



**Missing
Children
Europe**



*The President's
Foundation for the
Wellbeing of Society*

Lost in Migration

**Working together to protect children from disappearance, from
European priorities to local realities**

Delegate booklet

11-12 April 2018

Brussels, Belgium



#LostInMigration



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Objectives of the conference

The conference is organised as the second edition and follow up to the Lost in Migration Conference held in January 2017. The goal of the conference will be to discuss challenges and progress in implementing the European Commission's Communication on the Protection of Children in Migration across Europe. It will bring together authorities from the local, national and European level as well as experts, researchers and civil society organisations around the main issues addressed in the Communication:

- Root causes and protecting children along the migratory routes
- Identification and protection
- Reception
- Access to status determination procedures and implementation of procedural safeguards
- Ensuring durable solutions
- Respect and guaranties for the best interest of the child in data, research, training and funding

High level panels and interactive workshops organised by local authorities and civil society in Europe will connect delegates with the situation on the ground through the direct participation of expert from the field and nationally.

> Outcome

The conference will elaborate upon updated recommendations to ensure progress on the protection of children in migration in Europe. In order to effectively collect good/promising practices in implementing the actions outlined in the Commission's Communication around those topics, a call for good practices was launched in coordination with the Partnership on the Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees of the Urban Agenda for the EU. The analysis of these practices and the conclusions of the conference will feature in a publication to be disseminated both online and in print. In line with the organisers' commitments to children, a child participation element will be built into the programme, with the cooperation of the (Maltese) Presidents' Foundation for the Well-being of Society.



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Practical Information

Wifi network: Visit.brussels and password: bebrussels

Taxi 0032 268 00 00

Emergency Number 112

Contact Details

Should you have any further queries regarding logistics, please contact

- Nathalie Suvéé (nathalie.suvee@missingchildreneurope.eu) Tel: +32 2/894 74 84 or +32 473/29 07 42

Should you have any further queries regarding the event itself, please contact

- Federica Toscano (Federica.toscano@missingchildreneurope.eu) Tel: +32 2/894 74 83 or +32 484/55 41 39
- Laure Vierset (laure.vierset@missingchildreneurope.eu) Tel: +32 2/894 74 83 or +32 491/98 43 12

Organisers and funders



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Missing Children Europe is the European federation for missing and sexually exploited children, representing 31 organisations from 27 European countries. We provide the link between research, policies and organisations on the ground, to protect children from any kind of violence, abuse or neglect that is caused by, or results from, them going missing.



The (Maltese) President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society aims to produce relevant, appropriate and timely research by seeking innovative methodologies to engage with society for the promotion of peace and unity. The Foundation creates the space to listen, explore, discuss, research, and learn about ways of enhancing human relationships. The Foundation seeks to cultivate hope, particularly through engaging with minority and marginalized groups within our society and building bridges with society at large.



ALDE is the pro- European political group in the European Parliament, fighting for your freedom and stronger civil rights while securing economic growth. Our mission is to change Europe into a place that people can be proud of again.



The European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM), an initiative of currently 14 Partner Foundations and 11 associated Foundations, has the goal of strengthening the role played by civil society in advocating for constructive approaches to migration in Europe. This is done through grant-making, capacity development and networking. "Never Alone – Building our future with children and youth arriving in Europe" is a collaborative funding initiative established as a sub-fund in EPIM. The fund aims to support civil society organisations and public bodies/authorities seeking to address policy and practice issues, arising from increasing arrivals of children and youth in Europe, and the struggle for communities to provide adequate protection as well as long-term perspectives for their life in Europe.



The Intergroup on Children's Rights is a cross party and a cross-national group of committed MEPs, who work together with civil society to keep children's rights on top of the EU agenda. It is the only formal body within the European Parliament with explicit responsibilities for children.

It exists to ensure that the best interest of the child is taken into account in EU internal and external action and to mainstream children's rights in all EU policies and legislation. It aims to be at the heart of parliamentary work to address the needs of children, including migrant and refugee children, as well

as children in conflicts. The Intergroup also strives to combat any form of violence against children, namely: child sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking, child marriage, FGM, child labour and children victims of domestic violence.



The Partnership on the Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees is a three-year cooperation involving experts from Member States of the EU, the European Commission, European cities and NGOs. Within three years, members of the partnership design an action plan, implement the actions and evaluate the results. Members of the Partnership are: city of Amsterdam (coordinator), European Commission Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (co-coordinator), and members: Athens, Berlin, Helsinki, Barcelona, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Denmark, EUROCITIES, Council of European Municipalities and Regions, European Council for Refugees and Exiles, URBACT, Migration Policy Group, European Investment Bank, and three other European Commission Directorates-General: DG REGIO, DG EMPLO and the Joint Research Center. The objectives of the Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees, which is part of the Urban Agenda for the EU, are in three areas:

- I. Better regulation: How to improve EU legislation on Integration/Migration so that it better reflects urban needs practices and responsibilities?
- II. Better use of EU financial instruments: How to ensure better access to and utilization of European funds by urban areas?
- III. Better knowledge exchange: How to improve the EU urban knowledge base and stimulate the sharing of best practices and cooperation between urban areas?

One of the actions of the Partnership will be to produce recommendations for EU policies on the protection of children in migration.



The Government of the region is the executive body of the Brussels-Capital Region: it defines how the laws laid down by the Brussels Parliament are implemented. The Government of the Brussels-Capital Region is elected every five years by the Brussels Parliament (the Council of the Brussels-Capital Region). The members of the Government are responsible for matters defined by the regional competences: urban development, planning, urban renewal, housing, public works, transport, economic policy, foreign trade, employment, environmental protection, energy, local authorities, scientific research and international relations.



With the financial support of the "Rights, Equality and Citizenship 2014-2020" Programme of the European Union. Sole responsibility of this publication lies with Missing Children Europe.



