to shelter, education, health care and support, just like other children (Government nl.nd)

Legal Framework and Policy

Main legislative acts relevant to asylum procedures, reception conditions, detention and content of protection

Title in English	Original Title (NL)	Abbreviation	Web Link
General Administrative Law Act	Algemene Wet Bestuursrecht (AWB)	GALA	https://bit.ly/2MsylJS(NL)
Aliens Act 2000	Vreemdelingenwet 2000 (Vw 2000)	Aliens Act	https://bit.ly/3qUN0MS (NL) http://bit.ly/1CPkXEI (EN)
Act of the Central Agency of Reception	Wet Centraal Opvang Orgaan (Wet COA)	Reception Act	https://bit.ly/36cQane (NL)
Aliens Labour Act	Wet Arbeid Vreemdelingen (Wav)	Aliens Labour Act	https://bit.ly/3a8zONB(NL)

(AIDA, 2022)

Access to education

According to Article 3 of the Compulsory Education Act, education is mandatory for every child under 18. All minors are entitled to education under international treaties and school attendance for minors is compulsory in the Netherlands. This applies to both children with a right of residence and children without a right of residence (AIDA, 2022).

Primary education for children can take place in an asylum-seeking center as well as in a 'regular' primary school. Children start in specific language classes where they learn Dutch and from there they move to regular education. In regular education, attention is also paid to mastering Dutch and learning about Dutch culture.

Children who on arrival are at the age of secondary education (12 years) will start in an 'Internationale Schakel Klas' [International Transition Class] (ISK) where they can stay for a maximum of two years. With a large focus on language education (80%) in the ISK, children will be prepared for regular education. By mastering a sufficient level of the Dutch language, the child can attend regular education (Zijlstra et al., 2017).

Access to healthcare

Unaccompanied children seeking asylum have access to healthcare services on the same basis as other children. They receive extra assistance in separate reception facilities. They are attributed a guardian from the Nidos Foundation, who is responsible for accommodating the children and providing them with a health insurance. If their application is rejected, they keep their right to live in the asylum reception centres, to benefit from healthcare services and their right to education until departure, according to Article 6 of the Measures regarding asylum seekers and other categories of foreign nationals (Noret, 2017).

In general, UAMs have equal access to services such as guardianship and education, irrespective of their residence status (minor refugees, asylum seekers, and undocumented migrants). However, access to healthcare services for undocumented minors who have no legal residence status can be more restricted than for Dutch youth in the youth care system. For example, the assessment of the need of psychosocial care has to be renewed every six months, instead of the regular 12 months for Dutch children (Youth Act Decree [Besluit Jeugdwet], Article 2.1, Section 2 and

3). Once UAMs turn 18, and if they are undocumented, they are no longer entitled to social services and education, and only have access to basic medical care. In some situations, they are entitled to access basic shelter facilities (Oxfam, n.d.)

Unaccompanied minors turning eighteen

For UAM, turning eighteen means that they have to leave the reception centers for children. If they are still waiting for the outcome in the asylum procedure, they are transferred to facilities for adults and receive a minimum of social benefits. If the application is rejected and all legal remedies are exhausted, UAM have to leave the care facility and must take care of themselves. From then on, they are seen as irregular migrants who have to arrange their 'voluntarily' return to the country of origin or otherwise they can be forced to leave the Netherlands.

There are several initiatives in the Netherlands to support unaccompanied youth after their eighteenth birthday. The support focuses on primary living conditions, legal procedures, and education, on creating a positive future perspective, integration in the Netherlands and/or the young person's return to his/her country of origin (Zijlstra et al., 2017).

Certain cities in the Netherlands have or fund services for aged out unaccompanied children, called 'ex-ama teams', with 'ama' referring to the Dutch term for unaccompanied child. For instance, the city of Utrecht financially supports the local ex-ama team of the Dutch Council for Refugees. The team was set up in 2003 in response to homeless, undocumented aged out unaccompanied children living in the city. The team's primary goal is to support unaccompanied children in their journey towards independence regardless of their residence status. This is achieved through the building of a support network, intensive guidance (incl. regarding residence status) and creating some form of stability for the aged out unaccompanied children. The service, provided by professionals with legal training, starts incrementally six months before the child turns 18, when Nidos, the government service in charge of housing and guardianship of unaccompanied children, starts sharing information with the Utrecht ex-ama team. There is no end date for the help or guidance the young people can receive. In the city of Eindhoven, the organization Vluchteling in de Knel174 ('VIDK') supports undocumented people, including young people, to achieve sustainable perspectives for the future. A specific project for

UAM with a residence permit who turn eighteen are entitled to the same facilities as Dutch people; they can work, rent their own housing, and if they want to study, they can make a request for a student grant or other social benefits (Van der Vennet, 2022).

Spain

Legal framework-Minors' protection regulations.

- Spanish Constitution of 1978. In the Constitution, childhood is present in Title I dedicated to the fundamental rights and duties. Thus, Article 39, fourth section, provides that children shall enjoy the protection provided for in international agreements which safeguard their rights.
- Law 21/1987, of November the 11th, amending the Civil Code and the Civil Procedure Act in respect of Adoption (BOE no. 275 of November the 17th, 1987).
- Organic Law 1/1996, of January the 15th, about the Legal Protection of Minors, partially amending the Civil Code and the Civil Procedure Act (BOE no. 15, of January the 17th, 1996).
- Spanish Civil Code (Net for U Spain, n.d.)

Spain has not yet transposed the recast Qualification, Asylum Procedures and Reception Conditions Directive (AIDA, 2022).

Legal representation-Guardianship

The Spanish legal system shall assign to the public administration with the duty of Guardianship, in cases of declaration of neglect of an unaccompanied minor. The administrative representation of unaccompanied minors is focused especially on hosting UAMs in protection centers and providing them with an education, public health facilities, and access to work when they come of age. To summarize, the material execution of unaccompanied minors' rights is a duty of public institutions in Spain.

Article 215 of the Regulation of Organic Law 4/2000, about the rights and freedoms of foreigners in Spain and their social integration, states:
"In the Directorate General of the Police and Security Forces there will be a children's registry of unaccompanied minors with identification purposes only, which will be coordinated by the General Prosecutor, for the fulfillment of the competences attributed to the prosecution under Article 35 of the Organic Law 4/2000, within the scope of its guarantee function and protection of the interests of the child" (Net for U Spain, n.d. pg 12).

Access to housing
The competence for the guardianship of unaccompanied foreign minors corresponds to the protection services for children in the different regions in Spain in which the minor is located. Each region has developed its own residential care procedure to assist these children, therefore, practices and resources are very different from one region to another. In some cases, they have created specific centers for unaccompanied minors for both initial reception and long-stay phases. In other cases, specific resources for the first reception are promoted, and then progressively integration is sought (Net for U Spain, n.d.)

Access to education
Access for free education is a right for all the children in Spain and the schooling of minors is compulsory from age 6 to 16. This right is not explicitly ruled under Asylum Law but it is guaranteed by other regulations concerning aliens and minors.
The scheme followed for integrating asylum seeking children in the school varies depending on the Autonomous Community they are placed in, as each regional Administration manages and organizes school systems as they rule. Some Communities count on preparatory classrooms, while others have tutors within the normal class and some others do not offer extra or specialized services in order to ease the integration within the school (AIDA, country report, 2016).

Access to healthcare
Immigration legislation ensures full access to health care for all foreign minors on equal terms with the Spanish people.
Article 3ter, subparagraph 4 of Law 16/2003 provides that "in any case, foreign nationals who are less than 18 years old receive healthcare under the same conditions as Spanish citizens". This provision states clearly that all minors, including unaccompanied minors, have access to healthcare services, under the same conditions as Spanish minors, i.e. free of charge.
Regarding more specifically unaccompanied minors "seeking asylum", Article 47 of Law 12/2009 points out that minors seeking international protection and who are "victims of any form of abuse [...] or victims of an armed conflict, receive all healthcare as well as necessary specialized and psychological care" (Noret, 2017).

Transition to adulthood
In Spain there have been developed some health care programs for young people, former minors under guardianship, but we cannot say that there is a generalized system of transition for adult life. As regularization possibilities, children who reach adulthood documented with a residence permit, will have three months to renew at the expiration of the same. Whereas minority circumstance that gave rise to the permit is not maintained, these children will have to transform this document into a residence and work authorization.
Meanwhile, those who are 18 being undocumented, may request, at the initiative of the supervisory body, a residence permit for exceptional circumstances to be awarded based on a number of discretionary assessment criteria (basically the participation in training and integration activities) (Net for U Spain, n.d).

Greece

Legal framework

1. Law 4375/2016: “Organization and operation Asylum Service, Appeals Authority, Reception and Identification Service establishment of a General Secretariat for Reception, provisions for the work of beneficiaries of international protection and other provisions " Adaptation of Greek Legislation to provisions of Directive 2013/32 / EU of the European Union Parliament and of the Council, “on common procedures for granting and withdrawing of the international protection regime».
2. Law 4375/2016: article 34: appointment of an unaccompanied minor and Temporary and Permanent Commissioner, article 45: application procedure unaccompanied minors for international provision protection, article 46: Avoid detention of minors
3. Presidential Decree: 220/2007 “on the reception of applicants asylum”- adaptation of Greek legislation to the provisions of Directive 2003/9 / EC of 27 January 2003 on the subject with the minimum requirements for the reception of asylum seekers in the Member States. Article 19: asylum procedure - request for international protection in accordance with Geneva Convention
4. L.3907 / 2011 “establishment of an asylum service and first reception service”-adjustment of Greek legislation to its provisions Directive 2008/15 / EC on the public rules in the Member States for return of illegally residing third-country nationals”
5. Article 32 L.3907 / 2011 (by which was incorporated into the Greek legal order in Article 17 of Directive 2008/15 / EC) combined with article 46 L.4375 / 2016: Unaccompanied minors are detained as a last resort solution only for the purpose of referring them to hosting structure Maximum booking period: 25 days and in exceptional circumstances booking extension up to 20 days (Law 3907, 2011)

Guardianship

The competent authorities for the protection of unaccompanied minors shall immediately take appropriate measures to: ensure the necessary representation of unaccompanied minors in order to ensure the exercise of their rights, as well as compliance with the obligations set out in present. To this end, all public authorities and every third party, which is informed in any way for the arrival or presence of an unaccompanied minor, inform the Protection Department without delay Vulnerable Groups, Refugees-Asylum Seekers of the General Directorate of Welfare. The latter takes the necessary steps to appoint a commissioner through the matter and place competent Prosecutor. The unaccompanied minor is immediately informed of the appointment of a commissioner. The Commissioner shall carry out his duties with a view to safeguarding the best interests and overall well-being of the child. The person acting as commissioner is replaced only if required. Persons whose interests are in conflict or could possibly be conflict with the interests of the unaccompanied minor cannot be appointed as commissioners. The competent authorities for the protection of unaccompanied minors carry out regular assessments the suitability of the commissioners, as well as the availability of the necessary means for representation of unaccompanied minors (cisotra.eu, n.d.).

Transition to adulthood

The most of the Reception and Hosting Centers cannot continue to host unaccompanied minors after they reach adulthood. Therefore, they need to move to a hotspot with other adults. In rare cases, the unaccompanied minor may remain at the Hosting Center until they can find a job and support one autonomous living, but that is the exception.
The transition to adulthood does not mean that the individual is excluded from access to secondary education, if he wants to continue his studies. After becoming an adult, the unaccompanied minor is able to obtain a work permit (cisotra.eu, n.d.).

Access to education

Under domestic law, unaccompanied minors enjoy the same rights in education, training, health, language support with the other children living in Greece. In the Law .4251/2014 art. 21 (Chapter F) defines the common rights of third-country nationals. According to the article: "Minor citizens of third countries, residing in Greek territory, are subject to compulsory schooling, as are the natives. The third-country minors attending all levels of education, have, without restrictions, access to school activities or educational community".

Access to healthcare

According to article 33 Section 2 of the 4368/2016 law, asylum seekers and refugees are considered vulnerable groups and thus have access to the public healthcare system for free, in the same way as destitute Greek nationals. Article 33 of Law 4368/20161 provides free access to medical and pharmaceutical services provided by the Greek Health System to the uninsured and to members of "vulnerable social groups". This includes refugees, asylum-seekers (from the moment they express their will to apply for asylum) and minors irrespective of their legal status, including unaccompanied children and children without legal residence in Greece.

According to Article 33 para. 3 of Law 4368/2016 and Joint Ministerial Decision Α3(γ)/ΓΠ/οικ.25132/4-4-2016, individuals falling under the scope of Article 33 must have a Social Security Number ("ΑΜΚΑ") to be able to access free healthcare in the public health system. This number is issued by Citizen's Service Centers around Greece ("ΚΕΡ") or the offices of the Agency for Social Security ("ΕΦΚΑ"). For those asylum-seekers and other members of "vulnerable groups" that do not fulfil the requirements to be granted an AMKA or do not have one, Article 3 of the Joint Ministerial Decision of 2016 provided for the issuance of a special Foreigner's Health Care Card ("K.Y.P.A") granting access to free healthcare in the public health system (Amnesty International, 2019).

Access to employment

In Greece, a child who has reached the age of 15 may, with the general consent of the persons who have custody of the child, sign an employment contract. If they do not give consent, the court decides at the request of the child (Civil code, art. 136). For regular employment, people need to have a tax identification number. For children, this requires the consent of the parent or legal guardian. In practice, the lack of guardians makes it difficult for unaccompanied children to have one. At the time of the research, asylum applicants had access to the labor market from the moment they lodged their asylum application and obtained an asylum seekers' card. As of January 2020, such access starts only six months after one lodge an asylum application. Beneficiaries of international protection have access to employment under the same conditions as nationals (FRA, 2021)[2].

Assessment Activity

There are a number of ways you could do this:

- Questions with Yes/No answers
- True/False quiz
- Sentences with keywords left blank for the learner to complete
- A practical task?
- **Bear in mind that the assessments will be live on the website, and some of them may be incorporated into the App.**

[2] *UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN OUTSIDE THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM - CASE STUDY: PAKISTANI CHILDREN IN GREECE REPOR, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2021). [online] Available at: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-12/fra-2021-unaccompanied-children-greece_en.pdf.*

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries[1]

Summary of the good practices and the Learning Objectives Covered

The module will provide to the learner with:

- knowledge with the rights of the Child at EU and International frameworks
- the best interest of the child
- critical thinking on legal cases
- the ability to compare practices from six EU countries

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Greece, Civil Code, Art. 136

Training programme for employees working with UASC

Social workers, educators

Module 3: Societal integration (school, work, etc.)

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Introduction

This training module provides an overview of the main challenges related to access to education for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children as well as access to the labour market for those who come of age.

This module aims to identify some of the key challenges in UASC education and labour market integration, and offers solutions that can be applied by professionals working with this group.

The main points are: the legal aspects of these topics, the definition of the 'early school leaving' phenomenon, the various psychological, linguistic, administrative and societal challenges related to school integration, as well as issues related to vocational training and job search assistance.

Duration: This module should take about three hours to complete.

Additional materials: In addition to the textual resources provided directly by this module, readers are encouraged to consult optional external resources to further their understanding of the topics.

Evaluation: At the end of this module, you can take a short multiple-choice test to evaluate the knowledge and skills you have acquired.

Links to other modules in this training: This module is strongly linked to Module 1 on the legal challenges of UASC integration, Module 6 on the psychological challenges of UASC, and Module 7 on transition to adulthood issues.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the learner will be able to:

- *Explain the key challenges that accompany the societal integration of UASC in education and work;*
- *Understand the concept of early school leaving (ESL) and to detect the early signs of ESL in UASC;*
- *Understand how to help UASC develop their professional project.*

Units

Unit 1: Access to education

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries:

Summary of the good practices and the Learning Objectives covered

Give a brief description of what is covered in this Unit.

- The learner will get an overview of the main challenges faced by UASC in education (related to school organisation, student-teacher interaction, family and social factors and individual factors) and provide tips on how to mitigate them.
- The learner will be familiarised with the concept of early school leaving (ESL) and learn to detect the warning signs of ESL.
- The learner will discover the different components of the UASC reality (being a teenager, being in a stressful situation, being a language learner).

Unit Content

Access to education

In this unit, the learner will be provided with useful information and examples of good practice related to the different challenges of UASC in school attendance and education in general. It will address the issues of early school leaving, as well as the different factors and challenges at play that determine the motivation and learning capacity of UASC.

1. Introduction

Education plays an essential role in migrant integration. Not only does it provide formal knowledge, but it also helps to transmit local language(s), culture, norms and values. Participation in formal education helps to settle in a new country because it offers an institutional framework that serves as a gateway to the larger society. The skills and competencies acquired lay the foundation for labour market participation and contribute to better economic outcomes and general wellbeing.

For UASC in particular, early involvement in an educational system, whether transitional or formal, is important because it can provide much-needed stability and consistency. In the absence of their families, UASC face an entirely new environment on their own. Participation in educational activities can help reduce common stressors (more on this below) by providing perspectives beyond initial administrative hurdles, and prepare UASC for adult life.

Yet research shows that school dropout, or early school leaving (ESL) as the European Union calls this phenomenon, is more common among immigrant students than among native students. If dropping out of school is one of the worst outcomes for any child, it is even more so for children with an immigrant background, as it jeopardises the foundations of their social integration.

In order to support unaccompanied children in their educational journey and help them stay in school, it is important to adapt the educational approach and activities to their needs. One of the main challenges for professionals who work with UASC (social workers, educators, tutors, language teachers, etc.) is therefore to understand their needs.

Specialised training for professionals working with UASC is often not accessible due to budgetary and/or time constraints. This training therefore attempts to share some of the basics of working with unaccompanied minors in the field of education, with a view to building their resilience and facilitating UASC's active participation in their adaptation to a new culture.

2. Legal Framework

Before we dive into the details, let's first get acquainted with the international and European legal provisions regarding the education of UASC.

The **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** stipulates that states "recognize the right of everyone to education", including ensuring that primary education is free and accessible to all, that secondary education, including technical and vocational education, is "made generally available and accessible to

all by every appropriate means", and that "higher education is equally accessible to all on the basis of capacity" (ICESCR, 1966, Article 13).

These obligations are reinforced in the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**, which further contains a provision for states to direct education towards "the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential" (CRC, 1989, Article 29).

In the context of European Union law, the recast **Reception Conditions Directive (RCD)** provides that European Union Member States (EU MS) must grant minors "access to the education system under similar conditions as nationals of the host Member State for so long as an expulsion measure against them or their parents is not actually enforced" (RCD, 2013, Article 14).

According to the **RCD**, the education of minors can take place in accommodation centres and should start no later than three months after the application for asylum is lodged. In order to facilitate their access to and participation in the educational system, preparatory classes, including language courses, shall be offered where necessary. Access to secondary education may not be withdrawn solely on the grounds that the minor has reached the age of majority.

The recast **Qualifications Directive (QD)** refers to the education of children who have been granted refugee status or international protection and sets out that "Member States shall grant full access to the education system to all minors granted international protection, under the same conditions as nationals" (QD, 2011, Article 27.1).

In its latest **Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion (2021-2027)**, the European Commission highlights the need to develop specific support programs for two subgroups of UASC in particular: those arriving after the age of compulsory schooling[1] and those transitioning to adulthood (European Commission, 2020).

2.1. Preparatory classes

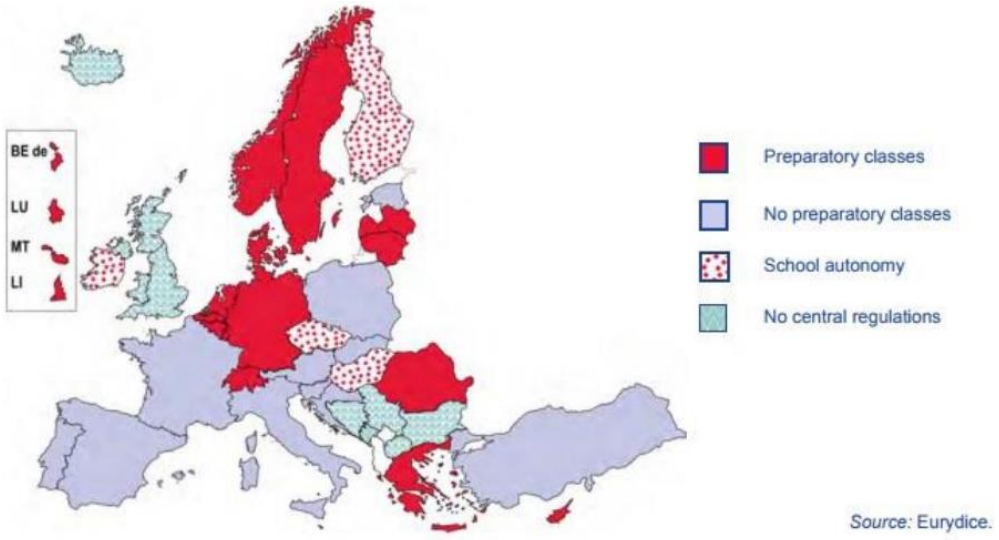
In order to facilitate minors' access to mainstream education, the RCD stipulates that "[p]reparatory classes, including language classes, shall be provided to minors where it is necessary" (Art. 14(2)2). The European Commission defines preparatory classes as "[s]eparate classes or lessons in which newly arrived migrant children are provided with intensive language teaching and, in some cases, an adapted curriculum for other subjects, in order to facilitate their integration in the regular school system"(European Commission Glossary).

[1] *"Full-time compulsory education/training refers to a period of full-time education/training that is regulated by law as compulsory for all students…. In Europe, compulsory education starts at the beginning of primary education [...] or at the end of pre-primary education [...]. The most common age to start full-time compulsory education is 6 years"* (European Commission, 2022).

The RCD further stipulates that MS should offer alternative educational arrangements when no access to the educational system is possible due to the specific situation of the minor (Article 14(3)). In these cases, preparatory classes are important because they can provide access to education for children above the age of compulsory schooling, especially when they have not yet reached the level of competence required by secondary schools and particularly in terms of language skills. In addition, they are an important alternative for children who need special attention (e.g., illiterate children).

With respect to preparatory classes, no single system prevails in the EU Member States (Figure 1). While in some member states newly arrived children are placed with their native peers shortly after arrival, other education systems offer preparatory classes to support the development of the language of instruction and to help children settle into their new (school) environment at a more relaxed pace, especially considering that many unaccompanied children may not have attended school regularly prior to their arrival.

Figure 1: Preparatory classes for newly arrived students, primary and lower secondary education, 2015-2016 (EC/EACEA/Eurydice, 2017)



According to the EASO Guidelines on Reception Conditions for Unaccompanied Children – a document developed to assist Member States in implementing the RCD – preparatory classes can be run by volunteers or other stakeholders (teachers, NGOs, professional staff) and should include intensive language classes, tailored to the needs, maturity level, and cultural background of unaccompanied children. In addition, these classes should be used to assess the skills and prior education of unaccompanied children for school enrolment and to sensitise teachers and educators to the specific needs of unaccompanied children.

As important as it is to include children in educational activities as soon as possible after arrival, preparatory classes should ideally be short in duration to avoid segregation, and schools should offer a smooth transition. In Denmark, for example, students participating in reception classes can progressively take core subjects in mainstream schools once it has been decided that they are ready.

Good practices from the partner countries:

- Greece: Children in reception centres can attend support classes in addition to primary and secondary education. In order to facilitate the integration of children, teachers use textbooks adapted to children for whom Greek is a second language (FRA, 2017).
- Netherlands: About 60 schools offer first-reception education for newcomers. The main objective is to teach the Dutch language and to introduce them to Dutch society while preparing them for the regular school system (UNHCR, UNICEF & IRC, 2017).

For more information on legal provisions pertaining to unaccompanied minors, please refer to the following sources:

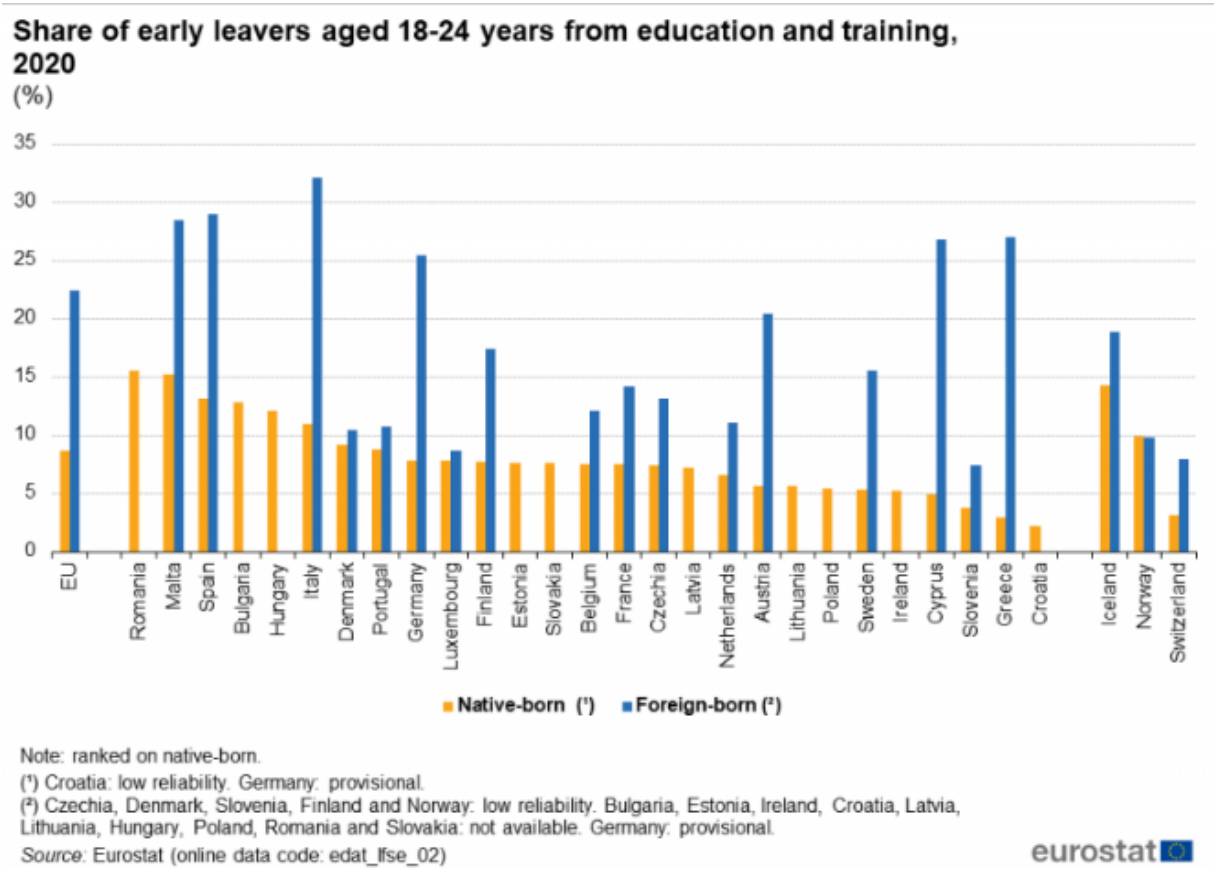
- Module 1 of this training
- "Reference Document on Unaccompanied Children" developed within the framework of the European Commission-funded "CONNECT" project: https://bit.ly/3ldjYLy
- "Education for unaccompanied migrant children in Europe: Ensuring continued access to education through national and school-level approaches": https://bit.ly/40ggwOQ

3. Early School Leaving (ESL)

3.1. Facts and figures

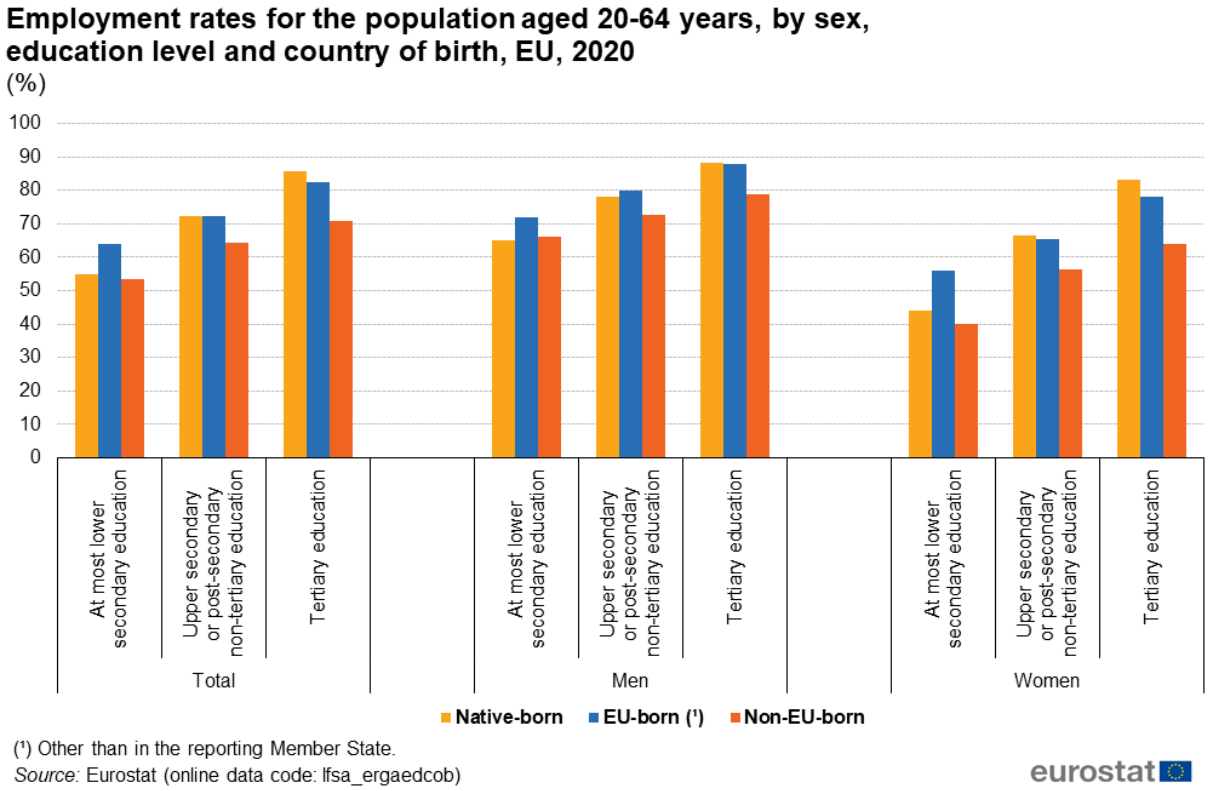
According to the European Commission definition, early school leavers are individuals between the ages of 18 and 24 who have completed only lower secondary education or less and are no longer in education or training. While ESL is a universal problem that exists in all educational systems, research shows that children with a migration background are more likely to leave education or training prematurely (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Share of early leavers aged 18-24 years from education and training, 2020 (Eurostat, 2021)



Early school leaving has lifelong implications. The lower the education level of a person, the more likely they are to become unemployed and to remain unemployed longer than individuals with a higher level of education. Unemployment (or precarious irregular employment) affects physical and mental well-being and longevity. When it comes to people with a migrant background - especially those born outside the EU - employment rates are lower than for native-born at all levels of education. Across all education levels, women born outside the EU have lower employment rates than native-born women, and men regardless of origin (Figure 3).

