



Separated Children in Europe Programme

NEWSLETTER No 25

April - June 2006

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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

SCE Programme meetings

On May 8th the seminar 'How to make children visible in migration?' was carried out with support from Save the Children Sweden. Members of the SCEP NGO Network, along with a wider audience of experts, focused on such important issues as healthcare, housing and education for migrant children. A report including presentations, discussion summaries and recommendations will be available shortly.

During the SCEP NGO Network Meeting partners evaluated the recent Daphne II project that supported the dissemination and launch of the translated Statement of Good Practice. Partners also discussed current trends and concerns such as age assessment measures. Additionally, the sessions focused on future co/operation with UNHCR and other potential partnerships.

On May 12-14 SCEP participated in the final conference of an EC Daphne project entitled "Protection and Support Measure for Third Country National Street Children in EU Member States." The project supported research in Berlin, Madrid, Amsterdam and Prague and the conference included experts from throughout Europe. Related reporting is available on-line at www.emz-berlin.de/projekte_e/pj51_1E.htm

On May 25-26 the SCEP participated in the annual meeting of the European Red Cross/Red Crescent cooperation in response to trafficking in human beings. Working Groups focused on issues such as peer education, family tracing and return policies. More information www.drk.dk/sw61500.asp

On May 1 and June 15 SCEP gave presentations at a seminar and a workshop on "The Protection of children's rights: the participation of vulnerable children" in Madrid, organised by Save the Children Spain.

SCEP Steering Committee

At its meeting on May 10 Eva Larsson-Bellander, Save the Children Sweden, was appointed new Chair of the SCEP Steering Committee, succeeding Marianne Borgen, Save the Children Norway.

New Steering Committee member representing Save the Children Norway will be Janne Raanes.

Changes with NGO partners & UNHCR

France: New UNHCR SCEP Focal point is Senior Protection Officer Véronique Robert, e-mail: ROBERT@unhcr.org

Luxembourg: New NGO contact person at Caritas is Cristina Lopes, e-mail: cristina.lopes@caritas.lu

The Netherlands: New NGO contact person at DCI-NL is Carla van Os, e-mail: c.vanos@defenceforchildren.nl

Norway: New NGO contact person at Save the Children Norway is Thale Skybak, e-mail: thale.skybak@reddbarna.no

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

UNHCR

The European Union's Dublin II Regulation, which identifies the Member State responsible for examining an asylum claim, needs substantial revision to ensure that the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees are respected, according to a UNHCR study published on April 20. The UNHCR report was issued as the European Commission is preparing its own review of the Regulation.

UNHCR's paper makes 20 recommendations to fill the gaps. Most importantly, UNHCR recommends that the text of the Regulation clearly prohibit sending the asylum-seeker outside the Dublin space without examining his or her application. UNHCR also stresses the need for a more consistent

approach to family reunification and a broader definition of what constitutes a family member.

In cases of unaccompanied minors, the principle of the best interest of the child should apply. Also, UNHCR calls on States to make sure that asylum-seekers have an effective possibility to appeal against a transfer under the Dublin system.

The full text of the study "**The Dublin II Regulation. A UNHCR Discussion Paper**", which includes a number of case examples, is available on the UNHCR website on [www.unhcr.se/se/pdf/UNHCR_6089_Dublin%20\(final\)_2.pdf](http://www.unhcr.se/se/pdf/UNHCR_6089_Dublin%20(final)_2.pdf)

On 7 April 2006 UNHCR published the **Guidelines on International Protection: The application of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees to victims of trafficking and persons at risk of being trafficked** www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/publ/opendoc.pdf?tbl=PUBL&id=443b626b2

In May 2006 UNHCR announced the **Provisional UNHCR Guidelines on Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child**.

These guidelines have been drafted to support staff from UNHCR, implementing and operational partners who are required to make and document a formal determination at field level of the best interests of the child.

While the Guidelines can also be used as an advocacy tool, responsibilities by States are not addressed in a comprehensive manner.

The Guidelines set out the legal and other principles that will guide decision-makers in when to make a formal Best Interests Determination; who should make the determination and what procedural safeguards should be followed; and how criteria should be applied to take a decision in a particular case.

The Challenge of Protecting Refugees: UNHCR's Recommendations for Finland's 2006 EU Presidency, see www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opendoc.pdf?tbl=RSDLEGA1&id=449809ed4

Slovenia: Upon closure of the UNHCR office in Slovenia, the responsibility for the Slovene region is transferred to UNHCR Regional Representation in Budapest.

European Union

Judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Communities in Case C-540/03, *European Parliament v Council of the European Union*, 27 June 2006.

The Court dismisses the action challenging the directive on the right to family reunification of nationals of non-member States.

The full text of the judgment can be found on the Court's internet site <http://curia.eu.int/jurisp/cgi-bin/form.pl?lang=EN&Submit=rechercher&numaf=C-540/03>

Brussels-based NGOs called for the EU to appoint a Commissioner for Children's Rights, while welcoming the launch of the European Commission's first-ever strategy paper, "Towards an EU strategy on the Rights of the Child".

The only way the European Commission will be able to form a coherent strategy to respond to all the issues related to children's rights, is to dedicate this task to one of the new Commissioner posts. These new posts will be created when Romania and Bulgaria join the EU. This would not only be a visible demonstration of Europe's commitment to the rights of children everywhere, but would also provide a focal point for children to communicate with.

But if the Commission is to ensure the best response possible to promoting and protecting children's rights, it must also ensure that children are truly able to participate in the decisions that concern them. That means making their voices heard at EU level and incorporating their opinions into future policy and action.

The new EU Strategy is an excellent first step but if EU policy is really to be in the best interests of children, then the EU must dedicate the time, resources and commitment necessary.

Contacts: Olivia Lind, Save the Children +32 (0)478 209 341

Jane Backhurst, World Vision +32 (0)477 438 166

Jana Hainsworth, Eurochild +32 (0)476 36 49 36

Committee on the Rights of the Child

Day of General Discussion: Child's Right to be Heard will take place in Geneva, Switzerland on 15 September.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has decided to devote its next day of general discussion

to the theme: "To Speak, Participate and Decide - The Child's Right to be Heard".

The meeting is open to representatives of NGOs, children and their organisations/networks, UN programmes and agencies, governments and other interested individuals, experts & organisations.

NGOs and children are invited to submit written contributions on the themes mentioned above to the Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) as soon as possible.