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Background

Since 2015, a growing number of children have arrived in Europe – often unaccompanied. The lack of efficient protection systems at local level and the limited use of solidarity mechanisms from EU member states have increasingly exposed children to violence, exploitation and abuse. According to Europol, at least 10 000 unaccompanied children went missing in 2015, and national reports prove that children have continued to go missing due to poor conditions in some reception centres, lack of information on their rights and options, slow and complex procedures for protection, lack of training for professionals in contact with children, and lack of coordination at national and cross-border level. Human traffickers have increasingly targeted children in migration, particularly when unaccompanied.

In May 2015, the European Commission adopted an EU Agenda on Migration in which it promised to develop a comprehensive strategy to protect children in migration. In November 2016 the European Commission organised the EU Forum on the rights of the child, focusing on children in migration. At this meeting, NGOs demanded that the Commission follow up on its commitment to develop this strategy, emphasising that a EU Action Plan on all refugee and migrant children is necessary to coordinate actions and mobilise resources. It would represent EU commitment at the highest level, effectively bring together the various responsible authorities, agencies and civil society in Member States and in the EU and develop more concrete and well-resourced processes and actions for these young newcomers.

In January 2017, coinciding with the European Justice and Home Affairs Council, Missing Children Europe and the Maltese President's Foundation for the Well-Being of Society, with the support of the European Programme on Integration and Migration (EPIM), brought together 160 professionals and experts to discuss the child protection challenges that lead to disappearances of these children. Conclusions of this conference – entitled "Lost in Migration" - were endorsed by over 50 organisations and shared with national and European authorities. In February 2017, Members of the European Parliament submitted an oral question in plenary, calling upon the Commission to follow up on the recommendations of the Lost in Migration conference.

In April 2017, the European Commission eventually adopted the long-awaited strategy through the [Commission Communication on the protection of children in migration](#), outlining 37 priority actions for the European and national level. The strategy mentions the conclusions from the Lost in Migration conference as a relevant contribution.

In June 2017, The Council of the European Union agreed [on common conclusions on the protection of children in migration](#), welcoming the Commission Communication and emphasising that protecting all children in migration is a priority at all stages of migration. Member states reaffirmed the primary role played by the assessment of the best interest of the child, also in legislative negotiations, and the importance to protect children from any violence or exploitation.

In November 2017, the European Commission organised the 11th Forum on the Rights of the Child with a focus on children deprived of liberty (children in conflict with the law, immigration detention,

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children in institutions and children of parents in prison) and alternatives to detention, ahead of the [UN global study on children deprived of liberty](#), the theme of this edition of the Forum.

Additionally, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families jointly adopted [two Joint General Comments](#) on the general principles regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration. The guidance promotes the development and implementation of comprehensive, rights-based migration policies in countries of origin, transit, destination and return of international migration, by improving the realisation of the children's rights.

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Missing in migration: Recalling underlying causes

Too often, the disappearance of children in migration is overlooked because it is seen as a voluntary act of the child, with little or no assessment of the reasons why the child decided/was pushed to leave, the possibility that the child was abducted or the risks to which the individual child is exposed.

When outside a child protection system, children face many risks, including homelessness, famine, depression and trauma, as well as risks related to trafficking and exploitation, which is why it is very important to dedicate efforts to facilitate safe alternatives, in the best interests of the child.

Often a missing child is the symptom of a malfunctioning system: The problem of children missing in migration is intimately connected to underlying and preventable problems. Efforts are needed to tackle these in a coordinated and integrated manner, and to provide children in migration with the basic protection required for any child.

Children in migration go missing for various interconnected reasons, a summary is provided below.

> Poor reception conditions

Across Europe, including in countries of arrival, a large number of children in migration face simply inhumane conditions. Children of all ages are kept in tents, containers, or warehouses unsuited for their needs. Throughout 2017, between 900 and 3,300 unaccompanied children were waiting for appropriate shelter in Greece¹. In some countries, children are placed in detention facilities for days, weeks or months. Some unaccompanied children reported ill-treatment and beatings by security staff in a Centre for Minors in Madrid, Spain². 92% of the children in the overcrowded 'La Purisima' facility for boys said they experienced violence daily³. The rudimentary nature of some reception facilities precludes any efforts to build trust with unaccompanied children and to allow space to provide reliable information to children, including to counter information from traffickers/smugglers. More than 90% of the children coming to the EU had been facilitated, mostly by members of a criminal network⁴.

Children miss out on education and basic medical care, aggravating the trauma and mental health issues faced. Asylum-seeking children in the hotspots in Greece and in parts of France, Hungary and Spain had no or limited access to education. Only 29% of children in reception centres attended regular schools in Germany⁵. In large cities, children had to wait for a place in regular

¹ Greece, National Centre for Social Solidarity; FRA, Monthly migration report, November 2016, December 2016, April 2017, October 2017, November 2017 and December 2017.

² FRA, Monthly migration report, December 2016.

³ FRA, Monthly migration report; May 2017

⁴ See joint Europol-INTERPOL Report on Migrant Smuggling Networks, May 2016

⁵ Germany, Unicef (2017), *Kindheit im Wartezustand*; FRA, Monthly migration report, April 2017

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school for up to one year⁶. In some EU Member States, when compulsory schooling ended, some 16 and 17 year olds were not offered any education and faced difficulties getting into vocational training or employment⁷.

> Lack of information

Guardianship systems provided for by law to safeguard children are, in many countries, poorly organised or non-existent. At all phases and stages of procedures, children lack child-friendly and reliable information on their rights, and feel stranded in a situation of limbo where too often their most trusted source of information will be the smugglers or traffickers who brought them into the country, rather than the authorities. In these conditions, children may consider that they have no other option but to continue their journey in unsafe conditions and go missing.