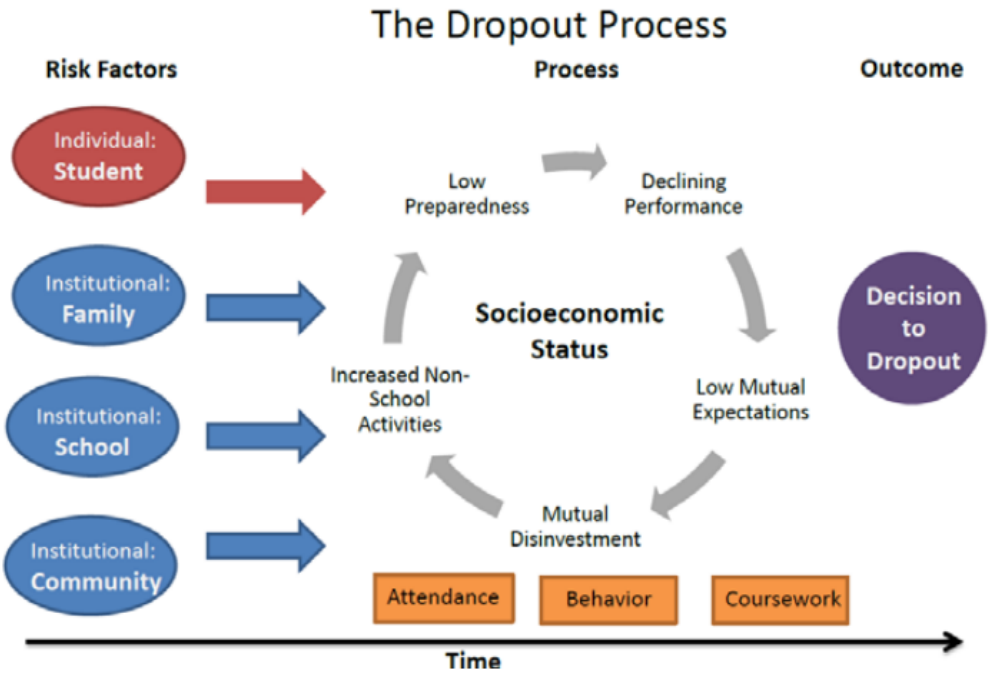
Figure 3: Employment rates for the population aged 20-64 years, by sex, education level and country of birth, EU, 2020, (Eurostat, 2021)



3.2. What is the ESL phenomenon?

ESL is a multidimensional phenomenon that can have many interconnected and mutually reinforcing causes, ranging from low socioeconomic status, a difficult parent-child relationship and mental health issues, to negative interactions at school and poor academic performance. Each dropout journey represents a unique blend of these factors and requires a tailored intervention (Figure 4).

Figure 4: The Dropout Process (Afterschool Alliance, 2013)



Dropping out of school does not happen overnight. Before a prolonged or permanent dropout occurs, it may manifest itself in a passive attitude towards school (disengagement), occasional absences or a temporary break. Students at risk of dropping out are likely to exhibit warning signs such as frequent absences, deteriorating grades, association with "deviant peers", conflictual relationships with teachers and/or progressive exhaustion.

Educators should take these signs seriously because dropping out of school is easier to prevent than to reverse, and the earlier disengagement patterns are detected, the better they can be contained. It is important to give students at risk of dropping out time to become aware of their situation while providing them with concrete solutions, such as helping them make sense of their school experience and fostering supportive relationships between adults and students (Pour la Solidarité, 2017).

More information on the topic in "Immigrant background and expected early school leaving in Europe: evidence from PISA": https://bit.ly/3YWfkzh

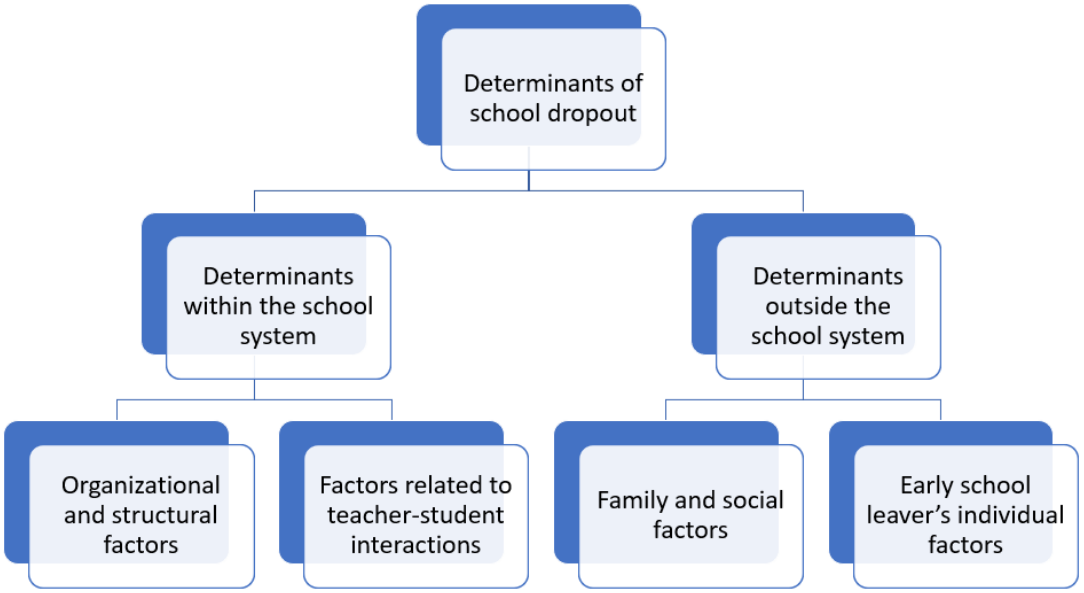
In order to prevent or react to early school leaving among unaccompanied minors, educators can refer to specialised projects that offer accompaniment to children at risk of abandoning school. For example, 462 projects of this kind were financed by the Brussels Capital Region in 2021: https://bit.ly/3yLdbM7

4. Determinants of school dropout and prevention tips

According to a study on Immigrant background and early school leaving in Europe that uses PISA 2015 data, the reasons for dropping out of school (Figure 4) are similar for immigrant and native students. However, while both groups share similar causes for dropping out, the numbers presented above (Figures 2, 3) suggest that immigrant students seem to be more likely to encounter the circumstances that can lead to ESL (Hippe & Jakubowski, 2018).

Researchers studying the phenomenon of early school leaving usually distinguish between determinants within and outside the school system (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Determinants of school dropout (Gilles et al., 2012)



4.1. School's organisational and structural factors

UASC with previous schooling have usually experienced education systems that are very different from the European ones. It is therefore important that they receive a good general overview of the host country's education system, where they are in it and what they need to do to achieve the different possible degrees. This type of orientation at the beginning of their educational pathway in the host country will help them envision their opportunities and facilitate the development of their life project.

Depending on the national reception system, the orientation process can begin in the UASC centres. Ideally, the professionals working with UASC in the accommodation centres will be in contact with the schools that the UASC

will eventually be assigned to, and will have established a transition system. Creating links between the different institutions is crucial because dropout is more likely to occur at transition points (de Waal Pastoor, 2013).

This is especially true for changes in physical educational facilities, but it also applies to transferring between educational stages within the same institution (middle school to high school, etc.). Getting new teachers, classmates, and subjects can be a difficult situation for a minor who has just gone through an integration period. It is important to support students during these transitions to ensure that they have all the necessary information and remain motivated to continue their education.

Another factor associated with a substantial increase in the risk of dropping out of school is grade repetition. Experts agree that grade retention is generally a bad practice because it results in students being overage for grade, which can affect their motivation and lead to disengagement. Students' initial difficulties typically persist when they repeat a grade, and in addition, they must deal with the social and emotional consequences of being held back and separated from their peers. Alternative interventions to help students succeed have been shown to be more effective than repetition, with the literature indicating that effective practices for at-risk students tend to be very similar to best practices in general education, but at a more intense and individualised level (Jimerson et al., 2005).

It goes without saying that the presence of hostile attitudes on the part of teachers and peers is detrimental to UASC well-being and academic success. The manifestation of prejudiced views towards UASC can cause serious harm and result in disengagement, isolation, decreased attendance and dropout. It is therefore vital that teachers who have UASC in their classes have a basic knowledge of the minors' backgrounds and needs, and discuss it with the native students.

4.2. Factors related to teacher-student interactions

Teachers and educators of unaccompanied minors have an important and challenging role as they must be versatile enough to respond to the different needs and aspects of a minor's integration into the new society. In this sense, educators working with unaccompanied minors should not only impart a certain curriculum, but also master aspects of (psycho-) social education, legal knowledge as well as an understanding of working with children who may have undergone traumatic experiences during the different phases of their migration journey and who face uncertainty during the examination of their asylum application.

Studies have shown that the teacher-student relationship has an impact on the student's well-being and academic success. A supportive relationship can go a long way, but at the same time, educators should not be expected to take on a therapeutic role if they are not licensed therapists. Educators can perform other important functions, such as assessing the needs of UASC and adapting the way they interact with learners, delivering the curriculum in ways that promote the well-being of minors (e.g., by including specific structured psychosocial activities in the teaching/learning process).

Another important responsibility of the educator is to connect UASC with other qualified (preferably bilingual) professionals as needed. To do this, consider the following three main needs and try to identify who in your school/facility is available to meet them:

- Healthcare: the minors may be exhausted and anxious when they arrive. They may also be ill due to the difficult conditions of their journey.
- Wellbeing: depending on their accommodation, they may not have easy access to good food, adequate sleeping and hygiene conditions, clean clothes, etc.
- Orientation: Need for information regarding their exact location, school layout, schedule, etc.

It cannot be ruled out that a child turns to their teacher and opens up about their troubles. In these cases, do not reject the child but listen to them and ensure a transition to a mental health professional without undue delay. According to a 2018 study on refugee children's experiences in England and Denmark, it is beneficial for the children if teachers provide them with the opportunity to share their personal stories and past experiences (Thommessen & Todd, 2018). This can both facilitate the educator's understanding of the minor's needs, provide an outlet for the UASC and strengthen the teacher-student relationship.

If the child is not actively sharing, the teacher is advised to respect the child's privacy and refrain from questioning them about potentially sensitive topics (e.g., home country situation, their journey, etc.), especially in front of classmates. This may make the child uncomfortable and cause him/her to withdraw from learning activities. If sensitive issues are raised by students from the host community, be prepared to mediate.

As an educator working with unaccompanied minors, do not neglect your own mental health in this process; working with people who may have experienced trauma can be traumatic in itself. For your own mental health and psychological wellbeing, it is important that you clearly understand and delineate your role in supporting the UASC. If situation-specific training is offered to you (like this one 😊) or exists in the wider context of your role, try to find time to follow it. If your daily work becomes (emotionally) draining, make sure you seek professional help.

Another important facet of working with unaccompanied minors is establishing a safe learning environment for all in the classroom. Emotional and physical safety must be ensured by the teacher, which is not always an easy task when dealing with suffering and/or traumatised individuals. In order to foster a welcoming and reassuring atmosphere and create an environment in which all participants feel they can express themselves freely, you can familiarise yourself with the concept of 'safe spaces'.

In some instances, a group of adolescents can become difficult to manage, especially when emotions are high and some of the youngsters exhibit aggression. In order to manage acute episodes of violence, intervention specialist Jim Wright recommends the following actions:

- Take a few seconds to relax and think about the most appropriate response before reacting to a student who provokes you;
- Use non-verbal communication, such as softening your voice, sitting next to the student, maintaining eye contact, and slowing down your speech;
- Give the student a break to calm down. Remove agitated students from the classroom or redirect their attention to an activity they enjoy. This interrupts the student's anger proactively and early in the escalation cycle;
- Move closer to the defiant students without invading their personal space or giving the impression that you want to overpower them;
- Remain calm and avoid giving the impression that you are angry, shocked or frightened. Keep a professional tone when talking to the upset student;
- Offer the student a solution to save face. Students sometimes find themselves in confrontational situations with their teachers. When this happens, the teacher can help the student avoid a major conflict in a face-saving way. Try the following de-escalation tactic: ask the defiant student, *"Is there anything we can work out together so that you can stay in the class and succeed?"*
- Do not get drawn into arguments. If you find yourself drawn into an exchange with the student (e.g., raising your voice, berating), immediately use strategies to disengage (e.g., moving away from the student, repeating your request in a professional tone, imposing a predetermined consequence for non-compliance).
- Ask open-ended questions. If you face an aggressive student and do not know what triggered the student's defiant response, you can ask neutral, open-ended questions to gather more information before responding. You can pose 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when', and 'how' questions to better understand the problem situation and identify possible solutions.

4.3. Family and social factors

To ensure adequate support for UASC, professionals working with this group will benefit from an understanding of the cultural differences between the minors' countries of origin and the host country (see country of origin information in Section 3.3.1.). While the former are often generalised as family cultures where (family) honour is the highest goal, the latter are more individual-oriented, with individual fulfilment being the most important aspiration (Pinto, 2007).

In the educational context, it is important to keep in mind that focusing on personal development rather than meeting the family's expectations may seem strange to the UASC who, in many cases, have embarked on the migratory journey with the goal of earning money to support the family. The educational decisions of minors may be governed by the desire to provide for the family rather than to foster their personal development. This might result in prioritising (irregular) work over school and can lead to dropping out of school before the completion of

compulsory education, choosing not to continue with upper secondary education, or not enrolling at all for those who arrive in Europe after the age of compulsory schooling.

In terms of school culture, schools in Europe often value active student participation and input of their own ideas and thoughts - behaviours that may be difficult for unaccompanied minors (and migrant children in general) to adopt. As one teacher from Norway put it, refugee children tend to prefer very specific tasks in which the response is measurable (de Waal Pastoor, 2013). While this is not generalizable, it is plausible that the transition from irregular schooling and/or differently functioning (e.g., more centralised) education systems may pose challenges and, at the same time, create a need for unambiguous task solutions.

It may be unusual for the child to express their own opinion or vision, or to participate in a decision-making process: "Children from extended family cultures learn to respect older people and to not have an opinion and desires of their own. Expressing their own opinion is considered a lack of respect and a sign of poor upbringing, meaning a disgrace to family honour" (NIDOS, 2014). Therefore, asking the child's opinion can make them very uncomfortable. Educators working with unaccompanied minors may want to address these cultural differences by explaining that expressing one's opinion with respect is an asset in the minor's new environment. This can be done through playful exercises.

For information on common countries of origin of UASC (Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iraq, Sudan, Vietnam), please consult the training material developed in the framework of the 'Unaccompanied Children in Alternative Residence' (U-CARE) project coordinated by IOM Belgium, Country of Origin Information: https://bit.ly/3ZUkQng. Also available in Dutch, French and Greek.
More information on trauma-informed care can be found in section 5.2. of this Unit.
For a series of important tips for teachers and educators of migrant children (from Ukraine), please see this toolkit developed by the Council of Europe: https://bit.ly/3YW7FB5
For ideas on activities that allow teens to practise new skills, please see The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation developed by UNICEF: https://bit.ly/40fqsbr

5. Early school leaver's individual factors

5.1. General aspects of adolescence

Dropping out of school usually occurs during adolescence, a time of significant change in a young person's life. It is considered the age of transition and is crucial in terms of mental health. It is during this period that the young person begins to question family values, form his or her own moral beliefs and become more independent.

As adolescents explore their autonomy, it is important for their development that they have access to a safe space to which they can retreat. A dysfunctional home environment can jeopardise the process of becoming independent, so psychotherapeutic intervention may become necessary.

During adolescence, the importance of the family gives way to that of peers. The peer group is crucial for the construction of the young person's identity. It is in the peer group that adolescents begin to experiment, develop their communicative and affective skills, and establish their new norms and values. The peer group can therefore play an important role in whether a young person stays in school or drops out.

Physically, the brain areas responsible for inhibition control develop late, reaching maturity only between the ages of 20 and 25. In combination with other factors (peer pressure, distance from family, construction of their own identity, need for experimentation, etc.), adolescents may exhibit impulsive and risk-taking behaviour. Changes in physical appearance can also affect the psychological development of the individual in terms of self-image and self-confidence.

Adolescence is fertile ground for identity crises. A crisis results from a dilemma, the resolution of which enables the individual to realise his or her identity and achieve greater maturity. A young person goes through formative stages of psychological development (autonomy vs. shame and doubt; initiative vs. guilt; diligence vs. inferiority, etc.), and it is important that they have someone to guide them through crises and show them methods of self-exploration (Erikson, 1968).

Many chronic mental disorders (phobias, anxiety disorders, affective disorders, impulse control disorders, substance abuse disorders, some psychoses) emerge or manifest for the first time between childhood and early adulthood. Depression, in particular, is common among adolescents at risk of dropping out of school.

We are just beginning to address adolescent mental health, which means that many families and professionals are not yet able to recognize the presence of mental health disorders in those entrusted to their care. However, the earlier we address young people's mental health, the better their long-term prognosis and quality of life!

5.2. Common psychological stressors of UASC

Module 6 of this training is devoted entirely to the mental and psychological health of UASC. Here, we will address these areas with a focus on education.

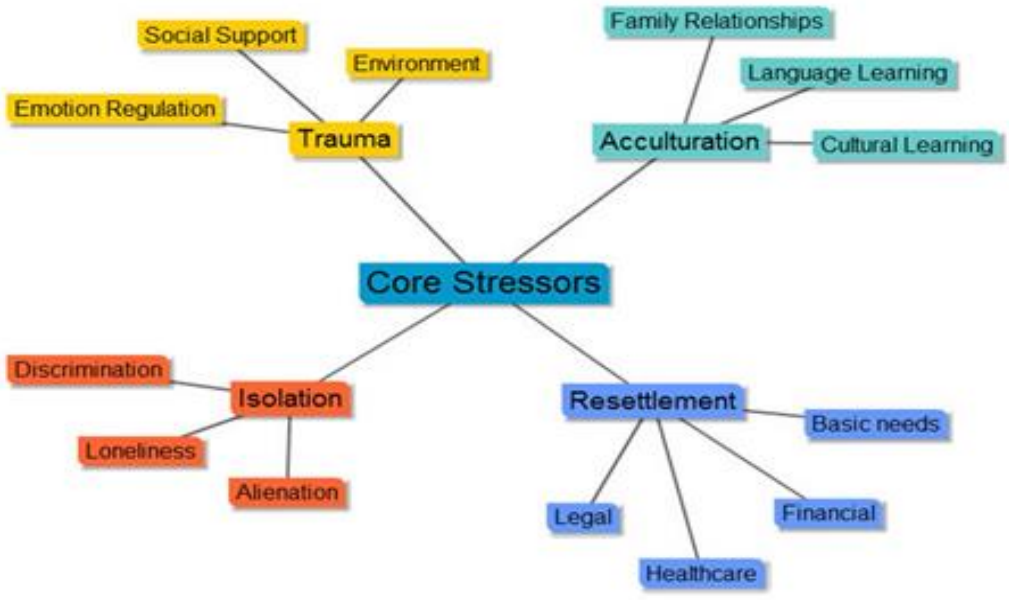
Many unaccompanied migrant children have had traumatic experiences prior to or on their migratory journey and may suffer from anxiety, insomnia, nightmares, restlessness, and difficulty concentrating. Studies on UASC mental health show a wide variability in the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, as well as behavioural, conduct, psychotic and somatic disorders (Von Werthern et al., 2019).

Untreated mental health issues can lead to academic and social problems in the learning environment. Poor mental health can manifest itself in lower levels of energy, concentration, dependability, mental ability and optimism. This, in turn, can lead to a lower academic achievement and a higher risk of disengagement and dropping out.

Students' mental health problems affect not only themselves but also their classmates and teachers who may be personally concerned about the student or experience the consequences of the student's decreased productivity. Classroom work suffers when students perform poorly and are not focused. And students dropping out of school has a negative impact on society as a whole. It is therefore in everyone's interest to support students' mental health and psychological well-being (SPRC, 2020).

Researchers at Boston Children's Hospital Trauma and Community Resilience Center have grouped these challenges into "core stressors", a model that is supposed to help educators understand and support unaccompanied minors (Figure 6). The model identifies four stressors: acculturation, resettlement, trauma and isolation (amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic) and proposes strategies for addressing them (ILC, 2021).

Figure 6: The Four Core Stressors Framework (Davis et al, 2021):



Acculturation is the process of adapting to a new culture. It can be stressful for a variety of reasons such as language barriers, financial difficulties, changing gender roles and downward social mobility. Other stressors can be related to the uncertainty surrounding the asylum claim as well as experiences of racism, xenophobia, and anti-immigrant sentiment.

To facilitate the acculturation process of UASC, teachers and educators can create clear classroom guidelines that reduce the “othering” of the students. Ground rules for respectful conduct and language that apply to both native students and UASC can make your expectations clear and help hold students accountable if they say something inappropriate (see safe space concept).

For many unaccompanied minors, the **resettlement** process is far from smooth. Many have difficulty accessing basic resources such as medical care, including mental health care, affordable housing, and legal and financial assistance. Even if they have low incomes, minors may have to send money back to their home countries, which requires them to find work. Educators can help minors master the relocation challenges they face by connecting them with relevant organisations providing services in specific areas.

As previously mentioned, **trauma** is very common among unaccompanied minors. In addition to the potential trauma of family separation, pre-migration, migration and resettlement trauma could all be present. Students may be fleeing war and conflict, and may be victims of human trafficking and other forms of violence during their journey. The uncertainty surrounding the examination of their asylum application and poor living conditions in reception centres can also be traumatic experiences.

Trauma may manifest itself in hyperactivity, absenteeism, withdrawal, mood swings, irritability and other "problem" behaviours. It is essential to respond with empathy and support rather than punishment. A simple strategy to help students process their experiences is to encourage them to write, talk or even create art about their stories. It is important to ensure that these activities are voluntary. Pressuring students to recount or relive painful experiences can bring back trauma in a harmful way.

Separation from family and prolonged periods of **isolation** during the migration journey, cut off from any sense of community for an extended period of time, can have negative effects on mental health. Lack of family support in the host country and not knowing anyone who speaks their language or understands their culture (especially when in foster care) can increase feelings of isolation and social withdrawal of minors.

Educators can help students feel connected to their peers and school community. You can do this by organising activities that encourage interpersonal relationships. One possible strategy is to create a buddy system, ideally pairing unaccompanied minor arrivals with multilingual students. If your school has a large group of students who share an unaccompanied minor's background, creating a club focused on celebrating their culture can be particularly helpful.

<u>Tips on creating educational environments that foster psychological wellbeing:</u>

- Make education flexible and responsive to emotional, cognitive and social needs and capacities of learners. For instance, offer shorter activities if learners have difficulty concentrating; establish flexible schedules to avoid undue stress on learners and on educators with little experience in this particular setting (i.e. volunteers) by offering variable hours/shifts; adapt exam timetables to give learners additional time to prepare.

- Aim to provide education that helps to restore a sense of structure, predictability and normality for children; creates opportunities for expression, choice, social interaction and support; and builds children's competencies and life skills. For instance, establish activity schedules and post these visibly in the education facility/learning space; avoid punishment of learners whose performance in class suffers due to mental health or psychological problems; use collaborative games rather than competitive ones; increase the use of active, expressive learning approaches; use culturally appropriate structured activities such as games, song, dance and drama that use locally available materials.

- Include life skills training such as non-violent conflict resolution, interpersonal skills, prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), etc. as well as skills to participate in supplementary education, vocational training, artistic, cultural and environmental activities and/or sport (life-long learning).

- Utilise participatory methods that involve community representatives and learners in learning activities. Adolescent and youth participation in conducting activities for younger children is particularly valuable. Peer-to-peer approaches should also be considered.

- Organise weekly community meetings with child/youth/community representatives to facilitate activities that are appropriate to the local context and that utilise local knowledge and skills.

- Ensure that any education coordination or working group takes into account mental health/psychological considerations. Designate a focal point to link the mental health/psychological coordination group to the education coordination mechanism.

- Use food-for-education programmes to promote mental health and psychosocial well-being, where appropriate. Providing food (on-site or as take-home rations) in educational settings can be an effective strategy for increasing attendance and retention, which in itself contributes to mental health and psychosocial well-being. In addition, food in education can directly benefit psychosocial well-being by increasing concentration, reducing social distinctions between 'rich' and 'poor', etc. The provision of food or feeding programmes in educational settings should occur only when this can be done efficiently and does not harm the nutritional status of the learners.

5.3. Linguistic barriers

One of the most important aspects contributing to the inclusion of unaccompanied minors (and migrants in general) is host-country language proficiency. Language acquisition is not only essential for education, but also for the labour market and integration into the host society in general. Conversely, for students with a migrant background, language proficiency is one of the most significant barriers to full participation in education and training and one of the most frequently cited factors affecting learning outcomes and causing disengagement and dropout. Involving newly arrived children in language learning activities as early as possible has many benefits for their initial reception and for the continuity of their education.

Assessment of language skills

Before doing so, it is important to assess their educational level and language skills upon arrival. The population of unaccompanied minors is heterogeneous in terms of origin, education levels, and personal competencies. Some UASC have had little exposure to schooling in their country of origin, while others have had regular schooling, but

in education systems that are very different from European ones. A variety of other factors (see core stressors in 5.2.) can affect their attendance, punctuality and ability to concentrate, learn and remember.

In most European countries however, there are no central regulations on the language assessment of newly arrived migrant students. Schools that do conduct assessments generally use either observation or standardised tests, the latter being more common but less personalised.

The child's mother tongue(s)

Ideally, comprehensive assessments should be based not only on students' knowledge of the language of instruction, but also take into account their general language abilities and prior education. The development of UASC' linguistic repertoire in their home language(s) and in other languages they may speak should not be overlooked as it contributes to overall functional literacy (Cunningham et al., 2017).

By extension, language learning activities are considered particularly effective when they combine support for the development of the child's mother tongue and the language of schooling, and are linked to the promotion of intercultural awareness in those around them. Viewing multilingualism as an asset rather than a barrier can enhance children's self-esteem and improve their well-being and academic performance. Promoting intercultural and linguistic awareness and embracing multilingualism also benefits their native peers as well as society as a whole.

Importance of tailoring language programs

Practitioners agree that it is beneficial to tailor language programs to the specific group in question. As children grow, their language repertoire becomes more complex and their neuroplasticity decreases. Therefore, tailoring language support to individual needs becomes increasingly important as age increases. In addition, individuals with a migrant background often have complicated, multi-country and multi-language trajectories that need to be considered.

According to UNHCR, refugee children and youth will benefit from culturally sensitive, youth-specific programs, including those young people who are beyond the age of compulsory schooling and/or not in school, as language and integration programs designed for adults often do not meet their needs. Programs that combine language training and transitional education are another good alternative for young people approaching or over the age of majority who wish to return to basic education or make a transition to employment (see vocational and/or occupation-specific language training) (UNHCR, 2022).

Continued language support

Once students begin attending regular education classes, language support should not stop. While a student may acquire a good level of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) during preparatory classes, this is usually a misleading indicator of a sufficient level of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) needed to follow more complex course content.

Language support in mainstream education can take the form of additional language classes that children can take either after school or during school hours, instead of other school subjects. A way to integrate language support into mainstream education is to provide in-class support using innovative, inclusive, and multilingual pedagogies such as:

- **Language-sensitive teaching** and **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)**: methods based on the principles that all teachers are language teachers and that children's language skills should be developed in all school subjects because languages are used to learn other subjects. In turn, subject knowledge will shape language learning. These methods are considered to have a positive influence on cognitive development, motivation and confidence, and to be very inclusive methods.
- **Computer-assisted language learning (CALL)** has also been shown to have a positive impact on the development of children's language skills because of its non-judgmental, student-centred nature that helps reduce learner anxiety. In addition, it connects learners to the cultural context of the foreign language by exposing them to different audio and visual media.

For more information on **UASC psychological support**, please refer to the following sources:

- Psychological First Aid for Unaccompanied Children: https://bit.ly/40cz0Qf
- Handbook on psychological support to unaccompanied foreign minors: https://bit.ly/3TlhE1A
- FARO MODEL HANDBOOK on Mental Health and Psychological Support to Unaccompanied Minor Migrants and Families with Children upon First Reception developed by Terre des hommes: https://bit.ly/3ZTaC6D

For more information on **psychological support in emergency settings**, please consult the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychological Support in Emergency Settings, 2007: https://bit.ly/3ZWdlw1

For information on Minimum Standards for **Education in Emergencies**, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction: https://bit.ly/3ZXqDZe

Some examples of **language skills assessment:**

- For French-speaking environments, the French Ministry of the Interior has developed a language assessment guide for people of immigrant background, although it is not specifically tailored to children: https://bit.ly/3yLjnDH
- For German-speaking environments, the Austrian Ministry for Education, Science and Research has developed an observation sheet for assessing language competence: https://bit.ly/3JpKsRT

Good practice in **language support in mainstream education** from Austria:

Increasingly multilingual classrooms require all teachers to have a basic level of language teaching skills that will help them manage diversity. In Austria, the Ministry of Education's Language Competence Centre set up an online platform that contains information and tools to support teachers with the subject-oriented language development of students across the curriculum: https://bit.ly/3IivANf

For tips on linguistic support to immigrant children: 'Council of Europe tools to help those providing language support to children arriving from Ukraine': https://bit.ly/3LrEWAL

6. *Conclusion*

One of the most important aspects of fostering UASC well-being and integrating them into society in a sustainable way is to facilitate their access to education and help them stay motivated to continue their schooling. While young people with immigrant backgrounds are at greater risk of dropping out of school, the causes of their early school leaving are not much different from those of native-born students. However, immigrant youth and UASC in particular are more likely to face adverse conditions that may lead to dropping out of school and thus need intensified support from their educators to offset the usual determinants of dropping out.

In this sense, unaccompanied children will benefit from a good knowledge of the educational system and support during the transition between schools. Educational activities that promote human connection and break down stigma should be prioritised over punishment and harmful measures such as grade retention. Supportive relationships with teachers will help unaccompanied children feel safe and open up if they choose. Professionals working with UASC should always consider that minors come from very different cultures, which influences their behaviours and priorities. UASC will benefit if their educators have a basic understanding of their origin cultures

and promote multiculturalism as an asset. Trauma sensitivity is also essential when working with unaccompanied children, as are basic language teaching skills.

Assessment Activities

1. The reasons for dropping out of school are the same for immigrant and native students. True or false?

2. What functions can educators perform in relation to the UASC? (Select all that apply)
    a. Assess the needs of UASC.
    b. Act as a therapist
    c. Deliver the curriculum in a way that promotes the well-being of the minors.
    d. Connect UASC with other qualified professionals.

3. Fill in the gap: While societies in host countries are generally oriented towards the individual, countries of origin are most often _ _ _ _ _ _-oriented.

4. What is the more favourable approach when dealing with students dropping out?
    a. Act when the first signs present themselves (prevention)
    b. Act after the completion of the dropping out process (remediation)

5. What factors can the educator/teacher influence to prevent the UASC dropout process? (Select all that apply)
    a. Family situation
    b. Socio-economic status
    c. Teaching practices
    d. Psychological problems
    e. Teacher-student interaction

6. Is this statement true? “By the age of 16, students should be fully capable of understanding the consequences of their behaviour.”

    a. True

    b. False

7. In the event of conflict episodes, which of the following practices should be applied? (Select all that apply)

    a. Use gentle non-verbal behaviour.

    b. Moving closer to the student to intimidate them.

    c. Scolding and arguing with the student in front of classmates to maintain your authority.

    d. Ask open-ended questions to get more information.

    e. Remove the agitated student from the classroom.

8. Is this statement true? “Teachers/educators are advised to ask the student about their traumatic past.”

    a. True

    b. False

9. Fill in the gap: “Increasingly multilingual classrooms require all teachers to have a basic level of _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ teaching skills that will help them manage diversity.

Unit 2: Access to work

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries:

Summary of the good practices and the Learning Objectives covered

Give a brief description of what is covered in this Unit.

