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Employability, Care Arrangements and Guardianship: Transnational Workshop on Migrant Children's Transition to Adulthood

Athens, Greece 30 January 2023

Organised by the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum of Greece in the framework of the Project "Building Futures, Sharing Good Practices: Migrant Children's Transition to Adulthood – UACFutures"

REPORT

This report was funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Council of Europe.¹

Overall Concept

On 30 January 2023, the Unit of Integration and Support for Unaccompanied Minors of the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors (SSPUAM),² Ministry of Migration and Asylum, organised a Transnational Workshop (the Workshop) in Athens, Greece. The Workshop was organised in the framework of the Project "Building Futures, Sharing Good Practices: Migrant Children's Transition to Adulthood UACFutures)" (the Project), co-funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Council of Europe.

The Workshop brought together around 80 professionals from Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, and Sweden to discuss existing challenges, exchange good

¹ The content of this report represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility. The European Commission and the Council of Europe do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.

² The SSPUAM, established within the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, is the competent state authority for the overall protection of third country national or stateless minors deprived of parental care in Greece.

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practices, and identify possible solutions with a view to facilitating the transition of unaccompanied migrant children to adulthood. In line with the Project's thematic areas and following the adoption of the new law (L. 4960/2022) on the establishment of a National Guardianship System in Greece in July 2022, the Workshop focused on employability, care arrangements and guardianship.

In order to strengthen the European dimension of the Workshop, representatives from other European Union (EU) Member States with long standing experience in working with unaccompanied migrant children on employability and vocational training were invited. More precisely, representatives from Italy and Sweden were invited to join this Workshop and actively enrich the discussions through presentations and insights on good practices and challenges faced in their respective national contexts. Also, a representative from the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) made a presentation on the developments of guardianship systems while Nidos, project partner, contributed to the discussion thanks to their expertise on guardianship and family-based care arrangements. These transnational perspectives were complemented by contributions from key local actors and organisations, such as UNICEF-Greece, Elix, Odyssey and Metadrasi.

While preparing the panels, the SSPUAM paid special attention to both the speakers and the moderators by selecting experienced professionals from the field. Their task was to summarise the main points raised, ensure coherence and build bridges between the different presentations, while also effectively handling the questions from the audience during the discussions.

Opening Remarks

The participants were warmly welcomed to the Workshop by the **SSPUAM's Unit of Integration and Support for UAMs**. Special thanks were extended to **Mr Giakoumopoulos, Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Council of Europe** for his honorary presence at the Workshop. Also, the SSPUAM acknowledged and thanked the esteemed Project partners, namely the Council of Europe, SolidarityNow, Nidos and Fundación Cepaim.

Mr Heracles Moskoff, Special Secretary for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors, welcomed the participants and thanked Mr Christos Giakoumopoulos for his presence at the Workshop. Mr Moskoff underlined the importance for the SSPUAM to ensure the



continuation of support, and access to services and rights for unaccompanied minors in transition to adulthood. Mr Moskoff underlined in particular the necessity to create opportunities for facilitating access to education and the labour market, in order for unaccompanied minors to enjoy their rights equally and fully as young adults.

During his opening remarks, **Mr Christos Giakoumopoulos** acknowledged that “turning 18 is a period of great uncertainty and risk for unaccompanied migrant children, bringing with it a variety



of challenges not just for young refugees and migrants themselves but also for the professionals supporting them.” He further stressed that the Council of Europe has been mindful of these challenges and the need to find comprehensive and sustainable solutions in line with Council of Europe standards and good practices in the field. In this context, he specifically noted the [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2019\)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood](#), adopted in 2019, as well

as the work of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2014 on specific support measures for young migrants and refugees turning 18. In addition, Mr Giakoumopoulos underlined the importance of the work and achievements of the Project over the past year, notably through the fruitful exchange of good practices on transition to adulthood. He also welcomed the direct involvement of unaccompanied minors, and young migrants and refugees in the Project’s activities by giving them space to express their views, hopes and dreams. Mr Giakoumopoulos expressed the hope that perhaps “one day, if we continue on our joint route through active dialogue and collaboration across diverse sectors and borders, we shall see the day when turning 18 will be a reason to celebrate for *all* children under our care – and not something to be justifiably terrified of.”

Round Tables

Following the welcome and the opening remarks, the first round table focused on **“Practices and policies on employability for youth transitioning to adulthood. The examples of Italy and Sweden”**.

