



## Separated Children in Europe Programme

# NEWSLETTER No. 26 July - September 2006

### In this issue:

- p. 1 Programme update
- p. 2 UNHCR
- p. 2 Committee on the Rights of the Child
- p. 3 Changes and developments in law, policies and practice
- p. 6 Detention
- p. 8 Age assessment
- p. 9 Guardianship
- p. 10 Reception
- p. 13 Missing children
- p. 14 Dublin II practice
- p. 15 Procedures and recognition
- p. 16 Family tracing and reunification
- p. 17 Return
- p. 19 Trafficking
- p. 21 Children and youth participation
- p. 21 Miscellaneous
- p. 23 Events
- p. 25 Publications
- p. 27 Useful web sites
- p. 28 Reporting organisations
- Annex Statistics on arrivals of separated children seeking asylum in Europe by September 2006 and  
Statistics on trafficked minors in Europe by September 2005

The content has been prepared from publicly available sources and information provided by UNHCR and the participants of the Separated Children in Europe Programme's NGO Network.

### Programme Update

**A Position Paper on the Use of Biometric Data** will be published by the Separated Children in Europe Programme in October and will be online available at [www.separated-children-europe-programme.org/separated\\_children/publications/reports/index.html](http://www.separated-children-europe-programme.org/separated_children/publications/reports/index.html)

**A report from the seminar “How to make children visible in migration!”** that took place in Warsaw May 8th 2006, organised by Save the Children Sweden and the Separated Children in Europe Programme, will be published in October. It will be sent to all participants and published at [www.separated-children-europe-programme.org/separated\\_children/publications/reports/index.html](http://www.separated-children-europe-programme.org/separated_children/publications/reports/index.html)

### Changes with NGO partners & UNHCR

**Greece:** New UNHCR SCEP Focal Point is Kalliopi Stefanaki, Protection Officer, UNHCR BO Athens. E-mail: [stefanak@unhcr.org](mailto:stefanak@unhcr.org)

**UK:** New SCEP Steering Committee member representing Save the Children UK is Louise King, e-mail: [L.King@savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:L.King@savethechildren.org.uk)

**Updated contact information** for the SCE Programme management, NGO Network and UNHCR Focal Points is available at [www.separated-children-europe-programme.org/separated\\_children/about\\_us/contacts/index.html](http://www.separated-children-europe-programme.org/separated_children/about_us/contacts/index.html)

## UNHCR

On the Agenda of the Standing Committee 26-28 June was the issue of Refugee Children with a report on UNHCR's activities on the Five Global Priorities issues, namely: Separation; Sexual exploitation; Abuse and violence; Military recruitment; Education.

The decisions of the Standing Committee:

- Reaffirms the importance of strengthening the protection and care of refugee children of concern to UNHCR, notably with regard to separation, sexual exploitation, abuse and violence, military recruitment, education, the specific concern of adolescents, nutrition, health and participation in decisions affecting their lives.

- Acknowledges UNHCR's progress in the role AGDM (Age, Gender, Diversity Mainstreaming) plays in strengthening the protection and participation of children, requests UNHCR to ensure that this strategy continues being used and remains part of its programming.

- Notes the important role played by education in the protection of children, and requests UNHCR to pursue all efforts to budget adequate funds for quality education with gender parity, safe school environment in accordance with the Minimum Standard on Education in Emergencies.

- Notes with appreciation the provisional release of the Guidelines for Formal Determination of the Best Interest of the Child, urges UNHCR for its implementation in operations.

- Recognizes that a systematic approach to the protection of refugee children is required; and encourages UNHCR to enhance its partnership with child protection agencies for a common understanding of an effective system and an implementation strategy to implement it in all operations.

The decisions of the Standing Committee:

[www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/excom/opendoc.pdf?tbl=EXCOM&id=44b256434](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/excom/opendoc.pdf?tbl=EXCOM&id=44b256434)

The Report of the High Commissioner's Five Global Priority issues for Refugee Children can be found on the following webpage:

[www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/excom/opendoc.pdf?tbl=EXCOM&id=4486a1d92](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/excom/opendoc.pdf?tbl=EXCOM&id=4486a1d92)

## Committee on the Rights of the Child

**Day of General Discussion: The Right of the Child to be Heard** took place in Geneva, Switzerland on 15 September.

The purpose of the Day of General Discussion was to:

- explore the meaning of article 12; its linkages to the other articles (in particular articles 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 30 and 31); and the implications of the article for child participation - both as individuals and a collective constituency - in all aspects of society;

- focus on identifying the gaps, certain good practices, and priority issues that need to be addressed in order to further the enjoyment of the right of the child to be heard and to have those views taken into account, in a manner consistent with the Convention;

- promote child participation and opportunities at all levels in the home, school, community and wider society, as well in emergencies, conflict and post conflict situations.

For final recommendations after Day of General Discussion, see:

[www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/discussion/Final\\_Recommendations\\_after\\_DGD.doc](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/discussion/Final_Recommendations_after_DGD.doc)

**Austria:** During the Austrian EU Presidency, the federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection assigned the Institute "Childon" (European Network of National Observatories on Childhood) to make a survey on the CRC Committee's Concluding Observations on the last EU Countries' Reports. The survey was published on a CD in August 2006 and contains a chapter on separated children.

Content of the survey: 1. Introduction; 2. General measures of implementation; 3. General principles; 4. Civil rights and freedom; 5. Education; 6. Family environment; 7. Health; 8. Special measures of protection; 9. Conclusions; Executive summary

The CD also contains a compilation of important documents on Child Rights like: Convention on the Rights of the Child; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts; CRC Ratifications and Reservations.

Lothar Krappmann, Member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, will be a keynote speaker at

the EPIMA 2 Seminar, which will take place on November 30 and December 1 2006 in Vienna. The title of his speech is: The right to education and apprenticeship within the child rights convention.

**Denmark:** September 19 2006 Denmark was examined on the optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child as regards the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The Concluding Observations have been released and can be found on [www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC\\_C\\_OPSC\\_DNK\\_CO\\_1.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC_C_OPSC_DNK_CO_1.pdf)

In general, The Concluding Observations are very positive. A few principal areas of concern and recommendations for the protection of the rights of under-aged victims are: “The Committee ... is concerned that the repatriation of trafficking victims is prioritized with few guarantees of witness protection measures in the country of origin. The Committee recommends that children who cannot be guaranteed witness protection upon repatriation be guaranteed permission to reside in Denmark and receive protection.”

**Ireland:** Ireland faced the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva on the 20th September. The Concluding Observations are available online at [www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/crcs43.htm](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/crcs43.htm)

**The Netherlands:** For the Committee’s Day of General Discussions on 15 September 2006 the DCI has written a paper called “The right of participation in immigration law - the Dutch experience”. Available at the CRIN website [www.crin.org](http://www.crin.org).

**Slovakia:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovak Republic sent the evaluation report about the rights of children in the past five years to the Slovak Humanitarian Council (SHC) to look through. SHC was an active participant that informed the Ministry about the situation and the changes in the area of unaccompanied children coming to Slovakia from 2002 to 2006.

**UK:** The UK government is in the process of preparing the next report on how it is fulfilling its obligations under the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The report will be submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child by 15 July 2007. The Department for Education and Skills is coordinating the UK report.

The UK’s UNCRC reporting process was launched on Tuesday 28 March 2006 with a conference in London. The conference was attended by a selection of people including NGOs, children, young people and officials. The Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP, Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families, spoke at the event.

In Scotland, the Scottish Executive is co-ordinating their contribution to the report and the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People will also be compiling a report. An NGO report from Scotland is being co-ordinated by SACR.

The situation of separated children and other child refugees and asylum seekers has been identified as a key area that will be covered by each of these reports.

The UK maintains its reservation to the UNCRC, which states that it is not bound to apply the provisions of the CRC in legislation dealing with immigration and nationality. UNHCR, the four Children’s Commissioners and Save the Children continue to advocate for the UK to lift this reservation.

## Changes and Developments in Law, Policies and Practice

**Austria:** Because of the new Alien Act (2005), it is now much more difficult for separated children who are adopted by Austrian citizens to receive a permanent residence permit as a family member.

It is not possible any longer to submit the application in Austria. Separated children are now obliged to submit their application at the Austrian embassy in their home country - or if there is no Austrian embassy, at the Austrian embassy in charge of the home country.

**Estonia:** Since 2004 the task of the National Contact Point regarding separated as well as trafficked children lies within the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The duties of the National Contact Point are following:

- To coordinate national resources regarding procedures
- To act as a bilateral contact for individual cases if it is not possible to find other contacts
- To specify inner country procedure regarding separated and/or trafficked children
- To cooperate with the Baltic Sea Council.

**Greece:** The Greek Ministry of Public Order has released an internal order to all police directorates, security divisions, aliens departments etc, of the country, regarding the treatment of unaccompanied children, particularly those seeking asylum, who are intercepted by the police on illegal entry or presence.

The order makes specific references to the full respect of the (a) due and immediate information of the prosecutor for minors and (b) the identification of appropriate care and housing structures and (c) the facilitation of the work of NGOs.

**Ireland:** Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill: The Irish Government has launched the Scheme for an Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill. Since this is just the Scheme/Heads of Bill, it will be some months – or longer – before the full text is available.

Though initially it was stated that the Bill was not going to address asylum issues but focus only on Immigration, it will in fact now replace the current Refugee Act 1996 in Ireland. The Irish Refugee Council and other NGOs will be making submissions prior to the enacting of the Bill.

**Italy:** UNHCR together with other associations, promoted an appeal on 20th of June to the Italian Government for a law on asylum. Save the Children joined the paper proposal.

The appeal was based on a document containing the main elements of this law, promoted by UNHCR and signed by some 15 NGOs working in the area of asylum after extensive consultations.

A joint press release was sent on 4th of July by UNHCR and Save the Children to promote the Statement of Good Practice, an important instrument to protect the rights of many unaccompanied minors reaching Italy, including those arriving at the Southern Italian border of Lampedusa.

Save the Children promoted this summer an open letter to the new Minister of Interior asking to the Government to intervene on protection of foreign children, with focus on separated children issues. Representative of the Ministry of the Interior answered by promoting a working table with associations dealing with foreign and separated children and representative persons of the Ministry of Social Solidarity and of the Ministry of Justice.

In the context of discussions on the future role of the Committee for Foreign Minors, UNHCR is pursuing the inclusion of unaccompanied children seeking asylum, who presently do not fall under the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

**Norway:** There has been an intensive debate in Norway regarding the conditions and the long period of time, which asylum seekers waiting in the asylum centres are forced to endure. Many have been waiting for many years, either for a decision on their case or because they either cannot be returned or will not accept return to their home country. Today 441 children have been living in reception centres for more than 3 years.

In August the Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion issued a policy saying that the Directorate of Immigration, UDI, and the UNE will not make any decisions in asylum or immigration cases including minor asylum seekers that have been living in Norway for more than 3 years, waiting for a decision on their case.

The interruption of case handling means that the obligation to return to the home country on the basis of decisions made by the UDI is temporarily suspended.

The reason is because the Norwegian authorities are working on a new legislation. The new legislation will focus on the children and they who feel attached to the Norwegian society as a result of staying here for a long time. A Greenpaper will come this autumn. The new legislation is supposed to be implemented in the spring 2007.

**Portugal:** The transposition of Directive 2003/9/CE, of 27th of January (the so-called “reception directive”) to national law was accomplished through Law 20/2006 of 23th of July. Despite, the fact that the directive dealt with minimum standards regarding reception of asylum seekers in European Union, in the transposition to national law, an article was included “extinguishing” the National Commissioner for Refugees, an entity with important competences within asylum procedure.

According to paragraph 1 of article 34 of Asylum Law (Law 15/98, of 26th of March):

“Within the Ministry of Interior shall be created the Office of the National Commissioner for Refugees, which shall be competent to prepare grounded proposals of asylum grant or refusal, grant or renewal of residence permits due to humanitarian reasons and declaration of loss of the right of asylum, as well as to decide on the reappraisal

requests which shall be submitted before itself, in accordance with the law.”

As seen, the National Commissioner for Refugees had an important role in the asylum procedure as an administrative appeal board in both phases of the process as well as a consultative entity.

The CPR had always a critical approach towards the person/persons appointed by the Ministry of Interior, but never questioned the function and responsibility of this entity within Asylum Law.

With the “extinction” of the National Commissioner for Refugees the proposals concerning the grant or refusal of asylum, the grant or renewal of residence permits for humanitarian reasons and the declaration of loss of the right of asylum become competence of the Aliens and Borders Service, which then send them to the Ministry of Interior.

**Romania:** The new Law no. 122 on Asylum in Romania (hereinafter called Law on Asylum) entered into force starting with 16 August 2006. It includes definition of unaccompanied minors from the “Qualification Directive” except “caregiver by custom”.