- The learner will explore the different meanings of work.
- The learner will discover techniques to improve the self-perception of UASC and to facilitate awareness of their individual strengths and weaknesses.
- The learner will gain insight into the development of career narratives.

Unit Content

Access to work

In this unit, the learner will be provided with useful information and examples of good practice relating to access to work and in particular to the career guidance of UASC. It will address the work-related considerations prevalent among UASC and provide practical examples of UASC career guidance.

1. Introduction

The assessment conducted at the beginning of the 4oneanother project shows that finding work is one of the major concerns of UASC. In most cases, unaccompanied minors find themselves under pressure to pay back their smugglers and/or to transfer money to their families back home. These factors can lead minors to seek employment through informal networks and often engage in precarious, low-paying, and unsafe working conditions, rather than pursuing an education that would lead to better-paying jobs and a better quality of life in the long run.

The priority is therefore to enable unaccompanied minors to access education (see previous Unit) and to ensure that they remain motivated and committed to pursuing it for as long as possible. In many cases, however, this is not an easy task, whether for reasons of organisation and capacity (e.g., assignment to regular classes in host countries may take some time), school conditions (e.g., negative attitudes of teachers and peers toward newcomers), or the minor's personal reasons (e.g., priority of earning money, language difficulties, mental and emotional struggles, etc.). In addition, many UASC arrive in the host country past the age of compulsory education and are then no longer required to attend school.

Whether a minor is in school or wants to work (or both), it is important to provide some level of understanding of the labour market and workplace literacy. Job search, orientation, and career planning programs for refugee youth, both in and out of school, are imperative to prepare them for employment. In this unit, we present some career guidance exercises that professionals working with UASC can use to help develop career narratives, explore the meaning of work and provide information on the labour market in the given host country.

2. General European context

The work dimension is particularly important in the context of UASC because many juveniles arrive at their destination with the goal of finding a job and earning money. Professionals working with UASC need to be aware of this and take the time to explain to minors that excessive or full-time employment can interfere with their educational journey and lead to lower earnings in the long run. Employment can have an impact on a student's academic performance and most studies agree that students who work more than 15 hours per week are more likely to drop out of school.

However, not working at all also seems to be a bad option, as early exposure to the work environment, at a low intensity, allows students to gain knowledge about the work culture, its rules and codes, and thus be better prepared for the future. If working moderately while in school is a form of social participation that can help UASC integrate in the host society, working too much could lead to dropping out of school and ultimately leading to precarious employment.

In the EU, young people under the age of 15 cannot be legally employed full-time as employment must not interfere with compulsory schooling. Depending on national legislation, the age of admission to full-time work may even be higher than 15 years in some EU MS. However, it is possible to employ young people in cultural, artistic, sporting or advertising activities, but this is subject to prior authorization from the competent authority. Young people between the ages of 14 and 15 can also work in a dual vocational training system or do internships. Children aged 14 or older (13 in some MS) may perform light work (Council of the European Union, 1994).

The Qualification Directive requires EU MS to ensure access to the labour market for unaccompanied minors who are granted international protection under the same conditions as nationals (QD, 2011, Article 26). According to the Reception Conditions Directive, UASC must have access to the labour market within nine months of their arrival. However, MS may set certain conditions and impose restrictions on access to the labour market for unaccompanied minors with another status, or deny them the right to work altogether (EMN, 2018).

While some MS grant automatic access to employment to unaccompanied minors with a residence permit[2], others do not require UASC to have a residence permit in order to work, but do require a work permit to access vocational training under an apprenticeship and vocational contract (France), or have even stricter policies in place. For example, in Austria, an authorization to work is required for all unaccompanied minors, even for vocational training, while in Belgium, UASC in the special residence procedure for unaccompanied minors and who do not have a pending application for international protection cannot apply for a work permit.

3. Career Guidance for UASC

Whether a minor is in school or wants to work (or both), it is important to provide some level of understanding of the labour market and workplace literacy. Job search, orientation, and career planning programs for refugee youth, both in and out of school, are imperative to prepare them for employment. In this unit, we present some career guidance exercises that professionals working with UASC can use to help develop career narratives, explore the meaning of work and provide information on the labour market in the given host country.

We build on the research conducted by Magnano and Zammitti, and presented in the paper titled "Career Guidance for Unaccompanied Young Migrants: A Report on an Italian Experience" (2020), and add information from additional sources. The proposed exercises are positioned within the paradigm of life design which "[…] constructs career through small stories, reconstructs the stories into a life portrait, and coconstructs intentions that advance the career story into a new episode" (Savickas, 2012).

This paradigm is particularly useful in the absence of predictable career trajectories. The loss of stable structures and the individualization of the life course apply to the 21st century world of work in general and even more so to people of immigrant background. The proposed interventions constitute a series of seven meetings that can be

[2] BG, CZ, EE, FI, LV, NL, PT, SE, UK

conducted in small groups, ideally composed by mother tongue and conducted by a professional who speaks the language. It is strongly recommended that the last meeting be an individual session in order to summarise the ideas from the group work and to facilitate the development of a personalised life project.

3.1. Individual Stories

This intervention aims to stimulate the reconstruction of personal and professional stories, thereby improving UASC self-perception and facilitating awareness of their individual strengths and weaknesses.

A possible approach to help UASC unlock and develop self-knowledge can be via understanding which descriptive aspects and characteristics the person ascribes themselves, thereby differentiating between the social perceived self (the concept of self as we think others perceive us) and the ideal self-image (the concept of self as the way we would like to be) (Di Nuovo, 2013).

One way to do this is to hold a group game where participants choose from a list of possible personal characteristics the descriptors that best represent them. Give participants time to choose from the list while clarifying terminology if necessary. Once the youngsters have chosen the characteristics that best describe them, let them share their lists with each other so that their peers can contribute to their selection, by underlining the characteristics they think best apply and/or by contributing additional characteristics.

Follow the game up with a group discussion about how participants chose the characteristics, experiences in their lives that contributed most to building their self-image, the role of social perception of self in creating their self-image, and finally, the importance of knowing one's strengths and areas for improvement in order to make wise choices for the future.

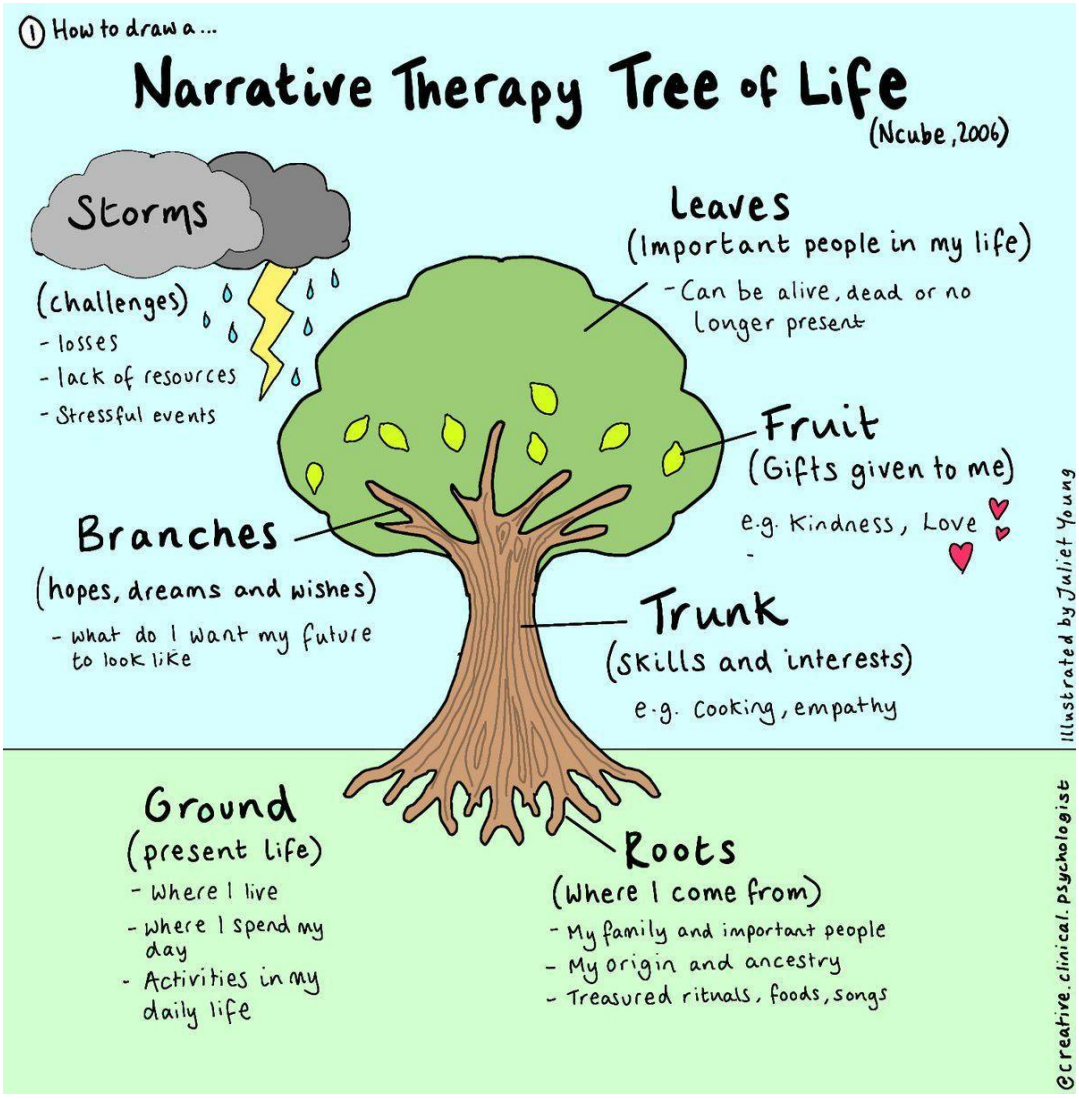
3.2. Tree of Life

The Tree of Life is a narrative technique that uses a tree as a creative metaphor on which participants are invited to represent their lives. People trace their cultural and social history in the roots by drawing their family origins and identifying those who have most influenced them in life, including the construction of their personal values.

The ground contains the characteristics of their current life, including where they live and what they are doing now. The main trunk of the tree represents their strengths and abilities, which can be identified by what others have observed of them. Finally, hopes and dreams for the future are put in the branches of the trees, with the names of important people from the present and past on different leaves and gifts that the person has received in the fruits of the tree.

Through a process of narrative questioning, participants are invited to build rich descriptions of their lives, identify their resources and skills, describe the social history of their development, and imagine how these can lead them towards their desired goals. By specifically analysing the values, contexts, and people who are important in their lives, frequent references to an individual's family of origin, his or her place of birth, and his or her friendships emerged (Piazza et al., 2017).

Figure 1: Tree of Life Illustration by Juliet Young



3.3. Definitions of work and decent work

The aim of this exercise is to explore the cognitive representations of the participants with regard to work.

Work plays a crucial role in a person's psychological well-being and is characterised by its intrinsic or instrumental value, or both. Intrinsic value refers to the meaning that individuals attribute to their work. Instrumental value refers to the importance of work in the construction of personal identity, in the satisfaction of individual life needs,

in the meaning of adult life, and in the fact that it represents a possible way for individuals to express their talents (Szymanski, 2000; Szymanski & Hershenson, 2005). The meaning of work extends from a means of securing one's own livelihood, to providing opportunities to participate in social exchange, to conferring social status that can enhance an individual's sense of prestige and power (Blustein, 2006).

The cognitive representation of work is important because often individuals' future plans are linked to their ideas about what work should mean to them, what characteristics a good job should have, and what kind of work individuals can aspire to, based on their needs and skills (Blustein, 2001). This representation influences their decisions about their professional future (Lent et al., 1994). It is therefore important to determine with SARCs what work and decent work mean to them in order to build their life plans.

To this end, ask participants to complete the sentences "Work is..." and "Decent work is...". Based on the definitions that emerge from the proposed activity, highlight commonalities among participants and stimulate discussion about characteristics that might represent weaknesses in future labour market inclusion, such as accepting any job, accepting any salary, and accepting illegal work (Ferrari & Sgaramella, 2014). Comparisons between definitions of work in this phase of the intervention, after the intervention, and in the follow-up can be used as indicators of the effectiveness of the career guidance exercises.

3.4. Career genogram

The purpose of this intervention is to explore the personal and professional values of UASC and to investigate how the past might influence their career plans.

A career genogram is used to analyse the professional experiences of family members and highlight how these may relate to the individual's current situation. It is a useful tool for identifying family members who have played a significant role in creating the individual's professional expectations (Soresi & Nota, 2010) and can be used to explore sources of influence, values, life roles, decision-making strategies, and barriers to success in the context of career counselling (Okiishi, 1987).

The exercise comprises three phases:

1. **Construction of the genogram.** Many templates exist online to help build the genogram, of which here is an example: https://bit.ly/3UaZ4Z5;
2. **Documentation of family members' occupations.**
3. **Exploration of the role models' influence on the worldview, career values, etc. of the minor.** In order to initiate the discussion, you can ask questions such as "What members of your family were successful in their lives? For what reasons?"

3.5. Knowledge of the labour market

UASCs, especially those who are beyond the age of compulsory schooling and approaching majority, will benefit from a basic understanding of the host country's labour market in order to facilitate their socio-professional integration. This exercise aims to broaden the minors' knowledge of the labour market, the basic rules of its functioning and appropriate work behaviours.

Begin this exercise by recalling the results of the previous discussion on the meaning of work and its different functions, which range from ensuring the survival of the individual to developing the individual's professional identity. Encourage the group to discuss the importance of looking at work beyond its economic dimension, as an activity that promotes the psychological well-being of the individual and allows them to feel like an active member of society.

The next step is to introduce the most common jobs and occupations in the host country to the group. This can be done using a card game on professions. There are many card games available for purchase, but if you have a choice, it is advisable to use cards depicting figures that are unidentifiable in terms of gender and facial expression. Present the most common jobs and explain what kind of actions and behaviours are carried out by people who practise each job, and what type of skills and training are required to be able to carry out each working activity.

3.6. Analysis of professional interests

This exercise serves to analyse the professional interests of the minors by linking them to specific job competences.

To this end, have participants select their three preferred work activities from the deck of cards and conduct a group discussion about each selected activity to verify that participants have the correct knowledge about the activities associated with the profession, the work behaviours involved, and the skills required to perform the job. Also, guide the group discussion toward redefining stereotypes related to gender and ethnicity.

3.7. The final profile and the professional project

In order to allow a customised development of a life project for each participant, it is advisable to conduct the last session in an individual setting.

This session should be used to summarise the profile of the minor developed in the previous meetings: the minors' image of their real and social self, their values and their professional interests. Based on the information gathered, discuss possible professional projects with the participants and help them identify some short and medium term goals.

Detailed information on using the 'Tree of Life' technique can be found in the following paper by Ncazelo Ncube, the developer of the approach: https://bit.ly/42lSjbG

Additional illustrations that help apply the 'Tree of Life' approach can be found here: https://bit.ly/3ZQ4U5o

Assessment Activities

1. Students who work more than __ hours per week are more likely to drop out of school.

2. According to the EU Reception Conditions Directive, UASC must have access to the labour market within __ months of their arrival.

3. The 21st century world of work is characterised by (Select 1):
    a. Stability
    b. Individualisation
    c. Predictable career trajectories

4. What is the 'social perceived self'?

5. In the 'Tree of Life' narrative technique, what does the main tree trunk represent? (Select 1)
    a. My hopes and dreams for the future
    b. Persons who influenced me most
    c. My strengths and abilities
    d. Characteristics of my current life

6. What can the 'instrumental value of work' refer to? (Select all that apply):
    a. The importance of work in the construction of personal identity
    b. The satisfaction of individual life needs
    c. The meaning of adult life
    d. A means of individuals to express their talents.

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Training programme for employees working with UASC

Social workers, educators

Module 4: Intercultural competences

ERASMUS+ Project Number 2020-1-AT01-KA202-078091
Training programme for employees working with UASC

Introduction

- This module addresses the topics culture, resilience, and acculturation. It will introduce you to the principles of interculturality and provide basic guidance to developing intercultural competencies. Equally, this module offers useful information on support of institutional and non-institutional actors and minors.
- The module consists of four units with both theoretical and practical lessons.
- At the end of each unit, the learning progress will be assessed by multiple choice questions.
- The estimated time required to complete the module is approximately 90 to 120 minutes.

Objectives

In completing this module, the learner will be able to:

- understand the importance of culture and acculturation.
- raise awareness for ethnocentrism, stereotypes, and prejudice.
- identify and strengthen intercultural competences.
- draw on resources for institutional and non-institutional actors and minors.

Unit 4.1: Culture, Resilience and Acculturation

Summary of the Unit and the Learning Objectives Covered

- The learner will learn about the importance of culture and cultural traditions.
- The learner will gain insight about culture as a resilience factor.
- The learner will be able to connect the terms heritage culture, host culture and acculturation and be able to explain the acculturation development model.

Learning Activity

The learner will have gained insight about intercultural challenges UASC frequently face after having arrived in a host country, the role of culture as a resilience element and the interplay of heritage culture (or culture of origin), host culture and acculturation (reading text).

In many cases, migration constitutes an extraordinary challenge - even more so, if the refugees are minors and unaccompanied. Within the European Union, authorities approach this challenge with supranational regulations and national and federal laws, systems of care and education. Unaccompanied refugee minors are situated in an 'in-between' space (O'Reilly, 2019) and, in consequence, transition phase to the host culture. This transition phase has been described to include acculturation and integration into the host society and job market.

Despite all challenges UASC face, they can develop a way to avert mental health problems or recover. Rodriguez and Dobler (2021) conclude that UASC may bear considerable resilience. In the beginning, resilience was often defined as doing well despite misfortune or risk (Masten, 2011). Today, the concept of resilience is regarded as a dynamic process of multiple **'resilience factors'** that positively influence trauma processing (Rodriguez & Dobler, 2021).

Besides individual factors and care arrangements, a continuing bond with one's own culture is seen as one of the most significant resilience factors for UASC. People's behavior is guided by their values that vary in their particular importance between individuals and between nations (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Maintaining connections to the culture of origin in addition to forming new relationships with peers from the host country can affect the distress and uncertainty the youngsters face positively (Rodriguez & Dobler, 2021).

For ethnic minority children, it is essential to develop cultural competence in terms of knowledge and skills that are necessary to participate in the activities of each cultural group. For this, Oppedal and Toppelberg (2016) designed a **construct of "acculturation development"** that accommodates multicultural circumstances of ethnic minority children and youth.

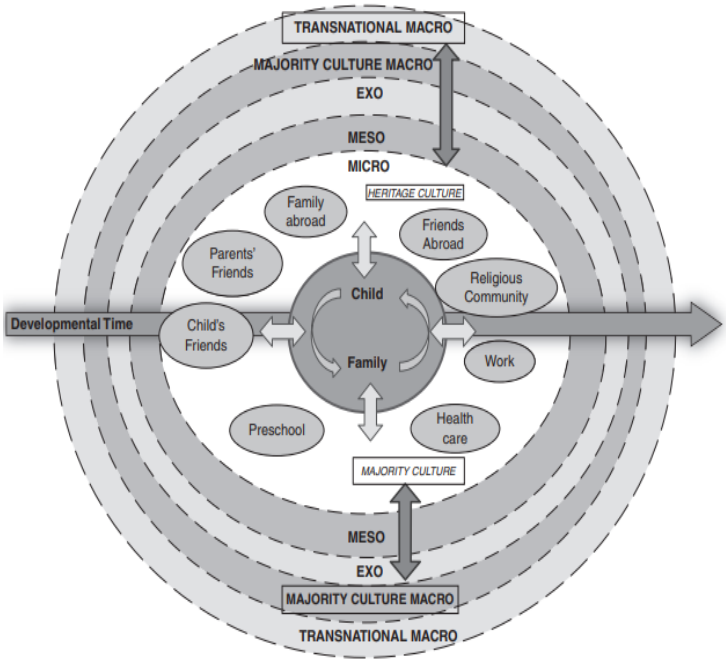


Figure 1. The `acculturation development model´ describes development as embedded in the child`s sociocultural domains – the heritage culture and the host society`s culture. The child collects experiences that can be attributed to one of these two domains. Eventually, the child creates cultural working models which are domain-specific and inform and guide her or his behavior (from Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016).

The migration of individuals and/or families to a different country may be permanent or temporary – whichever the reason and length of resettlement, immigrants undergo changes (concerning, e.g., values or behaviors) that result from exposure to the new host culture and interaction thereof with the culture of origin (Morris, Chiu, & Liu, 2015; Lee, Titzmann, & Jugert, 2019).

Children possess and develop capacities to deal with age-specific or situational challenges that may arise or emerge. The acculturation process thus constitutes an integral part of ethnic minority children's development. Different demands, such as the establishment of positive relationships with peers or adults and the development of problem-solving skills in social networks, are universal aspects of a child's social learning. However, the position of ethnic minority children growing up with two cultural groups or more is exceptional (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016), even more for unaccompanied refugee minors.

Acculturation means the integration of one's own and a new culture in the context of adapting to a majority culture when growing up in bi- and multicultural contexts. The process not only involves psychological adjustment but also continued unfolding or enrichment of the heritage culture and development of lifestyle and values of the host culture (Rodriguez & Dobler, 2021; Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016).

Assessment Activity

1. What is the assumed link between culture and resilience?
   (a) Nurturing connections to both the culture of origin and the host culture is an important resilience factor.
   (b) Resilience means that the host culture becomes the only anchor point.

2. Please define the term `acculturation´
   (a) Acculturation means assimilation to the host culture.
   (b) Acculturation means the development of knowledge and skills (= culture competence) useful for both the culture of origin and the host culture.
   (c) Acculturation is a different term for psychological adjustment.

3. Explain the `acculturation development model´.
   (a) Acculturation follows a pattern that unfolds in a predictable manner irrespective of individual differences among children.
   (b) The evolution of cultural working models, that are specific to the sociocultural domains of the heritage and the host culture, form part of an ethnic minority child's development and influence his or her behavior.
   (c) Acculturation is a linear process – every ethnic minority child must learn about the ways of the majority culture from children from the host culture.

Unit 4.2: Principles of Interculturality

Summary of the Unit and the Learning Objectives Covered

- The learner will encounter the concept of ethnocentrism and learn about the pathway to intercultural sensitivity.
- The learner will learn about stereotypes and prejudice.

Learning Activity

The learner will have understood the concept of ethnocentrism and the intricacies of stereotypes and prejudice. Also, the learner will have gained knowledge of the initiative `Unstereotype Alliance´ to counter negative imagery by the media (reading text).

While awareness of the values and ways of one's own culture constitutes a solid foundation for identity building and resilience, it can come with a potential setback – ethnocentrism. The term `**ethnocentrism**´ can be understood as the assumption that the outlook on the world determined by one's own culture is pivotal to all reality (Bennett, 1993). Intercultural contact may be challenging for certain individuals or groups, and a case can be made that the phenomenon of ethnocentrism has been gaining momentum again (Bizumic, Monaghan, & Priest, 2021). The pathway to intercultural sensitivity can be seen as going through the stages of denial (isolation or separation), defense (denigration, superiority, and reversal) and minimization (seeking universality). With the gradual development of acceptance, adaptation, and integration, one reaches the ethnorelative stages (Bennett, 2004). While more recent research seeks to better grasp the multifaceted and layered dimensions of ethnicity/-ies and nation states amid migration dynamics, this model (Bennett, 1993) can be seen as a useful vehicle to gain apprehension for hypothetical and factual responses on the individual or group level. In accordance with Berry (2016), integration can be understood as an active two-way process for both the acculturating individuals and citizens of the host country.

Stereotypes can be named as another impediment to successful intercultural exchange. Stereotypes can lead to the manifestation of commonly held beliefs which may not be appropriate. Also, the frequent recourse to stereotypes can lead to questionable generalizations from one individual to the group. Finally, stereotypes may be used in a way that single individuals` behavior from a group is interpreted in a negative fashion and derived from presumed group behavior (pars pro toto) (Jandt, 2001). Groups such as LGBTQ + people, ethnic minorities, or persons with physical or mental disabilities, are sometimes confronted with open or covert discrimination. One coping mechanism can be self-group distancing that may be effective on a temporary and individual basis, but potentially harmful in the bigger picture; the inequality in social hierarchy may thus be fostered (van Veelen, Veldman, Van Laar, & Derks, 2020).

From a social neuroscience perspective, stereotypes, affective bias, and discriminatory actions have been described as different facets of **prejudice**. Social categorization (=classification of individuals into specific groups based upon certain characteristics) can be understood as a precursor to prejudice (=attitude towards individuals perceived as member of one group, or a group). It could be shown that intergroup bias is a collection of different processes that may be malleable or open for specific interventions (Amodio & Cikara, 2021; Jandt, 2001).

Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay

The power of stereotypes unfolds in sometimes unexpected ways and can be perpetuated by the media. The initiative `**Unstereotype Alliance**´ is convened by UN Women and connects advertising industry professionals, creatives, and decision-makers to stop the portrayal of negative stereotypes in advertising. Instead, the industry-led `Unstereotype Alliance´ shall achieve positive cultural change and help empower individuals in all their diversity (concerning, e.g., age, ability, ethnicity, religion, language, or gender). A study by the UK national chapter and implemented by media agency UM collected the challenges of ethnic minority women, including e.g. Black African, Middle Eastern, White Continental European or Jewish, concerning stereotyping, prejudice or visibility in the media.

The awareness of ethnocentrism, potential stereotypes or prejudice can help to raise respect and understanding for each other and across cultural or ethnical divides. With the training of intercultural competencies (see below), these goals shall be attained more easily.

Assessment Activity

1. In which ways can ethnocentrism pose a challenge in the migration context?
   (a) Appreciation for own culture
   (b) Potential lack of understanding for other cultures
   (c) Potentially negative attitude towards individuals of other cultures
2. What is the connection between stereotypes and prejudice?
   (a) A Stereotype can be understood as a precursor of prejudice.
   (b) Stereotypes and prejudice are synonyms.
3. What is the purpose of the `Unstereotype Alliance´?
   (a) Eradication of all stereotypes worldwide
   (b) Suspension of negative stereotype depiction in advertising
   (c) Support of individuals irrespective of aspects such as gender, religion, or ethnicity

Unit 4.3: Developing Intercultural Competencies

Summary of the Unit and the Learning Objectives Covered

- The learner will learn the definition of `intercultural competences´.
- The learner will gain knowledge of the tools `Story Circles´ and `Social Identity Map´.
- The learner will find inspiration on how to start or maintain the intercultural dialogue in a school or school-related setting.

Learning Activity

The learner will have understood the definition of `intercultural competences´. Also, the learner will have encountered and reflected upon useful tools and will have found illustrative examples on how to begin and foster the intercultural dialogue in a school or school-related environment (reading text, watching video, practical task).

Intercultural competencies can be broadly defined as all attitudes, skills or actions needed to enhance human interactions irrespective of differences either within a country (due to e.g., age, religion, gender, political affiliation, etc.) or transnationally (Deardoff, 2019).

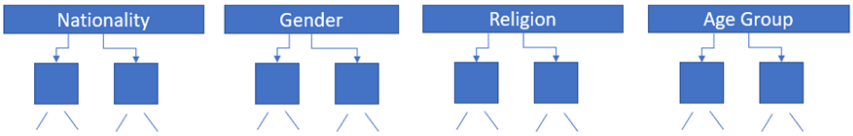
UNESCO piloted **Story Circles**, an accessible methodology (structured yet adaptable), that helps participants practice key aspects of intercultural competences. `Story Circles´ was elaborated to support the acquisition of intercultural competencies in diverse (in-)formal settings. Published in the Manual for Developing Intercultural Competencies (2019), this tool has shown its effectiveness with users developing valuable skills for empathy, tolerance, or critical thinking. Specifically qualified trainers enable participants to work on diverse issues, such as the social inclusion of migrants.

This video gives a brief overview of UNESCOs Story Circles:
https://youtu.be/QUQcA-FKWqg

The `**Social Identity Map**´ (Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019) should be used as a guide to better understand individual social locations. Originally, this tool has been developed for researchers to identify and reflect upon their perceived and factual position in society. This instrument may be valuable in the context of professional work with unaccompanied and separated children as well.

The `Social Identity Map´ is composed of three tiers. For the first tier, users are asked to define bigger dimensions of social identity such as citizenship, gender, or religion. For the second tier, users shall identify how these positions affect their lives; this shall ultimately enable the user to recognize and reflect upon how social identities influence their attitudes and behavior towards others. For the third tier, users are asked to verbalize emotions that may be connected to aspects of their social identity.

Figure 2. Positionality Map (adapted from Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019**)**



This tool could be employed, for instance, in a peer-to-peer dialogue, to better define and reflect upon regular exchanges with minors from different cultures.

In the classroom, **intercultural dialogue** can be facilitated or supported by simple, yet effective approaches. The question `how does your family or your culture cook rice?´ refers to a common ingredient (rice) that is cultivated in many countries. This question is meant to encourage students to share their perspectives and shall increase participation and mutual respect (Spry, 2022). In the primary and middle school context, the following suggestions may be helpful to encourage social exchange and interpersonal relationships: preparing the classroom for welcoming a migrant or refugee child with e.g. drawings or small presents, or promoting knowledge about different cultures with activities that highlight the beauty of the country of origin of all migrant or refugee children (Biasutti, Concina, & Frate, 2020).

Sports, whether in class or as an extracurricular activity, is generally associated with several benefits and can be seen as a vehicle for integration (see e.g., Stura, 2019). In the context of integration and youth sports, one approach can be to adapt the rules of the game to accommodate all players - irrespective of their capabilities and to allow for inclusion (see e.g., below the illustrative projects highlighted in the “ISCA Awards finalists” category). Also, while some girls may have experienced a different or no exposure to sports, the potential of adequate training possibilities could be further explored with suitable trainers in schools or in youth sports clubs.

Image by Luisella Planeta (sweetlouise) from Pixabay

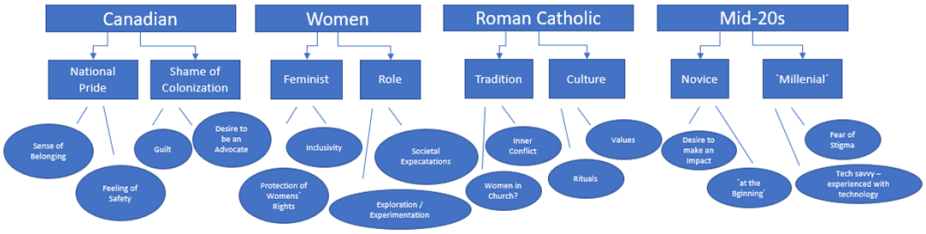
In a similar vein, the potential of **art** education or the provision of specific art classes, or access to arts and craft materials or instruments (see e.g. "The Hope Project Art" linked below) shall not be underestimated. Also, established arts organizations, such as museums or theatres, are essentially well-qualified candidates for integration projects – they offer room for exchange and encounters, language skills are secondary when emotions shall be shared or elicited, some art forms (like e.g., choirs) have no demanding entry barriers, and they are open for a cross-generational audience (Gross, Schwarz, von Clausbruch, & Hary, 2021).

Image by iwanna from Pixabay

Practical Task (individually or in pairs):

Which `social identities´ could you think of that constitute parts of yourself you strongly identify with? Please draw a social identity map and indicate which attributes and emotions go with each social identity. Ask someone you know (colleague, friend etc.) to do the same and share your insights.

Outcome: exemplary `social identity map´ (adapted from Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019)



Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

Content

From the data collected and analyzed within the project, several pivotal themes emerged or were confirmed as central to a positive intercultural dialogue. These include the role of **intercultural awareness** (professionals, minors) and **respect for the minor`s culture of origin**, the **need for customized courses** for UASC (concerning e.g. societal norms of the host country, local language etc.), the **active engagement** of minors both in school and extracurricular activities, and the importance of **local and kinship networks for minors**. These themes were made into integral parts of this module and are recurringly resumed in questions for repetition and individual or pair tasks.