For more information, see:

www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/discussion.htm

Finland: The Central Union for Child Welfare has sent comments to the Committee concerning the Committee's concluding observations to Finland about the 3rd periodic report. It was the first time that NGOs gave feedback to the Committee about concluding observations.

Among other things the comments raised some worries towards the situation of asylum seeking children in Finland.

The new practice of the Directorate of Immigration to give only temporary residence permits for asylum applicants worries NGOs more than e.g. the use of the accelerated procedure, which was one of the items the CRC Committee brought up in its recent conclusions. About 40 % of all positive decisions last year were temporary, also decisions for separated children.

Ireland: On 7th of June, a delegation from the Children's Rights Alliance met with the UN Committee to present the second shadow report, entitled *From Rhetoric to Rights*, on Ireland's progress on implementing the Convention since 1998.

Both in the report and the presentation to the Committee, the Alliance highlighted the situation of separated children: the fact that they are not given the same level of care afforded to Irish children under Child Care Act 1991; the fact that they do not have independent legal representation during the asylum process; and the fact that because there is no special immigration status for separated children, many receive a deportation notice once they turn 18. The Irish Government will go before the UN Committee in September.

Italy: "Child rights in Italy", the second monitoring report on the CRC in Italy (2005-2006) by the Working Group for the CRC is available in Italian at: www.savethechildren.it/2003/download/Pubblicazioni/Monitoraggio/CRCRC_Rapporto_2-2006.pdf

The Netherlands: Together with the partners in the Dutch NGO Coalition for the Rights of the Child, DCI has started a consultation process in order to gather information for the third NGO Report on the Rights of the Child in the Netherlands, which will be sent to the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child in 2007.

For the first time, the NGO report will also include information on the implementation on the additional protocol on the sale of children.

The rights of separated children will be one of the themes that will be discussed in the NGO report

Changes and Developments in Law, Policies and Practice

Denmark: Over the course of recent months, there has been intensive debate in Denmark regarding the conditions, 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.

This debate was sparked by a visit to reception centres by a parliamentary committee. Some of the MPs were shocked to see the conditions that the asylum seekers were living under, particularly the conditions that the children were forced to endure. The children experience all too much of their childhood in these reception centres, that have not been designed to accommodate children for years at a time.

Moreover, in the vast majority of cases, the children attend special schools within the centres, meaning that they are prevented from experiencing a more normal existence together with Danish children.

Save the Children Denmark – and a number of other organisations – pointed out that the Danish state must ensure that while waiting, these children must be offered as normal a life as possible, including schooling in a normal society together with Danish children, good recreational opportunities in Danish society and the opportunity to live as a part of Danish society if their stay in Denmark draws out and that children in the reception centres must receive much better psychological and physical support to be able to live a healthy life and develop normally.

Furthermore, Save the Children Denmark recommended to the Danish state that – similar to Sweden and Norway – it ought to demonstrate humanitarian conduct and find a means by which to

provide residence permits to this group of long staying hard-pressed families with children.

The results of a long intense debate is that the government has now indirectly acknowledged that it has failed to live up to the conditions formulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and has therefore earmarked resources aimed to improve the residential facilities, physical surroundings in the asylum centres, mother tongue teaching, expand day-care, social activities and individually tailored educational programs.

As regards the opportunity to attend school in the local communities, there have been numerous examples of local mayors taking initiative and contacting the reception centres and making it possible for the children who stand to gain from such opportunities to begin attending the municipality schools.

Both Save the Children Denmark and Save the Children Youth are undertaking a number of activities in the reception centres and in the time to come will follow up to examine to which extent the children experience the improvements announced.

Germany: The German Ministry for the Interior presented a draft law to implement the EU-directives on reception, family unification, procedure and qualification into the German asylum law.

The implementation of Article 10 Section 3 a) of the family unification directive which allows parents of unaccompanied children who are recognised as refugees to enter Germany is the only regulation which – according to the draft legislation – directly refers to separated children.

Other important regulations, e.g. the implementation of the primary consideration of the “best interests of the child” shall according to the draft not be implemented into German asylum law.

The Federal Association for unaccompanied minor refugees, Bundesfachverband UMF, drafted a position paper on the needs of implementation with regard to special regulations for children in the EU directives.

The German National Coalition for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child asked the Minister for the Interior to implement all provisions laid down in the EU directives which could improve the situation for asylum seeking children in Germany.

Greece: The Ministry of Public Order has prepared a draft law to incorporate the reception conditions

directive, including more provisions for separated children than included in current law.

The temporary protection directive has also been transposed now, through presidential decree 80/2006.

Luxembourg: New asylum law since May 2006: The applicants of asylum are entitled now to a remunerated work, this under certain conditions: they must have resided in Luxembourg for at least 9 months and not have received a negative answer.

The young people are entitled also to have a remunerated training, this under the same conditions: 9 months in Luxembourg without any negative answer.

Until now they had a training, but without being paid. Indeed, Caritas had an agreement with the various Ministries which authorized these young people to follow a formation. The training contracts were signed between Caritas, the young person and the owner. From now on, the contracts are done as for any other young resident.

Malta: The Ministry of Family and Social Solidarity issued a policy for unaccompanied minors in August 2005. This policy document provides the framework to ensure that throughout their stay in Malta, unaccompanied minor irregular immigrants are accorded the care and protection that they deserve.

This policy which binds all those who are directly or indirectly involved with procedures and services concerning unaccompanied minor irregular immigrants, shall be reviewed by the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity as and when necessary to ensure that unaccompanied minor irregular immigrants are adequately protected at all times.

Norway: In January 2006 a new Directorate was established. The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) is responsible for settling and resettlement of refugees in Norway.

The Norwegian Authorities are working on a new Immigration Act. It is supposed to be implemented in 2008.

Save the Children Norway has given comments on the Greenpaper and special comments concerning "the best interests of the child" principle. It should always be the basis for any application of provisions concerning children.

Romania: The Law on asylum in Romania and the methodological norms (no 122 from 4 May 2006)

will enter into force within 3 months from its publication.

Slovakia: After agreement with the Migration office, in May 2006 the Slovak Humanitarian Council with partner organization has started providing social services for refugees in all refugee camps in Slovakia, implementing ERF II.

The aim is to provide social, psychological and legal counselling for the refugee on the everyday basis.

There are 3 social workers from the NGOs in each camp. A team of lawyers, psychologists and a social worker responsible for the material support for refugees visit each camp at least once week.