Representatives from **UNICEF Italy** provided a brief overview of the situation for unaccompanied and separated children in Italy. Moreover, they presented the findings of the



research entitled *“At a crossroad. Unaccompanied and separated children in their transition to adulthood in Italy”* prepared jointly by UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM. The interventions from UNICEF’s representatives focused on actions aimed at building skills for school-to-work transition and job orientation for migrant and refugee youth in the public school system and reception facilities in Italy. In this context, the important partnership with Junior Achievement Italy in the implementation of skills building and job orientation models was underlined.

Next, **Junior Achievement Italy** explained how the organisation maps new inequalities, creates the metrics, and promotes shared values through the involvement of communities in projects that aim to empower young people.



Representatives from **Save the Children in Sweden** spoke about the experiences from their project “Youth Power – roads to employment” and gave an overview of the laws and policies affecting unaccompanied minors who have transitioned to adulthood. Save the Children also

presented the experiences from the EU funded project “Jobbvägen” and its goal to increase young people’s involvement in, and access to, working life and student life by strengthening their empowerment, health, knowledge, and networks.

The second round table on “Working on job readiness of youth refugee and migrant children in non-formal education. Experiences, successes, and obstacles as realized in Greece” started with the presentation from representatives from **UNICEF Greece**. In this context, they presented the two EU funded programmes “The Child Guarantee” and “All Children in Education programmes in Greece (ACE)” and explained how these two programmes aimed to create a model or alternative / articulated pathways for young people transitioning from education (including Vocational Education and Training (VET)) to employment and entrepreneurship.



Next, **Elix** presented their good practices and challenges encountered while preparing youth for their entrance into the labour market. Elix supports young adults in discovering and further developing their skills, preferences and ambitions for their future. To this end, particular attention was given to the “Non-formal educational projects” focusing on linguistic and digital literacy and vocational education and the “*Get ready for future project*” focusing on job readiness and smooth entrance into labour market.

Odyssea explained their innovative approach and work in addressing inequalities related to access to education and quality employment for UAMs and young persons not engaged in education, employment or training in Greece. The types of interventions and the categories of VET were also presented.



Metadras provided information on their “Stepping Stone” programme and its key pillars, services and initiatives for the education and integration of UAMs in order to build a future in their new home country.

The **afternoon session** opened with the round table on **“Guardianship and foster care”**. A representative of FRA presented briefly the EU legal and policy framework and gave an overview of the developments related to the guardianship system in EU countries since 2014. Representatives from Stitching Nidos, Project partner, presented key elements, good practices and challenges related to guardianship and foster care based on their experience in the Netherlands.

The session on **“Guardianship implementation in Greece and its recent developments”** was presented at the end of the day. The SSPUAM’s Unit for Institutional Protection provided an overall analysis of SSPUAM’s operation, mandate, units, and the key provisions for a comprehensive protection system.



Next, the new legislation L. 4960/2022 on the establishment of a National Guardianship System (July 2022) was presented. In this context, the SSPUAM explained the functions and role of guardians in Greece, as well as the way in which the guardianship scheme will be implemented. According to the new law, the State guides and supervises the National Guardianship System, the Public Prosecutor appoints the guardians and a private or public entity implements it. Through the Guardianship System, representation for unaccompanied minors in all legal and administrative procedures is ensured while the care provided is appropriate for the minor (accommodation, access to education and health care, overall wellbeing of the child). It was also underlined that the new law establishes the framework for the rules and procedures applicable to the system of accommodation for unaccompanied minors; frames the content of the Child Protection Policy applied by all actors providing



guardianship services; foresees the development of a National Registry for the protection of unaccompanied minors; regulates the National Emergency Response Mechanism and sets the frame for accompanying UAMs in the country in a secure and organised manner.

Following the round tables and an open discussion among the participants to reflect and exchange on the themes of the day, the SSPUAM's Unit of Integration and Support for UAMs made the **final remarks and closed the workshop**.

Evaluation

At the end of the day, participants were asked to anonymously **evaluate the workshop, reflect, and provide their thoughts and/or suggestions**. Twenty (20) participants evaluated the workshop with all of them sharing their *high-level of satisfaction* in terms of exchange of best practices and policies on employability and vocational trainings for youth transitioning to adulthood, the overall content of the workshop, and the administrative organisation. This was further underlined by the comments included in the narrative area of the evaluation form. Comments received, for example, indicate: *“Wonderful workshop,” “opportunities to interact with participants,” “Great organisation-Thank you,” “Good practices and insights on policies from other countries were substantial,” “taking with us the ideas on vocational training and knowledge from other countries,”* and *“Diversity of the speakers and the great organisations are among the things that we will take with us.”*