The legal framework for early identification of separated children lies with the Family Code - general obligation to inform the authorities dealing with child protection about a child without parents or legal guardian (5 days max acc. to art. 115 of Family Code) and with Article 20 of Law on Child Protection no. 272/2004 (hereinafter called Child Law) stipulates that foreign diplomatic and consular missions have the duty to inform the National Authority for Child Rights Protection and Authority for Aliens about all separated children on Romanian territory [...]

Authorities which are competent to receive asylum applications (Border Police and the Authority for Aliens from Bucharest and their local branches) benefited from training in the context of Twinning project regarding procedure for separated children. Complementary to these training sessions, a joint team composed from staff of the National Refugee Office, UNHCR, refugee assisting NGOs provided training to border police on asylum proceedings at the border, including issues related to identification, registration and referral of cases of separated children.

The Government Ordinance no. 41 amended and completed the Government Ordinance no. 44/2004 on social integration of aliens who were granted a form of protection in Romania. The Government

Ordinance will enter into force starting 20 October 2006.

**Slovakia:** Preparations are being made for an amendment of the Slovak refugee law and an amendment of the law of stay of aliens.

The implementation of the ERF II project focused on vulnerable groups of refugees in all refugee camps in the territory of the Slovak Republic.

**Spain:** It is worrisome that the discussion now is focused on the immigrant/children condition: if the immigrant minor should be first considered minor and then immigrant or vice versa, in other words whether to apply the Spanish Minors Law or the Spanish Foreigners Law. Depending on this decision, the autonomous communities or the State will supervise the protection of these children. There is a need to adapt these two laws to the reality of the huge arrivals by sea (in the Spanish Foreigners Law) and the specific situation of immigrant minors (in the Spanish Minors Law), and in any case the general criterion which must guide all the decisions taken should be the principle of the “best interest of the child”.

It is remarkable that, despite of the great majority of separated children coming from Morocco, at present more and more sub-Saharan children are arriving to Spain, especially in the last months. Most of them are from Senegal, between 15 and 17 years, but due to their aim of working in Spain, many of them say they are over 16 (despite that the age test reveals they are 15 years old).

**Switzerland:** As mentioned in earlier issues of the SCEP Newsletter this year, Swiss citizens decided on the implementation of further tougher measures within the Immigration and Asylum act on the 24th September 2006. The exclusion from welfare assistance for example shall be expanded to all asylum seekers whose demand has been rejected. They shall only get emergency assistance provided by the canton of their domicile. It is therefore the responsibility of the 26 cantons to provide adequate assistance and protection for vulnerable groups. Also foreign persons living in Switzerland will not be entitled to family reunification anymore for children older than 12 years.

**UK:** Reform of support systems for separated children: This Reform programme has been significantly delayed. The UK government is producing a paper on outcomes for all children

looked after by the state, within which will be a range of proposals, some of which may lead to legislation. The Reform programme will launch its own consultation paper, now expected in mid-October.

New Asylum Model (NAM): The New Asylum Model, which aims to speed up the asylum process, reduce applications and increase removals is now partly operational and is expected to become fully operational within the next few months.

One of the key elements of the model involves segmentation of the applications lodged; during the screening interview, Immigration caseworkers will assign the case to one of seven 'segments' which will then determine processing, management and support pathways for each case.

One of the segments identified relate to cases involving accompanied or unaccompanied children. Whatever segment a person is placed will determine the speed at which the case is processed, the timing of the initial interview, assistance in obtaining access to legal advice, the type of accommodation, and reporting conditions.

It is yet to be clarified how the new model will affect applications lodged by separated children and it will also depend on the outcome of the expected reform in the system for unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Qualification Directive: Council Directive 2004/83/EC (the 'Qualification Directive') is to be transposed by 10 October 2006. The Home office invited comments on the transposition of the Directive from different stakeholders and UNHCR and Refugee Council have both responded to the consultation.

It was of particular concern to UNHCR that Article 20(5) of the Council Directive which contains a direct reference to the 'best interest of the child' principle being a primary consideration was not transposed into the draft immigration rules. UNHCR regret that the UK has missed out on another opportunity to include this important principle in its legislation.

UNHCR also urged the UK to adopt a terminology distinguishing between 'unaccompanied children' and 'separated children'. The latter is not currently used in the UK's legislation or policy guidelines. The common term currently used is 'unaccompanied asylum-seeking children' (UASC).

It appears that the pilot program for substantively interviewing minors has been postponed. The

Home Office has previously agreed to the potential expansion of the UNHCR's Quality Initiative Project to children's cases.

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 received Royal Assent on 30 March. Most sections commenced on the 31 August 2006.

New measures have come into force that will strengthen borders and speed up the deportation process for foreign nationals who pose a threat to national security. It requires that if immigrants from nations not part of the European Economic Area are deported from Great Britain for reasons of national security, they must leave the country immediately, even if they plan to appeal their deportation. The only exception would be appeals based on human rights. The new laws mean that those immigrants believed to pose a threat to the country can be more quickly and efficiently returned to their home nations.

At the same time, security for those entering the country has been tightened with the increased use of biometric information. Immigration officers now have the right to carry out biometric checks on any passenger who holds a biometric travel document. This is the first step in rolling out a new fingerprinting system for visa applicants due to come into effect in 2008.

Immigration officers will now be able to fingerprint immigrants whose identification appears fraudulent, improving the thoroughness of their investigation into the identity of immigrants, and helping to separate legal migrants from illegal fraudsters.

Officers now also have the right to temporarily detain those leaving the country if there are any doubts about their identity, or the validity of their passports and visas. This will give border control workers time to interview suspicious travellers and determine if they entered the UK illegally in the first place, or abused their right to be in the country.

[www.opsi.gov.uk/acts](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts)

## Detention

**Austria:** Even though the number of separated children asking for asylum is decreasing sharply (more than 50% less applications in 2006 than in 2005), the number of separated children in detention is still high (probably even higher than in 2005).

The main reason for this is the new legislation, in force since January 2006, which allows detention

pre-deportation already at the very beginning of an asylum procedure (Dublin II).

While children whose age is deemed credible are normally not detained during the duration of their asylum procedure (they are often picked up directly at their reception facilities for the return to the responsible Member State or, in case of risk of abscondment, detained the day before the envisaged return only), children whose minor age is disputed (see 'Age assessment' below) risk detention for the whole duration of the examination of their claims in Austria.

**Belgium:** There is now a political decision taken at the governmental level to stop the detention of separated children. This decision still has to be implemented and there are currently still separated children in closed centres.

Once implemented, the procedure will be as follows:

- If a child arrives at the border claiming or appearing to be a separated child (following a legal definition), any authority has to inform the guardianship service in charge of separated children which depends of the Ministry of Justice.

- This service will first of all check if the condition to be considered as separated children are reunited (a child under 18 – if needed after an age assessment - coming from a third country out of the European economical space, which arrives in Belgium without any legal representative – parent or legal guardian); this identification procedure should be done within 3 days.

- If the child is considered as separated, he/she will immediately be sent to an open centre for separated children. During the first 15 days, this child will have a special status in Belgium. He/she will still be considered as “staying at the border” (extraterritorial status) as he/she had not entered the country. The Ministers declared that there will be no discrimination between children with this special status and the other ones; they will be allowed to go out of the centre but there will be a better control in order to avoid that minors disappear. It is unclear what type of documents they will receive during this period.

- After 15 days, they will get the same status as the other separated children on the territory.

The reason why they keep this status is because the Ministry of Interior still expects that it will be possible to send some minors back at the charge of the airlines.

The children's rights organisations and the “NGO platform” dealing with separated children have

express their great satisfaction after this decision because this is a result of 7 years of legal and political lobby. However, they express their concern about the status these youngster will receive during the first 15 days because they believe they may not be treated the same way as other children.

Recently there have been some children detained at the border despite this new decision. A group of 8 Chinese separated children (6 boys and 2 girls) have arrived at the border. There were suspicions of human trafficking. They were kept in detention during one and an half month. Then, four of them have been repatriated (but it is unclear if it is a voluntary return or not). The other ones are still in detention. Some guardians obviously think that they are better protected in those centres and that they may disappear if they are allowed to get out (despite the fact that there are specialised centres for victims of trafficking).

**Germany:** The Rhine Land Palatinate Higher District Court Zweibrücken decided on 9 March 2006 (3 W 36/06) that detention of minors should be the last resort only and any means to avoid detention of minors, e.g. the accommodation in a youth welfare centre, has to be examined first.

The court follows the recent jurisprudence of other higher district courts (Higher District Court of Munich, 34 Wx 037/05, decision of 9 May 2005; Higher District Court of Berlin, 25 W 64/04 decision of 18 March 2005).

The decision also deals with age assessment and argues that in case the respective person does not hold any personal documents which would prove his/her age, the district court is obliged to undertake an age assessment in a personal hearing to examine if the person is minor and in need of the respective protection. Additionally the court may ask for expert advice e.g. through a medical examination.

The decision is published under: [www.asyl.net/Magazin/Docs/2006/M-6/8419.pdf#search=%22abschiebehaft%20minderj%C3%A4hrige%202006%22](http://www.asyl.net/Magazin/Docs/2006/M-6/8419.pdf#search=%22abschiebehaft%20minderj%C3%A4hrige%202006%22)

**Greece:** During recent missions in border areas (i.e. Samos island) and relevant discussions with local authorities, UNHCR has witnessed the continued presence of unaccompanied minors (particularly of Afghan origin) in detention centres, pending screening and documentation procedures (that may last more than one week). In some areas where detention conditions are below standard minors are kept together with adults.

**Malta:** Despite a policy published by the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity whereby children are not to be detained, all persons entering Malta in an irregular manner are immediately placed in detention centres run by either the military or police forces. This mandatory detention policy is indiscriminate and applied to babies, children and unaccompanied minors.

Children and unaccompanied minors are then channelled through a fast-track procedure to ensure their release within a reasonable time. This is done via the government agency APPOGG, which intervenes upon receipt of a referral. In most cases, referrals are made by visiting NGOs or UNHCR.

In practice, the fast-track procedure often takes a long time to finalise, with reported cases of children being detained for a number of months. Generally, the reasons for delay are due to administrative obstacles and in the finalisation of medical clearances for parents. Owing to resource limitations and the number of persons arriving in Malta, particularly during the summer months, the duration of the age-verification process is also excessively long.

There were also a number of reported cases of babies in detention as well as pregnant women, taken to hospital to give birth and returned to the detention centres with the newly-born babies.

In detention, children do not have access to any forms of education. Furthermore, the physical conditions of Malta's detention centres fall short of international standards and of the EU's Reception Directive, which is of particular concern with regards to the detention of children.

**The Netherlands:** After a big campaign against the detention of illegally staying children (most of them are with parents, but there are a few separated children), the responsible Minister came with an alternative idea. Under the circumstances that a child has two parents, the Minister proposes to detain one of them. DCI among other NGO's is against this plan because it is a serious violation of the right to family life (art 9 CRC).

**Romania:** In practice, separated children seeking asylum are not detained. The new Law on Asylum explicitly stipulates that separated children are exempted from border procedure, which incorporates confinement to the transit zone.

In practice, immediate access to the refugee status determination procedure and to the territory was granted to separated children.

**Slovenia:** In 2005 and 2006 (until the end of August) there were 124 separated children who were deprived of liberty because they illegally entered or illegally resided in Slovenia. They were held in detention between a few days up to a month and a half.

**UK:** The No Place for a Child campaign, launched jointly by Save the Children, the Refugee Council, Scottish Refugee Council, Welsh Refugee Council and Bail for Immigration Detainees, successfully demonstrated public and parliamentary support to end detention of children. Over 14,000 people wrote to the Home Secretary and 151 MPs signed an Early Day Motion in support of the campaign.

A discussion paper on the alternatives to detention was commissioned by the APPGs on Refugees and Children, and written by parliamentary champions, Lord Dubs, John Bercow MP and Evan Harris MP. [www.noplaceforachild.org/report.pdf](http://www.noplaceforachild.org/report.pdf)

## Age Assessment

**Austria:** From January to July 2006 in 26 cases the asylum authorities did not believe the age of an applicant. Figures about how often the alien police made corrections of the stated age are not available. Still the quality of the so called age assessments is mostly very poor. Very often the public health officer makes a decision just by examining the development of the sexual characteristics and the dental status.

Recently in the detention centre in Salzburg, a 16 year old minor from Turkey was able to prove his age by bringing in his personal documents after a public health officer and a psychologist had identified him as an adult.

**Belgium:** The official guardianship service, depending of the Ministry of Justice, who is responsible for the age assessment, is now working with three different hospitals (instead of one) to conduct the age assessment.