> Slow and complex procedures for protection

Professionals interviewed in a Missing Children Europe and University of Portsmouth [study on safeguarding missing unaccompanied children in 2016](#)⁸ ('SUMMIT' study) stated that in many cases, children go missing as they are discouraged by the length and complexity of legal procedures that would allow them, for instance, to be reunified with their families. While the procedures exist, their implementation is too slow.

Other children go missing out of fear of being sent back or transferred to the first country of arrival. For example, according to Save the Children,⁹ the rate of disappearance in Sweden substantially decreased when Dublin transfers to Greece were suspended, which demonstrates the impact of these impending transfers on disappearances.

> Lack of training

Missing Children Europe's aforementioned research also highlighted the lack of training of frontline professionals across the 7 countries researched. For instance, none of the interviewed law enforcement representatives participating in the study recalled having received training in preventing or responding to missing unaccompanied children. 22% of the guardians or carers interviewed having been trained in prevention, with only 12% of them having been trained in responding to missing unaccompanied children. Guidelines, training modules and evidence-based good practices have been identified. They however too often do not reach the beneficiaries for which they were compiled.

> Lack of coordination at national and cross-border level

The SUMMIT study furthermore underlined a general lack of systematic and consistent procedures to prevent the disappearance of unaccompanied migrant children: where procedures exist, they

⁶ FRA, Monthly migration report, December 2016

⁷ FRA, Migration to the EU: five persistent challenges, February 2018

⁸ See

<http://missingchildreneurope.eu/Portals/0/Docs/Best%20practices%20and%20key%20challenges%20for%20interagency%20cooperation%20to%20safeguard%20unaccompanied%20migrant%20children%20from%20going%20missing.pdf>

⁹ Information provided in context of the "SUMMIT" research

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mostly only apply locally, and are often not sufficiently known or understood by those concerned. This includes the absence of systematic risk assessments for children arriving, which are needed to design and adapt care plans and prevent disappearances. Procedures for reporting disappearances are furthermore simply not known or too time consuming – with many missing unaccompanied either not being reported or reported too late. Biometric and alphanumeric data may be incomplete, hampering any potential attempts to find a missing child. When reported, follow-up on the case including investigation is not systematic – and in many cases tools in place for all missing children, such as the network of hotlines for missing children, the SIS or Interpol Yellow notices, are not being tapped into for this specific group. Clear ownership of missing children cases and cross border procedures need to be defined, to facilitate prevention and response: while some of the children might very well have found protection in another country or have been found, no one knows.

Cooperation also needs to be reviewed for cross-border exchange; when a child leaves the country, efforts to exchange information and continue the search are rarely undertaken. If an unaccompanied child who has gone missing leaves the country, all efforts usually stop.

> Risks of trafficking and exploitation

Some children may go missing to pursue their own migration plan towards the north of Europe or to join their family in other countries. However, data shows that children do not only go missing in countries of first arrival, but also in Germany, the UK and Sweden. Protection gaps when missing remain extremely high in all cases: during the time outside the protection system, children may face situations of exploitation, violence, starvation, homelessness and be exposed to serious risks for their mental and physical health¹⁰. Considering the lack of reporting of cases of missing children in migration, the problems related to data collection and the lack of an appropriate follow up on the disappearances, any assumption and underestimation is extremely dangerous for the children involved.

¹⁰ According to a risk analysis by the Swedish national authorities, 20 % to 30 % of unaccompanied children show signs of mental health issues, says FRA in the Regular overview of migration-related fundamental rights concerns, [May 2016 Edition](#)

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Local Authorities: Why do they need to be brought into the picture?

"[t]he increasing number of migrants coming to Europe constitutes a critical challenge for all levels of government, calling for adapted and effective measures in Council of Europe Member States. Local and regional authorities who, as the public authority closest to the population, are the first port of call in any emergency situation, have the responsibility to provide newly arrived immigrants with access to key public services (housing, health care, education) without any discrimination."¹¹

Resolution 411 (2017) of the Council of Europe

The European Commission's Communication on protecting children in migration achieves the important improvement of providing guidance for upholding the rights of all children, whether they are migrants or refugees, arriving with their families or on their own. The next step is to move from a system providing care based on general definitions to a system that allocates resources and develops care plans based on an individual assessment and individual needs. This is a priority especially at local level, where authorities are faced with the story and the needs of the single child, who becomes part of the local community, sometimes for a short while and sometimes with a long-term plan.

The services that have the most impact on children's daily lives are frequently at a local competence, even if most of the law and policies that determine the prospects of refugees and migrant children – such as asylum application, family reunification and return processes – are defined and implemented at the national level. Municipalities are often responsible for meeting the immediate needs of children on the move and their families, including reception, safety, housing, education, healthcare and protection.

Ultimately, local governments can make a real difference in the lives of children because they are closer to migrant and displaced populations and they have an in-depth understanding of the concrete challenges and opportunities these communities face, often putting in place innovative solutions to address them. Local authorities often decide to adapt national policies to local needs, or have no other choice than filling in for gaps in national systems through municipal services. It is very promising to see mayors, businesses and citizens around the world coming up with creative ways to make their cities and communities more inclusive, experimenting with innovative approaches and piloting public-private and other partnerships.

However, for many local communities good-will is challenged by serious lack of resources. In addition, both civil society and local authorities often express frustration on alleged mismanagement of resources at central level, and complain about difficult access and lack of transparency. Only few civil servants in local authorities in Europe, including those that are

¹¹ Council of Europe, Resolution 411 (2017), para. 1.

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responsible for certain areas of funding in the respective municipalities, are aware of EU funding being used to support local services, initiatives or developments. In several locations, national funding intervenes to help municipalities providing services and support to people in need of protection, but this is rarely enough and more needs to be done to ensure that the need is matched with resources¹².

