

Fostering Across Borders (FAB)

Support, improve and promote family based care for unaccompanied migrant children in Austria, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Poland and the United Kingdom.

Rationale

During the surge in arrivals of refugees and migrants in Europe in 2015, more than 90,000 unaccompanied migrant children (UMC) claimed asylum in Europe¹. Throughout the EU, the majority of UMC are placed in large scale residential care facilities, despite the recommendation of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) to provide them with family-based care (FBC) reception and accommodation, as reports show that fewer children go missing from foster care in comparison to reception centres and institutions². Family-based care has also been identified by the EU³ as better placed to provide a nurturing environment and for the individual and specific needs of children to be addressed. At the same time, training for professionals working with UMC remains a high priority, many lacking the experience and access to training⁴ necessary to provide the highest standards of care and protection to these children.

Objectives

The FAB aims to establish the highest standards of care and protection provided to children in migration by improving and expanding the quality of family-based care (FBC) for unaccompanied migrant children (UMC) with dedicated foster carers (FC) trained and supported specifically in the issues and challenges affecting UMC, in six EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Poland and the United Kingdom). To achieve these objectives the project partners will:

- Adapt appropriate training for FBC services and FCs in order to equip them with the knowledge to provide safe and effective family care for UMC
- Work with relevant regulated providers of FBC services to enhance their ability to recruit and support families to foster UMC
- Engage with UMC to ensure FBC arrangements meet their needs
- Promote the FBC model to families interested in fostering

Activities

The project activities will include:

- Mapping and analysing current training materials and training needs in the participating EU Member States (MS) to adapt existing training materials for professionals and families

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7244677/3-02052016-AP-EN.pdf/>

² Background note on ways to prevent unaccompanied migrant children from going missing, FRA, available at: http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2016-libe_missing_children_21_april_2016_background_note.pdf

³ As stipulated in Article 24 2. (b) of Directive 2013/33/EU laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection, available at:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013L0033&from=en>

⁴ <http://missingchildreneurope.eu/facts&figures>



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- Supporting professionals working with UMC and regulated providers of FBC services to promote better recruitment and retention of foster carers
- Delivering relevant training for FCs and kinship carers by using the more sustainable train-the-trainer (ToT) approach
- In accordance with a child rights-based approach, the FAB project will conduct focus group discussions with UMC to ensure their voice is heard and their perspectives inform the adaption of training and informative materials, to raise awareness about their circumstances and needs.

Timeline

The project will be implemented from January 2018 to September 2019.

About IOM and FAB partners in the UK

IOM, the UN migration agency, is the leading organisation in the field of migration. Established in 1951, the International Organization for Migration is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As part of its mandate IOM has been assisting governmental and civil society organizations worldwide in the development and delivery of programmes, studies and technical expertise on supporting children and youth in the context of migration.

CoramBAAF is the leading membership organisation dedicated to improving outcomes for children and young people in care in the UK. Its aim is to promote and encourage the highest standards of practice in adoption, fostering and social work; to promote public and professional understanding of adoption and fostering; to act as an independent voice in the field of child care; and to influence policy makers and legislations.

Coram Children's Legal Centre (CCLC), also part of the Coram group of charities, promotes and protects the rights of children in the UK and internationally in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is composed of experts across different areas of children's rights, including immigration, child protection, education and child law, that: provide legal advice and representation; research and produce evidence informing law, policy, practice and system reform; build the capacity of professionals and practitioners through training and advice provision; and challenge laws and policies that negatively impact on children and their rights.

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