They are also envisaging to conduct a research about the age assessment methods (nothing has been said about the method of this research yet).

**Estonia:** According to the amendment of the Refugees Act (entered into force 21.12.2005) an applicant is required to enable age assessment. The Act doesn't specify procedures for age assessment.

**Germany:** See above re. detention.

**Norway:** Initiated by the Norwegian authorities a number of experts (doctors, dentists and radiologists) have made a research on the methods on age assessments. The main objective of this report was to evaluate the reliability of the two methods used for age estimation in Norway in order to assess whether an asylum seeker with unknown age is above or below 18 years of age. The report with English summary is available at: [http://www.kunnskapssenteret.no/filer/Rapport13\\_06\\_aldersvurdering.pdf](http://www.kunnskapssenteret.no/filer/Rapport13_06_aldersvurdering.pdf)

They evaluated the accuracy of the methods for the purpose of estimating chronological age of individuals in the age range between 16-20 years. The report is critical to the methods. The report states that “using the methods as they are used today, someone who has been determined to be 19 years of age by both skeletal and dental examinations has a change of 8-12% actually be a minor”.

This report support what Save the Children and NOAS concluded in our report on Norwegian age assessments for separated children.

Because of the unreliable methods and all the criticism, Ullevål University Hospital has ended assisting the Directorate of Immigration, UDI. They will not do any age assessment (skeletal examination) in cases concerning separated children in the future.

**Romania:** The Law on Asylum stipulates referral to age assessment performed by the Forensic Medical Institute whenever there are serious doubts concerning the age and the child cannot prove his/her age.

The same law stipulates that the asylum-seeker in question and his/her legal representative are informed about the age assessment (i.e age assessment will not be undertaken before the appointment of a legal guardian).

Article 41 of the Law on Asylum stipulates that the asylum-seeker who will refuse to attend the age assessment will be considered adult. Exception is made when the refuse is made for reasons, which upon assessment of the NRO psychologist, are considered justified.

**Slovenia:** Age assessment is not used in Slovenia. When a separated minor claims to be under age, the authorities treat him or her as such.

**UK:** The government consulted with agencies as to the use of medical/intrusive methods of age

assessment as part of their review of services for separated children. The Home Office intends to start a pilot project on the use of medical age assessment this year, involving x-raying and dental age assessment.

NGOs are lobbying relevant Royal Colleges to speak out against the use of medical age assessment. The HO claim medical age assessment will be voluntary and complimented by currently used non-medical forms of age assessment. NGOs are worried that medical (dental, in particular) age assessment is being introduced by the back door - an increasing number of local authorities have started using it as a matter of routine.

## Guardianship

**Austria:** In winter 2005 it was decided by the Supreme Court of Justice that a fourteen year old separated child from Nigeria had the right to be supported by a guardian. Since then the youth welfare agency normally takes on the guardianship. However, very often the authorities do not fulfil the duties as a guardian and deny a specific duty to act in favour of the child. Some NGOs are now preparing a complaint because of this situation.

**Ireland:** The Committee on the Rights of the Child in its concluding observations to Ireland agreed that the “State party should ensure that children be provided with the opportunity to be heard in any judicial or administrative proceedings affecting them, and that the weight be given to those views in accordance with the age and maturity of the child, including the use of independent representation (guardian ad litem) provided for under the Child Care Act 1991, in particular in cases where children are separated from their parents”.

**Luxembourg:** Caritas ensures the follow-up currently of 45 minors and holds the supervision of 14 minors.

**The Netherlands:** The inspection for the Youth Care (Inspectie Jeugdzorg) has published a report in which they state that the quality of care, support, education and custody for separated children is not as good as it should be.

Social workers and teachers should work harder on the perspective of return for the separated children, says the Inspection. This advice can be contrary to the interests of the separated children if the asylum procedures are not yet finished yet or if the

procedure is not well done. Furthermore, there seems to be a possible discrimination to their right to education if the separated children will have to focus only on jobs that are useful in their home countries.

**Romania:** The Law on Asylum stipulates that NRO submits the request to the Directorate for Child Protection for appointment a legal guardian as soon as the separated child is expressing his/her will to apply for asylum.

The refugee status determination procedure is suspended until the appointment of a legal guardian. Because of the bureaucracy the child is left for a few weeks (sometimes months) without a legal guardian. The legal guardian assists the child during all refugee status determination interviews and the when the child submits appeals.

The staff members of the Directorate for Child Protection undertaking the responsibility to act as legal guardians for separated children benefit from training provided by a joint team, composed by staff from UNHCR, National Refugee Office and NGOs assisting separated children. Most recent training event was organised in June 2006 for staff members of the Directorate for Child Protection in Galati city (eastern border of Romania). Following decentralisation of the asylum system in Romania, since May 2006, NRO accommodated separated children and processed their cases in Galati.

**Slovakia:** There is a strong need for a re-education course of guardians. A new education project under the SHC and UNHCR will start in October 2006.

## Reception

**Austria:** A big problem is that since January 2006 not all separated children are brought to the "Erstaufnahmestelle" (first reception centres). The police are obliged to do the first interview and if it is likely – mainly because of the Dublin II regulation - that Austria is not responsible for the asylum procedure, the asylum seekers have to stay in detention pre-deportation from the very beginning. Some minors are still accommodated in the first reception centre West which does not have specific provisions for separated children.

Because of the significant drop in numbers of applications from separated children the specialised centres for separated children are now facing serious financial problems. If the number stays that

low in the future it will be likely that some institutions will be closed within the next months.

**Belgium:** A new reception system is discussed among the competent ministries.

This system would be in three phases:

1. First reception during 15 days in a open centre for the observation and the orientation of the separated child towards another reception centre (depending of the situation:: age, risk situation etc.).
2. Several centres depending of the reception system for asylum seekers or the reception centres for children in need (in the Children's care system) may then accept the child; this for a period of 6 month (eventually 12).
3. A long term solution is researched if there is no possibility for return.

This system would be applicable to asylum seekers AND non asylum seekers without any discrimination. This means that a child will be send to a reception centre depending of his situation and needs rather than the procedure. This was a clear claim of the "NGO platform for separated children" since years.

The specialised centres for the reception of separated children have now a permanent financing. Up until now, their funds were to be renewed each year (and often, there was a risk that they were not renewed). They have a greater capacity to accommodate separated children.

**Finland:** The Ministry of Labour has announced that some units for separated children in reception centres will be closed down because of the decline in the number of asylum seeking children and the number of asylum seekers in general.

One of the centres to be closed is Perniö, which has the oldest unit (a group home) especially meant for separated children. Another closing unit is a small one specialised to take care of small children.

It is understandable that reception centres are closed down and opened again according to how many asylum seekers are coming. But this causes problems to the work. Units planned and specialised for children have always to live in the fear of being closed down, and qualified staff in the fear of losing their jobs.

This may have consequences to the continuity and development of the work. Besides, decisions on closing down or opening new units are not based only on the best interests of children or quality of the work. There are other reasons behind decisions also, like e.g. local unemployment rate.

**Greece:** As of January 2006, and with subsequent funding from the ERF allocation for Greece, the following facilities to accommodate unaccompanied children seeking asylum are available in Greece:

- in Aspropirgos, with capacity for some 25 minors (responsible agency: ELINAS)
- in Makrinita, Pilion, with capacity for some 35 minors (responsible agency: ARSIS)
- in Thessalonika, with capacity for some 20 minors (responsible agency: Social Solidarity)
- in Athens, with capacity for some 10 minors (responsible agency: ARSIS)
- in Anogia, Crete, with capacity for some 25 minors (responsible agency: National Youth Foundation)

**Ireland:** Children's organisations have criticised the fact that accommodation centres for separated children did not come under the Social Services Inspectorate as children's residential centres are required to.

It is argued that this is one of the factors contributing to children going missing. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has stated that there is a need for "measure to create a statutory basis for the Social Services Inspectorate to function and extend its mandate to all children without parental care".

**Norway:** A working group in the Norwegian Department of Migration has just finished a report where the main focus is on the situation for the children who are living in reception centres in Norway. The report gives some proposals about the procedure for processing asylum applications and how to improve the situation for the children in reception. Thus far the report is not public.

**Romania:** According to legal provisions in the Methodological Norms for implementation of the Law on Asylum, separated children over 16 are to be accommodated in a NRO Reception Centre, while separated children under 16 in shelters of the Directorate for Child Protection. Methodological Norms refer also to the Child Law, which has similar provisions in this regard.

Asylum-seekers (including separated children seeking asylum) benefit from primary medical and hospital assistance free of charge, as well as treatment in cases of acute or chronically diseases which put his/her life on imminent threat.

In cases of those with special needs, these benefit from adequate medical assistance.

Methodological Norms includes specific provisions referring to assessment of cases with special needs by NRO trained staff and their referral to specialised institutions in such cases.

In practice, one child under 16 was accommodated in a NRO centre in order to be kept within his community for psychological support.

2 separated children are accommodated in the Galati reception centre.

**Slovakia:** A reception centre is still closed due to reconstruction. Children are sent from the borders directly to the foster care institution for children in the selected department where the child was found. In the asylum procedure, children are placed in the specialized reception centre for vulnerable groups of refugees in Rohovce. The second facility centre Brezova pod Bradlom burned down on 11 September 2006. There were no fatalities.

We have prepared a small qualitative research study of the system of care of separated children in Slovakia. It was realized as a PhD research under Trnavska University.

The method of the research was a tape interview with chosen interviewees and analysis of these interviews. Because of the different possibilities for an unaccompanied minor in Slovakia, we spoke to people employed by two ministries that work in this area (bureaucracy of both ministries, which has any impact on unaccompanied children, guardians, directors of specialized centres, social workers of the centres, unaccompanied children, UNHCR and two NGOs. One NGO works directly in both centres, another one monitors the situation of compliance of human rights in Slovakia, eg. the main goal of the last monitoring report of that organization was about children's rights in Slovakia in general, the situation of unaccompanied children was a part of that research).

The basis of our analysis was a legal framework of the Statement of Good Practice and its 11 minimum standards and their implementation in the facilities where unaccompanied minors are placed.

The first foster care center was established under the Ministry of labour, social affairs and family (Horne Orechove). Under the Ministry of Interior, a system of refugee centres has been developed. When children ask for asylum, they move to these camps (a camp chosen for the research was the accommodation centre Brezova pod Bradlom).

The results of the research are following:

The main task was to find out how the principles of Good Practice are implemented, and what eventually prevents them from being implemented. During the interview we asked three fundamental questions. The questions were to help us to understand better the opinion of the respondents.

1. What do you think this principle is about?  
2. Do you think that this principle is being implemented?

- Auxiliary questions to the second question: If yes, how? If not, why?

3. Do you see any possibilities to improve the situation?

As for the first principle, we found a new question. It helped us during the analysis of interviews: What are limits of implementation – practical realization or legal framework?

Principles No. I, II, III, IV, XI are implemented.

Principles that are not implemented:

No. V: because of the small amount of translators, and dilatory and sometimes indifferent attitude of guardians.

No. VI: because of lack of facilities for separated children and location of the centres (they are quite far from the nearest inhabited area).

No. VII: because the guardians do not carry out their role sufficiently.

No. IX: because of the absence of continual education of the staff

No. X: as separated children usually disappear.

As for the principle No. VIII, it was not possible to determine a clear answer, if it is implemented or not.

In general, the limits of implementation are to be found in practical realization, the legal background is sufficient to protect the interest of separated children.

Because of its quantitative aspects (too small amount of separated children and guardians), this research cannot be presented as a characteristic sample.

**Slovenia:** The reception of separated children is critical. We assume that high numbers of separated children caught by the police are immediately returned to the country from which they came.

There is no appropriate accommodation facility for separated children in Slovenia, where suitable protection, support and psycho-social programmes would be provided.

Separated children who do not ask for asylum are accommodated in the Centre for Foreigners, which is an institution managed by the police, so the

separated children are under the police supervision and their movement is restricted.

Separated children asylum-seekers are accommodated in the division for separated children within the facility of the Asylum Home. Existing accommodation and reception conditions for these children are not only inappropriate but also insufficient to provide needed assistance to meet their special needs because of the lack in providing special psycho-social support (especially to children with traumatic experience), social integration programmes (for easier integration into the Slovene society or into the country of origin in case of returning back etc.) and the fact that all asylum seekers are accommodated at the Asylum Home, so the separated children are much more exposed to contacts with adults and thus to potential dangers like child trafficking.

Because there is no systematic solution for accommodation of separated children that were recognized as refugees, their accommodation, as the first step of integration, is usually postponed and they stay in the Asylum Home for some time after obtaining refugee status.

**Spain:** 2006 represents for Spain the year with the biggest number of arrivals of illegal immigrants by sea. The number of people who arrived only in August passes the total number of immigrants arriving in 2005 (4.751).