Below you can find an overview on projects that support refugees via sports and the arts:

Yoga and Sport with Refugees (YSR)

HOME - Yoga & Sport With Refugees (yogasportwithrefugees.org)

International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)

ISCA Awards finalists: Integration of Women and Girl Refugees Through Sport - YouTube

The Hope Project Art

About Us | Hope Project (hopeprojectgreece.org)

Assessment Activity

(1) In which ways could the tools `Story Circles´ and `Social Identity Map´ be useful in your professional life?
   (a) Flexibility and applicability in a variety of contexts.
   (b) No trust or openness between peers required.
   (c) Supervision or training is either a prerequisite or recommended to avoid a potential misunderstanding of the concepts.

(2) How can sports and art be helpful to start or strengthen the intercultural dialogue?
   (a) Classes or training sessions can be adapted according to individual capabilities and needs.
   (b) Initiatives must focus exclusively on migrant or refugee children and their heritage culture and perspectives.
   (c) A lack of advanced language skills and little acquaintance with the host culture are no hindering factors to sports and art involvement.

(3) Could you think of more examples (i.e., practices, exercises etc.) that encourage or facilitate intercultural dialogue in the school context?
   (a) Establishment and/or guidance of a student co-created language club or language tandem within an elective course.
   (b) Organization of a world festival that celebrates diversity, respect, and tolerance.
   (c) Founding and/or professional support of one or more school band(s) that incorporate different musical traditions.

Unit 4.4: Support of Institutional and Non-Institutional Actors and Minors

Summary of the Unit and the Learning Objectives Covered

- The learner will become acquainted with the role of technology and new media to support the acquisition of intercultural competencies.
- The learner will gain knowledge on the concept of `free digital learning´ and will learn about examples of good practice.
- The learner will reflect on the limits that come with digital or technological learning in a migration or refugee context.

Learning Activity

The learner will have gained knowledge of the role of technology, new media and `free digital learning´ to assist with the development of intercultural competences. Also, the learner will have learned about contingencies and challenges in this process (reading text).

The acquisition of intercultural competencies can be facilitated by **technology and new media**. In Germany, for example, a local network of intercultural computer clubs (`come_IN´) was established for ethnically diverse children and adults. The goal was to offer a place and means in multicultural neighborhoods that support integration processes across potential age or ethnic barriers. First, an open structure was provided to encourage collaborative activity without preset expectations (e.g., `neighborhood-stories´ that lead to a playful exploration of technology and intensified language use). Second, projects such as the `computer puzzle´ (women were supported and guided to better understand computer's constituent parts) were implemented to guide participants towards a more structured approach that resulted in the improvement of technical apprehension (Schubert, Weibert, & Wulf, 2011).

Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay

The concept `**Free Digital Learning**´ can be especially valuable for young migrants and refugees. It can be understood as all formal, informal, and non-formal activities at diverse education levels that engage learners with the support of ICT tools (e.g., mobile phones, tablets, Apps, computers etc.) at no or negligible costs to the learner. These activities may be online courses such as MOOCs (=massive open online courses), language courses (online or downloadable), digital games with specific learning opportunities and further content created for migrant/refugee inclusion and integration in their respective host countries and future job markets (Colucci et al., 2017).

The JRC Science for Policy report from 2017 (Colucci et al., 2017) has named the following features and trends concerning FDL initiatives for migrants and refugees: offering `offline´ digital solutions for situations of unstable learning conditions, learning activities for refugees in camps in the form of hybrid (or: blended) learning, recognition of FDL and respective skills, overcoming linguistic barriers, and diversified funding and partnerships (crowd-funding, donations, EU-funding etc.). Notable examples for initiatives include Coursera for Refugees (learning programs for refugees), Kiron (social start-up for digital learning and support), and Edraak (online-platform with job-ready programs, pan Arabian and non-profit).

The promise of technology as a panacea is, however, contrasted by the **realities of digital careers** that require a high level of proficiency along with behavioral and sectoral know-how. While coding, for instance, has been depicted as a fast lane to attractive work, most labor markets still require national language skills and accredited qualifications. For migrants and refugees who study at coding schools in Berlin, their experiences have been described as positive to mixed, and general societal expectations of national integration seem to be mirrored by their learning experiences encountered when entering the highly competitive tech sector (Rushworth & Hackl, 2022).

Below you can find two additional EU projects that support refugees and migrants with the acquisition of coding skills:

Coding4MigrantWomen - EU ERASMUS+ Project

Home - Coding 4 Migrant Women
Handbook - Coding 4 Migrant Women

MigraCode Europe - A European Network to promote OpenTech Education for Refugees and Migrants

About MigraCode Europe
MigraCode Europe - Get to know our network and schools

Assessment Activity

1. How can technology and new media support or facilitate the development of intercultural competencies?
   (a) Concerning training architecture, open course structures can incentivize engagement while more structured courses can substantially increase skill development.
   (b) In general, the presentation of mobile apps and/or games on tablets is not suitable for a younger audience.
   (c) The length of screen time is a good indicator for the likely pace of progress in development of intercultural competencies.

2. Which modes of `Free Digital Learning´ have you learned about?
   (a) FDL refers to learning offers that are specifically developed by national or supra-national authorities and provided at no costs.
   (b) FDL encompasses all formal and non-formal tasks that activate beginning learners via ICT tools at no costs.
   (c) FDL includes all formal, informal, and non-formal activities that address learners of all levels via ICT tools at low or no costs.

3. Which are the limitations that come with a strong focus on technology and new media?
   (a) Especially for digital offerings that require a reliable, high-speed connection, the access may be restricted due to e.g., rural connectivity challenges – offline digital learning or hybrid learning may be preferable for professional use.
   (b) The presence of on-demand high-quality information and services (e.g., translation apps) decelerates or blocks skill building.
   (c) The ability to e.g. navigate the internet via digital technologies to find, assess and work with information can support the development of useful additional skills as a necessary, but not sufficient condition

Module Summary

In completing this module, you have learnt about intercultural challenges UASC oftentimes face in the host culture, the importance of culture as a resilience factor and the process of acculturation. You have thought about the concepts of ethnocentrism, stereotypes and prejudice and learnt about the initiative `Unstereotype Alliance´ to counter the perpetuation of negative images by the media. You have learnt about `intercultural competences´ and tried out useful tools. Also, you have thought about how to start and strengthen the intercultural dialogue in a school or school-related context. Finally, you have gained insight into the role of technology, new media and `free digital learning´ to support the development of intercultural competences.

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Further Readings:

Yoga and Sport with Refugees (YSR)

HOME - Yoga & Sport With Refugees (yogasportwithrefugees.org)

International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA)

ISCA Awards finalists: Integration of Women and Girl Refugees Through Sport - YouTube

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MigraCode Europe - A European Network to promote OpenTech Education for Refugees and Migrants

About MigraCode Europe

MigraCode Europe - Get to know our network and schools

Training programme for employees working with UASC

Social workers, educators

Module 5: Gender mainstreaming, equality, and non-discrimination

Introduction

The following module is composed by 4 units, and it aims to provide, in simple language, an overview of the main gender concepts, raise awareness of the importance of gender mainstreaming in achieving gender equality and, it analyses the relationship between gender and migration in the current context, with a special focus on the UNAM population. The last unit summarises the different forms of violence from a gender perspective.

Duration: This module should take between 90/120 minutes to complete.

Additional materials: In addition to the textual resources provided directly by this module, readers are encouraged to consult optional external resources to further their understanding of the topics.

Evaluation: At the end of this module, you can take a short multiple-choice test to evaluate the knowledge and skills you have acquired.

The Learning Objectives covered by the Module

In completing this Module, the learner will be able to:

- Familiarize with the main concepts related to gender
- Explain the challenges that come along with gender stereotypes
- Understanding of Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming
- Reflect on the needs and experiences of young migrants from a gender approach
- To detect gender-based violence
- To provide tools to support GBV victims
- Learning some good-practice examples of different countries.

Units within the Module:

This module includes the following units:

5.1 Gender differences
5.1.1 Gender basic terms
5.1.2. Gender stereotyping and Gender socialization
5.1.3 Good practices
5.2 Gender mainstreaming and Gender equality
5.2.1 Concept of gender mainstreaming and principles
5.2.2 Causes of gender inequality
5.2.3 Towards gender equality
5.2.4 Relationship between religion and gender equality
5.2.5 Good practices
5.3 Gender and Migration
5.3.1 Migration context from a gender perspective
5.3.2 Main challenges
5.3.3 Good practices
5.4 Gender-based violence
5.4.1 Concepts of gender-based violence
5.4.2 Cyber violence
5.4.3 Human trafficking
5.4.4Good practices (Projects, Networks, etc)

Unit 5.1: Gender differences

Unit Content

The first unit contains a short definition of the main concepts related to gender so we can better understand the differences of terminology and reflect on gender and gender differences and the impact that can have on our society.

5.1.1 Gender basic terms

The explanation of the key gender concepts has been taken from the Gender Toolkit produced by UNICEF (UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office, 2019):

Sex and Gender

The term "**sex**" is defined to mean the biological differences between women and men.

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles of adolescent girls and boys, as well as the relationships among them that vary from one society to another and at different points in history. It defines what behaviors, attitudes and actions a given society considers appropriate for adolescent girls and boys, including what they are expected to do, how they are supposed to behave and how they relate to each other.

Gender identity: A person's internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female, or neither male nor female.

- Examples: Male, female, other, personality traits, appearance

Source: morganeoger.ca

Gender roles are learned from the time of birth and are reinforced by parents, teachers, peers and society. These gender roles are based on the way a society is organized and vary by age, class and ethnic group. They are manifested

in attitudes, expectations, and "norms" that are present in the family, workplace, institutional, or global culture and that end up influencing everyday actions.

Gender norms are the accepted attributes and characteristics of male and female gendered identity at a particular point in time for a specific society or community. They are the standards and expectations to which gender identity generally conforms, within a range that defines a particular society, culture and community at that point in time. Gender norms are ideas about how women, men, girls and boys should be and act. Internalized early in life, gender norms can establish a life cycle of gender socialization and stereotyping.

Gender relations means the interactions between people and treated by other, it has to do with the ways in which a culture or society defines rights, responsibilities and the identities of women, men, girls and boys in relation to one another. They refer to the balance of power between women and men or girls and boys.

Gender equality is a transformational development goal. It is understood to mean that women (girls) and men (boys) enjoy the same status on political, social, economic and cultural levels. It exists when women (girls) and men (boys) have equal rights, opportunities and status.

Gender equity is the process of being fair to both women (girls) and men (boys) in distribution of resources and benefits. This involves recognition of inequality and requires measures to work towards equality of women (girls) and men (boys). Gender equity is the process that leads to gender equality.

Gender parity is a numerical concept. Gender parity concerns relative equality in terms of numbers and proportions of women and men, girls and boys. For example, the ratio of girls and boys enrolled in school.

Empowerment is about women, men, girls and boys taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, developing skills (including life skills), building self-confidence, solving problems and developing self-reliance. The process of empowerment enables women, men, girls and boys to question existing inequalities as well as act for change

Gender analysis is an organized approach for considering gender issues through the entire process of programme or organizational development. This requires sex-disaggregated data and ensures that development projects and programmes incorporate roles, needs and participation of women, men, girls and boys.

5.1.2 Gender stereotyping and Gender socialization

The OHCHR, Women's Rights and Gender Section has prepared the following definitions to better understand what a gender stereotype is and what gender stereotyping means (OHCHR commissioned report – 'Gender Stereotyping as a human rights violation', 2014).

A **gender stereotype** is a generalised view or preconception about attributes, or characteristics that are or ought to be possessed by women and men or the roles that are or should be performed by men and women. Gender stereotypes can be both positive and negative for example, "women are nurturing" or "women are weak".

Gender stereotyping is the practice of ascribing to an individual woman or man specific attributes, characteristics, or roles by reason only of her or his membership in the social group of women or men.

A gender stereotype is, at its core, a belief and that belief may cause its holder to make assumptions about members of the subject group, women and/or men. In contrast, gender stereotyping is the practice of applying that stereotypical belief to a person.

A stereotype is harmful when it limits women's or men's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives and life plans. Both hostile/negative or seemingly benign stereotypes can be harmful.

Compounded gender stereotypes occur when layered with stereotypes about other characteristics of the person, such as disability, ethnicity or social status.

Gender stereotyping is wrongful when it results in a violation or violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. An example of this is the failure to criminalize marital rape based on the stereotype of women as the sexual property of men. Another example is the failure of the justice system to hold perpetrator of sexual violence accountable based on stereotypical views about women's appropriate sexual behaviour.

How can affect Gender stereotyping women?

Gender stereotyping can affect the development of the natural talents and abilities of girls and boys, women and men. It will also influence their educational and professional experiences and any opportunities in other areas of their lives.

Gender stereotypes have often been used to justify and maintain historical power relations of men over women. As a result, the progress of women and girls is undermined by discriminatory norms and sexist attitudes and prejudices.

Some examples include: preventing political participation, hindering access to sexual and reproductive health services and rights, allocation of unpaid care responsibilities to women, wage disparities, under-representation in the labour market, etc.

Gender socialization is the process by which girls and boys, women and men learn from childhood social roles according to their sex, leading to gender-differentiated behaviours and attitudes. For example, the association that women do more housework, while men are responsible for paid work. Gender roles often lead to inequality.

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

Content

For this section we have selected as good practices some explicative videos that were created to understand the main gender issues.

Furthermore, a workshop guide to face gender stereotyping with additional training materials are included.

The first two videos are taken from a series of videos created by **Teach the Global Goals** to improve the Understanding of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. For this unit we consider useful the two videos created to explain the goal 5: Gender equality

Understand Goal 5: Gender Equality (Primary) - YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hc0kZh6CnM

Understand Goal 5: Gender Equality (Secondary)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vz7IUDOYvXk

In addition, in the following video, *Gender equality – We must do better, and we can!*, produced in September 2021 by World Health Organization (WHO) on gender equality, we can hear the voice of WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and the voices coming from different women around the world talking about the gaps that still needs to be addressed on gender equality.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1EvoX6lf-Y&t=11s

To understand better the gender stereotypes, the following video produced by Amiya Alvira has been selected:

What is Gender Stereotypes?| It's Impact | How to deal with Gender Stereotypes | Amiya Alvira

What is Gender Stereotypes?| It's Impact | How to deal with Gender Stereotypes |

As a practical activity to face gender stereotyping, the United Nations publication, issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) developed the following guide; *Gender stereotyping and the judiciary: A workshop guide (2020)*

PDF: English

There are also some additional documents to implement the workshop: English

Assessment Activity

1. How are gender roles learned?
(a) Gender roles are innate
(b) Gender roles are learned in school
(c) Gender roles are influenced by the family, environment, and society in general.

2. Choose the correct answer.
a) Gender equity is the process that leads to gender equality.
b) Gender equality is the process that leads to gender equity.
c) None of the above.

3. The stereotypes can have influence on the professional development of a person.
a) No, stereotypes do not influence a person's professional development.
b) Yes, stereotypes can influence the decisions that people make throughout their lives.

Unit 5.2: Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality

Unit Content

The second unit explains the concept of gender mainstreaming and its importance to promote gender equality. It also includes the seven principles of gender mainstreaming established by UNICEF and the negative impacts of gender inequality in society.

5.2.1 Concept of Gender Mainstreaming and principles.

What is gender mainstreaming?

The first definition that we have found it was created by the United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution in 1997 and states as follows:

“Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetrated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.” (Report of the economic and social council for 1997 (a/52/3, 18 september 1997).

Another definition for gender mainstreaming was done in 1998 by the Council of Europe:

“The (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.” (Council of Europe, 1998)

What means Gender mainstreaming in society?

It means integrating a gender equality perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programmes and projects. Women and men have different needs and living conditions and circumstances, including unequal access to and control over power, resources, human rights and institutions, including the justice system. The situations of women and men also differ according to country, region, age, ethnic or social origin, or other factors. The aim of gender mainstreaming is to take into account these differences when designing, implementing and evaluating policies, programmes and projects, so that they benefit both women and men and do not increase inequality but enhance gender equality. Gender mainstreaming aims to solve –sometimes hidden- gender inequalities. It is therefore a tool for achieving gender equality. (Council of Europe, 2023)

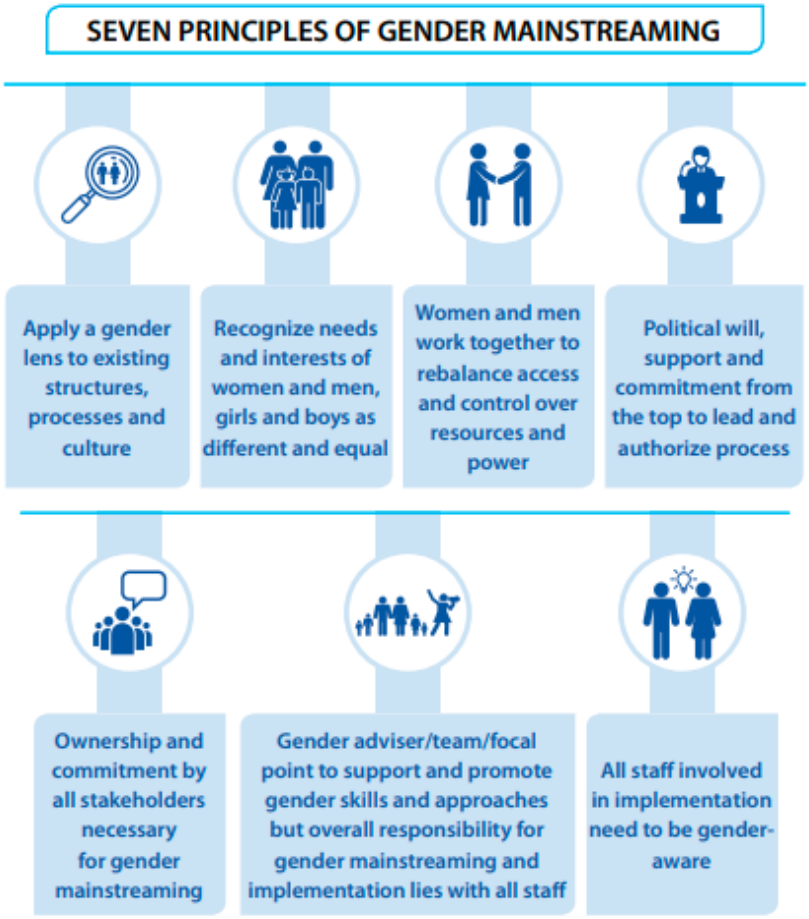
Mainstreaming gender equality is more than just understanding different needs of diverse women, men, girls and boys. It is also about understanding the ways in which the different roles and expectations within a society dictate what it means to be male and female and subsequently, how this shapes context and the situation in which programming is conducted. Gender mainstreaming is about applying knowledge of gender to implement more efective programmes and to take opportunities to promote equality between women and men, girls and boys.

Gender mainstreaming is NOT the goal itself, but rather a PROCESS or a STRATEGY for achieving the goal of gender equality.

Which are the principles of gender mainstreaming?

Taking the information from the UNICEF Europe and Central Asia, Integrating Gender in Programming – Gender Toolkit, report (UNICEF, 2019):

Gender mainstreaming is done at the three levels (1) policy; 2) institution/organization; and 3) programme and project and it is based on the following seven principles:



5.2.2 Causes of gender inequality

What can cause gender inequality?

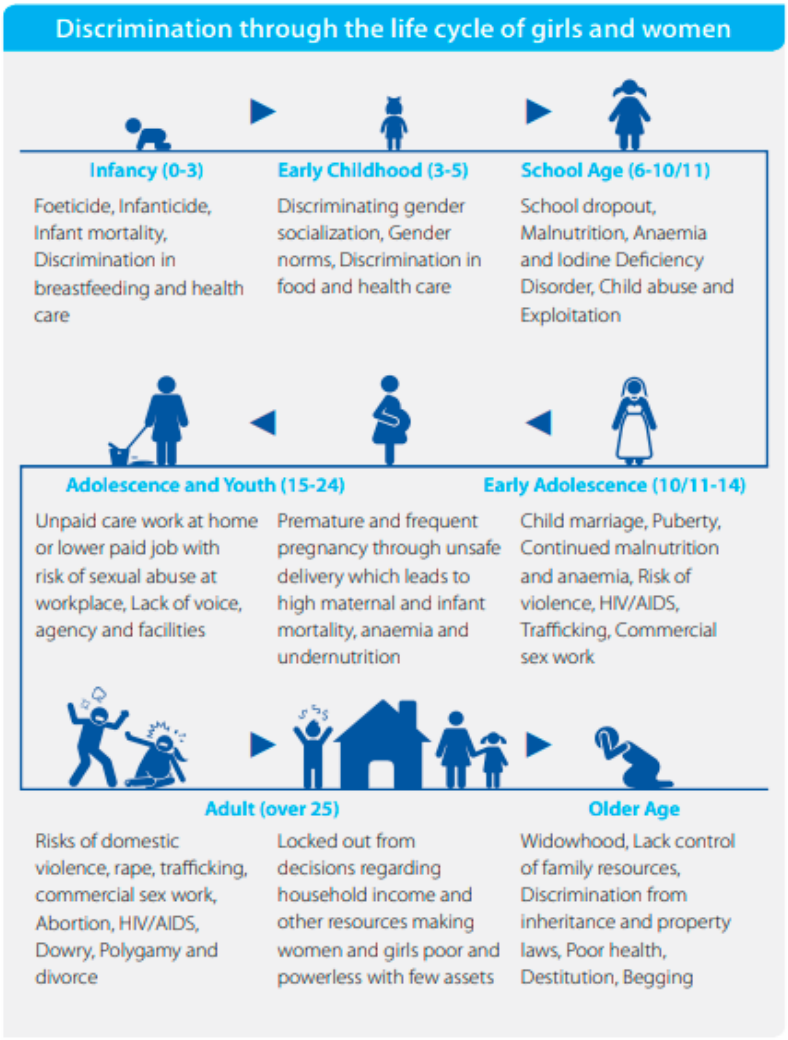
There is not just one cause of gender inequality, when there is inequality in one place produce in equalities in other areas.

Social institutions such as social norms values and attitudes about gender roles are deeply rooted and play a key role in perpetuating gender inequalities. For this reason, a multi-pronged approach is needed to address the issues.

In many cases, these values often include the belief that women and girls are inferior or weaker than men and boys, that women are poor decision makers, that men have no role or skills for raising children, that having a son is a better economic and social value than having a girl child. While gender roles and conventions have changed through the years, gender discrimination, gender stereotypes and pervasive gender norms have been perpetuated.

Gender inequality not only impacts on women's and girls' rights but in turn on the development of girls and boys.

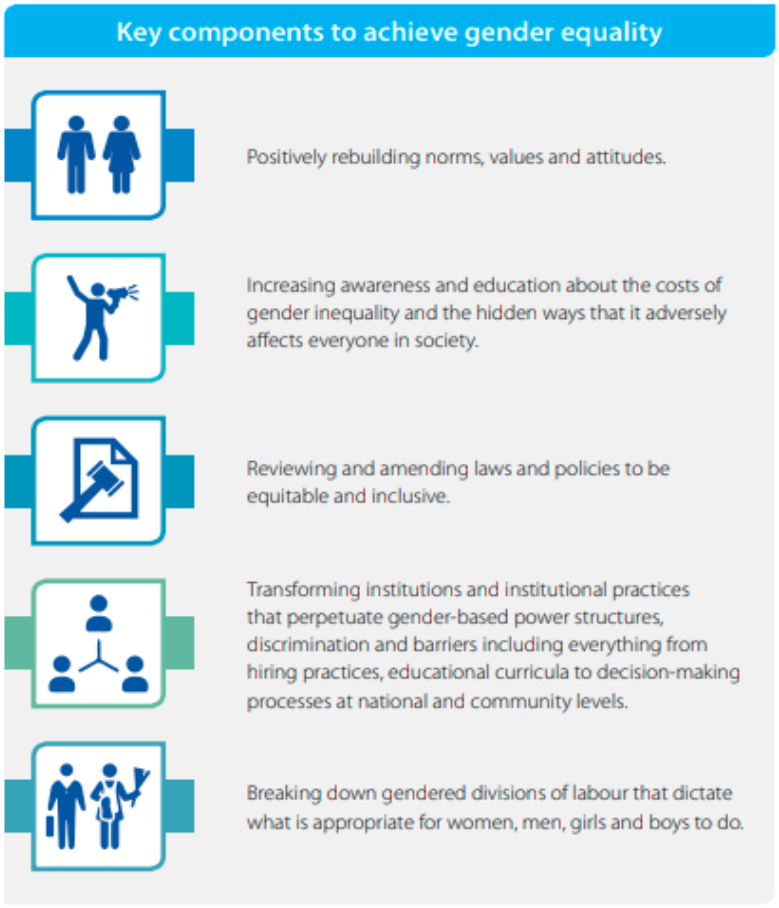
An illustration created by UNICEF describes below how gender discrimination and gender socialization start at birth, affect the girls' and women's whole life course and are transmitted onto the next generation.



5.2.3 Towards gender equality

How can gender equality be achieved?

The causes of gender inequality are deep-rooted and complex, and achieving equality between women and men, girls and boys are not a short-term or even medium-term goal. This is a long-term process that should be judged according to the progress it continues to make. Progress requires addressing all the factors that contribute to inequalities in effort to gradually lead to a shift in norms and value as follows.



5.2.3 Gender analysis.

What is gender analysis?

A gender analysis explores the relations of women and men in society and the unequal power in those relations.

Conducting a gender analysis is the first step in facilitating gender mainstreaming as it provides the necessary data and information to integrate a gender perspective into policies, programmes and projects.

Conducting a gender analysis serves to identify the differences between and among women and men in terms of their relative position in society and the distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints and power in a given context.

The European Commission defines gender analysis as 'the study of differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision-making powers, etc., between women and men in their assigned gender roles'.

The purpose of gender analysis is to identify and address gender inequalities, by:

- acknowledging differences between and among women and men, based on the unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, constraints and power;

- ensuring that the different needs of women and men are clearly identified and addressed at all stages of the policy cycle;
- recognising that policies, programmes and projects can have different effects on women and men;
- seeking and articulating the viewpoints of women and men and making their contribution a critical part of developing policies, programmes and projects;
- promoting women's participation and engagement in community, political and economic life;
- promoting better informed, gender-responsive and effective interventions.

Gender analysis involves acknowledging the historical and social inequalities faced by women and aims to inform the design of policies, programmes and projects to address these inequalities. This includes consideration of women's particular experiences, roles and responsibilities, and their level of access to resources and decision-making.

If you wish to have more information on how to carry out a gender analysis you can go to the EIGE section on Gender mainstreaming:

https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/methods-tools/gender-analysis

5.3.3. What is the relationship between Religion and Gender Equality?

The relationship between religion and gender equality is complex, religion is central to the meaning and implementation of gender equality. All religions provide some reflection on gender and embody gender ideologies in their educations and practices.

In many parts of the world, religion plays a very important role in the family and the vast majority of family issues have a religious dimension, such as marriage, divorce, custody and inheritance, etc.

In the vast majority of religions, women and girls have always been exposed to patriarchal interpretations. This fact, though improving in recent years, is not limited to any particular religion or region. The resulting male dominance is a negative inheritance in most cultures.

As it stated in the UN WOMEN report about religion and gender equality: "Religion plays a vital role in shaping cultural, social, economic, and political norms in many parts of the world. Similarly, gender roles and the status of women and men in society are deeply tied to the manner in which religious texts have been interpreted for centuries by those in positions of authority—positions held predominantly by men. Yet, in sharp contrast to their marked absence at the highest levels of decision-making in religious communities, women play a pivotal role in religious life. Within the family and the community, they implement and embody religious teachings and traditions, and pass these on to future generations". (UN WOMEN, 2022)

Miller and Hoffmann found that women were more interested in religion than men and had stronger religious commitments (Miller and Hoffmann, 1995). They detected some common characteristics that were associated with women in traditional societies and were usually supported by religion:

- Role associated with care and nurturing, which fitted well with the teachings of most conventional religions.

- Primary caregivers in the family, especially for children, the elderly and the sick. Many of them found comfort and guidance in the answers and explanations of the religions.

- Women tended to stay at home, which allowed them time to participate actively in religious activities to a greater extent than men.

- While women accepted the traditional gender roles of being mothers and homemakers, they found comfort, they found comfort, guidance, and support through religions and religious communities.

From the mid-twentieth century, the conventional gender roles that underpinned religions began to be viewed critically by feminist movements. Women began to demand a more active life outside the home and religious beliefs and activities became less important.

There are different feminist perspectives to explain the role of women in religion, one claiming that many religions evolved in patriarchal societies, where men used religious texts and dogmas to justify their superior status in society.

Others argue that some religions were originally women-centred, but that men have managed to twist doctrines, using religion to their own advantage throughout history.

Different feminists have different explanations for the role of women in religion and offer different solutions to meet each other's spiritual needs. Linda Woodhead (2007) and Steve Bruce (2012) noted that, since the 1960s, more and more women have left traditional religions and joined New Religious Movements and New Age Movements that offers more liberating practices and means of spirituality than the conservative and often patriarchal doctrines of traditional religions. (Woodhead, 2007; Bruce, 2012)

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

Content

Summary of the good practices

To support the learning of this module a series of videos to facilitate the understanding of the concepts have been selected.

In addition, some networks and platforms to support gender equality have been included.

To explain the concept on Gender Mainstreaming a video has been created by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE):

An essential guide to gender mainstreaming

Moreover, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions illustrates the principles of gender mainstreaming through concrete examples in the following short film:

Sustainable Gender Equality - a film about gender mainstreaming in practice

In addition, EIGE has developed the Gender Mainstreaming Platform to help policy makers identify what these inequalities are, and more importantly how they can be addressed:

Gender mainstreaming | European Institute for Gender Equality (europa.eu)

EIGE has collected and updated data on institutional mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the EU Member States in November 2019: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/countries

There are also some interesting **Networks** in the field of gender equality:

The European Women's Lobby (EWL) brings together the women's movement in Europe to influence the general public and European Institutions in support of women's human rights and equality between women and men. It´s the largest European umbrella network of women's associations representing a total of more than 2000 organisations in 26 EU Member States, three Candidate Countries, one former EU Member State and one European Free Trade Association country, as well as 17 European-wide organisations representing the diversity of women and girls in Europe. https://womenlobby.org/?lang=en

IPPFEN (International Planned Parenthood Federation) is a global healthcare provider and a leading advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all. It´s work is wide-ranging, including comprehensive sex education, provision of contraceptive, safe abortion, and maternal care and responding to humanitarian crises. https://www.ippf.org/

Assessment Activity

1. What is the ultimate goal of Gender Mainstreaming?

    a) Gender Mainstreaming is a goal itself.

    b) Gender Mainstreaming is a process or a strategy for achieving the goal of gender equality.

    c) Both options are correct.

2. Is there a need to raise awareness of gender inequality in schools?

    a) Today the general population is aware of gender inequality and it does not need to be addressed in schools.

    b) It is still necessary to teach about the cost of gender inequality and the way it affects society.

3. Does gender inequality only affect women and girls?

    a) Yes

    b) No

Unit 5.3: Gender and Migration

Unit Content

The third unit provides an overview of the migration context of unaccompanied minors and the main challenges they face from a gender perspective.