In a recent report, the Congress of Regional and Local Authorities of the Council of Europe confirmed that Sub-national level authorities and a range of local organisations were and continue to be at the forefront of the reception and integration efforts.

Authorities are expected to provide a rapid response, often in the context of reduced resources and political tension and, in many cases, without a clear legal framework. While national governments hold the reins of immigration policy, managing the details of national policy typically fall to local and regional authorities who must receive, host and eventually integrate newcomers and disadvantaged groups.

Congress of Regional and Local Authorities of the Council of Europe, 'The role of local and regional authorities facing migration', October 2017

The suggestion of the Congress is to strengthen regional cooperation and city partnerships to create the infrastructure for good migration governance, and to provide, local and regional authorities with direct access to European Funds such as AMIF and to financial tools concerning the means for housing, health care, and other pressing needs of refugees and migrants, in co-operation with European institutions, national governments and NGOs.

> Promising policies and practices from local authorities

Prior to, and as part of this conference, a research project was carried out as a pilot study with the Urban Agenda for EU and the University of Leiden, to investigate the progress achieved, to identify examples of successful and promising initiatives as well as challenges in the implementation of European commitments, and to draft initial recommendations.

The partnership mobilised civil servants in 14 local authorities and in 1 national organisation across Europe to document the current progress and challenges experienced with the integration of refugee and migrant children in their communities. Gathering over 20 different initiatives and services in 10 different countries, it offers lessons from the ground on protecting the rights and meeting the needs of children in migration. The project outcome is a useful resource to support national and EU level advocacy and test the progress achieved and gaps in policies to date.

The cities that participated in this study are: Antwerp (Belgium), Athens (Greece), Genova (Italy), Gent (Belgium), Glasgow (Scotland), Madrid (Spain), Milan (Italy), Ropazu (Latvia), Rotterdam (the Netherlands), Strömsund (Sweden), Tampere (Finland), Tilburg (the Netherlands), Trelleborg (Sweden), Vienna (Austria). Lastly, one nationwide initiative was included, namely Nidos from the Netherlands, an organisation uniquely appointed and funded by the Dutch government for the guardianship of unaccompanied children.

¹² FRA, Current migration situation in the EU: impact on local communities, February 2018

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> Progress achieved

This study points out that the integration of young unaccompanied refugees, requires flexibility, time and individual-centred approaches. A general remark is that the establishment of the basic needs (food, shelter, (psychological) health care), the provision of education and information, and offering extra support in the form of vocational training and integration activities seem to be the focus points of many local authorities that participated in this study, which is a good and promising overall finding. In light of these initiatives, significant progress is made at the grassroots level, and these initiatives should be carried out and further disseminated to other cities and countries. However, true integration and connection with locals takes time. Time, flexibility as well as exchange of support and learning between project staff and professionals may be helpful in this regard.

> Good/Promising Practices

Three specific approaches that proved to be successful for the integration of children in migration on local communities are **early integration, individualised approaches and prolonged support**

> Early integration

The European Commission stated that early integration of children is crucial to support their development into adulthood.

"Early integration of children is crucial to support their development into adulthood. It is a social investment and essential factor contributing to societal cohesion overall in Europe. Integration of children at the earliest stage, through mainstream and targeted measures, is also important to minimise risks with regard to possible criminal activity and exposure to radicalisation. Given that recently arrived children may not yet have been able to acquire sufficient skills and competences to fully and actively integrate in society, in particular for transition into further study or the labour market, children in this transitional phase should be provided with guidance, support and opportunities for continuing education and training. Furthermore, as is the case for children in State care who are EU nationals, mechanisms and processes need to be in place to help prepare children in migration in State care for the transition to adulthood/leaving care."¹³

Multiple cities, such as Genova, Tilburg and Vienna have implemented specific initiatives in support of early integration of children in migration. In the city of Vienna, Austria, the focus has been put on starting the integration from the first day that unaccompanied children arrive in the city – even before it is determined whether they can stay in the city or country. Vienna's implemented integration initiatives focus on the thematic areas (1) housing, (2) education and (3) refugee empowerment activities. All these initiatives combined ensure that the integration process is such that youngsters can acquire the necessary skills to start working, as soon as they receive the permit to stay in the country. The city of Vienna has experienced that the 'Integration from Day 1' strategy works and that the approach to help youngsters acquire the necessary skills to start working is one that should be applied also in other cities in Europe

¹³ European Commission, Communication (2017) 211 final, p.12.

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> **Individualised approaches**

Children in migration comprise a heterogenous group with their own experiences, expectations, needs, and development. Systems that have regard for the individual child prove more successful for the integration and well-being of children in our society. Multiple cities, such as Tilburg, Rotterdam, Stromsund and Trelleborg have implemented specific initiatives that give all individual children in migration an opportunity to participate, be heard and be helped with their problems, needs and wishes (for the future).

TRELLEBORGS KOMMUN My establishment line

INDIVIDUAL (YYMMDD-XXXX) DATE 2017-12-07 DATE FOLLOW-UP 2018-03-08
 NAME (YYMMDD-XXXX) SECRETARY UNACCOMPANIED MINORS
 RESPONSIBLE YOUTH COORDINATOR

When?	When?	When?	When?	When?	When?	When?
2017-12-07	2017-12-07	2017-12-07	2017-12-07	2018-08-15	2019-06-15	2019-06-30

GOALS: Go to scheduled meetings, Take responsibility for my labor market planning, Take responsibility for my study planning, Actively search for accommodation, 19 years, qualified to care program, 8 grades, 20 years old, apply for study scholarship (CSN), Move to own apartment and be self-sufficient.