This year in the Canary Islands alone more than 25.000 people arrived and at present, most of them are sub-Saharan immigrants.

The arrival of minors is one of the challenges that the Islands is facing with the situation of overflow of the Protection Centres for Minors. In the Canary Islands are now accommodated 940 minors (other 70 are awaiting the age test confirming their minority) when the maximum capacity established is 250. To face this situation, last March four centres of emergency for minors were opened. At present in Tenerife some of them are accommodated in the campsite of the army.

On the Canary Islands, adults are transferred to the Peninsula after 40 days or repatriated, but minors stay under the responsibility of the Canary Government, because in Spain, autonomous governments are the competent authority to address children's issues and needs in their community, and thus are the primary public authority responsible for separated children.

According to the government of the islands the only way to face this situation of emergency is to transfer

the minors to the autonomous communities of the Peninsula.

On the 18th of September the Spanish Government organised a meeting of the Consejo Superior de la Inmigración with the autonomy communities. The aim was to elaborate a Reception Plan for minors from Canary Islands. Representatives of the autonomous communities have expressed their willingness to receive the minors, but there is not a clear agreement, and most of them stated to be saturated. During the next days they will transmit the number available in their centres and the Government will also communicate the funding at disposal for each community.

Andalusia will not be able to receive minors, due to the saturation of its Centres for minors, 978 minors under the protection of the Andalusian Government.

More than 20% (23) of the almost 100 immigrants who arrived by the end of August in Motril (Granada, Andalusia) were minors between the age of 14 and 17. All the adults were repatriated but the minors couldn't be expelled.

The centres, of the province of Granada, according to the Government, are at the limit of their capacity and an emergency plan was activated to transfer some minors to other provinces in Andalusia. Some of them were accommodated in hostels outside Granada.

In Melilla (autonomous city located in North Africa) the Protection Centres for Minors have a capacity of 160 and 180 minors are already accommodated. Melilla wants to reach an agreement with the Government of Morocco to repatriate the minors. Only between the 7th and 11th September entered 17 unaccompanied minors from Morocco, the majority between the ages of 10 and 12.

**Sweden:** There was a change in legislation on 30 June. The responsibility for housing of separated children was transferred from the Migration Board to the municipalities.

The problems in finding sufficient number of interested municipalities together with the large number of arrivals of separated children in July and August (150 children, the largest number in several years) has meant that children have been staying in interim accommodation longer than expected before being transferred to the municipalities.

**Switzerland:** The number of arrivals of separated children seeking asylum dropped once more in the first six months of this year (it is interesting though that there is an increasing percentage of females).

Consequently, a smaller number of separated children are referred to the 26 cantons in order to be assisted during their stay in the country.

To keep or even improve the quality of reception and assistance in the cantons, it is now urgent that the Federal Office for Migration works out a system together with the cantons how and where vulnerable groups like separated children shall be hosted in an adequate manner. When small cantons are in charge of just a tiny number of separated children, there is a risk that specialised structures are abolished and separated children might be placed under the same roof as adults. A smaller number of separated children should be considered as an opportunity to professionalize reception, assistance and guardianship.

**UK:** The Home Office have funded a number of social work teams to be based at ports of entry into the UK to work alongside immigration officers. While all efforts to safeguard and support children are strongly welcomed, there are concerns that the delineation between the role of the social worker and the immigration officer is now less clear, both in reality and in the child's perception.

Save the Children Scotland Programme chaired the Children's sub-group of the Scottish Executive's Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, developing an Action Plan which will be launched at the end of the year. Key issues identified by the group for action by the Scottish Executive include improving the support provided to separated children through the introduction of guardianship and increasing local authorities' duties, especially to those young people leaving care at 16 and post-18.

Scottish Refugee Council has recently received funding to provide a support service to separated children in Glasgow, based on the Panel of Advisers service managed by the Refugee Council in England.

## Missing Children

**Denmark:** In 2005 65 children disappeared from the Danish reception centre (= 57.5% of 113). Of the disappeared children, 6-7 had arrived already in 2004.

The disappeared children were mainly from China, Iraq and Somalia and a group of African countries (Cameroon, West Sahara, Sudan, Nigeria, Sierra

Leone and Morocco) followed by Afghanistan and India.

[Source: Danish Red Cross Asylum Department]

**Greece:** The largest percent of unaccompanied children arriving in Greece is never registered by agencies providing appropriate care and assistance. There have also been several instances during which minors are referred to reception centres, yet they never appear or if they do, decide to thereafter desert these facilities on their own.

It was recently reported by the 'Social Solidarity' that 10 unaccompanied children left the reception centre without telling anyone about their intention to leave and their destination.

**Hungary:** 10 males have disappeared from the Youth Centre of Nagykanizsa, run by the Hungarian Red Cross.

**Ireland:** Media attention continued about the number of children missing from accommodation centres. Three leading children's organisations, namely the Irish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Barnardos and The Children's Rights Alliance, as well as the Irish Refugee Council have commented publicly about this disgrace.

In August Barnardos issued a statement calling on an action plan to include the need for a 24 hour social services service, guardian ad litem to represent separated children, centres to come under the remit of the Social Services Inspectorate and a proper data base of children to be created.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has made reference to a need for all of the above in its concluding observations.

Examples of three press releases on separated children by leading child protection agencies and the IRC at:

[www.barnardos.ie/news119.htm](http://www.barnardos.ie/news119.htm)

[www.ispcc.ie/pr\\_missing\\_childrens\\_day.htm](http://www.ispcc.ie/pr_missing_childrens_day.htm)

[www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/press06/separated\\_children.html](http://www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie/press06/separated_children.html)

**Luxembourg:** One separated child disappeared in July.

**The Netherlands:** Over 40 children from Nigeria have disappeared from reception centres. The call for closed centres grows in the parliament from almost all political parties. DCI protested against this 'easy' solution because of the fact that detention is a very drastic measure that should only be used as a measure of last resort (art 37 CRC).

DCI does not think that the responsible authorities have spent enough time, money and knowledge in trying to protect these minors in stead of imprisoning them.

The police at the airport will get trainings to be more sensitive to signals of trafficking.

**Slovakia:** 99% of the separated children left one of the centres in a period between one to three months after arrival. Slovakia seems to be 'unattractive' for most children

**Slovenia:** In 2005 and 2006 (until the end of August) 131 minors disappeared from the Asylum Home. In most cases these were boys that wanted to join their relatives in other European countries.

## Dublin II practice

**Austria:** Because separated children are not always brought to the first accommodation centres it is now much more difficult for NGOs to monitor the Dublin II procedure. At the moment there are no figures available.

**Denmark:** In the work with the presumed victims of trafficking in the team under the Ministry of Social Affairs, Save the Children Denmark has experienced several cases involving minors where it has been decided that they are to be returned to another European country they had been in prior to their arrival in Denmark. There have been several instances in which the child has disappeared from the centre where she/he was staying immediately after decision has been passed to return the child to another country.

This procedure renders it impossible for the child's guardian to achieve any kind of a sense of confidence with the child in the event that the child can be subject to return to another European country where she/he can be subject to exploitation and where the child has yet to be offered support and assistance.

The co-operating partners in the team have strongly recommended that these children ought to be exempted from special procedures such as e.g. being returned to a third country and that the Danish state should engage in agreements with other countries to prevent this from occurring.

**Greece:** The Greek authorities have recently amended their policy to allow Dublin II returnees re-enter the asylum procedure.

**Malta:** In August an unaccompanied minor was returned to Malta from the UK by virtue of Dublin II. It transpired that the return was erroneous, yet the minor was not accepted back by the UK authorities. The minor is presently still in Malta awaiting a resolution of his situation.

**Romania:** The new Law on Asylum includes one chapter on Dublin II procedure, transposing provisions of Dublin regulations. The relevant chapter will enter into force when Romania will join EU. Therefore there is no Dublin II practice up to the date.

**UK:** Several cases in which the Home Office have sought to return separated asylum seeking children and or/age-disputed children under the Dublin II Regulation came to UNHCR's London office attention in the last year. UNHCR was also approached by children in EU member states seeking to reunite with family members in UK. UNHCR is concerned that the cases have demonstrated an inflexible approach to Dublin II in order to effect family reunion in contrast with its favoured use as a removal tool. Statistics in relation to use of Dublin II are not published by the Home Office.

In August, representatives from the Refugee Council Children's Panel, International Policy Team and Mainstreaming Policy Team met with the Third Country Unit at the Home Office to share concerns about the implementation of the Dublin II Regulations in the UK, and to seek to develop communication and understanding which may help to protect children in the UK who are subject to these regulations.

## Procedures and Recognition

**Belgium:** A new law concerning the asylum procedure has been adopted by the Parliament. There is barely nothing specific concerning minors seeking asylum and separated children. This law should enter into force within the next month. A new legal status has been created within the system of "subsidiary protection" for those who do not receive the refugee status.

**Ireland:** A Supreme Court decision in July 2006, resulted in a judgment which stated that applicants appearing before the Refugee Appeal Tribunal can access previous decisions. Previously Ireland did not

allow for the publication of decisions and worked shrouded in secrecy, lacking any transparency.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child questioned the Irish State on the process of the refugee determination interview for separated children and whether the State had trained interviewers and translators sufficiently to work in a child-friendly manner. In its concluding observations it stated that: "the committee is concerned that unaccompanied children or children separated from their parents might still not receive adequate guidance, support and protection during the asylum process, in particular with respect to access to services and an independent representation".

It recommended the State take into account the principles outlined in its General Comment No 6 (CRC/GC/2005/6) and the SCEP Statement of Good Practice.

**Norway:** So far this year 13 separated children were granted asylum. 32 separated children were granted residence permit on other protection grounds. And 35 were granted residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

The authorities state that they pay attention to and use the term "child specific persecution" more often and are more aware of the vulnerability of the children.

The children who get residence permit in Norway are primary from Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Russia.

**Romania:** Provisions of the Law on Asylum and of its Methodological Norms, stipulating that individual interview should be conducted in the presence of the guardian if asylum-seeker's age is under 18, are completed by provisions of Article 24 of the Child Law according to which the child should always be interviewed and listened to when s/he is more than 10 years old. When the responsible authority considers necessary, those below 10 years old may also be interviewed.

Other provisions in the new Law on Asylum refer to interview of a child when her/ his psychological development and maturity degree allows it. The Law on Asylum explicitly stipulates the principle of the best interest of the child as a guiding principle for every decision regarding a child.

The child is assisted by a legal guardian, a lawyer or legal counsellor from CNRR and an interpreter. The NRO decision must be appealed within 10 days from the date of communication. The local court

examines the child's appeal. NRO is the respondent in the trial. Against the decision of the local court the child and his legal guardian or NRO may submit recourse. The recourse is judged by the Tribunal in a court with three judges.

Children are exempt from accelerated procedure and from the border procedure. They are not detained for illegally crossing the border to Romania.

Out of five cases of separated children registered in 2006, two were granted refugee status, one is pending court decision, one withdrew his asylum application and one abandoned the procedure.

**Slovenia:** Since March 2005 asylum has not been granted to any separated children.

**Spain:** The situation is really worrying, most communities ignore the nine-month deadline to document children (residence permission) established by law and in many communities as Madrid or Canary Island children reach the age of 18 and are expelled from the protection system without any documentation of their legal residence or opportunity to find a job.

**UK:** The new Asylum Policy Guidelines (API) on children asylum seekers became available in April 2006. The previous version was withdrawn in early 2002 and was since being redrafted. During the drafting stage UNHCR has provided the Home Office with extensive comments and suggestions and is pleased to report that its comments were largely incorporated.

The guidelines refer to the UK reservation to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child but calls on its caseworkers to adhere to the principles set by the Convention and in particular the principle of best interests of the child 'where possible, subject to the need to maintain effective immigration control'. UNHCR continue to argue that the principle of best interests should be adhered to, and transposed into national legislation and its application not only left to the discretion of caseworkers.

Recognition rates for separated children claiming asylum in the UK have risen slightly, and provisional figures suggest that 6% of applicant children have been recognised as refugees in 2006.

## Family Tracing and Reunification

**Finland:** Family tracing & information sharing between different authorities: The Parliament is still dealing with proposed change to the Aliens' Act concerning information sharing between reception centre and migration authorities as well as family tracing of asylum seeking separated children.

It has been proposed that the migration authorities would have the right to get information about separated children concerning their identity and family members from the reception centre personnel. This is based on an idea that people taking care of children might get to know or hear more about children and their family than children themselves are ready to tell to immigrant authorities. Decision makers are especially interested in possible parents of separated children and their whereabouts.

NGOs have been very critical towards the change and how the Government Bill is written. According to this criticism the new practice would jeopardize the quality of the care of separated children by putting the personnel in a double-role.