This project is interesting, because it is concentrated on the protection of vulnerable groups of refugees including separated children.

The plan of the Ministry of Interior for the nearest future is to transfer the management of refugee camps into the hands of NGOs completely. After that all the refugee camps should be under NGOs with the support of the state.

Slovenia: The amendments to the Aliens Act have already been confirmed by the Slovene government and are in process to enter for the parliamentary procedure.

The Slovene government did not take into consideration objections and proposals regarding treatment of separated children prepared by NGOs and UNHCR.

Due to new restrictive measures of the Slovene government in the field of migration and asylum, the number of separated children in Slovenia is decreasing. This has raised concerns that separated children are being refused access to international protection as a result of this policy.

Sweden: A new alien's act entered into force on 31 March. One of the major changes in legislation is that the Alien's Appeals Board was closed down, and that a new asylum procedure where first instance rejections can be appealed to independent courts was introduced.

The new legislation is aimed to ensure that protection and not humanitarian needs is the primary consideration in the asylum procedure. To date, it is difficult to predict what effect the reform will have.

Switzerland: A very large NGO-coalition continues its great work in order to find a majority within the Swiss public who will reject the planned revision of the Asylum and Migration law. The

referendum will take place on the 24th of September 2006.

The Terre des Hommes foundation has edited a leaflet that shows clearly how several aspects in the new law are contradictory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The leaflet, available in German and French, can be downloaded from the internet at www.tdh.ch

United Kingdom: The Home Office continues its plans to reform the way in which separated children are supported, and its initial consultation is completed. However, the timetable has slipped and the formal consultation has not yet been launched.

Detention

Bulgaria: A new detention centre has been opened recently in Busmantsi near Sofia under the auspice of the Ministry of Interior. The centre has a compartment for children and one for women.

Before there was no centre specially designed for the detention of illegal foreigners in Bulgaria. They have usually been detained in a centre for beggars and other categories of adult individuals.

In the new detention centre in Busmantsi there are no children so far. Bulgarian Helsinki Committee has already an agreement with the management of the detention centre about regular visits for monitoring and consultations of detained persons.

Hungary: Asylum-seeking separated children are not held in detention.

Malta: A new centre hosting pregnant women and families with children was opened in January. All pregnant women in detention were released. At the moment there is one family with three children who arrived 4 days ago being detained, they are waiting for medical clearance.

Fifteen asylum seekers claiming to be minors are being detained, two of them are waiting for medical clearance to be released within the next two weeks. The other thirteen have been sent for further age verification.

The Netherlands: The Minister for immigration policy had promised the Parliament to come up with an alternative plan for detention of children before the end of June.

Sometimes separated children are detained in order to prevent them entering the country for example if the authorities doubt their age.

Also separated children who have been involved in a criminal law procedure can be detained before they are expelled. Sometimes the detention can last several months.

The campaign 'No kids in the cell' (www.geenkindindec.nl) has collected over 100.000 signatures. The organisers of the campaign have talked with members of Parliament about alternatives for detention of children.

Romania: In Bucharest there is one detention centre, the Otopeni Centre. No children are in detention centres at the moment.

United Kingdom: "No Place for a Child – Stop Detaining Children Now", the public campaign by Refugee Council, Save the Children UK, Scottish Refugee Council, BiD and Welsh Refugee Council has run successfully and a report on the alternatives to detaining children will be brought before Parliament on July 12th 2006.

New government statistics released on May 23 show that the number of children detained for immigration purposes has risen.

During the last three months of 2005, 540 minors were released from detention centres - an increase of 19% on the previous quarter. Of these, almost 1 in 3 (29%) had been in detention for more than a week, with 25 children being held for between one and two months.

Age Assessment

Hungary: Hungary doesn't use age assessment. Asylum-seekers can easily hide their age and sometimes a person who has been considered a minor asks the authorities to change his/her official age only in order to be transferred to another reception centre to be together with friends.

Ireland: Age assessment continues to be contentious. Some children assessed initially as adults have appealed this and on reassessment have been deemed to be children - the child protection implications of such are clear as children should not be in adult Direct Provision centres.

It has come to the attention of the Irish Refugee Council, that in some cases once a child is assessed to be an adult and sent to adult centres, when reassessed later as minors they have not been transferred to children's centres as they are deemed to no longer be in the jurisdiction for such services

i.e Dublin. This could have serious consequences as such children are in adult centres and are refused entitlements such as education and the allocation of a social worker.

Luxembourg: A general practitioner determines the age by x-rays.

Malta: Age assessment is made through a panel of professionals appointed by the Ministry of Family and Social Solidarity. When one member on the panel does not agree with the others, the decision is always taken in favour of the minor.

Asylum seekers who fail this assessment and still claim to be minors are sent for a further age verification test by taking a wrist x-ray.

The Netherlands: The discussion on the age assessment procedure is still going on.

Some members of the Parliament have asked for an explanation from the responsible Minister for the withdrawal of one of the members of the Age Investigation Committee who said she was silenced by the chairlady of the committee.

Norway: Age assessment has been used actively since 2003. After quite hard criticism of how the government uses the results from the age assessment methods and of the methods themselves, Save the Children has in cooperation with the Norwegian Organization of Asylum Seekers (NOAS) made a report on Norwegian age assessments for separated children.

After a review of the relevant medical standards and of the application of age assessments in the asylum process, our primary concern is that with the current approach it will be a statistically regular occurrence for someone who is in fact a minor to be incorrectly treated as an adult.

We consider therefore that there is a need for several basic changes in how age assessment in Norway is conducted and applied.

Now after the publishing of the report we are in a good dialogue with the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI). They are aware of the weaknesses and want to find the best method.

Initiated by the Norwegian authorities, experts (doctors, dentists and radiologists) in Norway are now doing a research on the methods for age assessments. They will do a scientific evaluation. The report is supposed to be finished this summer.

Romania: If a child upon arrival has documents, his/her age is assessed according to these. If a child does not have any kind of document stating his/her age, he/she will be sent to the Legal Medicine Institute for age determination.

Slovakia: There is a discussion going on among guardians about introducing age assessment, because many young people declaring their age under 18 seem to be older.

Slovakia does not practice the age assessment but it looks like it is going to be changed. More than 60 percent of the declared unaccompanied minors may probably be older.

Sweden: Save the Children Sweden and Swedish Refugee Aid hosted an expert seminar on age assessment following the introduction of new Migration Board guidelines earlier in 2006. A report from the seminar is due to be published later in the summer.