NOTES: School, internships and other obligations: Accommodation: Health: Economy: Communication and conflict management: DATE 2017-12-07 SIGNATURES

One specific example that could be helpful to other cities, is the 'Establishment Lines' sheet that the city of Trelleborg in Sweden used. In this sheet, children and youth can fill out their goals and plans, and together with a social worker will be supported to successfully work towards the written goals. In Trelleborg, very positive experiences exist regarding the Establishment Line project and it is recommended to be implemented in more cities in Europe. Other recommendations will be shared in the final report once the study is concluded.

> **Prolonged support**

One of the most important issues highlighted in this research is that the majority of interviewees seemed mindful of the problem that children who reach the age of 18 years, and become legal adults, are often times not yet self-sufficient or independent. Specifically for these children, systems and mechanisms need to be in place that will ensure the provision of continued financial, material and emotional support, for instance by extending guardianship systems, systems of assisted living and support to finish education, building up a social network and finding a job, after children turn 18. It is recommended to establish young-adult-sensitive support systems. Rotterdam – for instance – provides individualised assessments for minors before they turn 18 to provide them with a smooth transition and good start as adults, including referral to the same assistance as other youth their age could. Other participating cities that provide prolonged support to children in migration are Antwerp, Tampere, Genova, Trelleborg, Vienna and Gent.

> **What's next?**

Researchers will include research practices and examples at the conference. After the event, specific recommendations on the way forward in cooperation with local authorities will be disseminated.

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Conference programme

Day 1 – Wednesday 11 April

> **Registration (08.15 - 08.50 CET)**

> **Morning sessions (09.00 - 12.30)**

- Welcome (09.00 - 09.15)

Federica Toscano, Missing Children Europe

Ruth Farrugia, The President Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society

- Opening remarks and keynote speeches (09.15 - 09.45): From principles to implementation

Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta

Hilde Vautmans, MEP, ALDE

- What progress would children like to see in protecting children in Europe? (09.45 - 10.00)

Laura Mercieca will present key messages and perspectives of the Children and Young Persons' councils of the (Maltese) President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society

- Panel discussion (10.00 - 11.00): The view from the field: call on situation, good practices and recommendations

Marit Buddenbaum, Leiden University

Dan Biswas, Faros, Greece

Karin Martinsson, Manager for Integration in the Municipality of Kungälv, Gothenburg, Sweden

Ernesto Caffo, President of Telefono Azzurro and Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy

- Keynote speech from Nathalie Griesbeck, MEP, ALDE 10.55 – 11.00

- Coffee break (11.00 - 11.30)

- Panel discussion (11.30 - 12.30): From "children in migration" to "non-discrimination"

Sophie Magennis, Head of the Policy and Legal Support Unit (PLUS), UNHCR Brussels

Virginia Gamba, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Sandie Blanchet, Director of the UNICEF Office for Partnership with the EU

Janeta Hanganu, Programme Officer at the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, Council of Europe

- Press conference and launch of the app/Standing lunch (12.30 - 13.30)

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> **Afternoon sessions (13.30 - 17.00)**

- **Workshops (13.30 - 15.00): Towards local implementation**

Hands-on workshops by various stakeholders and experts, focusing on the implementation of the European Commission Communication on the protection of children in migration at local level

- **Sweets break (15.00 – 15.30)**

- **Panel discussion (15.30 - 17.00)**

1. Upholding child rights in EU law and policy

Eugenio Ambrosi, Regional Director of IOM's Regional Office for the EU, Norway and Switzerland

Cecilia Wikström, MEP, ALDE

Birgit Van Hout, Regional Representative for Europe, OHCHR Regional Office for Europe

Adam Elsod, Co-founder and Chairman of The Young Republic

2. Protecting children across borders from trafficking and exploitation

Enrico Ragaglia, Senior Project Manager, ICMPD

Myria Vassiliadou, EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, European Commission

Mr Jari Liukku, Europol, Head of the European Serious Organised Crime Centre (ESOCC)

> **Networking cocktail (17.30 – 19.00)**

> **Evening concert with Refugees Got Talent (19:00 – 20:00)**

The concert will be open to external participants and will take place in the Salle des Guichets.

Day 2 – Thursday 12 April

Morning sessions (09.00 -10.30):

- **Welcome back, video message from the Intergroup and report on the panel discussions (9.00 – 9.15)**

- **Workshops (09.15 - 10.45): Towards local implementation**

Hands-on workshops by various stakeholders and experts, focusing on the implementation of the Commission Communication on the protection of children in migration at local level

- **Coffee break (10.45 - 11.15)**

- **Keynote Speech (11.15 - 11.30) by Věra Jourová, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality**

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- Conversation on the progress achieved by the Commission Communication on Protecting children in migration, (11.30 - 12.30)

Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta
Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, UN Special rapporteur on Sale and Sexual Exploitation of Children
Vera Jourova, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality
Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Co-chair of the Intergroup on the Rights of the Child
Permanent Representation of Austria to the EU*

- Standing lunch (12.30 - 13.30)

> Afternoon (13.30 - 16.00):

- From workshops to conclusions and recommendations (13.30 - 14.30)

- Launch of the Miniila app (14.30 - 14.45)

- Closing (14.45 - 15.15)

Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta
Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, UN Special rapporteur on Sale and Sexual Exploitation of Children and
President of Missing Children Europe
Hilde Vautmans, MEP, ALDE

- Film Screening (15.15 - 16.45): LOST CHILDREN - 30,000 minors missing

Debate with the director Chiara Sambuchi

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Workshops – 11 April

1. Strengthening the resilience of children and young people: How to equip young people to determine the course of their lives? (Room: Delvaux)

> Coordinated by SOS Children's Villages & Eurochild

When children and young people who have fled their countries are not supported in their transition to adulthood and inclusion in society, the consequences are often disastrous. They include dropping out of school, unemployment, poverty, homelessness, isolation, becoming victim of abuse, losing trust in others and hope in the future, and entering a cycle of marginalisation. These consequences are devastating for the individuals affected, a waste of talent for society as a whole and a breeding ground for discrimination and negative attitudes towards migrants.