Children should be able to trust people who are taking care of them but these same people would also have to report private matters of the children against their will to the immigrant authorities. However, it is said that all this would be in the best interests of the child. NGOs doubt that the best interests of the child would be met with this new practice. They are concerned that searching for family members would lead the asylum process too much and thus the investigation of the need for international protection would become less important.

NGOs also state that the rights of children have to be prior to the practical difficulties decision makers face when dealing with applications. Family tracing should be for the child and not for the decision makers.

ISS helping the government in family tracing – a project: The Directorate of Immigration has started to trace the family members of asylum seeking separated children. So far family tracing has not been the duty of the migration authorities, but the new proposed change in the Aliens' Act would give the responsibility to the Directorate of Immigration which also investigates asylum applications and makes decisions.

So far family tracing has been offered to children through the Finnish Red Cross but it has been

strictly confidential between the applicant and the Finnish Red Cross.

In the one year pilot project funded by the European Refugee Fund the Directorate of Immigration is doing tracing with the help of International Social Service.

ISS has interviewed 4 children in Finland before trying to get information about their families through ISS offices in the countries of origin.

Some NGOs have been following the pilot project with concern and claim that the practice can be seen as discriminatory against children: there are no “agents” in the countries of origin gathering information about adult asylum seekers, so they ask how this can be seen as good practice with children.

**Ireland:** On family reunification the Committee noted that the State should consider reviewing the definition of family in the Refugee Act 1996.

This of course could now be done pro-actively by adding a new definition in the Immigration, Residency and Protection Bill.

The Committee added that the definition should “better correspond to the developing understanding of the family”.

**The Netherlands:** There are a lot of problems with family reunion, with the right to family life in general. Although quite a few judges have declared the Dutch rules on family reunion contra the European Directive on family reunion (2203/86/EG), the highest court (Council of State, Raad van State) until now confirms the decisions of the Minister.

If a child and his parents are separated for more than five years, the family ties are assumed to be broken, there is no more ‘actual family life’ according the policy. Nowadays there are a lot of Dutch parents or Dutch children who are not allowed to live in the Netherlands with their foreign children or parents.

**Norway:** NOVA – a research institute under the auspices of the Norwegian ministry of education and research – has started a comparative study on family tracing and reunification concerning separated children.

The study will look to experiences and practice in other European countries. By the end of the study, in January 2007, there will be some recommendations regarding how the Norwegian Immigration Authorities should handle these kinds of questions.

**Romania:** According to Article 72 of the new Law on Asylum (Law 122/2006) – family reunification for separated children is initiated ex officio by the National Refugee Office taking into account the best interest of the child and with the agreement of the legal guardian and, if the case, with the agreement of the child himself/herself.

**Switzerland:** Three Somalia children – staying in a refugee camp in Kenya – were authorised to enter Switzerland to be reunified with their parents, asylum seekers with a provisional permit in Switzerland. It could be shown and proved that nobody else of their family were able to provide the necessary support for the children and that they suffered from being separated from their mother. In this case, Switzerland respected the right of each child to have a family relationship.

**UK:** The British Red Cross have issued Guidelines for Restoring Family Links for Unaccompanied and Separated Children. More information is available from Policy and Practice Officer, International Tracing and Message Services, UK Office on +44 (0) 207 8777255.

## Return

**Belgium:** Four Chinese separated children have been returned during the last weeks. It’s difficult to know whether it was a voluntary return or not! The guardians of those children have not been able to prevent it.

**Ireland:** A recent deportation charter to Nigeria in September saw a mother returned while her young son was left behind. The child is now in care. It highlighted again the need for clear child protection guidelines and policies to be in place for immigration officials carrying out deportations where children are concerned.

**Malta:** IOM Rome, in collaboration with the Maltese government, is launching a seven-month pilot project in Malta to help failed asylum seekers or other migrants who are not eligible for residence to voluntarily return home.

The project, which will run until December 2006, is co-funded by the European Refugee Fund (ERF), the Maltese Ministry for Justice and Home Affairs and IOM.

The initiative will include four training-information sessions for Maltese government officials, police officers and social workers.

The project will also fund the counselling, return and reintegration of irregular migrants currently in Malta who choose to voluntarily return home.

IOM and Maltese social workers will work with migrant reception centre managers in Malta to identify potential beneficiaries from the project.

For more information, please contact Giulia Falzoi at IOM Rome. Tel. +39.0644186226. Email: gfalzoi@iom.int

**The Netherlands:** After a successful initiative in Utrecht called 'Perspective' more local authorities have decided to start special projects for separated children that have reached the age of 18. On a voluntary basis they are prepared for their return.

This is against the national policy because the allowance of the separated children is stopped in order to make it impossible for them to be in the regular care system and at the end to force them to leave the country if their asylum application is not granted.

The Minister had the opinion that these kinds of special projects will allow people to postpone their departure. But the truth is the other way around. Through the special projects more separated children return home compared to the regular system which ends with detention.

**Portugal:** The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is responsible in Portugal for the Voluntary Repatriation Programme.

When an asylum seeker shows willingness in returning to his/her country of origin, the Portuguese Refugee Council directs him/her to IOM, in Lisbon, assuring, however, that the return is voluntary and made with safety and dignity. CPR also informs the asylum seeker of the limit stated in the voluntary repatriation contract: he/she will not be able to enter Schengen territory within the next five years.

**Romania:** Under the Child Law, children who are rejected asylum-seekers fall under the responsibility of the Directorate for Child Protection, which notifies the Authority for Aliens about the case and request the court to establish a special protection measure and shelter. The Authority for Aliens carries out formalities for return, provided that this is in the best interest of the child.

**Slovakia:** One child from Ukraine was sent back to the country of origin – when he became of age.

**Spain:** In the last months some children have been repatriated, guarantees provided to them during the repatriation were insufficient. The situation in the centres or residences is very stressful, and many of the children are leaving the centres to go to another autonomous community or just to live in the street.

A 17 years old child from Morocco was living in Spain for 2½ year at the centre of Santander in the community of Cantabria. 9 months after his arrival he got a residence permit. He was looking for a job while finishing his plumbing class. He also had an older brother with a work permit, living in the same region.

The night of the 4th of September two policemen came to look for him with a repatriation order dated the 21st of June. The guarantees provided by the law in the case of repatriation of minors were not applied: he was not informed of the decision for repatriation, he was not listened to and he did not have the possibility to speak with his family and a lawyer. Next morning a judge wrote an urgent court order to suspend the repatriation order, but this was ignored. The same day the minor was repatriated to Tanger by plane.

Recently, as he has a valid residence permit and therefore is allowed to enter Spain, he was not refused entry to Spanish territory and come to Madrid. At the moment he lives in another centre.

**UK:** In February 2005 the UK Government published a Five Year Strategy for Asylum and Immigration. One of the goals set in the paper was to 'find ways to return unaccompanied asylum seeking children'.

At the time there was an intention to start returning such children to Albania though the plan never materialised. The Home Office continues to examine options and is currently considering schemes to return separated children to other countries.

It is of some concern that the management of this programme has moved from the Children and Families Asylum Policy Team within the Home Office to the International Delivery Directorate, which has no specialism in working with children.

The UK Home Office has been considering the return of separated children whose asylum claims have been rejected. The children concerned come from Viet Nam, the Democratic Republic of Congo

(DRC) and Angola. Human Rights Watch is among the NGOs monitoring related developments and recently sent a letter to the Secretary of State for Home Affairs expressing their concerns.

In the case of Viet Nam, HRW is seriously concerned that state institutions and non-governmental organizations have neither the capacity nor adequate resources to care for and protect children who cannot or should not be reunited with their families. With regard to the DRC and Angola, HRW draws attention to the fact that both countries have a longstanding history of conflict with seriously weakened state institutions. HRW research on street children in the DRC highlights the current institutional weaknesses in the country to adequately protect vulnerable children (full report at [hrw.org/reports/2006/drc0406/](http://hrw.org/reports/2006/drc0406/).)

Drawing attention to applicable treaties and guidelines (CRC, Refugee Convention, UNHCR and UNOHCHR guidelines) HRW strongly urges the UK Government to fully incorporate the United Kingdom's child protection obligations under international law into its plans and policies regarding possible return of separated children.

Also UNICEF UK has launched a campaign calling on the UK government to "immediately drop plans to return these 500 children to Vietnam and to lift the reservation on the CRC".

[www.unicef.org.uk/campaigns/news/news\\_detail.asp?news\\_id=778](http://www.unicef.org.uk/campaigns/news/news_detail.asp?news_id=778)

The Guardian newspaper ran a front page report on the planned return of the unaccompanied asylum seeking children to Vietnam.

[www.guardian.co.uk/frontpage/story/0,,1852817,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/frontpage/story/0,,1852817,00.html)

## Trafficking

**Denmark:** Save the Children Denmark is organising a training seminar for Danish practitioners working with trafficking on October 31 and November 1.

Save the Children Denmark is participating in a two-year training programme in the Baltic Sea Region on Comprehensive Assistance to Children Victims of Trafficking implemented by the Council of the Baltic Sea States.

**Finland:** On 20 July the Finnish President Tarja Halonen approved legislation to help victims of human trafficking, including providing protection and temporary residence permits.

In July, verdicts were read in Finland's first human trafficking and prostitution case when a local court handed down prison sentences of two to five years to members of an Estonian-Finnish crime ring.

[Source: AP Worldstream, Jul 21, 2006]

**Germany:** In July 2006, the Federal Criminal Police Office published its report on human trafficking (Bundeslagebericht Menschenhandel 2005), which can be downloaded at:

[www.bka.de/lageberichte/mh/2005/mh2005.pdf](http://www.bka.de/lageberichte/mh/2005/mh2005.pdf).

According to the report, 23 minors were registered as victims of trafficking in 2005. This is a sharp decrease as compared to 2004, when 53 minors were recorded.

**Greece:** A mission of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography was held in Greece and Albania in November 2005. The summary of the report (which was recently released), makes reference on the guidelines on separated children seeking asylum in Greece (which were jointly promulgated by UNHCR and the Greek Ombudsman in 2004) and the Anogia centre of Crete for unaccompanied minors seeking asylum (run by the National Youth Foundation) as being a model of its kind.

The report also refers to the readmission agreement with Albania, to the situation of Roma children and other children of the Muslim minority and the continuous risk of trafficking in children and detention and deportation of those children who are illegally in the country.

**Ireland:** The Government launched a scheme for a Trafficking Bill, namely The Criminal Law Trafficking in Persons and Sexual Offences Bill 2006. This Bill will finally criminalise trafficking in Ireland. It adopts the UN definition of trafficking and also includes trafficking for the selling of organs, which is to be welcomed.

The Bill unfortunately makes no mention of the rights of the victim, for rehabilitation, safe houses, temporary residence or protection. It deals only with the criminal side of the prosecution of traffickers.

It was suggested after its publication that the Immigration, Residency and Protection Bill would address the issues of victim protection but on the publication of that Bill, it is clear that it too makes no mention at all of victims of trafficking.

Two bills have managed to sideline the human rights and needs of the victim while focusing on prosecution and immigration control.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its concluding observations has recommends the State put in place measures “for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of victims of trafficking, including the provision of shelter, counselling and medical care”.

The Committee also asks the State to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the sale of children, child pornography and prostitution. The Government of course can not ratify such a UN treaty nor can it ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Trafficking, until it puts in place some victim protection.

**The Netherlands:** The law that protects victims of trafficking has changed. Before a victim only got protection and a residence permit during the court investigation of the case against the traffickers. Nowadays it will be possible to get a permanent residence permit if the traffickers are found guilty by court.

Since 1 March 2006 a new Instruction/Directive of the National Office of the Public Prosecution Service on investigating trafficking in human beings has been issued for the public prosecutor’s service and police, in this also trafficking and prostitution of minors is addressed.

In 2005 ECPAT-NL, together with Unicef and DCI-NL, presented research on exploitation of minors in the Netherlands. Using information from interviews and case-studies, a database was compiled containing data concerning minors who were victims of exploitation in the period 2003-2005.

The database contains information on 230 child victims: 73.5% have been exploited in prostitution only, 9.1 % in prostitution as well as in other formal and informal labour sectors, and 17.4% have been exploited specifically in other sectors, such as domestic labour, the hotel and restaurant sector, the cleaning business, the drugs trade and in other criminal activities. In addition, odd jobs such as doing chores, folding and distributing leaflets, loading and unloading, and drudgery are sometimes done under exploitative circumstances. Illegal adoption is also included in the database.