The contents are largely drawn from the study, MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE, the identification of unaccompanied and separated girls in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Serbia conducted by UNICEF in 2020. (UNICEF, 2020)

5.3.1 Migration context from a gender perspective

Migration is a gendered phenomenon where roles, relationships and inequalities will often determine who migrates (voluntarily or forcibly), how they migrate, why they migrate and where they go.

Gender determines the risks and threats that migrants, men and women, experience on their journey and upon arrival, how they cope with them and the mechanisms in place for their protection.

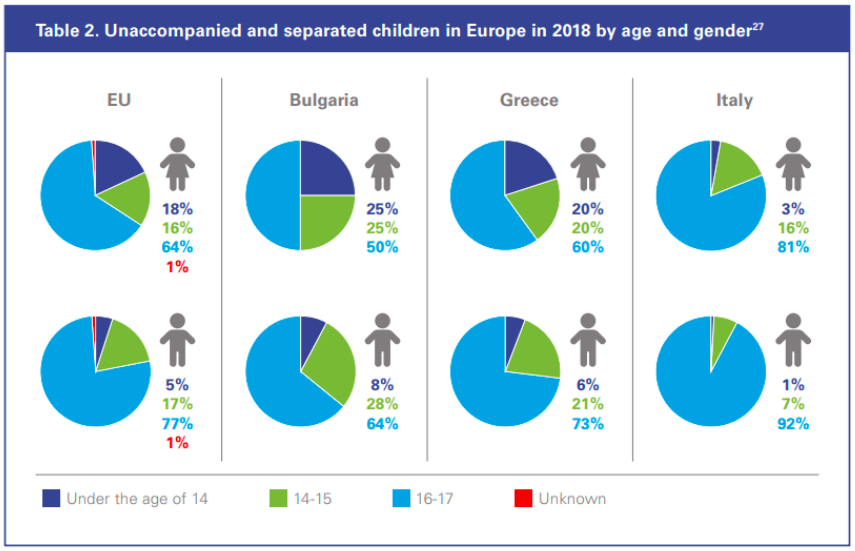
By September 2019, 82,000 refugees and migrants had arrived in Europe since the start of the year via the Mediterranean migration routes. One in four (19,800) was a child, and around a third of them are girls. As of September 2019, 11,940 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) were registered in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the majority boys, and around 10 percent girls.

Only those girls who have been officially registered are included in these statistics, which are not yet capturing the situation of those who are unaccompanied or separated. For example, they do not include girls who are trying to avoid detection (voluntarily or not) by, for example, travelling with others posing as family members, or by claiming to be over 18 years of age.

Nowadays is difficult to understand the situation and the approximate number of unaccompanied and separated girls due to the lack of collection and analyses of national and regional data that is disaggregated by sex and age.

This means that unaccompanied and separated girls who have disclosed their situation to authorities have been subsumed under the generic term ‘children’, therefore the real percentage of unaccompanied and separated girls in Europe remains unclear, always being lower than the reality. The lack of a consistent analysis and information makes even more difficult to understand the risks and needs of these girls and therefore offers the right assistance and services for them.

According to Eurostat, between 2015 and 2018 the percentage of unaccompanied and separated girls seeking international protection in the EU increased from 8 per cent to 14 per cent of all unaccompanied children. Overall, unaccompanied girls who seek international protection in Europe tend to be younger than boys seeking that protection, with 34 per cent aged 15 or younger, compared to 22 per cent of boys. This is critical information, as it highlights the need for services that are age- and gender-appropriate, particularly to cater for younger girls. (Eurostat, 2018)



Another problem arising from the lack of disaggregated data is the **place of origin**, which is often different from where boys come from, and knowing where they come from is crucial to being able to meet their needs as well as providing assistance that is culturally appropriate, including cultural mediation and interpretation.

Depending on the country of origin we can understand better the reasons the girl left, to know her route also can provide information about the possible risks that have been exposed, and the kind of international protection she might be able to access.

5.3.2 Main challenges

Which type of dangers can they face?

Migration routes can be particularly dangerous for adolescent girls, specifically those who are unaccompanied or separated.

Risks related to gender-based violence (GBV) can happens before, during and after migration:

- **Before** migration many are fleeing violence, including child marriage, in their home country.

- Some girls are trafficked **during** their journey, which becomes yet another part of the violence they face.

As a 2018 report by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent notes, “There is significant evidence demonstrating pervasive and chronic sexual and gender-based violence against girls and women on migration routes the world over.”

For example, the Central Mediterranean route is particularly dangerous for all migrants, but poses specific risks for unaccompanied girls, of abuse and exploitation during their travel, as the report indicates that nearly all women and adolescent girls who have taken the central Mediterranean route have survived sexual violence. A 2018 UN report on their situation in Libya states that, “The overwhelming majority of women and older teenage girls interviewed by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya reported being gang-raped by smugglers or traffickers or witnessing

others being taken out of collective accommodations to be abused. Younger women travelling without male relatives are also particularly vulnerable to being forced into prostitution" (UN, 2018)

In addition, a report from the Women's Refugee Commission finds that men and boys are also subjected to high levels of sexual violence during the journey, particularly in Libya as the main transit country before Italy.

- **After migration**, they remain at risk of exploitation and other forms of violence once they reach countries of arrival. Key challenges within Europe's migrant and refugee response include poor reception conditions, limited comprehensive and appropriate services for GBV survivors, and persistent discrimination.

The arrival can present several challenges:

- Difficulties in identification include the limited capacity of service providers, as well as the necessary knowledge and attitudes.

- There is a lack of qualified interpreters and cultural mediators who are fully integrated into the services provided by national systems,

- A shortage of - or limited adoption of - tools to support this work stream.

In order to access specific protection on arrival, they need to present themselves to the competent authorities as unaccompanied. but not all of them get the help they need because of deficiencies in identification systems.

The study highlights the constraints to identification from a cultural and gender perspective in the four countries analysed. Furthermore, the provision of specific services is not always in line with the best interests of the child.

Overall, the study highlights the need for increased resources and specific tools to support the identification of girls on the move. Despite this, in Europe, some important progress has been made in developing tools and systems to identify UASC and make appropriate assessments and referrals for care. For example, the European Asylum Support Office's (EASO) Identification Tool for Persons with Special Needs (IPSN) and UNHCR's Protection Monitoring Tool are used in some contexts. Even when UAS girls are identified, efforts to interview them are hampered by a lack of training, sensitivity and adequate resources, including trained female interviewers and interpreters.

Assessment Activity

1. Are there different risks for girls and boys in migration routes?

a) Yes

b) No

2. When do the young migrants, boys and girls, face more risks related to gender-based violence (GBV) in the migration?

a) Before migration

b) During the migration

c) After the migration

d) All of them are correct.

3. According to Eurostat, unaccompanied girls who seek international protection in Europe tend to be older than boys seeking that protection.

a) True

b) False (right one)

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

Content

For this section we have selected as good practices some materials that were produced by UNICEF, under the 'Action Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Affecting Refugee and Migrant Women and Children in Greece, Italy, Serbia and Bulgaria' initiative.

In this section you will find two videos to listen the experiences of girls and young women during their move to Europe and the staff involved on their arrive.

In the first video is possible to listen the voices of girls and young women sharing their stories, point of views and solutions to contribute to a better future.

https://youtu.be/Nq-XwBQb5s8

- The second video shows the challenges the girls face and the UNICEF staff and partners who support them:

https://youtu.be/G5kTKUuzoxg

In addition, under the same initiative UNICEF has produced other useful resources:

- Pocket-Guide for women empowerment, "My safety and resilience Girls Pocket -Guide" to provide a safe space which aims to contribute to the creation of safe spaces for women and girls and their empowerment. The guide is available in English, Serbian and Bulgarian.

Pocket Guide (English) (PDF, 9,26 MB)

Pocket Guide (Serbian) (PDF, 10,72 MB)

Pocket Guide (Bulgarian) (PDF, 10,59 MB)

- Practical ´tip sheet´ to support frontline staff (border officials, security, police, reception staff, etc.) with the identification, the sheet enumerates 10 possible signs to identify that a girl is unaccompanied or separated.

Poster (English) (PDF, 159,51 KB)

Unit 5.4: Gender based violence.

Unit Content

The fourth unit aims to clarify what the concept of gender-based violence encompasses and to differentiate between different types of violence, including the concept of cyber-violence and human trafficking.

Today, violence against women and domestic violence is still very present within and outside the European Union, and during the Covid 19 pandemic, its incidence increased. It is a human rights violation that particularly affects women and girls.

Data from 2021 from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) reflects those experiences of physical violence differs between women and men according to certain characteristics (FRA, 2021):

Violence against women occurs in the private sphere and is systematically underreported, also frequent interruption of criminal proceedings, the commonly sexual nature of the offences and/or a high prevalence of elements of coercive control.

In contrast, **violence against men** tends to occur in public spaces, is not usually of a sexual nature and is often perpetrated by other men. Violence directed against men because of their sex is also less frequent.

5.4.1 Concept of gender-based violence

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) defines **violence against women (VAW)** as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (UN, 1993)

Gender based violence:

An umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between females and males. The nature and extent of specifc types of GBV vary across cultures, countries, and regions.

Examples include: sexual violence, including sexual exploitation/abuse and forced prostitution, domestic violence, tracking, forced/early marriage, harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, honor killings and widow inheritance.

The Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in 2011, **defined the concepts of violence as follows** (Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, Istanbul, 2011):

Gender-based violence against women (Article 3, d) is the violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or violence that affects women disproportionately.

Domestic violence (Article 3, b) are all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.

Inter-personal violence, taking the definition from the WHO, is the violence between individuals, and it is subdivided into family and intimate partner violence and community violence.

The Istambul Covention, differentiated different types of violence:

Sexual harassment is defined as 'any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment'. (Article 40)

Psychological violence Psychological violence is defined as 'intentional conduct of seriously impairing a person's psychological integrity through coercion or threats' (Article 33).

Physical violence 'intentional conduct of committing acts of physical violence against another person' (Article 35). The Convention's explanatory report clarifies that the term 'physical violence' refers to 'bodily harm suffered as a result of the application of immediate and unlawful physical force' (Paragraph 188).

Sexual violence, including rape, is defined as '(a) engaging in non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a sexual nature of the body of another person with any bodily part or object; (b) engaging in other non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a person; (c) causing another person to engage in non-consensual acts of a sexual nature with a third person'. It also clarifies that 'consent must be given voluntarily as the result of the person's free will assessed in the context of the surrounding circumstances' (Article 36).

Stalking is defined as 'the intentional conduct of repeatedly engaging in threatening conduct directed at another person, causing them to fear for their safety (Article 34).

5.4.2 Cyber violence

In recent years, along with technological advancement that has led to increased use of the internet and social media as a popular mode of socialisation, gender-based violence has expanded into a new dimension where women, especially younger women, negotiate the digital world as a site of empowerment and as a source of sexual repression.

Cyber violence against women and girls is gender-based violence that is perpetrated through electronic communication and the internet. It can take a variety of forms, including, but not limited to, cyber stalking, non-consensual pornography (or 'revenge porn'), gender-based slurs, hate speech and harassment, 'slut-shaming', unsolicited pornography, 'sextortion', rape threats and death threats, and electronically facilitated trafficking. Although cyber violence can affect both women and men, women and girls experience it more often and in more traumatic forms. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) notes that one in ten women older than 15 years of age experiences cyber violence. (EIGE, Cyber violence against women and girls, 2017).

A study made by the Fundamental Rights Agency presented that between 5% and 18% of women in the EU have already experienced cyber violence; this proportion is even higher among adolescents. (FRA, 2014)

According to the Gender Equality Report, 23% of women in Europe have experienced online abuse or harassment. This could involve receiving offensive or threatening emails or text messages or finding offensive or threatening comments about oneself posted online. Experiences of violence online and in real life are often interrelated, which shows that it is important to address them together. Gender-based cyber-violence is often part of the violence experienced by victims offline. Although both women and men experience cyber-violence and harassment,

women are much more often among the victims of cyber-violence perpetrated based on the victim's gender, in particular sexual forms of cyber-violence.

Online sexual harassment can involve a wide range of behaviours and includes digital content (images, videos, posts, messages, pages) on a variety of different online platforms (private or public). Victims and perpetrators can be numerous: one perpetrator can have numerous victims and one victim can have numerous perpetrators. According to research, victims often know their perpetrator(s).

It often takes place in schools and local groups and occurs in front of an active audience, which can increase the level of discomfort caused. Bystanders can also be affected by witnessing online sexual harassment, regardless of whether they participate in it or not. A major challenge is that cyber-violence is not always acknowledged by either the victim or the perpetrator. Moreover, it seems to be tolerated, especially by boys, who may see cyber-violence as fun rather than harmful behavior.

Recent research by the CYBERSAFE Project conducted in Slovenia in 2018 has revealed several reasons for the occurrence of cyber violence.

The most persistent reasons for cyber violence mentioned were the following:
“It was a joke”

“because someone did it to me”

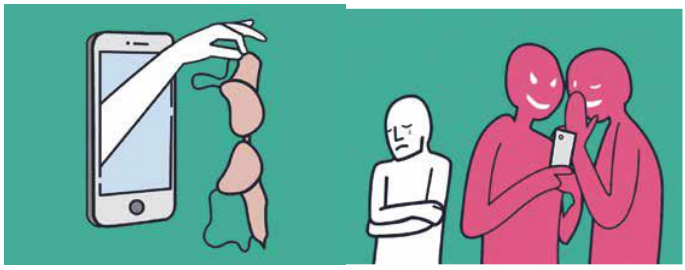
“for fun”

“to get back at an ex”

“to hurt someone”

“to get respect from friends”

“I was scared not to participate”



Another worrying aspect that happens among young population is that they have a strong sense of victim-blaming. In addition, gender stereotypes that are still rooted in our society are reproduced among adolescents, contributing to cyber-violence.

YouTube video by the womens organization Kadının İnsan Hakları Yeni Çözümler Derneği, depicting the story of three fictional women experiencing violence and how the IC provides them with support and protection.

Find the Link here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1Ci3X60Q8M

Source: The picture is taken from the Youtube video.

Human trafficking:

The most prevalent form of sexual exploitation in the European Union is human trafficking. This form of gender-based violence is perpetuated by gender inequalities.

Women and girls are the most likely to suffer from this violence, accounting for 92% of the victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. There are several factors that explain their vulnerability such as: gender inequality, poverty, social exclusion, ethnicity and discrimination.

In addition, almost a quarter of all victims of trafficking are children. The majority of child victims are EU citizens and victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

According to a 2017 UN report on trafficking along the Eastern Mediterranean route, “the experiences of trafficking victims vary depending on whether they are girls or boys”. Most girls detected have been trafficked for sexual exploitation, while most boys have been trafficked for forced labour. (UN, 2017)

Taking the data from a report prepared by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in 2017, in Italy estimates that 80 per cent of girls arriving from Nigeria were potential victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Between 2014 and 2017, Italy witnessed a six-fold increase in female victims of trafficking; most were Nigerian girls aged 15–17 years. (IOM, 2017)

Given the increase in violence against women and domestic violence, it is crucial to empower victims of violence through adequate support services to enable them to report crimes, participate in criminal proceedings, claim compensation and ultimately seek to recover from the consequences.

To have a complete picture of gender-based violence and of how it affects different groups of women within Europe it is still necessary to have more comprehensive, updated and comparable data.

Assessment Activity

1) Physical violence differs between women and men according to certain characteristics (Select the correct one)

(a) Violence against women occurs in the public sphere and is systematically underreported

(b) Violence against men tends to occur in public spaces is not usually of a sexual nature and is often perpetrated by other men.

(c) Violence against women occurs in the private sphere and is systematically underreported

(2) Which of the following practices can be considered examples of gender-based violence?

(a) Domestic violence

(b) Sexual violence

(c) Harmful traditional practices

(d) All of the above

3). Which of the following statements is not correct? (There can be more than one)

a) Cyber violence against women and girls is gender-based violence that is perpetrated through electronic communication and the internet.

b) Adolescents are the group least affected by cyber violence as they are used to new technologies and are therefore less vulnerable.

c) Women are more often among the victims of cyber-violence perpetrated based on the victim's gender.

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

Content

Summary of the good practices

This section offers a selection of European projects carried during the last years to prevent GBV or support their victims.

In addition, some European Networks working in the area of gender-based violence are identified.

Some interesting European projects have been carried out to prevent Sexual and Gender Based Violence:

The **WeToo Project**, funded under the EU's Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, aims to enable frontline workers (law enforcement agencies, social workers, anti-trafficking and anti-violence operators, women's clinics' medical staff) to better manage the stress generated by working with SGBV cases and better establish trust relationships with SGBV victims and survivors. The project also supports women survivors and victims of SGBV on their trauma recovery. It also contributes to improving early detection, protection and support services for victims and survivors. The project is live in Italy, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece and Serbia

Find more information about the project: https://www.wetooproject.eu/

The main objective of the **PATTERN project** (Prevent And combaT domesTic violEnce against Roma women), funded under the EU's Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, aims to contribute to the prevention and combatting of domestic violence against Roma women in Greece, Bulgaria, Portugal, Spain, Romania & the EU. By raising awareness within the Roma communities, informing women about their rights and the available support mechanisms and enabling professionals to respond efficiently to domestic violence, PATTERN will empower Roma women and enhance their integration and full participation in society.

Find more information about the project: https://www.projectpattern.eu/

In Portugal, the ESF funded projects target support for victims of violence. The Portuguese Red Cross aims to create a response of psychological support for children and young people victims of domestic violence in 7 municipalities. It aims at a holistic approach to the problem, maximizing networking of various partners involved in mitigating the harmful impacts of domestic violence on children and youth. Partnerships with various entities are protocoled. The GAVA project, "Gabinete de Apoio a Vitima" (Victim Support Office) set up a structure of care, monitoring and specialized support to victims of domestic and gender violence that operates in the municipality of Odemira. It also promotes information and awareness-raising activities on domestic violence and gender violence aimed at the local community, in order to consolidate the network of partners and for the effectiveness and efficiency of the response to prevention, protection and assistance to victims.

Another European funded project but with special focus on Cyber Violence against Women and Girls is "**CYBERSAFE**" "Changing Attitudes among teenagers on Cyber Violence against Women and Girls', Nine project partners from various European countries have developed and promote an innovative experiential educational prevention programme – the CYBERSAFE Toolkit – that includes playful online tools, to address the issue of online violence against women and girls among young people (13–16 years old), in a classroom setting. CYBERSAFE promotes

healthy relationships and gender equality online. The CYBERSAFE Toolkit provides information and tools to prepare and facilitate four workshops on the issues of gender-based online violence, to raise awareness and to encourage and support young people in safe and responsible online behaviour.

Find more information at the following links:

CYBERSAFE Project

CYBERSAFE Toolkit

Finally, under **the ASSIST project** has developed a useful guideline which includes best practice principles of gender-specific legal assistance and integration support to third country national female victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. In particular, the assistance provided in the project focused on addressing specific issues: special legal needs; the availability and accessibility of material assistance and safe and appropriate housing, through designated shelters or mainstream services; specialised psychological support; access to training and employment; and overall integration support. The document is available at Assisting-Trafficked-Women-Best-practice-principles-of-gender-specific-assistance-IE.pdf (immigrantcouncil.ie).

In addition, some European networks working in the area of gender-based violence have been identified:

End FGM EU (https://www.endfgm.eu/who-we-are/) is a European umbrella network of 34 organizations working to ensure sustainable European action to end female genital mutilation.

WAVE (Women Against Violence Europe), https://wave-network.org/ is a network of over 160 European women's NGOs working towards prevention and protection of women and children from violence.

WWP EN (European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence), https://www.work-with-perpetrators.eu/ they unite 66 members from 33 European countries.

EFJCA (European Family Justice Centre Alliance) https://www.efjca.eu/the-alliance is a legal entity and the officially recognized network of Family Justice Centers and related multidisciplinary models in Europe. The focus of the Alliance is the development of a multidisciplinary approach of gender-based violence, domestic violence, sexual violence and child abuse.

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"Assist: Gender-specific Assistance and Integration Supports for Third Country National Female Victims of Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation" (AMIF-2017-AG-INTE-821581), led by the Immigrant Council of Ireland and implemented in partnership with Be Free (Italy), Just Right Scotland (UK), SOLWODI (Germany), SURT (Spain) and the European Network of Migrant Women (Belgium) *Available at: https://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/sites/default/files/2020-11/Assisting-Trafficked-Women-Best-practice-principles-of-gender-specific-assistance-IE.pdf*

Training programme for employees working with UASC

Social workers, educators

Module 6: Coping with the emotional problems of the UASC

Introduction

Give an overview of the module here:

This training module provides an overview of the mental health status among the young population in Europe, with a special focus on the refugees and migrants. The module is composed by 4 different units in which it offers a selection of good practices and factors to understand and improve the psychological well-being of this population, including some techniques to promote mental health. Additionally, the risk factors and protective factors for mental health problems are being analyzed. Finally, it offers a specific unit to promote the well-being of professionals working with migrants.

Duration: This module should take between 90 to 120´to complete.

Additional materials: In addition to the textual resources provided directly by this module, readers are encouraged to consult optional external resources to further their understanding of the topics.

Evaluation: At the end of this module, you can take a short multiple-choice test to evaluate the knowledge and skills you have acquired.

At the end of this module, you can take a short multi-choice test to assess what knowledge and skills you have acquired.

Objectives

In completing this Module, the learner will be able to:

- Have knowledge of the main concepts related to the levels of psychological morbidity among refugee children, especially post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety disorders.
- To know the basic psychological notions of attention deficit and disruptive behaviour disorders. Adaptive disorders. Mood disorders. Substance use disorders. Learning disorders.
- Knowing how to develop stress coping techniques.
- Post-traumatic experiences: screening strategies.
- Post-traumatic stress. Post-traumatic stress training: Basic information on symptoms and causes of post-traumatic stress.
- Knowledge of risk factors (vulnerability) and protective factors (resilience) for mental health problems in young migrants.
- Know the most important aspects of the well-being of professionals (psychological support, possible burnout).

Units

This module includes the following units:

6.1 Mental Health status of UASC in Europe (Introduction)

- 6.1. 1 Good practices in the care of immigrant minors in Andalusia

6.2 Promoting mental health among UASC population

- 6. 2. 1 Factors to improve psychological well-being.
- 6.2.2 Techniques to cope with stress

6.3 Risk factors and protective factors

- 6.3.1 Traumatic experiences
- 6.3.2 Psychological implications refugee children

6.4 Well-being of professionals

Unit 6.1: Mental Health status of Non accompanied Minors in Europe

Unit Content

The first unit provides an overview of the mental health status among refugees and migrants in Europe including the main challenges and risks that they face.

The mental health of refugees and asylum seekers has received particular attention in research on the health status of this population in Europe. Mental health care provided by national and international organizations has been criticized for applying Western psychiatric categories in a way that ignores the social, political and economic factors that influence the refugee experience (Summerfield, 2001; Watters, 2001).

In southern and eastern European countries, there are no specialized mental health services (Watters, 2002), while in countries where asylum seekers are detained in accommodation centers, services may be provided outside mainstream health care (Germany and the Netherlands). In countries with dispersal policies (such as the UK), there are challenges in terms of access and adequacy of mainstream services (Watters and Ingleby, 2004). The diagnosis and treatment refugees and asylum seekers receive for mental health problems varies across Europe and by country, making any assessment of the prevalence of problems highly problematic.

A lengthy asylum procedure is associated with an increase in psychiatric disorder, but the evidence is patchy and limited. Prolonged duration of the asylum procedure is an important risk factor for psychiatric problems. Asylum seekers have been found to have higher rates of attempted suicide compared to other sectors of the resident population. In Denmark, suicidal reactions were associated with long waiting times (more than 20 months) and rejection of the asylum application (Robjant, Hassan and Katona, 2009).

The length of detention also influences the health status of refugees and asylum seekers. A systematic review of mental health outcomes for adults, children and adolescents in immigration detention found that anxiety, depression and PTSD, self-harm and suicidal ideation were related to time in detention directly associated with severity of distress and longitudinal outcomes showing the persistence of the negative impact of detention (Robjant et al., 2009). Refugee youth have been found to have a high prevalence of anxiety, sleep disturbance and depressed mood on arrival, with a reduction in severity with time in exile (Montgomery, 2011).

Other risk factors included female gender, older age, experience of traumatic events, lower social support and higher post-migration stress (Gerritsen et al., 2006).

Stressors in the post-migration environment are part of broader social determinants such as health, including poverty, racism, stress from lack of culture, language problems and loss of family and friends (Blight et al., 2009). Other stressors are also related to the legal asylum procedure, dispersal policies, detention, family separation, exclusion from work, and life under threat of deportation and detention (Blight et al., 2009).

Exposure to violence prior to migration is the most common risk factor for children and adolescents who are forcibly displaced to high-income countries (Fazel, Reed, Panter-Brick and Stein, 2012).

Other risk factors include being female, unaccompanied, a perception of discrimination, exposure to post-migration violence, several changes of residence in the host country, parental exposure to violence, poor financial support, single parenthood and parental psychiatric problems.

Stable settlement and social support in the receiving country have a positive effect on the child's psychological functioning, with self-reported positive school experience and same ethnicity parenting also protective factors. School participation, friends, language proficiency and mother's education predicted fewer long-term psychological problems.

Children showed a significantly higher incidence of stress reactions if their mothers also had difficulty coping with the stress of displacement, with children in collective shelters at greater health risk than their peers staying with host families. Mothers' emotional well-being predicted that of the children and the current circumstances of life in the receiving country were of equal or greater importance than previous exposure to organized violence (Almqvist and Broberg, 1999).

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have a higher risk of mental illness than those with one or more parents. Adolescent refugees separated from both parents experienced the highest number of traumatic events and were more likely to develop severe mental health problems compared to accompanied adolescent refugees (Derluyn and Broekaert, 2008; Sourander, 1998).

As for Malmö, Sweden, analysis of all admissions in 2001 to the emergency unit of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry found that unaccompanied refugee minors were overrepresented in inpatient psychiatric care (Ramel, Taljemark, Lindgren and Johansson, 2015).

The variation in refugees' and asylum seekers' access to mental health services reflects European variation in the organization of general practice, within and between nations. This reflects a lack of national, European or international strategy in the management of refugee health care.

6.1.1 Good practices in the care of immigrant minors in Andalusia

Content

Summary of the good practices

In this section, the results from a report on good practices in the care of immigrant minors in Andalusia region is presented. It includes socio-affective integration during leisure and free time, training and socio-labour insertion.

More information

In Spain, a study has been carried out and subsequently a report on good practices in the care of immigrant minors in Andalusia. depending on the content, the good practices have been organized as follows:

A. Socio-affective integration. Leisure and free time

A.1. Sports practices and excursions

The aim was to involve young people from different collectives in an intercultural and co-educational in an intercultural and co-educational coexistence through such a universal activity as sport and play, within a clear contextualization: "sport for all and equal opportunities". The objective of improving coexistence and cooperation between the group of participating children, who did not know each other before, was achieved. The assessment made by both the young participants and the monitors was positive; the only difficulty lies in the organization of the activity itself. The project is sustainable in time, as this is its second edition, and it is possible to extend it to other provinces where Red Acoge associations are located.

A.2. Cultural practices

Invite all parents and pupils of foreign and national origin to bring objects, legends, handicrafts and gastronomic customs for a week-long exhibition. The event will be planned 1 month in advance.

The planning of the event will take place one month in advance; weekly after-school meetings will be held between the teaching staff and the parents for the organization, planning and diagramming of the Cultural Week of the Villages.

Cultural and gastronomic meeting. Tasting, reflection and discussion of the activity. After the elaboration, we all be tasting of the menus. Menu on Moroccan cuisine and Spanish cuisine menu.

B. Training

Development of an intercultural education project with the collaboration of the whole educational community and local organizations and associations.

Objectives:

- To make all members of the educational community aware of the multicultural reality of the school.
- To work towards knowledge of the different cultural entities.
- To promote the values of respect and coexistence in the educational community.

B.1. School support, linguistic adaptation and interculturality at school.

B.2. Complementary training

Castro del Río (Córdoba) is a town where there are a large number of Moroccan immigrant families.
school, socially, psychologically, etc...

Objectives:

- To help children with their homework.
- To encourage integration in all areas by means of good relations with peers.
- Mediators between educational centres and families.
- Advice to families on all the existing resources they can benefit from.
- Advice in different areas (food, hygiene, health...).
- Helping to find out about the resources in the municipality (library, town hall, health centre, etc.).

The methodology used is at all times participative, dynamic and empathetic, combining the middle ground between educational and recreational, so that the group is relaxed and motivated to continue attending.

C. Socio-labour insertion

Minors over 16 years of age, almost all of them with little school knowledge and language problems; they have a clear migration project (training/work), most of them with training in their country of origin.

Objectives:

- To achieve a good social inclusion.
- To adapt to their expectations.
- To seek new ways of accessing the labour market.
- Convince public institutions of the need to organise training courses for unaccompanied minors with documentation problems. D. Guidelines for the care of immigrant minors.

Assessment Activity

1. The problem of mental health among young migrants is an issue that is uniformly addressed across Europe.
a) True
b) False

2. What stressors may arise in the post-migration environment? (Select the incorrect one)
a) loss of family and friends
b) Racism
c) external support
c) stress from lack of culture

3.The length of detention in accommodation centers can be associated with the apparition of:

a) Anxiety
b) Depression
c) Post-traumatic stress disorder
d) all from above

Unit 6.2: Promoting mental health among UASC population

Content

6.2.1 Factors to improve psychological well-being.

- **Understand and recognize stressors**: Refugee children and youth are often traumatized by experiences prior to migration and settlement in a new country. Indeed, the vast majority may have lived through violence, being exposed to combat situations, displacement from their homes, malnutrition, detention and even torture. Many have been forced to leave their country of origin and are unable to return safely. In some cases, they have migrated without their parents, without shelter and without knowing their state of health. Often, the psychological stress and traumatic experiences inflicted on these children linger for months or even years, and many of them experience some form of discrimination once they enter US schools. There are also times when settling in low-income, high-crime neighborhoods increases the likelihood of exposure to stressful conditions.

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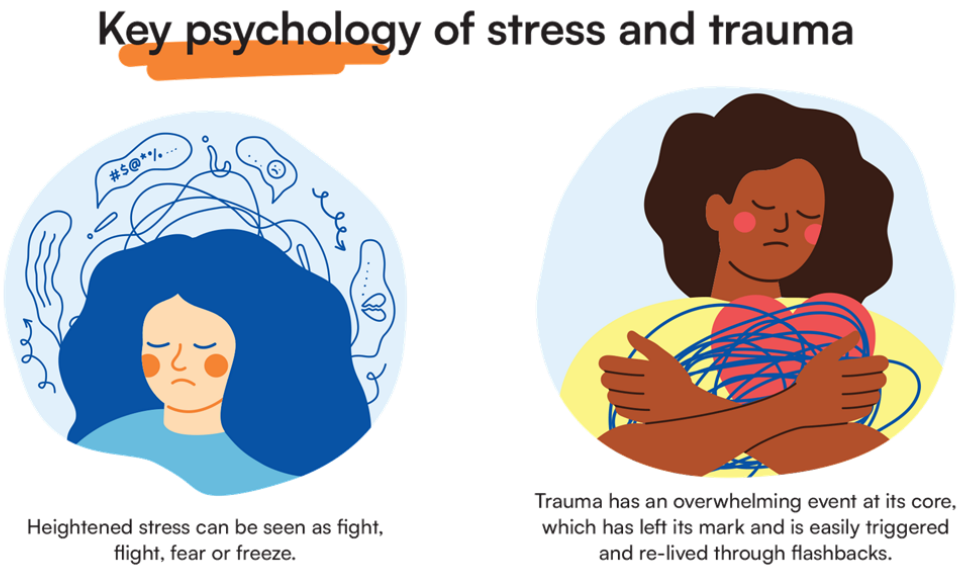


- **Understand the impact of trauma on school performance:** Extreme stress, adversity and trauma can limit concentration, cognitive functioning, memory and social relationships. Stress can therefore promote both internalized symptoms - hypervigilance, anxiety, depression, grief, fear, anger, isolation, etc. - and externalized behaviors such as startle responses, reactive attitudes, aggression and behavioral problems. In cases where refugee students experience chronic and significant stress, the risk of developing trauma and other mental health disorders is significantly elevated, undermining their ability to function effectively in school. Similarly, given the educational context prior to migration and arrival in a new country, many have experienced significant interruptions in schooling; along with language gaps, many students arrive unprepared to participate in school with peers of the same age.
- **Train education staff to provide effective and appropriate responses and supports to trauma**. Establishing trauma-sensitive schools greatly enhances supports for all students who may experience trauma, including refugees. Trauma-sensitive schools view classroom behaviors as the possible consequence of a range of life circumstances, rather than as disobedient and/or malicious behaviors. This approach emphasizes training for teaching staff members, teaching them to understand the impact of trauma on school performance and to analyze behaviors through this lens, and showing them how to help students build trusting relationships

with teachers and peers, develop the capacity to self-regulate their emotions, attention and behaviour, and support students' success in academic and non-academic areas, in turn promoting their physical and emotional health.