The purpose of this workshop is to:

1. Put forward recommendations by participants on how to better equip young migrants to cope with difficulties and unlock their potential so that they can determine the course of their lives and find a place in society; and
2. Identify elements that make a difference and proposals to overcome remaining challenges

> Promising practices that will be discussed with the workshop participants.

- **Mentoring programme for unaccompanied children in private living arrangements, SOS Children's Villages Sweden**

The professional mentoring programme, implemented by SOS Children's Villages Sweden in the Gothenburg district of Angered in partnership with district authorities, works with unaccompanied and separated children who have residence status and live with relatives or family friends in independent housing arrangements.

The services offered by the mentors include activities to build links with local communities and to cope with the challenges of everyday life, participation in social and cultural events and support in the area of education and work. SOS Children's Villages works with a strong network of partners to provide education and employment opportunities.

The programme complements the services provided by state and local authorities and helps children and young people to integrate into Swedish society. It works with young people up to the age of 23 as they transition to adulthood.

- **Centre for asylum-seeking families with children in Italy, Fondazione L'Albero della Vita**

A centre in Milan run by Fondazione L'Albero della Vita (FADV) provides assistance to families with children seeking asylum in Italy and those eligible for relocation to other EU Member States. It goes beyond accommodation and material support, aiming to provide

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a foundation for long-term social inclusion. Families living in the centre receive a range of specialised services including psychosocial and pedagogical support, education and healthcare, legal aid and employment counselling.

The project aims to respond to the individual needs of the families and to equip them with the tools to become self-sufficient by ensuring their participation in the preparation of family plans.

FADV operates in strict collaboration with the contractors – the Municipality of Milan and the Prefecture of Milan – and works with CSOs, local school and social services for implementing specific project activities. The project also implements activities to raise awareness and engage volunteers from the local community.

Speakers:

Cecilia Bergling Naclér, SOS Children's Villages Sweden

Daria Crimella, Fondazione Albergo della Vita

Moderators:

Ana Fontal, SOS Children's Villages

Agata D'Addato, Eurochild

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2. Supporting and protecting children in migration by applying a holistic approach mechanism at the local level (Room: Atomium)

> Coordinated by The Smile of the Child and Minor Ndako

The overall objective of the workshop is to present best practices for the support and protection of refugee and migrant children at the local level in Belgium and in Greece.

Semma Groenendijk from Minor-Ndako, will present good practices from the operation model of the Youth Care Facilities and the differences from large scale reception centers.

The Smile of the Child will share their good practices linked with:

- The organisation's approach towards children and unaccompanied migrant children, the operational model (mix model) of the Community Homes of the Organisation: the case of Kavala
- The operation of the Helplines within the framework of the Center for Direct Social Intervention in the city of Kavala
- The support to children with health problems within the framework of the Center for Direct Social Intervention in the city of Kavala

Speakers:

Sia Kakaroumba, the Smile of the Child (Greece)
Fotini Konstantopoulou, the Smile of the Child (Greece)
Sofoklis Panagiotou, the Smile of the Child (Greece)
Semma Groenendijk, Minor Ndako (Belgium)
Shanna Latrez, Minor-Ndako (Belgium)

Moderator:

Charlotte Verhofstadt, Parliamentary Assistant to Hilde Vautmans at the European Parliament

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3. Lost in Translation: Best practices in communicating with migrant children lead to better outcomes and resilience (Room: Speculoos)

> [Coordinated by Translators Without Borders](#)

Access to information in a language and manner suitable for children and the availability of trained and impartial language support is a right of children at all stages of their migration journey, and an important procedural safeguard, especially in the context of complex or accelerated asylum procedures. Factors such as language barriers, low literacy levels, and lack of access to technology can impede children's ability to access assistance and protection and increase their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. Migrant children might make high-risk choices, including dropping out of the formal reception system, out of ignorance of their rights and options. It is essential that children, especially those considered to be the most vulnerable, receive clear and comprehensive information in a language they understand, and appropriate interpreting support to communicate their needs and situation, from the outset.

The focus of the workshop will be on best practices in communicating with migrant and refugee children for professionals involved in child protection. Building on Translators without Borders' research efforts and language services provision in Italy, Greece and Turkey, it will include three main parts: (1) improving data on the languages that children speak and understand, as a basis for effective communication strategies; (2) measuring actual comprehension of information and its significance for choosing the most effective languages, formats and channels for listening to and informing migrant children; and (3) harnessing appropriate technology and machine translation for effective communication. Throughout the workshop, emphasis will be on practical language approaches beyond translation, such as communicating in plain language and simplifying technical or legal concepts for multilingual comprehension. The aim will be to highlight best practices that can easily be adopted to realize children's right to information and to be heard in all decisions that affect their lives.

Speakers:

Rebecca Petras, Deputy Director, Translators without Borders

Kate Murphy, Head Editor, Translators without Borders

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4. Exchanges on good practices and experiences from European Municipalities (Room: Magritte)

> Coordinated by [The Partnership on the Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees – the Urban Agenda for the EU](#)

The Partnership on the Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees is one of the 12 Partnerships of the Urban Agenda for the EU. The goal of this Partnership on Inclusion is to come with actions that lead, from a city perspective, to better EU policies and regulations, better knowledge and better access to EU funding.

The city of Amsterdam is coordinator of this Partnership. The European Commission's Directorate-General on Home Affairs is co-coordinator. The other members are: the cities of Athens, Berlin, Helsinki, and Barcelona, the Member States Portugal, Italy, Greece and Denmark, EURO CITIES, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, URBACT, Migration Policy Group, European Investment Bank, and the European Commission's Directorate-General on Regional & Urban Policy and the Directorate-General on Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion.