The prostitution of minors predominantly occurs in the escort service and in private houses, arranged through the internet and mobile communication. About 93% are girls and 7% are boys. Approximately half of the girls are victims of a ‘loverboy’ scam, but the other minors have been

exploited in prostitution in other ways. In prostitution most minors, about 40%, are sixteen and seventeen years old. Half of the boys are younger than sixteen years old, and 20% of the girls are under sixteen. For other forms of exploitation, minors younger than twelve years old constitute the biggest group (35%); this is due to the number of cases of illegal adoption. 20% of the minors exploited in other sectors are aged between thirteen and fifteen years old, and 20% are aged between sixteen and seventeen years old.

Dutch nationals as well as foreign minors are victims of trafficking. Victims come from 31 countries from all over the world. Of the victims of exploitation in prostitution, almost 30% are of Dutch origin, and a little more than 30% have a Moroccan, Turkish, Surinam or Antilles ethnic background. Of these, about 60% are Dutch nationals. The rest mostly come from countries in Africa and Eastern Europe. Of the victims of exploitation in other sectors, only 5% have Dutch nationality.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking minors, often mentioned as being extra vulnerable to exploitation, represent almost 6% of the victims of exploitation in prostitution. They have not been reported as victims of exploitation elsewhere, however. Quite a number of victims are residing illegally in the Netherlands: 13% of the victims are in prostitution and 37.5% are victims in other sectors.

Victims of exploitation in prostitution, as well as victims from exploitation in other sectors, seem to have the same vulnerabilities, such as psychological and emotional problems, low self-esteem, a history of (sexual) abuse and neglect, and problems at home.

For more information contact ECPAT Netherlands, [info@ecpat.nl](mailto:info@ecpat.nl)

**Norway:** In July the Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality published a report in which they state that the child welfare authorities have the responsibility of the minors who are victims of human trafficking.

In October the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police will publish a new Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking. The authorities indicate that many of the measures will be related to the special needs of children.

An independent group of professionals have documentations that indicate that a huge number of separated children are being exploited and are

victims of human trafficking in Norway. This documentation is not official statistics. There is a big debate on how to identify potential victims of trafficking.

**UK:** Save the Children have submitted a response, and supported the ECPAT response to the recent Scottish Exec and Home Office consultation on trafficking.

## Children and Youth Participation

**Germany:** From 18 to 22 September a workshop for young refugees took place in Berlin. The workshop is held in preparation of a symposium entitled "Improvement of the situation of young refugees in Germany", taking place in Berlin from 9 to 10 October 2006.

The symposium is organised by the Federal Working Group Youth Social Work (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Jugendsozialarbeit) in co-operation with the Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees.

More detailed information at:

[www.b-umf.de/pdf/AnkuendigungfachpolitischesforumNov-2006.pdf](http://www.b-umf.de/pdf/AnkuendigungfachpolitischesforumNov-2006.pdf)

**Ireland:** The Office of the Minister for Children held a meeting recently with organisations who work with hard to reach children including asylum seeking children and separated children in an attempt to include such children in Dáil na nÓg (Youth Parliament) scheduled for February 2007.

**Romania:** In April 2006 UNHCR Romania established a Multi-Functional Team composed by UNHCR staff with protection and programming background, staff of the National Refugee Office and of NGOs assisting refugees (with background in law and socio-psychology).

The main goal of the Multi-Functional Team was to support age, gender and diversity mainstreaming in refugee protection and assistance. For this purpose, members of the Multi-Functional Team carried out a participatory assessment process, which involved discussions with refugee women, girls, boys and men in order to jointly analyse the protection risks they face. Thus, refugee children and adolescents were involved in participatory assessment.

The children participate in activities organised by Save the Children in the Children's Rooms inside the accommodation centre (drawing lessons;

Romanian language lessons; computer lessons; cultural orientation seminars; traditional skills, etc.) and to the extracurricular activities which take place outside the accommodation centre (visits to the museum, theatre, going-outs, etc.).

**UK:** Young people were active in promoting the No Place for a Child Campaign at a number of outdoor events in Glasgow, encouraging the public to write to the Home Secretary.

## Miscellaneous

**Belgium:** The NGO platform for separated children is currently drafting small information cards to be distributed to separated children themselves; there will be 10 to 14 different ones explaining different questions dealing with their situations: arrival at the border; the guardianship; the schooling for separated children; the lawyer etc. They will be translated into 4 languages (Dutch, English, Arabic and Russian). The aim is to give concrete and useful information to separated children in a language they will understand.

**Germany:** The Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees (Bundesfachverband UMF e.V.) has moved from Nuremberg to Munich.

The new address is: Nymphenburger Str. 47, 80335 Munich.

Tel. +49 / 89 / 202 440 13; Fax. +49 / 89 / 202 44 015

The BIVS group working on the project 'The Risk Group of Unaccompanied Minors: Protection measures in an enlarged European Union' has now started with its research. In a first step, the focus will be directed towards the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The situation in Malta will subsequently be investigated.

Currently, research is concentrated on the fields statistics, legal situation, asylum procedure, reception, education, guardianship and health care and the overall institutional developments for the protection and support of unaccompanied minor migrants. National as well as international organisations have been contacted and dates for interviews are to be determined. Activities in the current project are based on the results of three former projects on unaccompanied minor migrants carried out by BIVS.

Coordinator: University of Primorska, Science and Research Centre Koper, Slovenia

Partners: Università Degli Studi di Firenze, Dipartimento di Scienze Dell'Educazione, Italy and Berlin Institute for Comparative Social Research (BIVS), Germany  
[www.emz-berlin.de/projekte\\_e/pj58\\_1E.htm](http://www.emz-berlin.de/projekte_e/pj58_1E.htm)

**Greece:** The UNHCR Representation was recently alerted on the perilous situation in the Greek city of Patras (exit point for illegal travel to Italy), where apparently a large concentration of illegal stayers, including some 60-80 minors, has been reported. Red Cross observations report on adults, illegally residing in Greece, urging these youngsters to drug trafficking and drug addiction.

**Malta:** A tragic event occurred when, during an incident at sea, a boat sunk taking with it a number of migrants. Amongst the drowned persons were 5 children and 2 babies. A surviving minor lost his mother and 5 young siblings during the incident, putting him in a severe state of shock of despair. Thanks to the rapid intervention of UNHCR and APPOGG, the minor was released from detention and placed under adequate care. Attempts are being made by APPOGG and UNHCR to unite the minor with his refugee uncle presently living in the United Kingdom.

**Portugal:** “Sociedade Civil”, a TV program on asylum and refugees, continued to be broadcast every month through a Protocol signed between the Portuguese Refugee Council and the public channel RTP2.

**Sweden:** The Social Democrats lost the general election on 17 September and there will be a change of government for the first time since 1994. The four-party centre-right coalition won a Parliament majority and a new cabinet will be sworn in early October under Prime Minister-elect Fredrik Reinfeldt.

The winning coalition has not presented any elaborate policies on asylum and migration. In terms of integration the main messages have been about employment, language skills and strengthened non-discrimination legislation.

Much of the post-election public debate has been focussed on the rise of the far-right party Sverigedemokraterna (the Swedish Democrats) who won close to 3 % of the national vote – the threshold to get Parliamentary seats is 4 %.

Sverigedemokraterna did win seats in many local assemblies.

**Switzerland:** The Foundation Terre des hommes – child relief - in Lausanne is about to complete a nationwide inquiry about the situation of separated children.

Social Workers, legal guardians, teachers, judges of minors, policemen etc. have been consulted. The theory will be illustrated with some evidences from separated children. The report should be available on the website of the Foundation Terre des hommes in November 2006 on [www.tdh.ch](http://www.tdh.ch)

**UK:** Statistics show that unaccompanied children are arriving in the UK at a younger age. Refugee Council Children’s Panel statistics show that in 2005, 22% of applicants were aged 14 or below at time of application, in 2006, 25% of applicants were aged 14 or below.

The UK Parliamentary Committee that focuses on breaches of human rights (Joint Committee on Human Rights) is conducting an inquiry into the treatment of asylum seekers in the UK. Children are one of five areas being investigated.  
[www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_committees/joint\\_committee\\_on\\_human\\_rights/jchr\\_press\\_notice\\_05\\_06\\_no\\_\\_46.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/joint_committee_on_human_rights/jchr_press_notice_05_06_no__46.cfm)

The Legal Services Commission has recently issued a consultation paper ‘Legal Aid, A Sustainable Future’ in which – amongst many other proposals – they have issued proposals for future funding of services to separated children.

[www.childrenslegalcentre.com/Shared\\_ASP\\_Files/UploadedFiles/52C40E84-D1BD-47CB-B145-3C2AF4654F86\\_LSC-newfundingarrangementsforUASC.pdf#search=%22LSC%20proposals%20for%20exclusive%20detention%20contracts%22](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com/Shared_ASP_Files/UploadedFiles/52C40E84-D1BD-47CB-B145-3C2AF4654F86_LSC-newfundingarrangementsforUASC.pdf#search=%22LSC%20proposals%20for%20exclusive%20detention%20contracts%22)

In May 2006 UNHCR, in collaboration with Save the Children UK, launched its Gender, Age and Diversity Mainstreaming Project (GDAM).

The first phase of the project in the UK examined refugee integration and consisted of a series of workshops involving refugees in the London Borough of Newham.

The workshops involved discussions with refugees of different ages and genders on integration issues including community, health care; education; housing; employment; status in the UK; media representation and discrimination.

Within the GADM strategy, the first stage was to form a 'multi-functional team' which consists of UNHCR staff members and key governmental and non-governmental partners including Refugee Community Organisations. The multi-functional team then administered participatory assessments with groups from diverse backgrounds and ages. Analyses of the results of the exercise are expected before the end of the year.

The Scottish Executive's Funding for Learners Division recently removed the 3-year ordinary residency requirement for refugees with Humanitarian Protection, their spouse, civil partner or child seeking student support and the payment of tuition fees. This will allow compliance with the EU Qualification Directive.

However, the Scottish Executive went further and included those granted Discretionary Leave (a lower form of complimentary protection) to be included as well as allowing the provision of Educational Maintenance Allowance (between £10 -£30 a week offered to 16 to 19 year olds to keep them in education) and Independent Learning Accounts (a small amount of money to fund a wide range of learning courses to improve skills). This will allow unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Scotland who are initially granted Discretionary Leave (72% of unaccompanied applicants in the UK in 2004 were given this form of leave) to increase their educational chances and further their development towards more successful integration. This change is currently being implemented for the start of the academic session 2006/2007. It has not been implemented in England and Wales.

## Events

### **20 June 2006, Geneva, Switzerland Launch of ninemillion.org campaign**

UNHCR's campaign Ninemillion.org was launched on World Refugee Day as a new public-private sector initiative and an example of how business partners are helping UNHCR to give refugees hope for a better future.

The campaign has received key support from Nike and Microsoft, both members of UNHCR's Council of Business Leaders. The international humanitarian organization, Right To Play, is also a partner.

The campaign includes a 30-second TV spot featuring Brazilian football legend Ronaldo, who is supporting ninemillion.org in his capacity as a UNDP goodwill ambassador. It also features short

films about young refugees in Azerbaijan, Uganda and Thailand who share similar experiences, hopes, ambitions and love of football.

Two-thirds of the money raised through the campaign will be used for education projects in refugee camps. The remaining third will fund sport and play programmes by Right to Play for refugee youth, with an emphasis on getting girls and young women onto playing fields.

### **20 June 2006, London, UK Launch of the 'Nine Million' campaign**

A joint effort by UNHCR, Nike and Microsoft was launched as part of World Refugee Day.

Estimates suggest that there are currently nine million refugee children around the world. The campaign aims to bring them attention and a better future, a chance to change their future through the power of education and sport.

[www.ninemillion.org/](http://www.ninemillion.org/)

### **21 July 2006, Rome, Italy Seminar "Little Roma from Romania"**

Organised by Save the Children Italy in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, Department for Juvenile Justice

The seminar took place in a Roma's camp and there were 50 participants. Mainly the focus was on trafficking of unaccompanied minors and the links between Roma community and the Department for Juvenile Justice.

### **24 July- 1 September 2006, Romania Exhibition at UN House**

Drawings and objects made by the refugee children and separated children on the rights of refugee children.

### **15-18 August 2006, Seattle, USA 22-25 August 2006, Rotterdam, Netherlands Youth Empowerment Against Racism And Child Abuse**

Organised by Global Youth Empowerment Organization

### **12-14 September 2006, Sofia, Bulgaria Third expert meeting Multi Stakeholder Training Programme on Trafficking in Children**

ECPAT Europe Law Enforcement Group

**15 September 2006, Geneva, Switzerland**  
**General Day of Discussion: The Right of the Child to be Heard**

Committee on the Rights of the Child  
[www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/discussion.htm](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/discussion.htm)

**18-22 September 2006, Germany**

**Workshop for young refugees**

Organised by the Federal Working Group Youth Social Work (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Jugendsozialarbeit),

The workshop is held in preparation of a symposium entitled "Improvement of the situation of young refugees in Germany"

**20 September 2006, Greece**

**Conference on unaccompanied children**

Organised by the Greek Council for Refugees with the cooperation and financial support of the US Embassy in Athens.