United Kingdom: The Refugee Council has run a number of successful training sessions on “Age Assessment Awareness”, with the aim of developing the skills and knowledge of advocates who are assisting children who have been age-disputed.

The Home Office have committed to updating their “Age Assessment Protocol” (written jointly with the Association of Directors of Social Services) to include a protocol for assisting age-disputed children in detention; this should be completed by September.

They intend to introduce a pilot for a new method of assessing age later this year, which is likely to include both medical information and a social worker’s assessment.

Guardianship

Germany: In October 2005, an amendment of Section 42 Youth Welfare Act entered into force, which obliges Youth authorities to provide age-appropriate accommodation and to appoint a guardian for all unaccompanied minors up to the age of 18.

A preliminary survey of the implementation of Sec. 42 of the German Youth Welfare Act showed that lack of co-operation on the part of the aliens authorities which are the first who get into contact with separated children, as well as a general lack of information and reluctance due to higher costs for

accommodation and care led to an insufficient implementation of the new regulation.

The Family Ministry, the Federal aliens authorities and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees established a working group to establish common guidelines on how to implement the regulation. The outcome is not yet known.

Ireland: On the 14th May this year a group of Afghan asylum seekers occupied St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin where they began a hunger and thirst strike protesting against what they saw as the slow and unfair pace of the asylum process in Ireland. The hunger strike which lasted until 21st May received a huge amount of media attention. 7 of the hunger strikers were minors under the age of 18.

It was soon established that some of those involved were minors. Armed with this information some media sources drew no distinctions with regard to status of those inside the cathedral and referred to all involved as "adults". The Irish Daily Star, a tabloid newspaper, reported that "Most of the "men" were aged between 16 and 45" while RTE and the Irish Examiner a broadsheet both described the group as "men who are aged from their late teens to their 60's" even though the youngest person involved was in fact only 16 years of age.

On the first day of the hunger strike one of the minors was taken seriously ill and had to be removed from the cathedral suffering from a kidney condition. All media reported on the fact that the 16-year-old boy was taken to hospital. The boy was later returned to the cathedral and questions must be asked why a minor was allowed return to hunger strike?

By day two the Irish Times, the main liberal broadsheet, was referring to the minors as "secondary school students". Fellow students shouted support outside the cathedral. On the other hand the Irish Examiner and Irish Independent still referred to the entire group as adults.

On the 18th the Children's Rights Alliance had issued a statement calling for the Health Service Executive to take action to protect the welfare of the minors. The media began to report on the growing concerns for their health. In one headline the Examiner reported that "fears [were] growing for the health of minors inside St Patrick's Cathedral". Later in the day RTE reported that the High Court had made the "seven underage protestors wards of court following a Health Service Executive application". As wards of court the

minors are under the jurisdiction of the courts and their rights as minors upheld.

The minors were also allocated a guardian ad litem, an independent guardian who looks after the best interests of the child. This is clearly best practice and to be commended but questions should be asked why these children were afforded thus only at a crisis point and why it is not afforded to all separated children?

After this the minors were made wards of court. The media began to take a more sympathetic approach and began to distinguish them from the adults in the group. The media did however show their faces on television despite the fact that minors in care should not be identified and also in spite of the fact that asylum seekers should not be identified in media.

May 21st saw the strike come to an end and over the next couple of days recriminations began to develop in relation to the adult hunger strikers while the media continued to take a softer line with the minors.

On the 22nd the minors through their guardian ad litem issued a statement. This was reprinted in the Irish Times on the 23rd along with an article entitled "Afghan minors went to cathedral because of 'huge difficulties'" which was a direct quote from the statement. The article set out to put the situation of the minors into context and was very supportive of them.

Three weeks after the end of the hunger strike it was reported in some of the newspapers that one of the minors had received a letter from the Department of Justice threatening to deport him. The reports said that he had two weeks to apply to the Minister for Justice for leave to remain while they also explained that the President of the High Court had made it clear that the boy would not be removed as he was a ward of the court.

Luxembourg: Caritas holds the supervision of 13 minors and ensures the follow-up currently of 47 minors.

Malta: All unaccompanied minors are appointed a guardian as soon as they are released from detention. Such a guardian is required to be present during the unaccompanied minor's interviews with the Refugee Commissioner. The guardian is also responsible for any major decisions related to the minor.

Romania: Guardians are appointed by the Child's Protection General Department, for the time being

for one separated child recognised as a refugee and four seeking asylum separated children.

Reception

Finland: The number of separated children seeking asylum was only 28 until end of May. There seem to be a decline from last year. The main countries are Somalia (7), Afghanistan (5) and Angola (5).

Ireland: The hostels which house separated children are not inspected by the Social Services Inspectorate. This has always been a concern as it implied a two-tier system for children in care in Ireland.

The Irish Times recently referred to the fact that the aforementioned hostels were unregistered. The Child Care Act 1991 prohibits establishing any unregistered children's residential centre, and thus these centres could be in breach of legislation. The link between the lower standard of accommodation centres and the high level of missing children is referred to also.

The Minister for Children was quoted as saying that he was concerned about this and that he requested a report on the issue. The Ombudsman for Children commented that the inferior care provided for separated children placed Ireland is in breach of its obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Irish Refugee Council would call for an overhaul of the residential hostel accommodation to a model similar to that offered Irish children in care. [Irish Times 07-06-06, 08-06-06 and 10-06-06]

Italy: A representative of the new Ministry of Interior has raised awareness in a press conference about the unaccompanied children arriving in the Southern part of Italy:

Their number is growing compared to the past year and Member of Parliament Marcella Lucidi said the Government must act to give them proper reception guarantees.

Luxembourg: There is no difference between the reception of minors and adults. It is tried however to place the minors in structures where they are framed by social workers.

Malta: Separated children in Malta are hosted in a centre which specifically caters for unaccompanied minors. In 2005 Malta had two homes for unaccompanied minors but due to the decrease in

the number the second home is now hosting pregnant women and families with children.

The centre for unaccompanied minors caters for thirty people but at the moment there are only fifteen minors residing in this home. The home for families is hosting fifteen families with children.

The Maltese Government asked the EU to provide Malta with experienced professionals to train the staff members working with these vulnerable groups. A delegation from the Netherlands was sent to Malta in the month of June to give specific training to the employees working in these centres.