This partnership established 8 actions which it will undertake in the coming year. One of these actions is related to the position on Unaccompanied Minors in EU cities. This action will seek to produce Policy-Recommendations on the reform-package of the Common EU Asylum System, from the Urban perspective and with emphasis on Unaccompanied Minors.

In order to generate input for this action, we conducted a series of 15 cases-studies on projects and programmes at local level involving Unaccompanied Minors.

A selection of the city-professionals from those 15 cases will be present in our workshop, and will share their experiences and lessons learned.

We will use their input, and the information on all 15 case-studies, for an interactive workshop with the professionals from the conference, in order to develop and specify suggestions for better EU policies in the interest of children in migration.

In particular, the workshop will focus on the following challenges:

- Housing and Reception Conditions
- Support to migrant children, including education, guardianship psychological care

Speakers:

Jolien de Crom, the city of Antwerp
Isolde De Vogel, the city of Gent

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Wouter Verheij, the city of Rotterdam
Elisabeth Lindholm, the city of Strömsund
Joakim Selén the city of Strömsund

Moderators:

Carlos Mascarell Vilar, Council of European Municipalities and Regions
Mark Boekwijt, the City of Amsterdam
Diletta Zonta, Ecorys

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Workshops – 12 April

1. Best practice models for working to improve frontline responses to child trafficking (Room: Delvaux)

> Coordinated by ECPAT Belgium, ECPAT France, and ECPAT UK

This workshop will present a best practice model for enhancing the knowledge, skills and confidence of professionals involved in providing services and caring for trafficked and exploited children. Besides sharing learning, it will also aim at generating discussion on the steps at local level for the prevention of (re)trafficking and exploitation of children.

It will be based on contribution from three countries:

1. United Kingdom: ECPAT UK will present its current innovative project, the ground-breaking Partnership Against Child Trafficking Project (PACT), which provides a specialist consultancy service to four UK local authorities in order to improve localised responses to child trafficking. This project responds to established failings around child trafficking at the local level, in particular the shocking levels of trafficked and unaccompanied children going missing from care, and huge gaps and inconsistencies in data collection efforts by local authorities.
2. Belgium: ECPAT Belgium will focus on the ReACT training modules for guardians that have been developed in collaboration with the Guardianship Service and Caritas International Belgium. The training packages include training courses and workshops focused on participatory methods as well as an e-learning.
3. France: a French lawyer will share their experience in training students of the Paris Lawyers' School and lawyers from the « Children Antenna » of the Paris Bar association. In the framework of the ReACT project, they also delivered trainings in different towns in France on the non-prosecution principle for child victims of trafficking for criminal purposes.

Speakers:

Ariane Couvreur ECPAT Belgium

Catherine Delanoë-Daoud, Vareilles-Daoud Avocats Associés

Catherine Baker, ECPAT UK

Moderator:

Marine Braun, Defence for Children Belgium

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2. Supporting mental health needs of refugee and migrant young people (Room: Speculoos)

> Coordinated by The Children's Society

There has been a steady increase in numbers unaccompanied young people arriving in the UK over recent years, with a stark increase of 134% unaccompanied young people being placed in local authority care since 2013.

Statutory models for responding to mental health need in young people sometimes do not identify the full range of issues that refugee and migrant young people might be struggling with. Considering the trauma and difficulties young people face in arriving here and attempting to settle in, mental health and wellbeing of refugee and migrant young people has increasingly become a concern for local authorities, mental health services and other support services, who have been exploring innovative methods for responding to this need.

The workshop will bring together experts in mental health, local government and frontline advocacy services to discuss the ways that they have been responding to mental health needs of young people and developing processes for lasting support: with combined therapy approaches for refugee and migrant young people, inter-agency working between professionals and integrated therapeutic support in frontline services. The experts will discuss the evidence that informs their approach and there will opportunity for delegates to contribute with examples of good practice in their own setting.

Speakers:

Ana Draper, Coram

Lucy Leon, RISE Project

Sally Joseph, Camden local authority Children's Services

Moderator:

Rupinder Parhar, The Children's Society

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3. Effective Inclusiveness for Children on the Move: A workshop on youth integration (Room: Magritte)

> Coordinated by Terre des Hommes Greece

Terre des hommes (Tdh) has been working in Northern Greece (Epirus and Thessaloniki) since March 2016. Benefiting from a strong expertise in child on the move protection (member of the [Destination Unknown](#) platform and [Childhub](#) network for Southeast Europe) Tdh implements together with important local actors an adapted, supportive and comprehensive response to the needs identified for youth on the move in Greece. Owing to gaps in service provision for UASC turning 18, and other vulnerable youth, in 2017, Tdh extended its services and developed additional expertise dealing with children and youth aged 15 – 25 through its skills building enrolment service: In addition to supporting younger children to access formal education, this service supports young people to access educational and skills building opportunities which address their needs and ambitions and support their transition to living independently. To date, 1360 children, youth and young adults in northern Greece have been supported to access formal and non-formal education.

ARSIS works with unaccompanied minors in various contexts, from first screening through street work and visits to police stations for children kept under protective custody searching for durable solutions after their reaching adulthood. The legal counselling provided by ARSIS, as well as the two Centers of Youth Support (KYN) that function in Thessaloniki city, offering various activities not only to unaccompanied minors residing in shelters, but also to homeless unaccompanied minors who are beneficiaries of ARSIS street work service, are as many means to establish effective inclusiveness. The cooperation of the two organizations is established for more than 20 years.

The workshop will aim at sharing experience, focusing on existing good practices, while at the same time addressing the main advocacy agenda issues. Through a multidisciplinary, holistic approach, crucial aspects of the complexity of all relevant issues can be brought into surface in an interactive and vivid way, covering eventually all 6 priorities stated by European Commission, while at the same time focusing mainly on the fifth of them, namely “ensuring durable solutions”.