Representatives from relevant Ministries (including Public Order; Health and Social Solidarity; Justice; Interior; and Education), UNHCR, GCR, academia, and with contributions from two international experts (US Department of Health & Human Services, and Amnesty International, The Netherlands) gathered to discuss best practices and possible response mechanisms on the treatment of separated children in Greece.

**23 September 2006, Luxembourg**

**Journée Internationale de la paix, manifestations multicolores**

Organised by Comité d'Organisation de la Journée Internationale de la Paix.

**26 September 2006, Brussels, Belgium**

**Reception Conditions for Asylum Seekers in the EU. Comparative overview of the implementation of the directive of 27 January 2003 by Member States**

5th European Congress for Lawyers specialised in Asylum and Immigration in Europe  
[www.ulb.ac.be/assoc/odysseus/Congres2006UK.html](http://www.ulb.ac.be/assoc/odysseus/Congres2006UK.html)

**26-28 September 2006, Athens, Greece**

**The European Network of Ombudsmen for Children's (ENOC) annual meeting**

The event will be attended by representatives of ENOC members, independent authorities working for the protection and promotion of children's rights in Council of Europe member states. ENOC also welcomes observer - participants, representing

Ombudsman institutions wishing to become members of the Network, or being located outside Europe.

**9-10 October 2006, Berlin**

**Symposium "Improvement of the situation of young refugees in Germany"**

Organised by the Federal Working Group Youth Social Work in co-operation with the Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees. More information at:

[www.bumf.de/pdf/AnkuendungfachpolitischesforumNov-2006.pdf](http://www.bumf.de/pdf/AnkuendungfachpolitischesforumNov-2006.pdf)

**10 October 2006, Turku, Finland**

**The Future of Asylum Policy in the European Union**

Organised by the University of Turku, Faculty of Law

**18 October 2006, Brussels, Belgium**

**Round-Table on Child Trafficking in Europe - How to improve prevention? Drawing lessons from field practice for an improved EU policy**

Organised by Terre des hommes and UNICEF. Presentation of the report by Mike Dottridge, "Action to prevent child trafficking in South Eastern Europe. A preliminary Assessment", Terre des hommes/UNICEF, 2006.

To attend the Round-Table, please register by Friday 13th October 2006 by e-mail to Chiara Tripepi at: [tdh-europe@iftdh.org](mailto:tdh-europe@iftdh.org) (tel +32. 2. 743.87.96)

**31 October-1 November 2006, Helsinki, Finland**  
**Conference on Identification of Trafficked Children**

Organised by the Finnish EU Presidency

**November 2006, Madrid, Spain**

**Seminar "Migration, international cooperation and infancy in Spain and Morocco"**

Organised by Save the Children.

**12 November 2006, Budapest, Hungary**

**Migrant Children's Day**

A celebration of refugee and migrant children is to be held in one of the biggest arts centres of Budapest. The day will be dedicated to the diversity of cultures, displaying different traditions through music and dances, arts, foods etc. We expect around 500 visitors, including Hungarian families with children.

It is supposed to create a new celebration day – if successful, we'd like to hold it every year.

The purpose of the program is to demonstrate the values of minors and minorities, to raise awareness and to give migrant children the possibility of having fun together. It is organised by Menedék and the management of the arts centre. We still lobby for the support of UNHCR and/or UNICEF.

#### **13-14 November 2006, Florence, Italy**

##### **Second annual UN-European Children's Network meeting**

Organised by UNICEF and the European Children's Network

This year the meeting will include a regional civil society consultation on the World Fit for Children +5 review.

For more information, contact Ms. Nathalie Simeoni, UNICEF Brussels Office, [nsimeoni@unicef.org](mailto:nsimeoni@unicef.org)

#### **14-16 November 2006, Berlin, Germany**

##### **Policy & practice for social inclusion of children and young people - The role of non-formal and informal learning**

Eurochild & AGJ European Conference  
[www.eurochild.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/files/Conference\\_Programme\\_Eurochild.pdf](http://www.eurochild.org/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Conference_Programme_Eurochild.pdf)

#### **27 November – 2 December 2006, Ghent, Belgium**

##### **The International Interdisciplinary Course on Children's Rights: From text to context: Bringing child rights to reality through the social practices of those working with and for children**

Organized by Children's Rights Centre, Ghent University and The International Institute for Child Rights and Development, University of Victoria (IICRD), Canada

#### **30 November - 4 December 2006, Vienna, Austria**

##### **EPIMA 2 Seminar**

During this seminar about sixty people from NGOs and stakeholders from authorities and politics will come together to discuss and develop possibilities for young asylum seekers in the areas of education, apprenticeship, vocational training and work

Programme and more information on: [www.epima.at](http://www.epima.at)

#### **6 December 2006, Germany**

##### **Expert meeting on education for young refugees**

Organised by the Berlin Institute for Christian Ethics and Policy (ICEP) and the Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees (B-UMF).

Information at:

[www.b-umf.de/pdf/Konzept\\_25\\_7\\_06.pdf](http://www.b-umf.de/pdf/Konzept_25_7_06.pdf)

#### **20-21 March 2007, Warsaw, Poland**

##### **Seminar: Focus on Children in Migration - From a European Research and Method Perspective**

Organised by Save the Children Sweden, The European Network of Masters on Children's Rights (ENMCR) and Separated Children in Europe Programme.

## **Publications**

**Action to prevent child trafficking in South Eastern Europe : a preliminary assessment.** By Mike Dottridge. Terre des hommes Foundation & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 30 August 2006

[www.childtrafficking.com/Content/Library/?pg=2&CID=d2ddea18f00665ce8623e36bd4e3c7c5|545b](http://www.childtrafficking.com/Content/Library/?pg=2&CID=d2ddea18f00665ce8623e36bd4e3c7c5|545b)

**Alternatives to immigration detention of families and children : A discussion paper.** By John Bercow MP, Lord Dubs and Evan Harris MP for the All Party Parliamentary Groups on Children and Refugees, July 2006.

**Annäherungen : Junge Flüchtlinge und ihre PatInnen erzählen.** Mandelbaum Verlag, 220 p. ISBN: 3-85476-178-3

The project "Connecting people" has promoted contacts between young asylum seekers and Austrian adults for more than five years. The book gives an insight into experiences made during this time. The contributions are written by young refugees and the Austrian adults.

**Belgium:** The NGO platform for separated children has published **recommendations to improve the guardianship system**; in the meantime, it has published the report of a conference which was held in November 2004 concerning this topic.

**Child first, migrant second : Ensuring that every child matters.** By Heaven Crawley, ILPA. February 2006.

The paper includes a chapter on separated asylum seeking children and is available from ILPA's website: [www.ilpa.org.uk](http://www.ilpa.org.uk)

**EQUAL Transition Supports Project Report on the Needs Assessment of Separated Children Seeking Asylum and "Aged-Out" Minors.** Siobhan Phillips Transition Supports Project ESF, EQUAL Dublin, 2006.

For copies contact [itayi.viriri@parnell.cdvec.ie](mailto:itayi.viriri@parnell.cdvec.ie)

**Fair, effective, transparent and trusted : Rebuilding confidence in our immigration system.** Home Office, July 2006.

The paper sets the office's objective for the next three years. One of the objectives set to be completed by April 2007 is that all asylum claimants would be tagged or monitored. It is yet to be seen if the office intends to tag children claimants as well.

For the full document go to:

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ind-review-250706/ind-review-eng?view=Binary](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ind-review-250706/ind-review-eng?view=Binary)

**Future Scots : Pre-five Services for Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Glasgow.** By Frances Hume and Richard Morran, Save the Children, February 2006.

**Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of a Comprehensive National Anti-Trafficking Response.** Elaborated in the framework of the "Programme for the Enhancement of Anti-Trafficking Responses in South-Eastern Europe".

For an electronic copy or a hard copy of the document, please send your request to International Centre for Migration Policy Development, e-mail: [Barbara.Cuzuioc-Weiss@icmpd.org](mailto:Barbara.Cuzuioc-Weiss@icmpd.org)

[www.anti-trafficking.net/104.html?&no\\_cache=1&F=0&tx\\_icmpd\\_pi1\[article\]=60&tx\\_icmpd\\_pi1\[page\]=61](http://www.anti-trafficking.net/104.html?&no_cache=1&F=0&tx_icmpd_pi1[article]=60&tx_icmpd_pi1[page]=61)).

**Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls.** Provisionally released by UNHCR for consultation purposes (June 2006).

The paper was distributed to different stakeholders and is expected to become publicly available within the next months.

**Human Trafficking – Our Response.** ASTRA & Red Cross of Serbia, 2006.

A manual for peer education now available in English. Available at [www.astra.org.yu/index.php](http://www.astra.org.yu/index.php)

**Investigating exploitation : research into trafficking in children in the Netherlands.** Anke van den Borne and Karin Kloosterboer. ECPAT-NL in cooperation with DCI NL, UNICEF NL and Plan NL, Amsterdam, 2005. 94 p.

**Migration Processes in Central and Eastern Europe: Unpacking the Diversity.** Edited by Alice Szczepaniková, Marek Čaněk and Jan Grill. The Multicultural Center Prague, 2006.

The publication looks into various, previously unexplored aspects of migration processes in the region. It originated from a series of papers presented at the Workshop on Developments and Patterns of Migration Processes in Central and Eastern Europe organised at the Faculty of Humanities of Charles University in Prague in August 2005. The fourteen articles are accompanied by interviews with representatives of non-governmental organizations.

Available online at

[www.migrationonline.cz/news\\_f.shtml?x=1691483](http://www.migrationonline.cz/news_f.shtml?x=1691483)

**Review of the Home Office Publications of Control of Immigration Statistics.** Home Office, August 2006.

One of the eleven key recommendations made by the report was that priority should be given to the development of more detailed statistics relating to children. The full report is available at:

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/immig\\_review\\_06.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/immig_review_06.pdf)

**Right to Education during Displacement: A Resource for Organizations Working with Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.** Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2006.

As part of a campaign to promote displaced children and youth's uninterrupted access to quality and safe education, this tool identifies the right to education and actions that individuals and organizations can take to fulfill these rights, with a focus on refugees, returnees and internally displaced people. It has been developed for local, regional and international organizations that work with displaced communities.

It is a training and capacity-building resource, an awareness-raising tool and a call to action. The Women's Commission intends to revise this version based on feedback from around the world, translate

it into other languages and develop an accompanying training module. Comments will be appreciated; a feedback form is available online.

[www.womenscommission.org/pdf/right\\_to\\_ed.pdf](http://www.womenscommission.org/pdf/right_to_ed.pdf)  
To request hard copies, please contact the Women's Commission, Jenny Perlman Robinson, at: [jennyr@womenscommission.org](mailto:jennyr@womenscommission.org)

**This is a good place to live and think about the future...** By, Peter Hopkins and Malcolm Hill, Glasgow Centre for the Child and Society and Scottish Refugee Council, March 2006.

A report on the needs and experiences of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Scotland.

**Transnational Protection of Children : the case of Albania and Greece 2000-2006.** Terre des hommes & ARSIS, October 2006.

Both Albania and Greece have made significant efforts to end child trafficking and support NGOs initiatives in both countries. While recognising the progresses achieved, the new publication identifies the main existing gaps and discusses potential solutions. It urges the Albanian and Greek States to increase their efforts towards empowerment of vulnerable communities. The publication links such a need with the significant role that the community, families and children themselves play in preventing trafficking from occurring.

Available on line at:

[www.tdh.ch/website/doc\\_dnlnd.nsf/bf25ab0f47ba5dd785256499006b15a4/aa38138679a23d33c12571760041dd5d/\\$FILE/transnational\\_protection\\_childr\\_en\\_albania\\_greece\\_en\\_06.pdf](http://www.tdh.ch/website/doc_dnlnd.nsf/bf25ab0f47ba5dd785256499006b15a4/aa38138679a23d33c12571760041dd5d/$FILE/transnational_protection_childr_en_albania_greece_en_06.pdf)

**Unaccompanied Minors : rights and protection.** Kristina Touzenis. March 2006. 288 p. ISBN: 8860830001

The book offers a critical analysis of existing international Conventions relating to children in specific situations. It further looks at UN positions and relevant EU legislation regarding unaccompanied children.

For further information on the book, please visit [www.xledizioni.it](http://www.xledizioni.it)

**Unaccompanied Refugees and Asylum Seekers turning 18 : A guide for social workers and other professionals.** Save the Children UK, April 2006.