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 could be contrary to the interests of the separated children if the asylum procedures are not yet finished or if the procedure is not carried out well.

Furthermore, there seems to be a possible discrimination in their right to education if the separated children have to focus only on jobs that are useful in their home countries.

Norway: Recently there has been a lot of attention on the conditions in the reception centres for asylum seekers in Norway.

A working group within the Norwegian Department of Migration is working on a report where the main focus is the situation for the children who are living in reception centres in Norway.

The report will give some proposals about the procedure for processing asylum applications and how to improve the situation for the children in reception. The report will be finishing this summer.

These days there has been a public debate on children who have lived in reception centres for more than three years. As a consequence Save the Children has taken part in the debate and has been able to raise a wider debate on the standards of reception centres and this is still ongoing.

Romania: 5 separated children are accommodated in the Stolnicu reception centre. 1 separated child is accommodated in the Galati reception centre.

The children participate in the activities organised in the Children's Rooms inside the accommodation

centre: drawing lessons, Romanian language lessons, computer lessons, cultural orientation seminars, traditional skills etc. and also in extracurricular activities which take place outside the accommodation centre such as visits to museums, theatre etc.

Sweden: The responsibility for accommodation of separated children will be transferred from the Migration Board to the municipalities on 1 July. A small number of municipalities will be signing special agreements with the Migration Board to ensure that separated children have accommodation upon arrival in Sweden.

There have been concerns expressed from various actors about the timing of the handover, although most find this change long overdue. The main concerns are that too few municipalities have signed agreements, and a lack of sufficient preparations to ensure that the children already in Migration Board reception units will be placed in appropriate accommodation.

Missing Children

Bulgaria: The trend still remains of children going missing a few weeks after their registration as asylum seekers.

Ireland: The most recent figure admitted by the Minister for Children's office of separated children going missing is 316 since 2001.

On International Missing Children's Day, the Irish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children released a joint press release with the Irish Refugee Council to highlight the issue, see www.ispcc.ie

The Netherlands: There has been a lot of rumours of disappearances of Indian separated children in the Netherlands. Although the first signs of disappearances became clear already in 2004, the authorities did not react in an adequate way, or even at all.

Today there is more attention on the problem but this seems to result in the solution of 'detaining in order to prevent disappearances'.

Slovakia: We have still a problem with missing children. More than 90 percent of the children arriving stay in Slovakia less than one month. Most of the children coming to Slovakia are economic migrants and they are migrating to Western Europe.

Sweden: A Chinese couple were convicted of smuggling in human beings by the District Court in Stockholm in June. They were prosecuted for smuggling more than 40 Chinese children, many of whom have gone missing in the Swedish asylum procedure. The children are believed to have been smuggled via Sweden to other European countries.

United Kingdom: The Refugee Council are working with an independent researcher to look at the issue of separated children whose application for asylum is refused because they have not returned their statement to the Home Office; many of these children have disappeared. A report is due in the autumn.

Dublin II practice

Denmark: Save the Children Denmark is part of a team working to develop an action plan for the children who fall victims to trafficking to Denmark. In this connection, we have experienced two instances, where trafficking is suspected, where decisions were made after a brief period in protective custody that the children are to be returned to a third country.

In both instances, the children disappeared subsequently to the decision.

We now work to draw the attention of the decision makers to the fact that potentially trafficked children should not be returned to third countries.

The **European Council on Refugees and Exiles**, www.ecre.org, have agreed to focus their advocacy work for 6 months on the Dublin II Regulations.

Refugee assisting organisations from 30 European countries (73 ECRE members) have signed an open letter to Franco Frattini, European Commissioner, calling for reform of the regulations. The Refugee Council UK are signatories to this letter, and have issued a press release stating that children are being put at risk, and calling for reform.

Procedures and Recognition

Germany: In 2005, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees counted 331 separated children younger than 16 years of age who applied for asylum through their guardians (2004: 636).

213 out of these 331 children were males and 118 females, which is a share of 36% (2004: 38%).

The by far largest group with 91 minors came – like in 2004 – from Vietnam; 28 from Eritrea, 27 from

Ethiopia, 19 from Afghanistan, 14 from Iran, 11 from Iraq, 10 from Guinea, 9 from Somalia, 7 from India, 6 from Angola. In another 20 cases the nationality of the children was unclear.

319 decisions on separated children under 16 years of age were taken by the Federal Office in 2005. 6 separated children were granted refugee status, 12 received humanitarian status. The overall protection rate for separated children under 16 (refugee and humanitarian status) was 5.6%.

Norway: So far this year 7 separated children (13 %) have received refugee status. 16 separated children (31 %) have received residence permit for other protection grounds. And 21 (41 %) have received residence permit of humanitarian reasons. 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 children.

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

Romania: The NRO applies the standard procedure for all the separated children.

Sweden: The new legislation is aimed to ensure that protection and not humanitarian needs is the primary consideration in the asylum procedure. To date, it is difficult to predict to what extent the reform will lead to changes in recognition rates. The Migration Court of Appeal has yet to set binding precedence.

The Migration Board granted an Afghan separated child a permanent resident permit for compassionate reasons in a guiding decision of 30 May 2006. The reason behind the decision was that there was no possibility to arrange adequate reception for the child upon return to Afghanistan within a reasonable timeframe.

Family Tracing and Reunification

Luxembourg: One family tracing has been undertaken without any result until now.

Malta: We have not had any unaccompanied minors who were assisted to be reunified with their family. Currently Dar is-Sliem together with UNHCR Malta is working on helping a seventeen

year old Eritrean unaccompanied minor to be reunified with his father in Germany.

Norway: International Social Services is implementing a project financed by the migration authorities. Currently they are interviewing about 26 separated children in reception centres in order to find out whether reunification is possible.

The project’s objective is to make procedures and good practice on how to work on this issue. The project is being evaluated these days.

Sweden: New rules for family reunification entered into force on 30 April 2006. The new rules ensure that separated children who have been found to be refugees or in need of complementary protection now have a right to family reunification with their parents in Sweden. The new rules are part of the efforts to implement the EC family reunification directive.

Return

Denmark: UNHCR has voiced its concern over Denmark’s adoption on 2 May of amendments to the new European immigration laws allowing for easier expulsion of refugees.

It stated that these amendments are “not fully in line with the UN Refugee Convention”, which contains clear restrictions on the expulsion of refugees, taking into account the serious consequences they could face if expelled.