- **Understand the challenges of relocation and acculturation:** Refugee children and youth often must make significant adjustments in their lives to adapt to their new communities and schools. This includes language differences, unfamiliarity with how the school functions, not knowing where and whom to turn to for help, unfamiliarity with the curriculum or social customs, and difficulties in making friends. While some refugees are resettled in communities with a population from their home country, in other cases this is often not the case, increasing their sense of isolation. It is imperative to bear in mind that children often adapt culturally and linguistically much more quickly than their parents, a fact that over time can be a source of conflict when children deviate from their traditions and/or can increase the burden on children when parents rely on them to function in their new environment and act as translators.
- **Be sensitive to family stressors:** Parents and other family members also often deal with the stresses of relocation, including efforts to adapt and become self-sufficient in their new community. This includes overcoming language and cultural barriers, as well as finding housing and employment, establishing a social network, accepting their role in their children's education, accessing social services, and connecting with the beliefs of their community. As a rule, many of them are not used to asking for help and do not like to rely on others, and being forced to do so can contribute to stress. In addition, some parents may have experienced a high level of stress or significant trauma during the migration process, which may lead to an increased risk of negative outcomes for their children.
- **Identify high-risk children and youth and plan interventions**: Schools have a responsibility to identify refugee students who may be most at risk based on all of the above factors. In general, interventions delivered through comprehensive service models (i.e. Multi-Level Systems of Support) and focused on educational, social and economic outcomes are more effective than clinical treatment alone, and often prevent the need for intensive direct services. However, by maintaining close contact with teachers and parents, the school counselling team can determine which students require more intensive intervention and support. Schools should also have a protocol for referring students and/or their parents.
- **Understand cultural attitudes towards mental health**. It is important for mental health professionals to be aware of attitudes towards mental illness and the role of mental health services in providing help to students. Many cultures may have minimal knowledge of mental illness and, in some cultures, mental health problems may even be stigmatized. For example, certain cultures may view emotional problems as a weakness of character rather than a natural response that can arise in the face of adversity. Understanding these barriers is an essential first step in reassuring and engaging students and their families, and ultimately building the trust needed to provide effective services and supports.
- **Engaging and empowering families.** Families from other countries may have different views on education, including the assumption that children's education remains the exclusive duty of the school and that any involvement would be intruding on that responsibility. Some families may not be sufficiently fluent in the language (in this case English) to participate effectively, despite their interest in wanting to do so.

  Also, many families may experience practical barriers, such as not having a car, or having a job that prevents them from actively participating during school hours. Schools can work with families through cultural liaison to find ways to connect with parents and ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in their children's education.

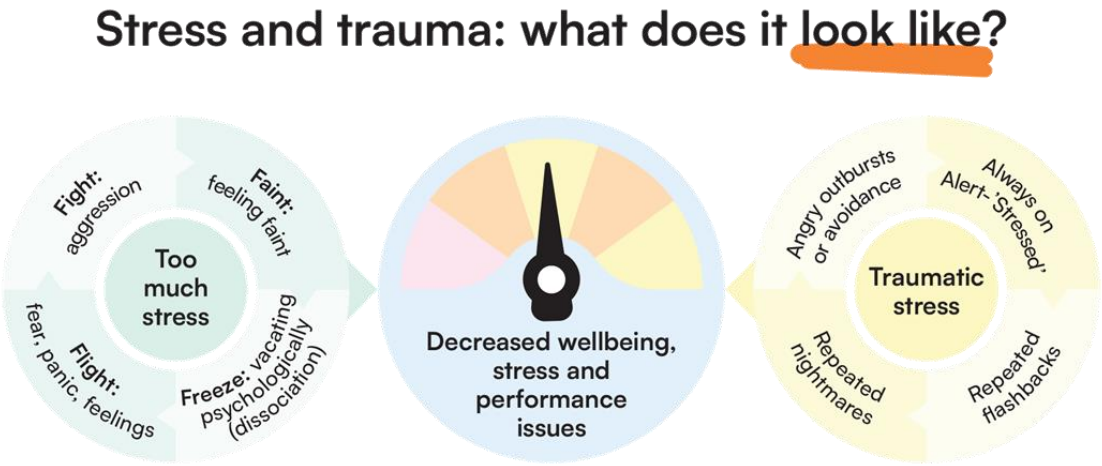
- **Focus on students' strengths**. Many refugee students have diverse skills, strengths and knowledge in the classroom that are unique. We should build on these resilience strengths and consider having them share their knowledge of their country, as well as their customs and culture. In this regard, educators should seek to support the preservation of culture and language at home, while emphasizing the importance of developing the skills and knowledge needed to succeed (in this article, in US schools).

- **Community access resources**. Find out if there are organizations in the community that specialise in working with refugee families if such resources are available. Develop an updated list of available resources aimed at assisting affected families, including names, phone numbers, websites (if available), contact persons (if applicable), descriptions of services, etc., identifying where support groups are offered and whether refugee coordinators exist.
- **Immediately eliminate any bullying or harassment**. Refugee children may be at risk of abuse by others if they are unfairly stigmatized by classmates and even teachers. Make it clear that such behaviour in any form (in person, online, through social media) is unacceptable. Promote acceptance and actively teach conflict resolution skills to both the perpetrators and the refugee student(s).

6.2.2 Techniques to cope with stress

- **Organisation of daily life.** To carry out a timetable where the child plans together with the educational and leisure activities with the child. By establishing routines we provide the child with greater security and a sense of control.
- Physiological **control techniques**. Use deep breathing and progressive relaxation training techniques to reduce levels of physiological activation.
- **Increase activities of enjoyment with reference figures and peers.** Encourage the formation of support groups, in which children have the opportunity to talk about and share their worries and about their concerns and share them, feeling that they are not alone.
- **Improve/strengthen the bond with the family**. Encourage emotional expression among members, so that the children feel secure and safe, and the family nucleus can play a supportive to play a supportive role in the face of any difficulties that the child may experience. In addition to the carrying out of pleasant activities together.
- **Emotional expression and regulation.** Facilitating the expression of emotions, through psycho-education adapted to the age of the child, explaining the meaning of each emotion and its physical and its physical manifestation, and thus also increasing the child's bodily self-knowledge and facilitating the detection of their facilitating the detection of their sensations.
- **Encourage autonomy**. Promote the child's participation in the assumption of greater responsibilities in their daily life. Responsibilities in their daily life. For example, dressing themselves, helping with household chores, housework, etc.
- **Social skills**. Training in communicative and assertive skills for adaptation and interaction with peers.In addition, increased understanding of social rules and their adaptation to their cultural system.
- **Positive reinforcement, "Token Economy" technique**. Psycho-education parents on the importance of positive reinforcement to promote the repetition of desirable behaviors. In addition, the child's self-concept and perception of self-efficacy will be improved perception of self-efficacy of the child.

More information:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264869667_Promoting_the_emotional_wellbeing_and_mental_health_of_unaccompanied_young_people_seeking_asylum_in_the_UK_-_Research_Summary



Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

Content

Summary of the good practices

In this section we have include an interesting short film about the experiences of Ukrainian young refugees during the war.

In addition, a guidance to offer Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants is included.

The short film "Uprooted", released by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, describes the trauma of fleeing the war experienced by Ukrainian refugees. The short film shows how the terrifying memories of conflict live on in those who have escaped and sends a message of solidarity to refugees around the world.

The video can be found at the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7APQd5BBFo&t=1s

More information related with the production of the film and their actors can be found at the link below:

https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2022/6/62a371b94/ukrainian-refugees-depict-trauma-fleeing-war-new-short-film.html

We have included a document prepared by UNHCR, IOM and MHPSS that serves as a guide to provide support from improving mental health among migrants. *Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants on the Move in Europe, A MULTI-AGENCY GUIDANCE NOTE*.

Find the link below: https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/297576/MHPSS-refugees-asylum-seekers-migrants-Europe-Multi-Agency-guidance-note.pdf%3Fua%3D1

Assessment Activity

1. Mental health problems can be stigmatized in some cultures
a) True
b) false

2. Choose the correct one:
a) Refugee children and youth, because of their age, often adapt easily to their new communities and schools.
b) Refugee children and youth often must make significant adjustments in their lives to adapt to their new communities and schools.

3. Who needs to be taught conflict resolution skills and acceptance values in the schools:

a) the perpetrators
b) refugee student(s)
c) both from above

Unit 6.3: Risk factors and protective factors

Unit Content

This unit covers the different stages of traumatic experiences and outlines risk and protective factors for the mental health of refugees and migrants.

6.3.1 Traumatic experiences

THREE STAGES OF TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES

The stresses to which most refugees are exposed can be understood as occurring at three different stages: (1) while in their country of origin; (2) during the flight to safety; and (3) when having to settle in a country of refuge.[1]

1. In their native countries many refugees have experienced considerable trauma. They have often been forced to flee their homes because of exposure war or combat and hence witnessed violence, torture, and losses of close family and friends. **Refugee children might have no memory of a period of stability; their school education, if any, is likely to have been disrupted; and parental distress and general insecurity are common experiences.[2]**
2. The journey to a country of refuge can also be a time of further stress. It can take many months and expose the refugees to more life-threatening dangers. **Refugee children at these times can experience separation from parents, either by accident or as a strategy to ensure their safety. As international immigration controls tighten, more children are being placed in the hands of smugglers to ensure their escape, either**

[1] **Hodes, M**. (2000). Psychologically distressed refugee children in the United Kingdom. Child Psychology and Psychiatry Review, 5(2), 57-68.
[2] **Russell S.** Most vulnerable of all: the treatment of unaccompanied refugee children in the UK. UK: Amnesty International, 1999..

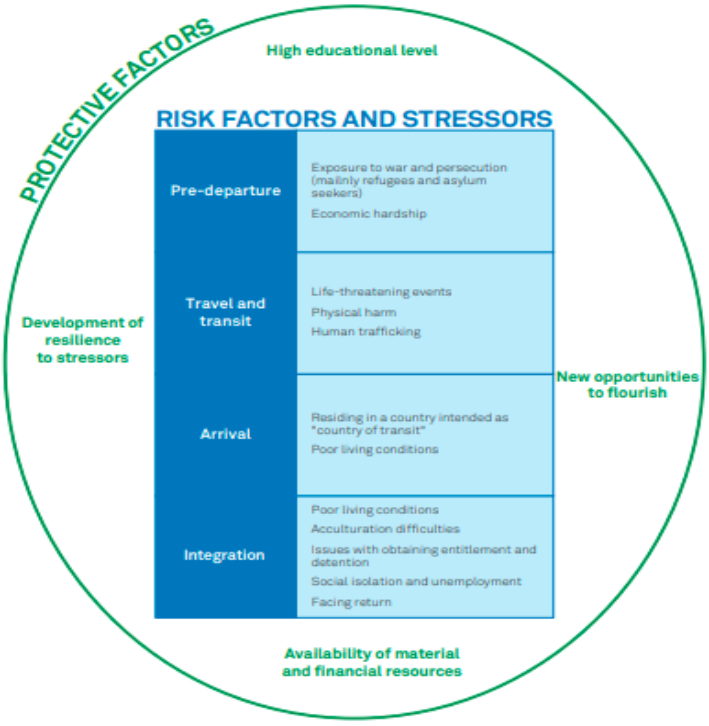
as the only representative their family can afford to send away or in the hope that the child alone would have better chances of gaining refugee status[3].

3. The final stage of finding respite in another country can be a time of additional difficulty as many have to prove their asylum claims and also try **to integrate in a new society**[4]. This period is being increasingly referred to as a period of **"secondary trauma**" to highlight the problems encountered. On arriving, a refugee child will need to settle into a new school and find a peer group. Children might have to prematurely assume adult roles; for example, as a vital language link with the outside world.

Risk factors and protective factors for mental health in refugees and migrants

Fig. 1 is an infographic outlining the risk factors and protective factors for mental health in refugees and migrants.

*mental-health-eng.pdf (who.int)



Source: data from several publications *(11,30–32)*.

[3] **Ayott L**, Williamson L. Separated children in the UK: an overview of the current situation. London: The Refugee Council and Save the Children, 2001.
[4] **Werner EE**, Smith RS. Vulnerable but invincible: a longitudinal study of resilient children and youth. New York: McGraw Hill, 1982.

6.3.2 Psychological implications refugee children

There is considerable evidence that refugee children are at significant risk of developing psychological disturbance as they are subject to a number of risk factors. **(Fazel M, Stein A.***The mental health of refugee children* Archives of Disease in Childhood 2002;87:366-370.)

Table 1 Risk factors for mental health problems in refugee children

Parental factors
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in either parent[49]
Maternal depression[24]
Torture, especially in mother[14]
Death of or separation from parents[24 50]
Direct observation of the helplessness of parents[12 14]
Underestimation of stress levels in children by parents[51]
Unemployment of parents[12]

Child factors
Number of traumatic events—either experienced or witnessed[52]
Expressive language difficulties[14]
PTSD leading to long term vulnerability in stressful situations[53]
Physical health problems from either trauma or malnutrition[54]
Older age[12]

Environmental factors
Number of transitions[36]
Poverty[6]
Time taken for immigration status to be determined[55]
Cultural isolation[24]
Period of time in a refugee camp[14]
Time in host country (risk possibly increases with time)[21]

Table 1 provides a framework for conceptualizing these risk factors**. Refugee children suffer both from the effects of coming from a war zone and of adjusting to an unfamiliar culture.** These stressors also affect their families.[5] Moreover, consistent research findings show that as **the number of risk factors accumulates for children, the likelihood that they will develop psychological disturbance dramatically increases**[6]. In particular, Rutter has shown the synergistic effects of multiple risk factors on adverse child outcome.

Studies of children in exile show that the prevalence of emotional and behavioral disorders is high, with the most frequent diagnostic categories being post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety with sleep disorders, and depression. The incidence of these disorders is difficult to estimate but most studies have found significantly raised levels of disturbance compared to control populations. For example, studies of newly arrived refugee children show rates of anxiety from 49% to 69%, [78]with prevalence dramatically increasing if at least one parent had been tortured or if families have been separated.

[5] **Werner EE**, Smith RS. Vulnerable but invincible: a longitudinal study of resilient children and youth. New York: McGraw Hill, 1982.
[6] **Garmezy N**, Masten AS. Chronic adversities. In: Rutter M, Taylor EA, Hersov LA, eds. *Child and adolescent psychiatry: modern approaches*. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific, 1994:191–208.
[7] **Hjern A**, Kocturk-Runefors T, Jeppson O, *et al*. Health and nutrition in newly resettled refugee children from Chile and the Middle East. *Acta Paediatr Scand*1991;**80**:859–67.PubMed Web of Science Google Scholar
[8] **Cohn J**, Danielsen L, Holzer KI, *et al*. A study of Chilean refugee children in Denmark. *Lancet*1985;**2**:437–8.CrossRef PubMed Web of Science Google Scholar

Table 2 lists common presenting symptoms of the different disorders.[9] Children, however, often present with a mixture of the symptoms listed and not necessarily fulfilling a single diagnostic category, for example with a mixture of post-traumatic and depressive symptom.

Table 2 Summary of common presenting symptoms of psychological disorders in refugee children

Post-traumatic stress disorder
Persistent avoidance of stimuli: specific fears; fear of being alone; withdrawal
Re-experiencing aspects of the trauma: nightmares; visual images; feelings of fear and helplessness
Persistent symptoms of increased arousal: easily aroused; disorganised and agitated behaviour; lack of concentration
Other anxiety symptoms
Marked anxiety and worry: irritability, restlessness
Other sleep disorders
Somatic symptoms including headaches and abdominal pain
Depression
Low mood
Loss of interest or pleasure
Declining school performance
Conduct disorders

PRINCIPLES OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE

When planning for the mental health needs of refugee children, two main areas need targeting: firstly, the provision of appropriate help for those experiencing psychological difficulties; and secondly, to pay attention to develop primary prevention strategies to this high-risk group. Traumatic events can have an effect on a child's emotional, cognitive, and moral development because they influence the child's self-perceptions and expectations of others. However, finding appropriate ways to treat these problems is hampered by the lack of reliable evidence for the effectiveness of clinical therapeutic interventions with refugee children as most of the research has been conducted following single traumatic events (such as floods, single school shootings). Many refugee children, however, have experienced prolonged and repeated trauma. The general consensus is that there is a need for a variety of different treatments, including individual, family, group, and school-based interventions. Cognitive behavioral treatment for single traumatic events has been used, and a number of case series and single case studies have reported good results for treatments including play, art, music therapy, and storytelling. Of added significance are the post-traumatic symptoms of parents and the impact of these on their capacity to parent.

No studies have evaluated the benefit of group treatments, however, based on evidence for groups in other circumstances, it would appear that this may be a good way to help children develop a sense of coping and mastery and sharing ways of solving common problems. A number of children's disorders could be addressed directly; for example, many suffer from depression and common sleep problems for which psychotherapeutic treatments and medication are available. Addressing the treatment needs of refugee children can often seem overwhelming to those involved as they do not easily fit with prescribed care packages and often require working with many different professionals and agencies such as interpreters, legal/immigration teams, voluntary organizations, ethnic support groups, social services, and schools. This unavoidably requires more time and resources. Successful programmes emphasize the role of cross-cultural teams who can work in an extended outreach manner.

[9] **American Psychiatric Association.** Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, 4th edn. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 1994.

Assessment Activity

1) Choose the correct one;

a) Refugee children usually break their period of stability when they leave their country of origin.

b) Many refugee children are exposed to instability already from their country of origin and can be caused by parental distress, general insecurity, etc.

c) None of the above

2) Which of the following risk factors for mental health problems can be consider child factors:

a) Number of traumatic events (either experienced or witnessed)

b) Physical health problems from either trauma or malnutrition

c) Maternal depression

3) Select some of the common symptoms of psychological disorders in refugee children

a) Loss of interest or pleasure

b) Marked anxiety and worry: irritability, restlessness

c) Good school performance

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

Content

For more information on **UASC psychological support**, please refer to the following sources:

- Psychological First Aid for Unaccompanied Children: https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/special-resource/pfa-unaccompanied-children.pdf
- Handbook on psychological support to unaccompanied foreign minors: https://issuu.com/medecinsdumonde/docs/aeneas

FARO MODEL HANDBOOK on Mental Health and Psychological Support to Unaccompanied Minor Migrants and Families with Children upon First Reception developed by Terre des hommes: https://www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/faro-model-handbook-1.pdf

For more information on **psychological support in emergency settings**, please consult the IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychological Support in Emergency Settings, 2007:

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-force-mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-emergency-settings/iasc-guidelines-mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-emergency-settings-2007, some relevant content:

- Enforce staff codes of conduct and ethical guidelines;
- Organise orientation and training of aid workers in mental health and psychological support;
- Prevent and manage problems in mental health and psychological well-being among staff and volunteers;
- Facilitate community self-help and social support;
- Provide access to care for people with severe mental disorders.

Minimum Standards for **Education in Emergencies**, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction: https://www.preventionweb.net/files/4546_MSEEreport.pdf

Unit 6.4: Well-being of professionals

Content

This unit includes some of the challenges faced by workers working with migrants and offers some tips to promote their well-being.

Every profession has its challenges, its pleasures and its difficulties. Over time, we learn to manage situations that at first seemed impossible, and by the time several years have passed, we have acquired a series of resources for dealing with difficult moments. They have also developed defences against experiences that exceed their capacity for understanding and action, and it is not unusual to find them exhausted, without new ideas and without enthusiasm.

The professionals who work with immigrants are not exempt from the experience of important internal changes, temporary or chronic maladjustments depending on how they develop, and they can develop overprotective attitudes or excessive involvement in the cases they attend. [10]

Personal involvement is great in working with this group, as the level of needs is usually high and varied, especially in the first stage of migration, or when some time has passed, and the person has not managed to develop their project. Often the first meeting may be the only one, and professionals are often under pressure to do their best in a very short period of time and without the certainty of future opportunities to develop a link with the person, based on a real process of support. Another factor that makes work difficult has to do with the working conditions themselves when they depend on annual grants or projects.[11] The instability of contracts and, therefore, the lack of security of continuity, prevent the development of work based on the quality of the human relationship and not on statistics or on the number of people attended to. In these circumstances, processes are often cut off prematurely or are not developed at all, as human movements do not have an expiry date based on the calendar.

Faced with the problematic aspects mentioned above, professionals react in different ways, depending on their own characteristics and the external severity of the situation. When we cannot act with balance, one way is to go beyond the possibilities by saying "yes" to everything and everyone, another by using the path of indifference and apathy in dealing with people. Both resolutions distort, frustrate and make us sick.

THE PREVENTION OF BURNOUT

Situations such as those described above constitute a breeding ground for alterations that can lead to stress. For this reason, it is necessary to give it the attention it deserves, with the same intensity with which we work for the well-being of immigrants. Let us remember that if we are empty, sick and unmotivated, it will be difficult for us to offer our users quality care, no matter how much study and good intentions we have. Below are some ideas that may be useful for the prevention of burnout in professionals who care for immigrants**.**

[10] Ruiz Martínez*, Mª Clara: Professionals working with immigrants: Burnout and prevention
[11] Ibid.

In summa Burnout, also called burnout syndrome, is the response of a worker when he or she perceives the gap between his or her own ideals and the reality of his or her working life. It usually develops in helping professions and professions with frequent social interaction.
Nowadays, burnout syndrome is understood as an inadequate way of responding to chronic work stress, presenting a series of negative behaviours and feelings towards the people the worker comes into contact with on a daily basis, as well as the feeling of being emotionally exhausted.
It is mainly manifested by the following symptoms:

- Emotional exhaustion
- Depersonalisation or negative behaviours towards users and colleagues
- Feelings of low self-fulfilment, for the prevention and treatment of burnout, a number of reforms are necessary in the work and personal field, such as:
    - Limiting the number of working hours and allowing adequate time for rest.
    - Avoiding repetitive and monotonous activities. Alternating between different tasks
    - Promoting teamwork and taking care of the health of the team.
    - Share emotional experiences.
    - Set realistic goals.
    - Participate in group spaces to help cope with stressful situations.

It is very important to have a life apart from work. Having time to develop personal projects with friends and family, who are not part of the work context. It is these people who help to stop or withdraw them in order to take distance and relativise the experiences.[12] It is also necessary to review the most difficult cases, or those that move our emotions intensely, with an expert who generates total confidence. It is an act of humility and also of responsibility to ask for help when we see that certain situations are getting out of hand. This should come naturally to people who are in permanent contact with human needs and suffering. Moreover, the participation of support groups has long been an excellent resource for sharing, reviewing and realising aspects that otherwise would not come to light, and which can bring with them uncomfortable but humane emotions, as no one is immune to their influences.

SUPPORT GROUPS
These are regular meetings in which a team shares its experiences and concerns at work and the group gives back to each member its feelings, ideas and suggestions. There are a number of requirements for such a meeting to be successful. One of them is the presence of a person from outside the group, but an expert and trustworthy person, who helps to reveal aspects that may interfere with the group dynamics.

The effectiveness of this preventive resource has been proven on many occasions. Its origin dates back to the 1950s, when Michael Balint, a Hungarian psychoanalyst who worked at the Tavistock clinic in London, published his book "The doctor, his patient and the illness", in which he reflects on the importance of the figure of the doctor in the resolution of the illness, and the need for the professional to have the necessary human resources and the support of a team of colleagues who help him to see those aspects that are "blind" to his perception. Over time, this idea has been extended to other disciplines and has been of great help in the prevention of burnout in human professions.

[12] https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/prevent-burnout

Assessment Activity

1) Which of these symptoms can you look out for as signs of burnout? Select the correct ones

a) Feelings of low self-fulfilment

b) high motivation and interest

c) Emotional exhaustion

d) negative behaviors towards users and colleagues

2) Which situations can lead to stress for the professionals?

a) working under pressure which does not allow personal involvement with immigrants

b) instability of contracts

c) having enough time to create a link with the person and follow them up on the entire process

3) Select the correct affirmation to support professionals and prevent the burnout:

a) It is necessary to have a life apart from work and having time to develop personal projects

b) It is necessary to review the most difficult cases that happen with the immigrants, or those that move our emotions intensely, with an expert who generates total confidence

c) The participation of support groups has been of great help in the prevention of burnout in human professions.

d) Professionals know always how to act, and they do not need to have and extra support.

Selection of good practices and tips from participant countries

Some free additional resources:

integrity Healthcare eLearning

UK's leading charity fighting for children and young people's mental health. They have a clear purpose: to stop young people's mental health reaching crisis point. https://www.youngminds.org.uk/

MindEd is a free educational resource on children, young people, adults and older people's mental health. https://www.minded.org.uk/

https://www.mentalhealth4refugees.de/en - since 2019, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research has been funding seven nationwide projects in their research on innovative methods of care for refugees.

https://www.unhcr.org/mental-health-psychosocial-support.html

https://adc.bmj.com/content/87/5/366

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/11071330_The_Mental_Health_of_Refugee_Children

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Centre for Psychiatry, Imperial College London, London, UK, International Organization for Migration Ankara, Ankara, Turkey, Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Medical School, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece, Lund University, Lund, Sweden, Former University of Applied Sciences Potsdam, Germany, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Tromso, Norway, University of Ankara, Ankara, Turkey, University of Duisburg-Essen, University Hospital Essen, Essen, Germany, Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Child Protection, Institute of Psychiatry, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Klostergata 46,7030 Trondheim. ***Refugees in Europe: national overviews from key countries with a special focus on child and adolescent mental health****, Norway, 2017 December 21. Avaitable at:*
https://www.academia.edu/47934689/Refugees_in_Europe_national_overviews_from_key_countries_with_a_special_focus_on_child_and_adolescent_mental_health

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https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.1365-2214.2008.00883.x

Clin Pract Epidemiol Ment Health. ***Prevalence of Psychiatric Disorders Among Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Adolescents in Norway,*** *Published online 2014 Jun 13. Available at:*
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4085584/

Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Global Public Health. ***Health Status of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Europe.*** *November 2017. Available at:*
https://www.academia.edu/35503013/Health_Status_of_Refugees_and_Asylum_Seekers_in_Europe

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Organización Mundial de la Salud. II. War Trauma Foundation. III. Visión Mundial Internacional. ***Primera ayuda psicológica: Guía para trabajadores de campo****. 2012. Available at:*
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https://www.unhcr.org/mental-health-psychosocial-support.html

HEALTH EVIDENCE NETWORK SYNTHESIS REPORT. ***Public Health Aspects of Migrant Health: A Review of the Evidence on Health Status for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the European Region****. October 2015. Available at:*
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282673001_Public_Health_Aspects_of_Migrant_Health_A_Review_of_the_Evidence_on_Health_Status_for_Refugees_and_Asylum_Seekers_in_the_European_Region

*World Health Organization****. Mental health promotion and mental health care in refugees and migrants Technical guidance****. 2018. Available at:*
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European child & adolescent psychiatry. ***Refugees in Europe: national overviews from key countries with a special focus on child and adolescent mental health.*** *21 December 2017. Available at:*
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*University of Kent and Utrecht University****. Good practices in mental health and social care for asylum seekers and refugees.*** *Available at:*
https://www.academia.edu/3878892/Good_practices_in_mental_health_and_social_care_for_asylum_seekers_and_refugees?email_work_card=view-paper

European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry. ***Challenges and opportunities in refugee mental health: clinical, service, and research considerations*** *Published: 13 February 2018. Available at:*
Challenges and opportunities in refugee mental health: clinical, service, and research considerations | Dimitris Anagnostopoulos - Academia.edu

Published by the Nordic Welfare Centre *Author: Nina Rehn-Mendoza.* ***Mental health and well-being of unaccompanied minors: A Nordic overview. 2020 April 1.*** *Available at:* *https://nordicwelfare.org/en/publikationer/unaccompanied/*

IOM BRUSSELS Regional Office for the European Economic Area, the European Union and NATO. ***EQUALCITY TOOLBOX 2021: Training manual for UMC Responding to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) among unaccompanied migrant children (UMC)***. *Available at:* *https://eea.iom.int/equalcity*

ESCAP European Society for children and adolescents Psychiatry. *https://www.escap.eu/*

Training programme for employees working with UASC

Social workers, educators

Module 7: Guardianship. Foster care. Coming of age

Introduction

After having learnt about who is a UASC, the legal framework and the societal integration, the intercultural competences, the gender mainstreaming and the emotional problems of the child, we are now analyzing the system of foster care and the problematic of coming to age for UASC.
This training module is going to give you an overview of the legal framework of the foster care system in Europe, on benefit and challenges of foster care system for unaccompanied foreign minors, and the guardianship instrument. As well, it giver a deep overview of transition to adulthood phase, very crucial and delicate for UASC.

This module has 2 units. Some has additional materials, documents, link to videos, as well as Toolkits and manuals elaborated by different organizations.
You are expected to need 3 hours to complete the module.
At the end of Unit, you can take a short multi-choice test to assess what knowledge and skills you have acquired.
Part of this module is an integrated and adapted extract from the Toolkit "Foster care and alternative forms of care for unaccompanied and separated migrant children", elaborated within the project EPIC – European Practices for integration and care, co-funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund. Published by Fondazione L'Albero della Vita Onlus.

Objectives

In completing this Module the learner will be able:

- To outline the main legal framework of foster care for UASC in Europe
- To identify the positive aspects and challenges of foster care for UASC
- To define the foster care's duty
- The difference among homo-cultural foster care and hetero-cultural foster care
- To describe the difference among foster care and guardianship
- Explain the challenges and problems of the Transition to adulthood.
- Explain the importance of job as social inclusion.
- To name some good-practice examples of different countries.

Units

UNIT 1 – FOSTER CARE FOR UASC

LEGAL ASPECTS: BASIC INFORMATION

1.1 Pursuit of the best interest of the child
1.2 Legal framework of foster care for UASC in Europe

THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM FOR UNACCOMPANIED FOREIGN MINORS

INTRODUCTION
1.3 Different systems
1.4 Homo-cultural foster care and hetero-cultural foster care
1.5 Benefits and challenges of fostering UASC in a family
1.6 The task of the foster carer

THE SELECTION OF CARERS AND MATCHING
1.7 The importance of the assessment and selection activity
1.8 The "assessment" of the child
1.9 The matching activities

TRAINING, SUPPORT AND MONITORING
1.10 Training
1.11 Assessment and monitoring
1.12 Support
1.13 Network support
1.14 The psychological support
1.15 BEST PRACTICES

Assessment activity
Bibliography
Additional resources

UNIT 2. COMING TO AGE
2.1. The needs of children and young people in their transition to adulthood
2.2. Transition to adulthood – critical issues
2.3. The inclusion in the job market
2.5. BEST PRACTICES

Assessment activity
Bibliography
Additional resources

Unit 1. FOSTER CARE FOR UASC

Unit Content/Summary

In this Unit, you will read about the Legal framework of foster care for UASC in Europe;
Also, you will identify the positive aspects and challenges of foster care for UASC, the duties of foster carers. You will have clear the difference between homo-cultural foster care and hetero-cultural foster care, and you will be able to describe the difference between foster care and guardianship.