## Useful web sites

**[www.nominorsindetention.org](http://www.nominorsindetention.org)** - English version of a European appeal against detention and removal of foreign minors.

**Czech Republic:** **[www.migrationonline.cz](http://www.migrationonline.cz)** is a specialised website on migration in Central and Eastern Europe

**Mediterranean region:** **[www.euromedrights.net](http://www.euromedrights.net)** - Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network 's new trilingual website.

The new web site is not only an organisational website for the EMHRN containing all relevant information and documents on the EMHRN and its members. The website aims at creating an on-line focal point for human rights in the EuroMed region for human rights activists, civil society actors, decision-makers, students, and the media alike with all information provided in English, French and Arabic.

**Romania:** **[www.unhcr.ro](http://www.unhcr.ro)**

**UK:** **[savethechildren.org.uk/caris](http://savethechildren.org.uk/caris)**

Information for legal and other professional advisers, parents and young people on issues affecting young refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland.

Now updated with section for primary school-aged children, including an interactive game designed by children.

**[www.refugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)** - the updated website offers a number of new features:

- How we help: A section detailing the work of the Refugee Council, particularly the help and support we give to refugees and asylum seekers.
- Multilingual microsite: Written in 20 languages, this section empowers refugees and asylum seekers to access all our client information leaflets, navigating in their own language.
- Policy and research: A one-stop-shop for all our policy position papers, policy responses and briefings. There is also a useful 'A to Z of policy issues' where you can access our resources by topic.
- Practice: This section draws together all our practical guides and information leaflets. This area includes a basic guide to asylum and gives details on our information service and teaching resources.

[www.ukhtc.org](http://www.ukhtc.org) - the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre, Sheffield. The Centre will aim to provide specialist care for the victims - mostly women brought from abroad and forced into prostitution. Run by the Association of Chief Police Officers, the unit is the first of its kind in the UK, where academics and experts work together under one roof.

## Reporting organisations

Asylkoordination Austria  
Bundesfachverband UMF  
Caritas Luxembourg, Service réfugiés, Passe-partout  
Central Union for Child Welfare (Finland)  
Defence for Children International - The Netherlands  
Defense for Children International Belgium / Service droit des jeunes  
Estonian Union for Child Welfare  
International Social Service, Hellenic Branch (I.S.S.)  
Irish Refugee Council  
Menedék (Hungary)  
Portuguese Refugee Council  
Refugee Council (UK)  
Save the Children Denmark  
Save the Children Italy  
Save the Children Norway  
Save the Children Romania  
Save the Children Spain  
Save the Children Sweden  
Save the Children UK  
Slovak Humanitarian Council  
Slovene Philanthropy  
Swiss Foundation of the International Social Service  
UNHCR Greece  
UNHCR Austria  
UNHCR BO London  
UNHCR BO Rome  
UNHCR Malta  
UNHCR Romania  
UNHCR Spain  
UNHCR Sub-Office Nuremberg

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## Statistics on arrivals of separated children seeking asylum in Europe by September 2006

A = Actual; E = Estimated; P = Provisional; N/A = Not available

Receiving country	Figures		Age 15-18		Males	Females	Main countries of origin 2006	Source
	2005	2006	2005	2006				
Austria	877	301 (Jan.- July)	709 <sup>1</sup>	234 <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A	Afghanistan (32) Nigeria (22) Russian Fed. (21) Serbia (15)	Federal Ministry of Interior
Belgium	584	258 (until end July)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Afghanistan Guinea Congo Angola Cameroon Rwanda Russia	Office des étrangers (Ministry of Interior)
Bulgaria	155	N/A	137	N/A	2005: 137	2005: 0	2005: Afghanistan Bangladesh Iran India Nigeria Pakistan Somalia	State Agency for Refugees
Czech Republic	106	N/A	106	N/A	N/A	N/A	2005: India (32) China (30) Slovakia (9)	Ministry of Interior
Denmark	109 A	53 <sup>3</sup> A (Jan.- June)	72.5 %	N/A	2005: 78%	2005: 22%	Iraq Afghanistan Somalia	Danish Immigration Service
Estonia	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	Ministry of Social Affairs, Citizenship and Migration Board
Finland	220 A	62 (Jan.- August)	193 (14- 18)	52 (14- 18)	2005: 167 2006: 47	2005: 53 2006: 15	Somalia (12) Afghanistan (11) Iraq (10), Angola (9)	Directorate of Immigration

<sup>1</sup> 709 is the number of asylum seekers recorded as separated children older than 14 years. In 91 cases the authority responsible for the asylum procedure did not believe the age claimed by the asylum seekers and declared them as adults. So the official number of separated children for 2005 is 790. 81 of them are reported as being younger than 14 years at the time of application.

<sup>2</sup> 234 is the number of asylum seekers recorded as separated children older than 14 years. In 33 cases the asylum authority did not believe the age claimed by the asylum seekers and declared them as adults.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to these numbers, separated children who are UNHCR quota refugees are arriving in Denmark: In 2005 28 separated children arrived as quota refugees and until now 23 separated quota refugees have arrived in 2006.

Receiving country	Figures		Age 15-18		Males	Females	Main countries of origin 2006	Source
	2005	2006	2005	2006				
Germany <sup>4</sup>	331 A	48 A (Jan.- March)	N/A	N/A	2005: 213 2006: N/A	2005: 118 2006: N/A	Vietnam Eritrea Ethiopia Afghanistan Iran	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees
Greece	158	64 (Jan.- June)	152	48 (Jan.- June)	N/A	N/A	Afghanistan Iraq Nigeria	Ministry of Public Order
Hungary	41 A	45 A	40 A	40 A	2005: 37 A 2006: 37 A	2005: 4 A 2006: 8 A	Nigeria Moldova India Somalia Russia	Hungarian Red Cross, Menedék, Immigration Office
Ireland	Placed in care: 201 Reunifi- cations: 442 Total: 643	Placed in care: 137 Reunifi- cations: 205 Total: 342 <sup>5</sup> (Jan.- Aug.)	218	145 (Jan.- Aug.)	2005: 313 2006: 156 (Jan.- Aug.)	2005: 309 2006: 159 (Jan.- Aug.)	Nigeria Somalia Romania	Health Service Executive (Separated children seeking asylum social work team)
Italy	90 E	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	UNHCR
Latvia	2	N/A	2	N/A	2005: 1	2005: 1	N/A	Ministry of Interior
Luxembourg	13 E	7 E	9	7	2005: 9 2006: 6	2005: 4 2006: 1	Nigeria Angola Russia Senegal Guinea	Caritas Refugees Office, Passepartout
Netherlands	424 A	300 E	400 E	N/A	2005: 50 % E	2005: 50 % E	Iraq Somalia China Burundi Afghanistan Sierra Leone <sup>6</sup>	IND; COA

<sup>4</sup> Data refer to minors up to the age of 16 only. According to the Germany Residence Act, minors between 16 and 18 have legal competence with regard to asylum and residence law and are therefore not counted separately.

<sup>5</sup> These statistics are based on referrals to the HSE. Many of the children get reunited with family members in Ireland and the rest are put in care. Not all lodge an asylum claim. Where figures do not add up it is because children have gone missing since the date of original referral.

<sup>6</sup> These are figures of officially registered separated children. If children disappear during their first day's in the Netherlands, they will not show up in these statistics. This counts for example for a lot children from India.

Receiving country	Number		Age 15-18		Males	Females	Main countries of origin 2006	Source
	2005	2006	2005	2006				
Norway	322 A	177 A	220 A	147 A	2005: 228 (158 age group 15-18) 2006: 133 (110 age group 15-18)	2005: 94 (62 age group 15-18) 2006: 44 (37 age group 15-18)	Somalia Afghanistan Iraq Russia Sri Lanka Burundi Eritrea Iran	The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)
Poland	131 E	115	131	N/A	N/A	N/A	Russia (Chechnya) 115	Office of Repatriation and Aliens
Portugal	1	1					DR Congo	PRC
Romania	7	5	7	5	2005: 6 2006: 4	2005: 1 2006: 1	Liberia Somalia Sudan Sierra Leone Iraq	National Refugee Office (NRO) NGOs
Slovakia	142 A	88	140 A	78	2005: 138 A 2006: 76	2005: 4 A 2006: 2	India Moldavia Pakistan Vietnam Afghanistan	Migration Office, Ministry of Interior
Slovenia	122 E	20 E	120	20	2005: 117 2006: 20	2005: 5 2006: -	Albania Serbia (Kosovo) Turkey	Slovene Philanthropy
Sweden	398	347	344 (13-17 y.)	N/A	2005: 255	2005: 143		Migration Board
Switzerland	415	127 (Jan.-June)	390	116 (Jan.-June)	2005: 338 2006: 101	2005: 52 2006: 26	Guinea Conakry Ivory Coast Afghanistan Somalia Iraq	Federal Office for Migration

Receiving country	Number		Age 15-18		Males	Females	Main countries of origin 2006	Source
	2005	2006	2005	2006				
UK	Total: 5,390 accepted as children: 2,965 age- disputed 2,425	Total: 2,380 (Jan – June) accepted as children: 1,410 age- disputed 970	4,650 E	1,950 E	2005: 3,935 E 2006: 1,800 E	2005: 1,400 E 2006: 550 E	Iran Somalia Eritrea China Iraq DR Congo Vietnam Nigeria Guinea	Actual figures from Home Office <sup>7</sup> , estimated figures from Home Office and Refugee Council Children's Panel
<b>Total arrivals for 24 countries</b>	<b>10,681</b>	<b>4,740</b>						

<sup>7</sup> On the 22 August 2006 the UK Home Office released its asylum statistics from the 2nd quarter of 2006 (April-June 2006). According to the data 655 applications were received in this period from unaccompanied children, 105 applications less than in the previous quarter. The majority of applications, 580, were received in country. The majority of claims were received from nationals of Afghanistan (210 applicants), Somalia (65 applicants), China (60 applicants), Eritrea (45 applicants) and Iran (35 applicants). The full data can be found on: [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/asylumq206.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/asylumq206.pdf)

## Statistics on trafficked minors in Europe by September 2005

Country	2005	2006 (provis.)	Age group 15-18 years	Males	Females	Main countries of origin	Source for statistics
Germany	23	not yet available	2005: 21 2006: not yet available.	2005: N/A 2006: N/A	2005: NA 2006: N/A	N/A	Federal Criminal Police Office
Hungary	32 (A)	40 (E)	2005: 32 (A) 2006: 40 (E)	2005: 26 (A) 2006: 35(E)	2005: 6 (A) 2006:5 (E)	Nigeria Moldova India Somalia Russia	Immigration Office
The Netherlands	248		23			China Nigeria Morocco Uganda Romania Bulgaria Sierra Leone Poland Belarus	STV

**Denmark:** One decision has been passed in 2006 with reference to the section in the Danish Criminal Code covering trafficking, where the case dealt with an under-aged female who had been trafficked to Denmark.

Moreover, Save the Children Denmark is part of a team - formed under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs - that works with cases about presumed victims of trafficking in the current year. In this forum, we have dealt with several cases involving suspicions of trafficking or children who have been in transit through Denmark and where there are reasons to believe that the child's transportation could be aimed at exploitation. One of the reasons that Save the Children Denmark participates in this team is that in the current year we are responsible for documenting these cases. Save the Children Denmark will be publishing a report on December 1<sup>st</sup>

**Finland:** There is not yet such a body which would keep the statistics. There have been some cases among asylum seeking children that have raised worries but investigation has not led further and e.g. there has still not been a case concerning minors as victims of trafficking taken into court.

**Ireland:** There is no official data in relation to trafficked children. However in its concluding observations to Ireland the Committee on the Rights of the Child stated that it "requests the State party to provide in its next report further information and data on trafficking in particular with respect to children".

**Norway:** According to The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) there are minors trafficked to Norway from Albania, Nigeria, Morocco and Serbia & Montenegro. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) do not have statistics regarding trafficking with reference to age. In that case Norway do not have any statistic on minors trafficked to Norway.

UDI has statistics on the number of cases that were granted protection, based on the reason of trafficking: in 2005, 4 persons were granted asylum and 5 persons were granted residence on humanitarian grounds. In 2006, 3 persons were granted asylum and 2 persons were granted residence on humanitarian grounds. This is official registration. An unofficial documentation documents a huge number of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers trafficked to Norway.

<sup>8</sup> Among these victims are also Dutch children, mainly girls

**Slovenia:** In 2005 serious suspicion of victimisation by human traffickers occurred in one case of a female from Macedonia, aged 16, and in 9 cases of males from India, aged 15-18. A girl from Macedonia was returned; boys from India applied for asylum and disappeared from Asylum Home. Until the end of August 2006 serious suspicion of victimisation by human traffickers occurred in three cases of females from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia (Kosovo), aged 14, 17 and 18. All girls were returned.