Last December, UNHCR warned that a EU directive on asylum procedures could lead to a trend towards the adoption of worst practice and a serious downgrading of asylum standards. It felt that the directive, which sets minimum standards for ruling on asylum claims, could lead to breaches of international refugee law unless further safeguards were introduced. The Agency was particularly concerned about proposals to allow states to designate “safe third countries” outside the EU, to which asylum seekers can be returned without even being able to have their claim heard. UNHCR also stated that the directive failed to make it clear that asylum seekers cannot be sent back to their countries of origin while waiting for the outcome of their appeals, thereby removing the right to an effective remedy in the event of an error in the decision making process.

Malta: Malta, through the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, is currently preparing a program for

assisted voluntary return. Two delegates from IOM Rome have visited the centres and given information on this program. We will start working on a case of an unaccompanied minor who has asked to return to his country of origin.

The Netherlands: A new agreement signed between IOM and the Dutch government will provide increased financial support for the reintegration of rejected asylum seekers voluntarily returning to their home countries with IOM support.

Each adult will now receive € 1,750 and while a family will get € 875 for each child in order to help them rebuild their lives in their countries of origin.

In order to qualify for the increased reintegration assistance, rejected asylum seekers need to be returning home voluntarily and must have filed their asylum claims in the Netherlands before 15 June 2006.

IOM expects to assist 3,820 rejected asylum seekers with this reintegration assistance until the end of 2007 with funding from the Dutch Foreign Ministry. Over the past four years, an average of 15,000 rejected asylum seekers apply for voluntary return and reintegration assistance each year with about 10 per cent of them meeting the qualification criteria.

For more information contact: Joost Oostlander, IOM The Hague, Tel: +31.70.3181500. Email: joostlander@iom.int

Norway: We had a case recently where an 11 year old boy was sent back to Sri Lanka. He arrived in Norway as a separated child four years ago. In this case Save the Children has taken part in the public debate and has used arguments and recommendations from SCEP position paper on returns and separated children. The debate is still ongoing.

Spain: More than 40 organizations have reported and denounced the worrying situation of the unaccompanied minors in Madrid. The Manifesto, presented in a press conference, focused on two main points:

- Repatriations without guarantees:

In the last months many children are being repatriated, especially from Madrid. The guarantees provided to them during the repatriation are insufficient (they are not informed before, the Police officials appear at 6:00 a.m., wake them up and take them to the airport, they are not allowed to take their belongings). As a result, the situation in

the centres or residences is very stressful, and many of them are leaving the centres to go to another autonomous community or just to live in the streets. In 2005, non-governmental organisations, care professionals, academic researchers and other individuals across Spain documented and lodged complaints against repatriations in violation national and international law.

- Documentation:

The Government in Madrid ignores the nine-month deadline set in the Law to give the residence permit and children reach the age of 18 and get expelled from the protection system without any documentation of their legal residence or opportunity to find a job. Since June 2005 none of them have been provided documents (residence permit).

Very good news is that last month a judge stopped a repatriation: a Moroccan child was taken off the airplane – 4 minutes before take off – and appointed an independent lawyer to defend the rights of this child, because it was considered that the minimum guarantees had not been respected and the child was at risk. This was thanks to a lawyer that could appeal the repatriation. It is really a good precedence that has been followed by others judges, three cases so far.

Trafficking

Finland: The working group of the Ministry of Labour has submitted its report on how to arrange a system for possible victims of trafficking.

The report suggests a comprehensive system to help people who are suspected to be victims of trafficking. The government would have the responsibility, which means that the costs would be within the annual budget.

Access to the system will not depend on whether the criminal investigation is successful or not. Possible victims should be allowed to get help as long as they are in the country, whether their case is going to the court or not.

Minors' cases will be coordinated by one of the reception centres for asylum seekers that is specialised to minors. The reception centre is prepared to take care of child victims of trafficking. However, they could also be placed in e.g. child welfare institutions if it is assessed to be in their best interests.

The director of the reception centre would have the right to make a decision to take a minor into the system.

There would also be a local multi-professional group to consider the best solution for placement and to follow up upon the case.

Ireland: The IRC has an information note on trafficking on its web-site citing case studies including minors and listing recommendations, see www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie

First Counter-Trafficking Information Campaign – is focused around a poster which is available in five languages - Russian, Romanian, Portuguese, French and Chinese - and which features a free phone number which victims can call for assistance. They will then be referred to an appropriate agency including the police and the IOM office in Dublin. The campaign will target high visibility areas such as nightclubs, airports, bus and train stations.

The campaign will be facilitated by Crimestoppers, a registered charity that allows people to report crime without fear of reprisal. It is supported by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Garda Síochána and IOM and is sponsored by several private companies.

It comes prior to the approval of the Immigration and Residence Bill, which will strengthen legislation protecting victims of trafficking and as well as efforts to prosecute traffickers.

Italy: Law of 16 March 2006, n°146 – Published in the Official Gazette 11.04.2006-06-16:

The new Law of Ratification and execution of the United Nations Convention against trans-national organised crime and its Protocols (the so called “Palermo Protocol” included), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on the 15th of November 2000 and on the 31st of May 2001.

Norway: In October 2005 twelve Chinese children were identified in reception centres as suspected victims of trafficking.

The Norwegian police (KRIPOS) investigated the case. They have initiated a European police-cooperation to find out why the children came to Norway, where they were intended to go and what was supposed to happen to them.

The children came to Norway to apply for asylum. Today they have been granted residence permit in Norway, and the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration and the child welfare system are taken care of them.

A Chinese couple were accused and detained for trafficking in Sweden. After this case there have not been other Chinese children who have applied for asylum in Norway. In the opinion of the police they have put a stop to an organized network.

Romania: Save the Children Romania organized workshops on anti-trafficking awareness for 15 refugee children.

United Kingdom: The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (www.ceop.gov.uk), part of the Virtual Global Taskforce (www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com), has been launched.

It is aware of issues affecting children from abroad, including trafficking, and the Refugee Council are part of a CEOP stakeholders group for voluntary organisations.

Children and Youth Participation

United Kingdom:

A group of young refugees and asylum seekers had a rare opportunity to influence the asylum debate at a conference in Westminster on 19 April.

The young people, aged 15 - 21, come from a range of unstable and war-torn countries including Angola, Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe. They met as part of 'Brighter Futures' - a Save the Children project that works to change perceptions of young refugees and asylum-seekers.