You will get the basis to proceed with the assessment, selection and matching activity of foster carers. You will also have clear how to train, support and monitoring the **foster carers.**

1.1 PURSUIT OF THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

The guiding principle of the entire European (and international) body of law regarding the child is the pursuit of his or her best interest (*best interest of the child* - BIC). This principle guarantees that in all the decisions and actions that concern a child the child's best interest must be taken into consideration in particular regarding the principle of the unity of the family, the child's wellbeing and social development, his or her survival and safety, also in light of the child's own preference, depending on the age and level of maturity of the individual.

In that sense, the member states of the European Union called upon to protect UASC have to provide to ensure that:

- as soon as a child is found in a country, an appropriate individual investigation is undertaken to establish any possible vulnerabilities and needs - depending on the gender and age of the child - and that this investigation takes into consideration all the subsequent procedures that relate to the child;
- adequate conditions of accommodation are offered to the child, including a series of alternative options of assistance such as foster care and assistance in reunification with family members;
- the child is provided with a guardian/legal representative;
- access to education is guaranteed;
- access to healthcare is guaranteed, including therapy for the treatment of mental illness and support to children who have experienced any form of abuse and/or trauma- and psycho-social support;
- thorough investigations are made to determine the possibility of reunification with the child's own family;
- the child can engage in recreational activities including play and other age-appropriate activities,
- the child is allowed to present an application for asylum;
- always taking into consideration the best interest of the child, before issuing a decision to repatriate, the child is provided with adequate assistance to ensure that he or she is returned to a family member, a designated guardian, or an adequate receiving structure in the country of repatriation.

1.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF FOSTER CARE FOR UASC IN EUROPE

Protecting children means defend European values of human rights, respect, dignity and solidarity. Since 2015 migration crisis, European efforts to protect children in migration and to facilitate member states to apply the EU acquis has been notable although gaps in the quality of care and access of services still exists.

The European Union has an influence on the internal legislation of the member states, which are required to adapt their legislation to comply with Community directives. Often, the legislation of the member states has developed in certain sectors - including the immigration sector - specifically thanks to the indications received via the EU, such as the article 24(2) of the *Reception Condition Directive (2013)* which states that unaccompanied minors shall be placed with (a) foster family; (b) in accommodation centres with special provisions for minors; (c) in other accommodation suitable for minors. Secondly, it recalls the *Communication on the protection of children in migration (2017)* stated by the European Commission on the topic. Third, it embraces in the comprehensive framework to support efforts in developing and strengthening integration policies also for children as reported in the *New Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027*.

At international level, Article 20 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)* instructs that *"any child who is **temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment** or who cannot be left in that environment in his or her best interest, has the right to protection and special aid from the government. The governments, for their part, provide a guardian for the child, in accordance with their national legislation. This guardianship may consist of foster care in a family, the institution of **kafalah** under Islamic law, **adoption** or, in case of need, placement in **adequate institutions for childcare**. In choosing among these options, due account will be taken of the need for some continuity in the child's education, and of his or her ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic origin"*.

Although Community law imposes basic regulations common to all the member states, there are still profound differences between different legal systems, especially about acceptance, guardianship, repatriation, and expulsion and holding the UASC.

ACTIVITY:

Helps the child understand the role of the guardian as a whole and how to use the support offered by this figure, or an equivalent person, to promote his or her superior best interests.

THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM FOR UNACCOMPANIED FOREIGN MINORS

INTRODUCTION

European policy, through its institutions and their work, has repeatedly shown how important it is for the health of the UASC to be placed in an environment that is suitable for their growth and development, where they can live in serenity with all the rights guaranteed by law, supported in their choices and the process of integration. In this sense, the European institutions have urged the member states to adapt their domestic law to ensure that the UASCs can be placed in the first instance - if possible - with their adult relatives, otherwise with a foster family or in specific centres for minors.

The support offered to the UASC must be specifically designed for the person. Any form of support *must take into account the specific characteristics of the UASC, their history, their path, needs, vulnerabilities, desires, potential and ties they may have already built or are building on a given territory*. The more tailor-made the support is, the greater the chances of achieving the short-, medium- and long-term objectives of caring for the person, allowing for better integration in the territory and an increase in personal well-being.

1.3 DIFFERENT SYSTEMS

The system for taking care of the needs of UASC provides for a varied set of measures that combine to guarantee the pursuit of their *best interests*.

These include foster care for individuals or families, so-called '*alternative*' care, residential care where the child is placed in a residential childcare centre or community, *Kinship Care* an arrangement in which children live with and are taken care of by another family member, because their parents are unable to take care of them.

The UASC- as is the case for an indigenous child who does not have parents or other relatives responsible for him or her - requires a figure called a *guardian* who, if he or she is not the same as the Carer, must be consulted by the latter for decisions concerning the Children.

Also, taking into consideration the age of the migrant minors (for an UASC over 16, lighter forms of foster care could be helpful to develop and/or increase their skills to integrate into the host community, to improve their training and working capacity, as well as to develop a path to independence), different forms of support and assistance could be offered and proposed to the minor such as placement in a community or a reception centre, classic foster care or being hosted by a foster family only during the weekends (so called: *supportive/welcoming families* or *part time foster care*).

These assistance measures are usually organised, established, and managed by the public administration (Juvenile Court, social services, etc.).

When defining possible inclusion pathways and developing adequate and comprehensive protection measures as well as promoting opportunities for the child, it is, however, necessary to consider not only the age but to know social and cultural background that force them to leave their country of origin.

The different systems are:

- **FOSTER CARE**

It provides for residential placement in a foster family formally recognised by the State. The placement of the child is normally decided by a state authority or a social services agency. The state, through the Juvenile Court and the child protection service agency, places itself *in loco parentis* vis-à-vis the child, making all legal decisions, while the custodial parent is responsible for the day-to-day care of the child.

There are two additional forms of foster care:

- **Mother-child foster care.** The foster family takes in the child and the mother at their home or in an adjoining flat. This solution is chosen when the mother is noticeably young or fragile and needs a family context to guide and support her. This foster care may succeed in accompanying and reinforcing the relationship between mother and child preparing for autonomy.
- **Light foster care or welcoming families.** It refers to the reception within families without the involvement of institutions, for a limited amount of time. It could be during the weekend, but also short periods of the year or, for example, the holiday period. Through this form of foster care, the available families/individuals generally act mainly as support in finding a job and in carrying out bureaucratic and administrative tasks, as well as stimulating the child in school, educational and training activities and, in general, in socialising.

- **RESIDENTIAL CONTEXT FOR CHILDREN**

Residential care refers to medium/long-term care provided to minors staying in a residential facility/community. Depending on the minor's needs, there are different care options available. UASCs - also considering their age and other specific vulnerabilities - can be placed in a community or family home, a care centre for UASCs. In any case, the child's place must have standards of safety and protection for the child, including non-promiscuity with adults and access to adequate space for play and psycho-physical development.

- **KINSHIP CARE**

Is an arrangement in which children live with and are taken care of by another family member, because their parents are unable to take care of them. This arrangement is also known as "intra-family foster care" or "parental foster care". It is less expensive than formal foster care and keeps many children out of the classic foster care system.

- **LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP**

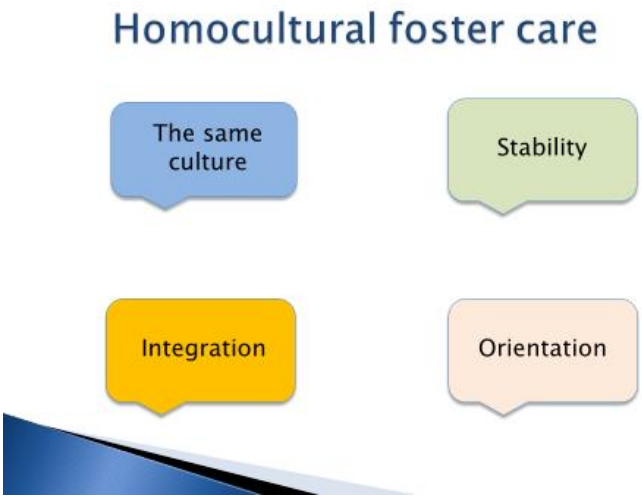
A guardian is "an independent person who safeguards a child's best interests and general well-being. To this effect, the guardian complements the limited legal capacity of the child. The guardian acts as a statutory representative of the child in all proceedings in the same way that a parent represents his or her child".

1.4 HOMO-CULTURAL FOSTER CARE AND HETERO-CULTURAL FOSTER CARE

Two types of foster care are possible for UASCs:

- **Homo-cultural foster care**: with a family that has the same language, culture, and traditions as the Children, a foster care where the families or individual foster carers belong to the same ethnic group as the child.

  Homo-cultural foster care represents, in many cases, an efficient and effective strategy for UASC. In families whose culture they share, they find stability, welcome, shared habits and customs, and also valuable help in understanding the new country in which they have arrived. The UASC may experience, especially initially, a state of disorientation that a family of the same ethnic group can help him/her overcome. Homo-cultural foster care has also proved to be a valid tool for promoting the active citizenship of immigrant families already integrated into the country, making it an essential resource for the territories, challenging the tendency to think of them only as service users. However, this type of foster care can have some risk. The social services and other professionals involved must effectively encourage and support the foster family to really promote the child's inclusion in the local community and not only in the community of his/her ethnicity.



1 FADV FORUM training package

- **Hetero-cultural foster care**: with an indigenous family, a foster care in which the families or individual foster carers do not belong to the same ethnic group as the child. Foster carers shall be adequately informed about the reference values and cultural and religious differences through meetings with community representatives, social workers, ethno-psychologists, ethno-pedagogists and cultural mediators. One of the main advantages of this type of foster care is that the minor, being in a family with customs and traditions different from his own, can get to know and discover new traditions, thus speeding up his integration in the community.

Moreover, foster care with an autochthonous family can create a discontinuity in the minor's life with his previous life; if the latter has suffered traumas, it can represent a breaking point from which to start again.

1.5 BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF FOSTER CARE FOR UASC IN FAMILIES

Foster care, or family-based care, is widely regarded as the best form of care for UASCs. These benefits translate into more significant support in accessing health care, education, and social support, helping the child to **improve his or her ability to build relationships and facilitating integration**. The ongoing construction of the child's relationship with the foster carers can also contribute to developing a new relationship of trust with the outside world, as well as a continuity in care provision, well after reaching the age of majority. These strengths of the foster care system strongly contribute to the development of the resilience of the UASCs. Considering this, classic foster care is characterised by some limitations, such as the difficulty in recruiting foster carers and the fact that foster carers are usually not professionally trained, unlike what usually happens/should happen in residential care facilities where professionals such as educators, psychologists, legal advisors, etc. are employed. Moreover, classic foster care can entail long waiting times due to the bureaucratic process necessary for its formalisation.

Finally, one of the potential disadvantages of foster care is that contrary to what happens in reception centres and communities, minors do not usually live with their peers (unless the foster carers have children). Consequently, it is essential that the fostered children still live their daily lives with their peers, whether minors from similar cultural backgrounds or children who are citizens of the "host" country.

FOSTER CARE FOR UASCs – benefits & challenges

Benefits of foster care vis a vis other forms of care:

- Building relationships
- Promoting resilience,
- Facilitating integration
- Developing trust
- Facilitating access to health care, education, social support
- Continuity in care provision

Challenges of foster care vis a vis other forms of care:

- Uncertainty (time, status, wishes)
- Age of the child/young person
- Difficulties recruiting foster carers
- Foster carers are usually not professionally trained unlike residential care workers.
- System reflections

2 FADV: FORUM training package

1.6 THE TASKS OF THE FOSTER CARER

Main goal of the foster care for UASCs (with the differences that remain between the laws of the various EU countries) is providing him/her with a **proper and safe environment** to support child development and his/her integration in the host society. The whole process is focused on the child and no parallel path is foreseen to support the natural family, as it usually happens in the foster care for national children. Reunification with the child's natural family could also be a goal when it is possible and it is in the best interest of the child.

The foster family also assumes rights that translate into parental authority in specific contexts and occasions.

When it is in the *best interest of* the UASC, the foster carers' tasks also include **fostering the relationship between the child in care and his/her family of origin**. In this sense, when it is considered safe and appropriate and always considering the child's wishes, foster families should be able to help maintain this bond. Such contacts usually take place by phone, using WhatsApp or Skype. Social workers should provide foster carers with detailed and precise

information about this, ensuring that foster families can support and understand the child (who may experience very mixed emotions ranging from happiness to loneliness, anger, or fear).

Maintaining contact with family members will be of particular importance in situations where it is possible for the children to be reunited with their family.

THE SELECTION OF CARERS AND MATCHING

1.7 THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION

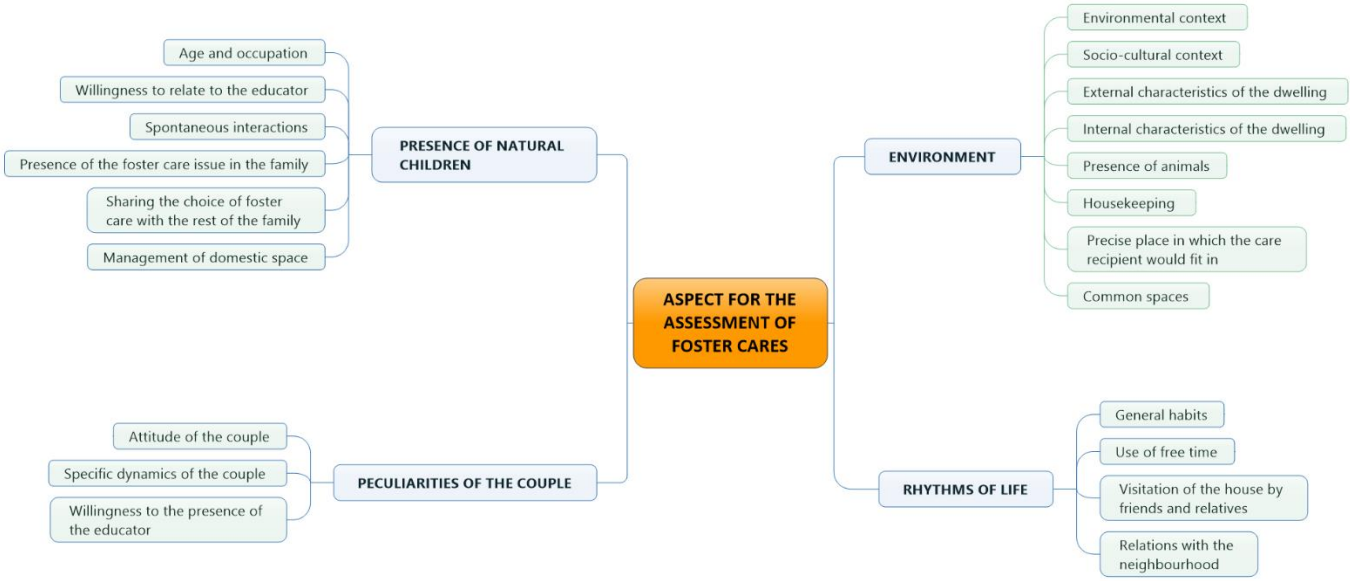
A foster care service should select, assess, and support a heterogeneous group of foster carers (either families or individuals) and support persons (for light foster care, guardian, etc.) able to respond appropriately to the multiple needs of UASCs, considering their psychological, social, ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic specificities. The guiding criteria in the selection phase and especially in the matching phase between the potential foster family and the potential child is undoubtedly complex. It should balance the need to identify general principles to consider the child's personal history and experience.

The assessment process of the family or individual who decides to foster the UASC should be clearly and unequivocally defined and explained to the future foster carers (the same applies to other forms of assistance such as guardianship).

It is very important for recruitment and matching activities to identify **the stages and content of the selection process** and, where possible, the timeframe; the minimum and desirable **standards** to be applied during the evaluation phase and the **personal qualities, skills, and attitudes** sought and/or to be attained.

The assessment should be carried out by adequately trained professionals and should include face-to-face meetings with both prospective foster carers and other family members living in the household.

During the survey aimed at assessing the children's potential foster carers, several aspects must be examined in-depth, deepening the following aspects.



1.8 THE "*ASSESSMENT" OF* THE CHILD

The participation and training of the community and foster care operators is fundamental for the child's selection process. In particular, the operators who follow the UASC and are involved in the formulation of the foster care project must ensure that a psychological and social diagnosis is carried out, which allows them to define - also to facilitate the following matching with the foster family - the minor's need for foster care and the type of foster care envisaged.

The report should also analyse and include, among others:

☑	Personal data, a brief history of the child, presence of any decrees of the Juvenile Court (or other judicial authorities);
☑	The reasons that led to the foster care decision.
☑	Prediction of the duration of foster care.
	If the UASC still maintains contact with his/her family of origin:
	☑ the type and frequency of relations between the latter and the child.
	☑ the kind of cooperation that can be envisaged between the latter and the child, as well as between the family of origin and the foster carers.
	☑ the conditions that would allow the children to return to his/her family of origin.
☑	Any indications on the type of family suitable for the minor
☑	The procedure (how and when) for checking the project.

When assessing the suitability to start a family foster care experience, the child's community background should be taken into consideration as fully as possible, evaluate therefore the state of autonomy, whether he/she respects the rules, whether and how he/she relates to his/her peers and adults. The possible inclusion of the children in a school and training programme may provide further information necessary to complete the assessment and selection process.

It is always advisable to remember that the formulation of the foster care plan cannot preclude the children from being heard.

Hereafter, a selection of factors that may be considered when 'matching'

- Wishes of the young person
- Geographical location of placement
- Type of housing
- Family composition
- Nationality & Ethnicity
- Migration status of foster family & length of time in the country
- Religion
- Language
- Personality of family members & of UAM
- Carer's links with local community
- Strengths and Weaknesses of Carers
- Socio-economic background
- Educational factors
- Capacity to be culturally competent & to support young person in relation to racism
- Dietary requirements of the young person
- Sexuality
- Ability to live with secrecy & silence & threat of deportation
- Ability to respond to any special needs
- Whether there are pets in the home

Sources: Ní Raghallaigh, 2013; Zeijlmans et al, 2017

ACTIVITY:

Through an exchange with the UASC, try to understand what 'feeling at home' means to him. Help him recreate a personal map that contains the points of reference closest to his needs in the target context.

1.9 THE MATCHING ACTIVITIES

Matching is the phase preceding the child's placement in the foster family. During this phase, a family adapted to the specific needs of the child is sought. Matching, therefore, takes place especially for families without kinship ties. However, also for intra-family placements, it is useful to systematically check the matching, to confirm or not the safety of the child and the sustainability of the placement.

During this phase, it is necessary to gather as much information as possible on the child and the potential foster family. Comparing and relating this information can help identify the most suitable family, but can also help highlight aspects that need more attention during the placement.

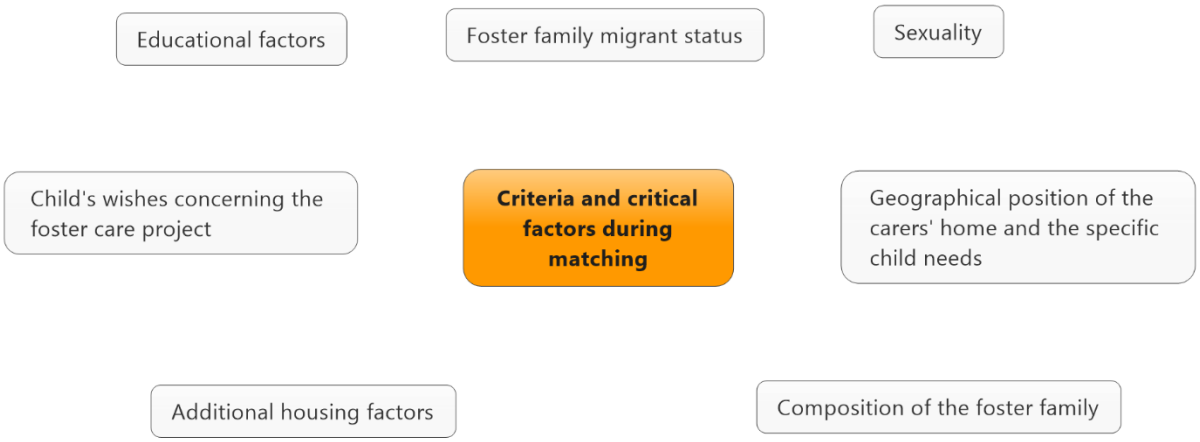
What is sought during the *matching* activity is unlikely that any one foster carer/ foster family will meet all the needs of an individual Unaccompanied And Separated Child, but is sought the highest possible level of compatibility between the foster carer and the UASC, according to the factors to be considered, listed in the previous paragraph.

Once the family that will take in the child has been identified, all the actions aimed at getting to know the parties must be prepared to accompany the child and the family towards each other following the foster care path established. The next step is then to start the procedures for the family to meet the child, according to the methods indicated in the project, until foster care is granted.

Of particular importance is how the confirmation of the foster care decision is shared with the child, mainly its reasons. It is a delicate and significant moment that lays the foundations for the future emotional relationship and trust between the child and the foster family.

Criteria and critical factors to be taken into consideration during *matching.*

Some specific measures and elements must be considered when seeking "*compatibility*" between the Carer and the child, including:

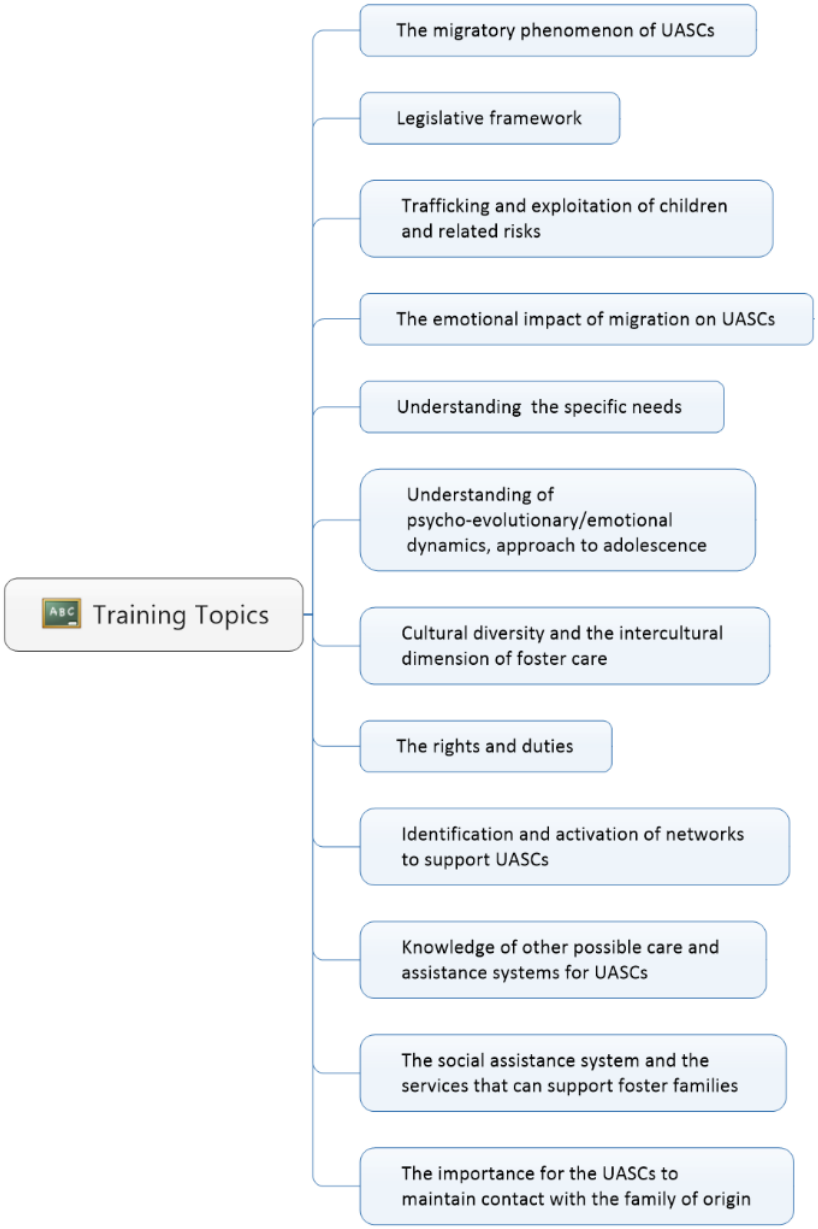


TRAINING, SUPPORT AND MONITORING

1.10 TRAINING

Foster carers' training. Foster carers (families and individuals), as well as those who support them, should be trained, and prepared to deal with the problems they may encounter, identifying the skills and strengths they have or need to develop.

To learn the various skills to provide the best possible care for the child in care, the training should include modules covering the following aspects:



A specific focus should be appointed to **gender issues**. The gender dimension is particularly relevant as it strongly influences both the condition of being a minor and that of being a migrant. It is imperative to include gender among the reasons that determine and influence the needs of UASCs and among the elements to be considered - together with ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic needs - when designing a support and care intervention. In particular, whoever is called to work in the interest of the UASCs must be aware that gender is linked deeply to the culture of each country and, consequently, some implications can define and influence the experience of foster care and caring. In particular, the different gender entails specific and various critical issues related to the child's physical and psychological health and behavioural problems;

1.11 ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

After about six weeks, an **assessment** must be carried out with both the family and the child (separately and together). Thereafter, frequent contact must be maintained with the family and the child in order to address any issues, before these turn into problems or misunderstandings. During the first days of the placement this happens very often. If necessary, an interpreter or key person can be supportive.

The evaluation six months after placement focuses on practical aspects, the child's well-being and the resolution of any problems or misunderstandings. If the family or the child needs more guidance or the placement is particularly vulnerable, extra evaluations must be scheduled between the six-month and annual evaluations.

Monitoring is an opportunity for foster carers and children to share their opinions and requests regarding needs and problems to be addressed. In the monitoring phase, it is necessary to identify dedicated operators both for interviews with families at predefined intervals and for interviews with the child and, in general, with all family members. Quality monitoring requires the involvement of a range of professionals working together according to their expertise. The agency or competent authority should visit and conduct continuous monitoring of each foster placement. It should make an adequate number of visits, at regular intervals. Ideally, monitoring should be carried out by a social worker other than the one supervising and supporting the foster parents.

In most European countries the supervision of the host family and the child is performed by the same social worker. There are particular aspects that require special attention, which are listed below.

With respect to the child

- Paying attention to **signs of developmental problems**
- Offering **support for psychological problems**, threats in the child's development and issues faced by an unaccompanied minor
- Giving advice on how to **promote attachment and resilience**

Concerning the host family

- **Recognising any signs of imbalance** between the burden required of the family and the ability to cope with it
- Recognise if there is **too much distance or closure towards the child**
- Give **advice and support in maintaining relations with the child's biological parents** and other relatives
- **Explaining the legal procedures for applying for asylum**
- **Giving support** in dealing with the uncertainty of obtaining a **residence permit**
- Giving advice on **bringing up children "between two cultures"**
- **Advising on parenting issues**

1.12 SUPPORT

Accompaniment and support - to the families and the child - are considered fundamental for the success of the foster care project.

After the initial training, the **families should not be left behind**. It is necessary to guarantee them the accompaniment for the whole duration of the project: information, provided in a clear, precise, and written form, on the services available and that can be activated at any time, especially in cases of emergency or if difficulties arise, are fundamental tools to encourage and support the foster care process.

Accompaniment should favour in particular, the contact and support of the network with other foster groups and families, *"feeling alone and isolated"* is a serious risk for the success of the foster care project; and an adequate psychological support to the foster carers and the child.

1.13 NETWORK SUPPORT

Every foster family placement is made possible *"by the involvement of several subjects and actors, each of whom plays a specific role within the foster care project: the **child and his/her family members, the members of the foster family or the individual foster carer, the operators of the services competent in foster care, the judicial authority, the operators of the private social sector and the other subjects involved**".* The implementation of a good foster care project, therefore, requires the activation and support of a good network in which different realities and professionals interact and work, with *"well-defined tasks and functions, to be carried out with the utmost professionalism and competence"* and *"in which each actor is required to operate synergically, recognising the other as an interlocutor and as an indispensable resource for the good performance of the project"*.

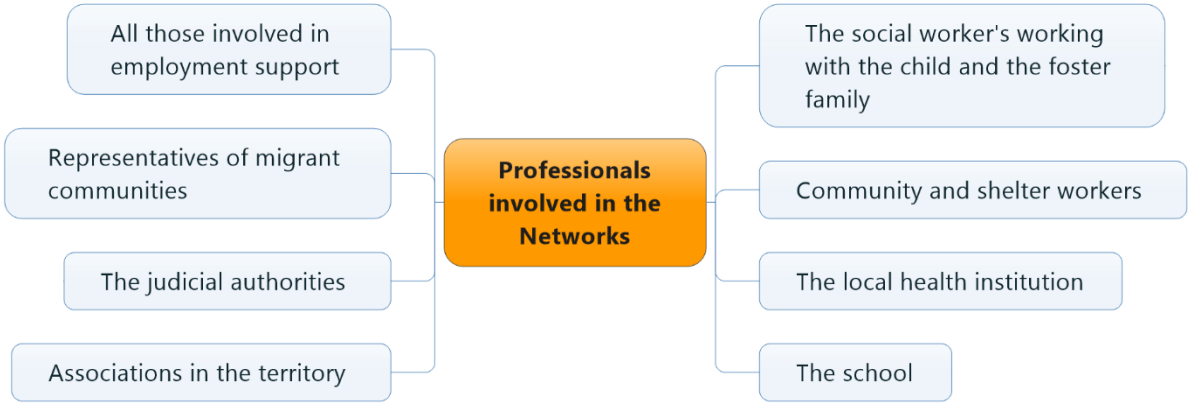
We can define a support network as a "*plurality of actors"* connected by social ties with a relationship with an individual. In this sense, we can identify different types of network: i) **the primary network**, consisting of family members, relatives, and friends, and ii) **the secondary network** (professionals, agencies, and support organisations).

But the network also, as mentioned, unites several people and specialists, individuals, and groups, who can work together in an integrated way to achieve specific goals, working together to assist individuals or families most appropriately and efficiently. In this sense, a *"coping network"* is defined by Folgheraiter, F. in" La logica sociale dell'aiuto" as "a *set of interpersonal links anchored not so much to an individual, but a [...] well-specified problem, and thus to the purpose of its coping",* distinguishing:

- a "*natural coping"* network when all the joint work towards the coping goal was unplanned, people interconnected for spontaneous reasons,
- the "*pure primary natural coping* network" which is made up entirely of relationships between people who already have well-structured links before a given problem arises;
- the "*secondary natural coping"* network, which is a link that is established later than the appearance of a problem to cope with it.

It has been found that where the support networks work effectively, supporting the family and the minor, foster care is effective; on the contrary, where the territorial support networks - for various reasons - do not work, foster care has difficulty in taking off and, if started, leaves more critical issues to emerge.