Annex I: News items and visibility of the Transnational Workshop

To ensure the visibility of the Workshop, the SSPUAM published news items on its social media. These can be found at the following links:

- <https://www.facebook.com/HeraclesMoskoffSSPUAM/posts/pfbid0EPbAL1Y7FPEbrvfUTbhyjckV1eWGMfXUvDBh8cspaw3dVxPm267xF9v1QyuZ6UtgI>
- <https://www.facebook.com/HeraclesMoskoffSSPUAM/posts/pfbid02FTqb4JqUzEws2ceEaN15HGJ9sUEpJysffUzCpd2UQbd3BzmbWfKZ8CXFBtDod3oul>
- <https://twitter.com/sspuam/status/1620070748110069760>

Annex II: Agenda



AGENDA

EMPLOYABILITY, CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND GUARDIANSHIP: TRANSNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON MIGRANT CHILDREN'S TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

Athens, Greece 30 January 2023

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Monday 30th January 2023 | [Royal Olympic Hotel](#) (28-34 Athanasiou Diakou Str., Athens)

- 09:00 – 09:30 *Welcome Remarks*
Gelly ARONI, Head of the Unit for Integration and Support of UAMs, SSPUAM
- Official opening*
Mr Heracles MOSKOFF, Special Secretary for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors (SSPUAM)
Mr Christos GIAKOUMOPOULOS, Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law, Council of Europe
- 09:30 – 11:00 Round table on ***Practices and policies on employability for youth transitioning to adulthood. The examples of Italy and Sweden.***
- Giacomo GIOVANNINI, Junior Achievement, Italy
Sophia BENASSILA, Sarah MARTELLI, UNICEF, Italy
Åsa ERSBORG, Save the Children, Sweden
Carolina LAXVIK, Save the Children, Sweden

Moderated by Kostas SIMITOPOULOS, Junior Achievement, Greece

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:00 Round table on *Working on job Readiness of youth refugee and migrant children in Non-Formal Education. Experiences, successes, and obstacles as realized in Greece.*

Giorgos SIMOPOULOS, UNICEF, GREECE Education Officer

Angeliki SIFAKI, Elix, Greece

Jai MEXIS, Odyssey, Greece

Iro BAKA, METAdrasi - Action for Migration and Development, Greece

Moderated by Nikos RANGOS, SolidarityNow, Greece

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch Break

14:30 – 15:30 Round table on *Guardianship and Foster care.*

Monica GUTIERREZ ARQUES, FRA, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

Marika ZERVOS & Marjolein GROEN, NIDOS, Netherlands.

Moderated by Andreas DIMOU, Reception Officer- Child Protection, SSPUAM

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-16:20 Presentation of *Guardianship implementation in Greece, recent developments.*

Sotiria KASNAKOUDI, Head of the Unit for Institutional Protection, SSPUAM

Angelika GYFTOPOULOU, Legal Assistant SSPUAM

16:20- 17:00 **Open discussion** moderated by Claire PAVLAKI, Child Protection Special Advisor SSPUAM

Final remarks and closure of Workshop

Gelly ARONI, Head of the Unit for Integration and Support of UAMs, SSPUAM

Annex III: List of Organisations

Around eighty (80) participants including project partners, guest speakers, and attendees joined the Transnational Workshop. The list is as follows:

The Project partners:

- Council of Europe
- SSPUAM
- SolidarityNow
- Nidos
- Fundación Cepaim

Guest speakers, Moderators and Participants:

- AMALA
- Elix, Greece
- European Commission, Greece
- European Migration Network, Luxemburg
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)
- European University Cyprus
- Evropaiki Ekfrasi
- Faros
- Faros Elpidas
- Fenix Humanitarian Legal Aid
- Greek Council for Refugees (GCR)
- HEMAYAT, Austria
- International Chamber of Sustainable Development (ICSD)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- INTERSOS HELLAS
- Junior Achievement, Greece
- Junior Achievement, Italy
- Karolinska Institutet, Sweden
- Koinoniko EKAV
- Médecins Sans Frontiers (MSF)
- Medical Intervention (Medin)
- Metadrasi – Action for Migration and Development Greece
- Network for Children’s Rights
- Odyssea, Greece
- PICUM, Belgium
- Psychosocial innovation, Serbia
- Refugee Legal Support
- SAMS HELLAS
- Save the Children, Sweden
- The Home Project
- The Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation (INEDIVIM)
- UNICEF Greece
- UNICEF Italy
- University of Athens
- Velos Youth