The conference gave the group a chance to raise the problems they face on a daily basis with an audience that included MPs and the Children's Commissioner, as well as grass-roots practitioners such as social workers, immigration officers and the police.

The focus was on experiences of racist bullying, barriers in accessing higher education and unequal treatment by social services

Nassra, 17, says: 'As a young refugee in this country life can be very difficult - from suffering racist bullying at school to struggling to get into college and university. We want the MPs to help us to change the issues facing us. We are in a strange country and need to feel safe and protected.'

Ramatolai, 16, adds: 'We would like people to acknowledge our role in society and to change perceptions of young asylum seekers and refugees. We want to show that young asylum seekers and refugees are human beings like other people.'

www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk/jsp/resources/details.jsp?id=4110&group=resources§ion=news&fromgroup=news&newssection=newslibrary&subsection=details

Miscellaneous

Bulgaria: A Workshop is organised by UNICEF and the State Agency for Refugees for preparing communication strategy for the application of the National Integrated Plan for the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child for the period 2006-2009.

Italy: Save the Children Italy, together with CIES association (www.cies.it), launched an awareness campaign about the children's conditions in Morocco, Romania and Albania, the three countries from where most of the children come.

The aim of the campaign has been to raise awareness especially in the secondary schools on the phenomenon of children in migration.

The campaign has seen the production of 10.000 CD ROMs, 8.000 posters and several professional/teachers trainings and workshops for pupils in Milan and Rome.

The translation of the Statement of Good Practice is one of the extra materials on the CD ROM and it has been published on www.almaro.org, web site of the campaign.

Slovakia: The Slovak Humanitarian Council has prepared a complete analysis of Slovak conditions according to 11 points of the Statement of Good Practice. We will inform about the results in the next monitoring period.

A voluntary program was prepared together with the Trnavensis University and the Slovak Humanitarian Council. 17 social work students participated in the program. Each week three of them worked with the unaccompanied children directly in the camp or in the nearby town. They arranged free time activities and cultural events.

United Kingdom: Fingerprinting of children below the age of 5 is a new attempt to prevent asylum seeking families 're-circulating' children

According to Bloomberg, migration authorities in Southern London and Liverpool will run a pilot during the next six months fingerprinting the young children arriving with families.

The traditional method for fingerprinting might be problematic because the children's fingers are very small. But the cause of taking this means into use is that the authorities have experiences that several children seem to re-appear with different families seeking asylum.

[JP Net May 16 2006]

Events

24 March 2006, Osnabrück, Germany

Conference on access to work and education for young refugees.

Organised by SAGA, an Equal-project in Osnabrück which deals with access to labour market, health of asylum seekers and the development of self help strategies.

A reader of the statements held is in preparation. More information on the project SAGA: www.equal-saga.info/pb.html

30-31 March 2006, Berlin, Germany

Symposium under the title: "Children without German passport – responsibility of the state and rights of children"

Organised by the National Coalition for the implementation of the UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the "Forum Menschenrechte".

Discussed were i.a. the access to education, the new regulation of Section 42 German Youth Welfare Act (access to youth welfare and guardianship of separated children), the implementation of the EU-directives, participation of refugee children, traumatized children.

More information available under:

www.national-coalition.de/index.php?id1=4&id2=0&id3=9

4-6 April 2006, Hofgeismar, Germany

Regular spring conference of the Federal Association for unaccompanied minor refugees (Bundesfachverband UMF).

Working groups to i.a. the following topics were offered: the new regulation of Section 42 German Youth Welfare Act; the implementation of the EU-directives; treatment of children with psychosomatic disorder; integration in the country of stay or re-integration in the country of origin?; fundraising.

A reader on the conference (in German) is in preparation and can be requested by the Federal Association for unaccompanied Minor Refugees at info@b-umf.de

19 April 2006, London, UK

Save the Children UK Brighter Futures group, run by separated children, held a very successful conference.

Invited delegates, including representatives from the Home Office, were given information about the situation in the UK for separated children, and were challenged to respond.

18-19 May & 15-16 June 2006, Madrid, Spain

Seminar and workshop "The Protection of children's rights: the participation of vulnerable children (separated children, children affected by armed conflict and labour exploited children)". Organised by Save the Children Spain.

18–20 May 2006, Rome, Italy

In Rome there has been an International Photos Festival and Save the Children Italy organised a show of pictures titled: "Unaccompanied foreign minors: a coloured future". The pictures were made by persons working in Save the Children, external photographers and children themselves.

June 2006, Sofia, Bulgaria

National competition for children's drawings on the topic "Give the reason to refugees in Bulgaria". The initiative was dedicated to the World Refugee Day. The exhibition of the drawings will be shown at the national Palace of Children and at the French Institute.

June 2006, Finland

The UN Refugee Day was celebrated in reception centres in Finland. NGO's held a media conference and gave a common statement to the Finnish government concerning the EU refugee policy in relation to the Finnish Presidency. NGO's stressed basically the same issues on asylum that ECRE has done in its Way Forward campaign.

We stressed the point of view of separated children in connection with Dublin II and the return directive.

'Separated children' was selected as a theme of the Refugee Day this year. A brochure was made concerning their situation and rights. (Also the Refugee Woman of the Year in 2006 is a former separated child – the same young woman from Afghanistan who was presented in the documentary film Unaccompanied, made in 2002.)

June 2006, Norway

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) arranged a conference where "the best interests of the child" was the main issue.

There were 250 participants from the authorities, NGOs and other professionals.

2 June 2006, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Round table discussion on "Missing and Sexually Exploited Children"

Organised by Child Focus and Seecran (South East European Child Rights Action Network).

Slovene Philanthropy gave a presentation on the situation of the separated children in Slovenia.

9-12 June 2006, Alhucemas, Morocco

Meeting of organisations working with separated children in Spain and Morocco.

17 June 2006, Budapest, Hungary

To celebrate the World Refugee Day, Menedék organised a feast in one of the most popular spots of Budapest. We called this feast the "Street of Diversity".

It happened to have a large publicity and it also drew attention to the problem of separated children. We distributed a lot of the Statement of Good Practice.

Most of the visitors of our website, who looked for the program of the feast, had seen the resumé of the Warsaw meeting (since that was the most colourful news on the site, with nice pictures) – and some became so enthusiastic on the topic that actually plans are being made to organise a similar event especially for children. It could greatly raise awareness. We count on separated children to participate in the preparation and also in realisation. Date and premise is under negotiation, but earliest in the autumn.