Among the professionals who are most involved in networks are:



1.14 PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

The support of the psychologist during foster care is critical in equal measure for the UASC and the foster carers.

The minors must have the possibility of receiving the necessary support from professionals in the field (psychologist, anthropologist, a psychologist with transcultural and ethno-psychiatric training, etc.) to face this delicate phase of his or her life. This need is even more substantial in the case of UASC who have suffered traumas and violence during their journey and have experienced cognitive, somatic, or relational impairments.

Foster carers should also receive appropriate support in dealing with reactions and feelings arising from their relationship with children, mainly when they show challenging and complex behaviour. Also, it is essential that foster carers understand the importance of psychological support and do not feel judged or inadequate for the ways and results they are carrying out their delicate task. During the sessions of psychological support, foster parents have the possibility to express without fear all their experiences related to the experience they are going through, not only as parents but especially as a couple and as individuals.

1.15 BEST PRACTICES:

1) **ITALY - THE COLOURFUL FAMILIES OF MACERATA**

Famiglie a colori (Colourful Families) is a project of the Municipality of Macerata aimed at promoting family foster care, including homologous foster care, for Unaccompanied Migrant Children.

The initiative started in 2016, when there was an increasing flow of migrants in the municipality, as well as throughout Italy and Europe. The reception centres for minors (*Comunità Educativa*) were complete. Having to guarantee a safe place for these boys and girls, the social workers of the Municipality of Macerata asked for the support of Macerata's families.

Since then, the service has been systematised with favourable results, first for the minors but also for the entire population. This is thanks to the continuous work to structure and nurture a network of foster families and a whole series of services aimed at foster care the integration of Unaccompanied Migrant Children through:

- learning the Italian language
- obtaining a qualification or completing vocational training courses
- discovering the city and connecting with its citizens through art and culture
- job placement

The many testimonies perfectly described the richness of this programme, which succeeds in catalysing the work of

the various actors involved towards the common goal of integration: the goodwill of the families and volunteer tutors; the competence of the social workers, psychologists and educators who guide these processes and support the families, boys and girls at all times; the commitment of the volunteers who accompanied the Unaccompanied Migrant Children in their discovery of the city of Macerata; the artists who encouraged them in their integration process and finally the companies who welcomed the UASCs for their vocational training.

E.'s words tell her success story with *Famiglie a Colori*:

"I arrived in Italy in 2016, in Pozzallo (Sicily), and from there, I was transferred to Licata. I stayed in Licata for three months without doing anything. I wanted to go to school and continue studying, so I ran away. While I was on my way to Bologna, the train conductor made me get off at Macerata; I went to the police station who asked the municipality, and they transferred me to a community for a fortnight. Once I was settled in, I started studying, learning the language, attended third grade. While I was doing that, I took a course for metalworkers. Now I work as a turner here in Macerata'.

2) SPAIN - THE ACCEM PROGRAMME

ENTITY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE ENTITY

Accem is a non-profit, non-partisan and non-confessional organisation working to improve the living conditions of people in vulnerable situations. Accem's mission is the defence of fundamental rights, care and accompaniment of people in a crisis or at risk of social exclusion. Accem advocates equal rights, duties and opportunities for all people, regardless of their origin, gender, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation and identity, religion, opinion or social group.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OFFERED

The development of educational projects is carried out in a planned, controlled and evaluated way, ensuring the highest quality of care for all minors living in the homes, who have very different needs and increasingly specialised care requirements, as well as being involved in individualised interventions.

Following the basic principle of normalisation, the protection centres try to reproduce an atmosphere of family coexistence, respecting normative social models of the distribution of spaces, activities, rules, offering emotional and material support and personal relationships. In addition, there are multidisciplinary teams in each province and social and community resources for educational and residential care to cover the minors' needs, both in terms of schooling and health, leisure and recreation.

Care in the homes is provided 365 days and 24 hours a day. Resources consider the different ages and the characteristics and needs of each minor in the homes to provide optimal intervention and socio-educational care.

Protection homes are located in the community. They aim at optimal development and the acquisition by the minors of the necessary autonomy, using community resources to develop socio-educational work and the integration of children into society.

Profile of minors assisted:

- Minors within their diversity. Natives and foreigners of both sexes, and any age up to 18 years.
- Who find themselves in a situation of neglect and risk.
- They present developmental, family and social situations that require individualised interventions.

For all these reasons, minors usually present various problems addressed by the technical educational team and the external resources of the community. As far as objectives are concerned, their essential function is to guide the educational and socialisation action that minors are entitled to receive. It is vital to consider and fulfil the following general objectives:

- Satisfy the essential needs.
- Promote maximum development of personal growth and overcome intellectual, emotional, social, health dimensions, etc.

- Integrate the minor and intensify the primary normalised socialisation contexts such as school, community, etc.
- Provide a safe and protective environment where minors can generate learning experiences based on appropriate educational models of responsibility and positive relationships.
- Contribute to implementing the Educational Intervention Plan. It is crucial to prioritise actions and interventions to
- achieve the plan's objectives most appropriately after the psycho-socioeducational assessment has been carried out.

METHODOLOGY PROPOSED

Action programmes provide the framework to develop individual educational plans.

- Organisation of daily life. Daily life is the basis of residential care. Its organisation responds to the needs of the minor and fulfils the following purposes:
- Offer some of the experiences that family life offers typically, i.e., security and wellbeing for the minor.
- Provide favourable conditions for the minors' development and help them express their emotions and feelings, facilitating communication and relationships among peers and adults.
- Health. Healthcare aimed at promoting the minor's physical and mental health. Appropriate actions are implemented to meet the minor's health needs, prevent possible impairments, and encourage healthy behaviour (all under the minor's developmental stage). Detailed procedures are established.
- School and vocational training. All minors will receive schooling and/or vocational training according to their age and needs.
- Autonomy, responsibility, and intervention in conflicts. The expectations of the minor or adolescent's behaviour will be maintained following their stage of development, their level of maturity and their ability to manage their behaviour. Their autonomy will be fostered by preparing them to leave home and developing responsibility for their behaviour to favour personal and social growth.
- Conflicts resulting from coexistence will be addressed by guaranteeing respect for their rights and using techniques promoting prevention, mediation, and reparation. Minors or adolescents will be helped to correct inappropriate behaviour for their personal and social development.
- Leisure and community. Residential care will offer minors play and leisure experiences integrated into community life. Such activities will enhance their physical, cognitive, social and emotional development and help them acquire a sense of fun. In this regard, the action will be:
- Looking for activities and groups that best meet their needs, characteristics, and interests.
- Encouraging the participation and use of community resources.
- Supporting and monitoring the activity.
- Facilitating the continuation of relations built within the framework of these activities.
- Teaching how to plan the free time.
- Focusing on family relations. Family relations will be developed following the direct and concrete directives of the minors team and with the provincial social assistance delegation. In no case will the sheltered house have direct relations with the minor's family, except in cases authorised by the minors' service.

The testimony of F., a Moroccan girl who arrived in Spain as a minor, outlined all the difficulties she experienced as a migrant, a girl and alone, and the essential support she received from the ACCEM programme to obtain a school diploma and go through that difficult transition from adolescence to adulthood. She participated in this programme in Castilla la Mancha and is now 21 years old. In her testimony, she repeatedly underlined the multiple discriminations she faced (at home, at work, etc.), both in her community of origin and in the Spanish community, for being a woman, a migrant, and a minor. Fatima also talks about the challenges she faced during her migration and integration process because of the cultural and religious barriers in her country of origin and in the host country.

TESTIMONIAL: a UASC in foster care with FADV

He has a passion for international football teams and follows their matches. He is also good at sport. He trains whenever he can. He arrived in Europe with this dream: to become a footballer. The day after he turned 18, he left the community where he was staying and was welcomed by a foster family of four people: Daniela and Marco, Sofia and Raffaella's parents. He is a boy described by all as very respectful, autonomous in the management of his daily life and responsible, practical, who knows how to seize opportunities: an example is a fact that in his first year in Italy he enrolled in a vocational training school for carpenters, which he is still attending, while at the same time he completed the eighth grade, with an evening course of preparation for the exam. In addition to learning Italian rather quickly, which is now his third language after Senegalese and French.
When he finishes school, he may serve an apprenticeship, thus entering the world of work. His dream of becoming a footballer has faded into the background, but he continues to play as a hobby. He has a slight stutter that tends to accentuate when he is excited or agitated. He left his land, Senegal, alone, crossing different countries. He entered Europe from Spain and reached a small village in the province of Varese. There, he was attended by the social services, who immediately placed him in the protected context of a community for adolescents. During the time spent in the community, he has never been "created problems". He made friends and participated in all activities at school, including voluntary work. He has occasional contact with his parents.
Those contacts are now sporadic. He has recently received news of a brother and a sister living in France. Today she is happy to know that her brother has been welcomed into a foster family, and he is happy. Very little is known about his background and the journey he underwent. Ibou does not speak spontaneously about it, and if forced to answer, he does it quickly.

He is Muslim and goes to the mosque every now. He is keen to respect the traditions of his culture, which represents the link with his land and his origins. The family that has welcomed him into their home for the past month is originally from Sicily. They moved to Milan a few years ago, experiencing, as they tell it, migration.
After the birth of their first daughter, Daniela worked while she struggled to find employment after the birth of their second. She applied for a job in the north, and the whole family settled in Milan in 2012. The move was initially difficult, the girls were 4 and 8 years old, and the couple recalls that Sofia, of the two, suffered the most. They define themselves as "luxury migrants", recognising the difficulties of starting over in a distant city but having all the opportunities and possibilities to succeed in integrating, as happened fully. In February 2018, Marco and Daniela took part in the Training Course for Aspiring Foster Families of L'Albero della Vita. They also attended other meetings on foster care of Unaccompanied Migrant Children.
At the end of the course, the family takes a break to reflect on their gained awareness and ask themselves if they were ready for this intense experience. When we contacted them in July 2018 to propose Ibou's case to them, we found them more willing to make this project concrete: we tell them about the boy based on the elements we have, they take us to see the spaces of their future home (the move will take place next January), they meet Ibou's social services with whom they talk about the possibility, now confirmed, for Ibou to ask the Judge for administrative continuation, thus remaining under the protection of the Social Services.
On 17 October, Ibou meets Daniela and Marco, and they gradually start to meet each other on weekends. Their relationship seems to work, even with Raffaella and Sofia, who are enthusiastic about having a "big brother". After several months of reception, Ibou has chosen to live in a rented flat with some fellow countrymen. Today, he has a job. His "foster family" is still an emotional reference point, but also proper support for all those issues that a young boy may have to face.

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

1) Which is the Guiding Principle regarding the child?

2) Which of the following rights must be ensured?
   a) Access to education
   b) Access to healthcare
   c) Possibility of reunification
   d) Adequate accommodation

3) Which article of the CRC states that "*any child who is **temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment** […] has the right to protection and special aid from the government. The governments [...] provide a guardian for the child, in accordance with their national legislation. This guardianship may consist of foster care in a family […].?*
   a) Art. 18
   b) Art 20
   c) Art 22

4) _____-child foster care is an additional form of foster care**.**

5) Kinship care is an arrangement in which children live with and are taken care of by _____ _____ member

6) Foster care with a family that has the same language, culture, and traditions as the Children is:
   a) Homo-cultural foster care
   b) Hetero-cultural foster care

7) One of the biggest benefits of foster care is that helps the child to improve his or her ability to build relationships and facilitating integration: True or False?

8) Foster parents exercise the powers associated with parental responsibility in relation to normal relations with health authorities: True or False?

9) Among the selection of factors that may be considered when 'matching' there are: Wishes of the young person, Carer's links with local community, Whether there are pets in the home: True or False?

10) The gender dimension is not particularly relevant among the elements to be considered:

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UNIT 2 COMING TO AGE

Unit Content/Summary

In this Unit you'll face the needs of children and young people in their transition to adulthood, the difficulties in turning 18, and all the request and pressing they have in being considered as an adult.

Also, you'll learn how to support them to be independent, and you'll read some best practices that could help, as well as testimonials that get you into the feeling.

You'll also read some direct testimonies.

2.1. THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

Turning eighteen and coming of age marks a crucial and compassionate step for minors in general and UASC in particular.

Most UASC are adolescents, often close to the age of 18 (of the more than 13,500 asylum seekers minors who have applied for international protection in the 27 EU Member States, 67% were between 16 and 17 years of age), and this, therefore, requires the implementation of specific foster care and reception programmes with the fundamental objective of accompanying them towards autonomy. Awareness of their age and the potential difficulties that may arise must be the subject of attention both by operators/social services and foster families.

When assessing a foster care pathway, the specificity of age must therefore always be considered to clarify the role of accompaniment to adult life that the foster family should facilitate. In this sense, it is essential to underline the need to call for a rapid and accurate assessment of the condition of a minor who is close to reaching 18 years of age since he/she has an extremely short time to enter the protection and integration system as a minor with all the rights that being a child entail.

To make young people independent, it would also be necessary that member countries implement all programmes, services, activities, and protective measures for UASCs even after they turn eighteen, to support their transition to adulthood and to foster their integration into society.

Being autonomous is difficult for many minors. UASCs are often very concerned about turning 18. They fear all the bureaucratic paperwork they will have to deal with and the uncertainty about where they will live in the future often plays an important role. In addition to a network of friends and reference figures, a support network they can rely on and turn to with their questions is of utmost importance. A social life resulting from education and work is, of course, a big help. Another protective factor is being able to speak the language of the country of residence. In some countries continuing care and guidance with a guardian is an option that can be of great support.

TESTIMONIAL from KMOP and Defence for Children International – Italia: Resiland.

"Life in the new country is not always easy. I spent some time to get my bearings, learn the language and understand the rules. My greatest need was to find a job and send some money home, because I knew my father had to pay back the money he had borrowed for my trip. But I was not so aware that in order to find a good job I would have to study and learn to communicate in the language of the country where I was. And to live well I would have to make friends and avoid dangerous situations. In fact, I once had a bad experience with the police, although everything worked out well in the end. I often thought to return to my country, but now I am trying to earn enough to allow my brother, and maybe one day my parents, to join me."

2.2 TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD - CRITICAL ISSUES

In the research from *"Fondazione ISMU (2019), A un bivio. La transizione alla vita adulta dei minori stranieri non accompagnati in Italia. UNICEF, UNHCR e OIM, Roma",* it is outlined the concept of 'triple transition' the UASC face when turning 18:

1) The transition **from adolescence to adulthood** with the changes from a biological-physical, socio-emotional and cognitive point of view that are common to every human being;
2) the transition linked to **migration** that leads to detachment from one's context of origin and the need to build a new life in a different cultural and social context;
3) the transition concerning the overcoming of **traumas experienced** before, during or after the journey made.

By adopting this approach, the artificiality of a distinction between "minors" and "adults" that does not duly take into account the process nature of becoming an adult, the cultural and social differences that affect this process, as well as the vulnerabilities to which this category of migrants is exposed, is immediately apparent. The process of growth and development of these young people is thus conditioned by the concept of registration age that, in protecting the best interests of minors, concentrates all its meaning in the different legal condition and especially in the recognition of the rights of minors compared to legally adult subjects. Research has shown how desires and expectations play a decisive role in this threefold transition, articulated in a pre-departure phase characterized by personal circumstances and desires (e.g. to find better life opportunities, to study, to escape violence) and by one's own and the family of origin's expectations to work and contribute to the family economy.

Among the factors that positively or negatively influence the transition to adulthood are contextual, subjective and relational variables related to boys' and girls' personal, agency and resilience resources as well as the networks of formal and informal relationships they are able to activate once they arrive in Italy. The presence or absence of these conditions determines the variety of perspectives and opportunities open to UASCs, both when they arrive and begin the process of inclusion and when they have become adults.

Some of the most critical issues that an Unaccompanied And Separated Children may encounter when they come of age include:

- the fact that many of the rights that the Unaccompanied Migrant Children was entitled to as a minor (e.g., the right to study, the right to enrolment in the health service, etc.) are lost on coming of age - in different ways in each country - means that some countries provide for certain institutions to protect the minor during this delicate transition phase;
- the availability of accommodation;
- the availability of an income;
- possession of a valid residence permit.

In teaching how to be autonomous is important:

- constantly pay attention to building a support network, both formal (organisations) and informal (friends, compatriots and adults integrated or born in the country);
- try to keep the welcoming family within the minor's support network when he/she becomes an adult;
- ensure that the child knows where he/she will live long before he/she turns 18;
- ensure that the future placement matches best with the child's network and daily routine (study/work).

SOME PRECAUTIONS THAT CAREGIVERS SHOULD FOLLOW

Also, as mentioned above, most of the UASCs received in Europe are over 16 years old. It is of fundamental importance to adopt good practices that can facilitate the transition to adulthood. It is necessary to focus on:

- **Obtaining the required documentation to obtain a new residence permit.** It is paramount that the person who must take care of the child makes every effort to receive all the necessary documentation to obtain a new permit before the child comes of age.
- **Validation and recognition of competencies acquired in non-formal and informal settings.** As part of the *New Skills Agenda for Europe*, the EU has developed a tool for profiling the skills of *non-EU nationals, the EU Skills Profile Tool for non-EU citizens*. It is an online tool aimed at facilitating the mapping of skills of third-country residents. It is a multilingual and free tool. It can be used to reconstruct a migrant's professional profile by mapping their skills, qualifications, and previous work experience. Although the tool is not intended to recognise or authenticate skills, it offers personalised advice on, among other things, recognition of qualifications and validation of skills.
- **Job placement.** Monitor whether training courses have been set up to facilitate the access of the UASCs to the labour market, focusing on job placement with professionals who stimulate the connection between the job offer and the skills and desires of the UASC, promoting vocational training and internships (learning a trade could give the Unaccompanied And Separated Children a greater and more profound sense of being part of the host country and help meet their expectations as well as those of their family of origin). For this to happen, those responsible for the integration of the UASC should foster coordination/agreements with the private sector to facilitate the access into the labour market.
- **Searching for accommodation.** In this regard, it is advisable to contact and ask for support from social services, reception centres (whose operators should support migrants in their search for accommodation once the migrant's reception period is over), and associations that support migrants in various ways.

ACTIVITY:
Explain to the UASC the changes that will take place once he turns 18. Evaluate with him the type of support needed to sustain this period of transition to independence and identifies relevant professionals and possible adults who can become references.

2.3 THE INCLUSION IN THE JOB MARKET

Job placement represents a crucial phase in the pathways of UASCs and young adults. Achieving full economic autonomy is in fact the most demanding challenge faced by boys and girls. The factors that affect the pathways to the world of work are numerous: first and foremost, **the legal status**; the **opportunities of the labour market** in the local context; the presence of an adequate **vocational training offer**; the possibility of having a **social network** capable of mediating with existing job opportunities; and language skills.

The urgency of accessing the world of work is a recurring theme in the narratives of the newly-born, who often struggle to fully understand the reasons for waiting and the importance of following the educational and training steps indicated by educators and/or tutors. Interviews show that UASCs and newly-arrived adults can rarely choose their career path following their own aptitudes and aspirations.

Most of the UASCs have already had work experience in their country of origin (even at an early age), or during the long journeys they undertook to arrive in Europe, working as farmers, welders, carpenters, shop assistants, bricklayers.

Many unaccompanied minors have aspirations to find work and earn, maintain their studies, pay any debts they have incurred to undertake the journey, support their families in their country of origin. The dimension of money must be

taken due consideration when helping the child to recreate a map in the country of arrival and develop a life project with him. Often work needs do not with the right to education and the needs imposed by compulsory schooling. Generally, entry into the world of work is difficult in the immediate for migrant children, due to age, status or immigration and labour laws. In any case, it is good for the practitioner to address this issue with the child, highlighting existing limitations and understanding the problems that arise. An open dialogue may help the child to evaluate important alternatives, such as training for work, study or vocational training so as to be ready in the future for a structured and qualified job.

ACTIVITIES:
Informs the child about the rules of the work and the limits imposed by the system in relation age and status. Explains to the young person the risks in undertaking informal activities and help him/her to find remunerative activities that do not get in the way of his or her education, health and development. Openly show the child the limits and possible alternatives to work.

TESTIMONIAL from KMOP and Defence for Children International – Italia: Resiland**:**

"This is my story and some things I have understood so far. I currently work in a bakery and night shift; I continue to study during the day, in the the day, in the afternoon, once I am awake. I have many good friends, I often hear from my loved ones at home and regularly manage to send them money. When I can, I try to help children and coming from different countries of the world, after a journey long and tiring journey like mine. I hope you enjoyed my story. However, it was very important for me to be able to tell it. Perhaps my thoughts and reflections can help you to better understand your story and maybe they can help you guide you to compose a useful map for your own safety and well-being, so that you can better nurture the tree of your life which is unique and unrepeatable."

2.5. BEST PRACTICES:

1) CROSS-BORDER NETWORKING

In its search for effective methodology, Nidos has gathered many positive experiences involving the family network. Based on a methodological approach similar to the Family Group Conference in New Zealand, in 2013 the international Cross-Border Networking (CBN) was launched. At the heart of the methodology are existing, imaginary and international networks that are involved in support and guidance from the beginning. Since the arrival of Syrian and Eritrean children in 2014-2015, it has become part of the normal work of Nidos to maintaining contact with the families. There are no obstacles because the child has the right to asylum and the family is in favour of contact to allow reunification as soon as possible. Especially with Syrian children, it is often easy to get in touch with the families via telephone or Skype. The Danish Red Cross has had positive experiences in taking an active role if the child agrees, contacting the family abroad as soon as possible. Professionals explain the realistic opportunities for the child and the possibilities for family reunification, explaining how the family can contribute. The unattainable expectations can thus be eliminated, relieving the child of a heavy burden. The use of smartphones makes cooperation with families abroad much easier than in the past.

2) Italy - the projects of CIDIS Onlus

We highlight three programmes that have been implemented since 2015 and are targeted explicitly at Unaccompanied Migrant Children and young adults. Since 2015, CIDIS has worked with approximately 6,000 Unaccompanied Migrant Children.

- **Family Placement:** The programme aims to give Unaccompanied Migrant Children. They are about to turn 18 and will therefore be considered adults, the opportunity to live in a family context rather than in adult centres.

By actively involving the community through public campaigns and calls for participation, CIDIS can place nearly-18-years young people with host families for six months. By doing so, young people are supported in the transition to adulthood and can be more independent. A vital element of the programme is the presence of a multidisciplinary team to support both families and children in this process.

- **CIDIS Home:** The programme consists of a *co-housing* arrangement for adolescent migrants who have arrived in Italy unaccompanied and are approaching adulthood. CIDIS Home is in the centre of Naples. It functions both as a living arrangement for young migrants, who can cultivate their independence and socialisation skills, and as a hostel for tourists that residents help manage and run. This dual function helps young migrants become more independent while allowing them to develop skills related to the tourism sector and access vocational training.
- **Popeye Youth Centre:** The centre aims to promote social and personal opportunities for young migrants living in the area by offering them educational, artistic, and professional activities and giving them a space to socialise and meet with their peers. The youth centre consists of a network of associations and territorial services. It promotes workshops, courses, creative activities, and recreational events to promote legality and active citizenship that will involve Italians and foreigners aged 15 - 21.

3) Sweden - Reach for Change in Stockholm

In 2016, Reach for Change responded to the migration flow of asylum seekers by launching *Innovation for Integration*, a thematic initiative within their Swedish incubator. This programme is designed to help refugee and asylum seeker children and teenagers have the same opportunities as their Swedish peers. Since 2016, Reach for Change has been selecting seven social start-ups working with scalable ideas to integrate the needs of newly arrived children and adolescents into their incubation programme by supporting them through grants, capacity building and *networking*.

Since 2016, the social innovation initiatives for integration have supported more than 3,000 children and young people in Swedish society.

All social initiatives work towards achieving one or more of the following outcomes:

- Improved language skills
- Greater knowledge of Swedish culture
- More social connections with established Swedes
- Enhanced links with government authorities
- More opportunities for higher education
- More job opportunities
- Improving mental well-being

TESTIMONIAL:

Kompis Sverige is one of the seven social startups in the I4I program. Kompis Sverige's youth program creates meeting spaces for newly arrived youth and established Swedes through school workshops, free-time activity programs, and friend matching programs.

Rhoda made Swedish friends through Kompis Sverige. *"My name is Rhodas. I am 17 years old and come from Eritrea. I came to Sweden one year ago and learned a lot about Sweden and the Swedish school. The teachers were much nicer here in Sweden than in Eritrea. Still, the weekends were rather boring because I did not know many people in Sweden and did not have any friends to spend time with outside school. I just sat at home most of the time, and I rarely spoke Swedish outside school. One day Kompis Sverige came to my school and held a workshop. It was great fun, and I got to know several new people from other classes. A week later, I got a Swedish friend through Kompis Sverige. Her name is Sofia, and she is very kind. We will go swimming in a few days! It is great fun having someone to hang out with on the weekends and talk Swedish. I have also been involved with Kompis Sverige's activities, both in theatre and painting workshops. There I have met even more new friends and got to visit new places."*

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

1) The majority of UASC arrived in Europe are among 16-17 years. True or False?

2) To teach unaccompanied minors to be autonomous is important to constantly pay attention to building a _____ network.

3) What triple transition' the UASC face when turning 18 (Select all that apply):

   A) The transition **from adolescence to adulthood** with the changes from a biological-physical, socio-emotional and cognitive point of view that are common to every human being;

   B) The transition linked to **migration** that leads to detachment from one's context of origin and the need to build a new life in a different cultural and social context;

   C) The transition into a different **weather;**

   D) The transition concerning the overcoming of **traumas experienced** before, during or after the journey made.

4) Among the factors that positively or negatively influence the transition to adulthood are contextual, _____ and relational variables.

5) Achieving full economic autonomy is in fact the most demanding _____ faced by boys and girls

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

"Labour integration for vulnerable migrants" https://www.alberodellavita.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/W4I-toolkit-en-desktop.pdf

Promotion mentor: https://careforminors.eu/mentors/how-to-become-a-mentor/

Young Refugees' Transition to Adulthood: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47262325/Refugees+transition+to+adulthood.pdf/9a064fa1-ee97-be3f-84fd-5a27d85e15a6

Integration of young refugees in Europe: https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-integration-young-refugees_en.pdf

Local strategies supporting integration: https://europa.eu/regions-and-cities/programme/sessions/421_en

Interview at the workplace with a youngest from Afghanistan: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oRFmt5L-yE

Worksheet

on Digital Literacy & Skills

ERASMUS+ Project Number 2020-1-AT01-KA202-078091
Training programme for employees working with UASC

Digital skills and access to technologies have become vital for many facets of today's life, such as education or employment. On 30 September 2020, the EU adopted a renewed action plan, the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) that proposes a joint perspective on excellent digital education for Europe (European Commission, 2020). The European Union (EU) has thus made it a priority to strengthen digital learning in every member state so that high-quality digital training and education become **more inclusive and easier to participate**.

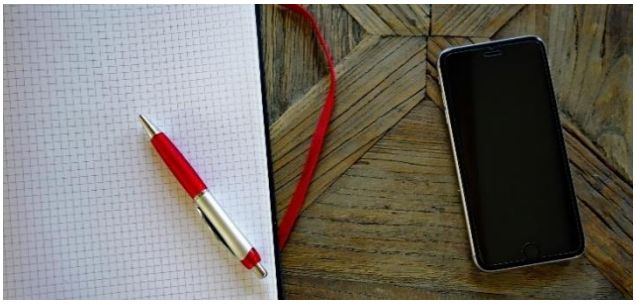

Image by StephanieAlbert (adapted) from Pixabay

The term `digital literacy´ can be traced back to early work by Gilster (1997) and originally referred to a bundle of **skills and capacities necessary for the useful employment of digital media**. More than that, digital literacy was also understood to include an approach towards digital media that is both **creative and critical** (Pangrazio, Godhe & Ledesma, 2020). In 2018, the UNESCO defined digital literacy as *`the ability to access, manage, understand, integrate, communicate, evaluate and create information safely and appropriately through digital devices and networked technologies for participation in economic and social life. It includes competences that are variously referred to as computer literacy, ICT literacy, information literacy, and media literacy´* (Antoninis & Montoya, 2018).

The so-called `**digital divide**´ describes the fact that individuals, companies, and regions do not have the same form of access to ICTs or internet for daily routines (Ye & Yang, 2020). Formerly centred on accessibility, the concept now includes matters such as digital skills, technology employment and participation in society and the economy (Bilozubenko, Yatchuk, Wolanin, Serediuk, & Korneyev, 2022).

Local organizations, such as public libraries, are well suited to advance digital literacy **trainings in the communities**. Important recommendations to successfully plan and implement such trainings include staff training, sustainable funding, scheduling of trainings in line with the target group`s needs, effective marketing (specially to reach non-traditional and minority audiences) and sharing of good practices within and beyond the community (Detlor, Julien, La Rose & Serenko, 2022).

Especially for children and adolescents, the digital world offers a plethora of opportunities for entertainment and learning, but also **potential challenges** (e.g., excessive time spent) and **severe risks** such as media trauma, cyberbullying, self-harm content or access to the dark web (Lau-Zhu, Anderson & Lister, 2023). An informed approach, as well as a balanced (social) media involvement can be learned.

*Please click this link (or type https://www.unesco.org/en/digital-education) to obtain more information on digital learning, including a **collection of best practices** and **open educational resources** curated by **UNESCO**.*

Individual Reflection Questions

As an expert, which role do you see in the digital for the support and qualifications of UASC? More specifically, which conditions do you consider conducive to **personal and/or professional growth**?

Reflection Questions for Pair Work

Challenges that can arise with pervasive connectivity include the risk of video game addiction or cyberbullying.

Which measures or tools have you experienced as useful to guide UASC towards a **healthy behavior**? Which measures or tools do you consider less effective in the guidance of UASC towards **digital balance**? Which parallels do you see to general health risks in childhood and adolescence?

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Infosheet
on Diversity & LGBTQI+

ERASMUS+ Project Number 2020-1-AT01-KA202-078091
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Image by Steve Johnson (adapted) from Pixabay

Within the European Union, human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights are considered as fundamental values. Since the signing of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009, these rights have been established by the EU in the **Charter of Fundamental Rights**. Article 21 ("Non-discrimination") states: `Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership or a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited.´ (European Union, 2010, Art. 21). This includes respect for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) European citizens (Leinenbach, 2013) as well as individuals (including UASC) from the LGBTQI+ community, who face specific challenges on their migration journeys and after their arrival in the European Union.

Organisations for LGBTQI+ refugees

- The Queer European Asylum Network (QUEAN) is an umbrella organisation founded in 2019 that brings together NGO practitioners, LGBTQI + refugees and activists and academics working on LGBTQI + migration and asylum in Europe" - https://queereuropeanasylum.org/
- ILGA-Europe is an umbrella organisation (international, independent, and non-governmental) bringing together more than 700 organisations in Europe and Central Asia that collectively work towards more equality, inclusivity, and accountability for the LGBTQI+ community - https://www.ilga-europe.org

Publications and policy guidance for LGBTQI+ refugees

- The UNHCR Integration handbook provides basic information and practical guidance such as a checklist for LGBTQI+ sensitive integration programs - LGBTIQ+ refugees | UNHCR Integration Handbook
- Introduction to the 'Berlin Model' for reception and integration: a strategy that respects and considers the particular vulnerability of asylum seekers who identify as LGBTQI+ - LGBTQI+ refugees and the 'Berlin Model' - Eurocities

Personal accounts by LGBTQI+ refugees

- Spotlight on THE EU AND LGBTI EQUALITY (europa.eu)
- Making education safer and more inclusive for LGBTQ+ youth | OHCHR (USA)
- Life Stories | SOGICA

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