19-25 June 2006, United Kingdom

Refugee Week was held in the UK.

It was hugely successful, celebrating the contribution which refugees and asylum seekers make to the community and country, with over 450 events held, and much local and national media attention.

20 June 2006, Malta

Celebration of World Refugee Day.

Some of the unaccompanied minors will be participating by doing hair braiding and playing in the football tournament which is taking place for this event.

3-14 July 2006, Brussels, Belgium
European Summer School: European Union Law and Policy on Immigration and Asylum at Université Libre de Bruxelles.
ODYSSEUS Network, coordinated by the Institute for European Studies, odysseus@ulb.ac.be
www.ulb.ac.be/assoc/odysseus

23-26 October 2006, The Hague/Amsterdam, The Netherlands
3rd Annual World Conference on Children without Parental Care: "Symposium for Enforcing the Human Rights of Orphaned and Abandoned Children – Applying Action to our Promises"
Organised by International Advocates for Children IAC.
An international conference meant for Government Decision-makers, relevant NGO's and researchers.
Information and registration: Inge Gouwenberg, e-mail info@iachildren.nl, fax +31 20 638 0072
www.iachildren.com/index.php

14-16 November 2006, Berlin, Germany
3rd Annual Conference of Eurochild AISBL
The Child and Youth Welfare Association in Germany and Eurochild AISBL are organising a European conference on the role of non-formal and informal learning in combating social exclusion of children and young people.
The conference aims to compare and contrast national policy developments that contribute to three key areas of the EU's political agenda: the fight against child poverty and social exclusion, cooperation in the field of youth policy and implementation of the European Youth Pact.
More information at www.eurochild.org

15-16 December 2006, Oxford, United Kingdom
International Conference on Refugees and International Law: the Challenge of Protection
Further information is available at:
refugeelaw.qeh.ox.ac.uk

Publications

Der Anspruch des unbegleiteten Kindes auf Betreuung und Unterbringung nach Art. 20 des Übereinkommens über die Rechte des Kindes : seine Geltung und Anwendbarkeit in der Rechtsordnung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland / Hendrik Cremer. Baden-Baden, Nomos, 2006. 249 pages.

The dissertation deals with the relevance of Article 20 of the UN-CRC with regard to unaccompanied minors.

Ces enfants venus d'ailleurs / un film de Jean-Louis Mahé. January 2006, 58 min.
A DVD about separated children in France.
For more information, contact Dominique Bordin, e-mail dbordin@france-terre-asile.org

Can you hear me? The right of young children to participate in decisions affecting them / G. Lansdown. Number 36 in the foundation's Working Papers series.
The publication makes the case for children's participation and discusses how it can be put into practice and measured.
www.bernardvanleer.org

From rhetoric to rights / Children's Rights Alliance (Ireland)
This second shadow report was presented to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The report as well as a separated children's report will be available on the Children's Rights Alliance web-site shortly, www.childrensrights.ie.

Invisible children: the human rights of migrant and asylum-seeking minors detained upon arrival / Amnesty International – Italia. February 2006
With this research, Amnesty International launches a campaign for the rights of children seeking asylum.
A brief English report can be found at:
web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGEUR300012006?open&of=ENG-369

Reference Guide on Protecting the Rights of Child Victims of Trafficking in Europe / UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS). July 2006.
www.unicef.org/ceecis/protection_4440.html

Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament based on Article 10 of the Council Framework Decision of 19 July 2002 on combating trafficking in human beings. 02.05.2006. COM(2006) 187 final
europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0187en01.pdf

Survivor's experience : a study of the psychosocial needs of the unaccompanied minors asylum seeker in Malta / Bernard Schembri. 2006

Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns / United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2006
Identifies 127 countries of origin, 98 transit countries and 137 destination countries.
The full text of the report is available at /unodc/en/trafficking_persons_report_2006-04.html. To request a print copy, please message thbreport@unodc.org.

Useful web sites

www.17yearsandcounting.org: 17 Years and Counting came into being as a response to the North/South Civil Society Refugee Warehousing conference held in Geneva, Switzerland near the end of September 2005.
17 Years and Counting will work to seek out and support refugees worldwide who best speak for, and articulate the issues concerning their particular constituent population; to afford refugees the opportunity to have a voice, to be seen and heard on the world stage, that they might participate in determining their own future.

Germany:

www.b-umf.de: website of the Federal Association for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees (Bundesfachverband UMF)

www.tdh.de: website of terre des hommes Germany.

www.national-coalition.de: website of the German National Coalition for the implementation of the UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child

Ireland:

www.childrensrights.ie: website of the Children's Rights Alliance

Italy:

www.meltingpot.org/index-en.html: Meltingpot is an information project about and for migrants born in the Venice Region 10 years ago. It has now started a new version of the website and part of it is available in English.

Sweden:

www.sweref.se: New website of the Swedish Refugee Advice Centre (Rådgivningsbyrå för asylsökande och flyktingar.

The website has a sub-site on children: www.sweref.se/barn

www.utanpapper.nu: A new website introduced by Save the Children Sweden aimed at reaching undocumented children and families in Sweden.

Reporting organisations

Bulgarian Helsinki Committee-Refugees and Migrants Legal Protection Programme
Bundesfachverband UMF

Caritas Foundation Luxembourg, Refugee Office, Passetout Project

Central Union for Child Welfare (Finland)

Dar is-Sliem, Home for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers (Malta)

Defence for Children International - The Netherlands

Irish Refugee Council

Menedék (Hungary)

Refugee Council (UK)

Save the Children Denmark

Save the Children Italia

Save the Children Norway

Save the Children Romania

Save the Children Spain

Save the Children Sweden

Slovak Humanitarian Council

Slovene Philanthropy

Swiss Foundation of the International Social Service

UNHCR BO Athens

UNHCR BO Sofia

UNHCR Spain

UNHCR Suboffice Nuremberg

This Newsletter has been produced by Lise Bruun and Jyothi Kanics for the Separated Children in Europe Programme. For more information please contact:

Lise Bruun, Administrative Co-ordinator

LBR@redbarnet.dk

Tel: +45 3524 8524

Jyothi Kanics, Programme Manager

JK@redbarnet.dk

Tel: +45 3524 8536

Save the Children Denmark, Rosenørns Allé 12, DK-1634 Copenhagen V

Fax: +45 3539 1119

www.separated-children-europe-programme.org