Speakers:

Melina Spathari, Terre des hommes
Thomas Charalambidis, Destination Unknown campaign
Vivian Kounio, Arsis

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4. Promoting access to secure residence status (Room: Atomium)

> Coordinated by the Platform of International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)

Clear status determination procedures that provide children and young people with a secure and long-term residence status are crucial to ensure they fully enjoy all of their rights and to promote their well-being. Regularisations are a common policy tool with numerous benefits for states, individuals and families, and the communities and economies they live in. Almost all EU member states have regularised undocumented residents in the past 22 years, through regularisation mechanisms, programmes, or a combination of both. The workshop will discuss several current regularisation procedures, evaluating key aspects of the procedures in terms of providing effective durable solutions for children, as well as the campaigns and strategies that were used to secure implementation on national and local level.

Speakers:

Frances Trevena, Coram Children's Legal Centre, UK

Catherine Cosgrave, Immigrant Council of Ireland, Ireland

Silvia Giuliani, Generation 2.0, Greece

Moderator:

Lilana Keith, PICUM

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Last year's conclusions

On 26-27 January 2017, coinciding with the informal Justice and Home Affairs Council, [Missing Children Europe](#) and the [Maltese President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society](#) brought together key stakeholders concerned with the protection of migrant children's rights across Europe. The event gathered 160 participants from across Europe including H.E. Maria-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta; Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, President of Missing Children Europe and UN Special Rapporteur on Sale and Sexual Exploitation of Children; Dimitris Avramopoulos, European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship; Carmelo Abela, Maltese Minister of Interior representing the Maltese Presidency of the EU; Rob Wainwright, Director of Europol; Jose Carreira, the Director of EASO, high level representatives from UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM, Members of the European Parliament and European and frontline professionals in migration and child protection.

The conference took stock of the current challenges regarding the protection of migrant children's rights, in particular the reasons why children 'go missing'¹⁴ from state care, the appropriate responses, and the implications for policy and practice. The disappearance of children in migration is in most cases linked to an underlying protection problem. Recommendations to prevent and respond to disappearance must be rights-based and comprehensive, considering children as individuals and with families, whether the families are in the country of arrival, elsewhere in the EU or a third country¹⁵.

On the basis of the discussions that took place during the "Lost in Migration" conference as well as existing research, expertise and recommendations¹⁶ developed by partners involved in the "Lost in migration" conference - including the findings of the SUMMIT¹⁷ report on missing unaccompanied children - the conference developed concrete, comprehensive and forward looking operational and policy recommendations for policy and decision makers, aimed at drastically improving the situation of migrant children in Europe and offering them fair chances for a better future.

The conference conclusions outlined in this document are open for endorsement by civil society, NGOs, international organisations, politicians and academics who subscribe to the proposed recommendations. To endorse the conclusions, please access this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/conclusions>

¹⁴ Migrant children are considered missing when they are registered with state authorities and go missing from the reception/accommodation centers provided for them. Children disengage from these services for numerous reasons (including inadequate and ill-adapted reception, inefficient procedures, fear of deportation, desire to join family or friends in another country etc). Some are abducted and an increasing number ends up victim of (re-) trafficking. While much necessary focus is on missing unaccompanied children, it is important to consider that children may join family in Europe, and that children and families also go missing from reception centres. All face numerous risks while travelling and residing irregularly in Europe.

¹⁵ For data and background on causes and risks of children missing in migration, see Lost in Migration Background note available at <http://lostinmigration.eu/BackgroundNote.pdf>

¹⁶ Including "Recommended Principles in Children on the Move and other Children affected by Migration", see <http://destination-unknown.org/9recommended-principles/>, <http://destination-unknown.org/wp-content/uploads/recommended-principle-EN.pdf>

¹⁷ See

<http://missingchildreurope.eu/Portals/0/Docs/Best%20practices%20and%20key%20challenges%20for%20interagency%20cooperation%20to%20safeguard%20unaccompanied%20migrant%20children%20from%20going%20missing.pdf>

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This document has been drafted based on extensive consultation, input and feedback from experts and partners involved directly and indirectly in the conference. Many thanks to the numerous organisations that participated to the event and contributed to the drafting of these conclusions, and in particular to PICUM, UNHCR, OHCHR, Save the Children, Child Circle and members of Missing Children Europe.



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10 operational and policy recommendations to better protect children in migration and enhance the respect of their rights

1. Better accommodation and reception.

Reception arrangements must meet the rights and needs of children, including in families, in line with their best interests, and be provided to all children and families in need and in a formal procedure. They should include swift and child friendly registration and information, suitable accommodation, nutrition, access to health services, play facilities, psychosocial assistance, independent legal assistance and referral to specialised services where needed. Efforts should be undertaken to provide accommodation for unaccompanied and separated children in small scale reception centers, family units or with foster families. Where relevant, especially in cases of child victims of trafficking and/or exploitation, children should be placed in protective accommodation with personnel trained on these matters specifically. Children, including those in families, should never be detained for migration related reasons; detention is never in the best interests of the child and always a violation of their rights. In addition, fear of detention is one of the reasons why children go missing from state services.

- ➔ Member states: Central authorities need to improve conditions and closely monitor that national reception systems respect the aforementioned basic standards, including when reception is outsourced to private entities. An assessment of whether there is a de facto deprivation of liberty under Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) therefore needs to be undertaken, regardless of the name or characterisation given to a particular place or type of accommodation. Authorities should prohibit and swiftly end the detention of migrant children for reasons linked to migration.
- ➔ EU institutions and agencies: Funding should be channelled to support member states, local authorities, and civil society to provide quality accommodation and reception arrangements. Common qualitative benchmarks should be developed to verify that standards of quality of accommodation are similar throughout the European Union. EASO's forthcoming benchmarks on reception of unaccompanied children would contribute to more uniform quality standards in this regard if described in clear and unambiguous terms.

2. More efficient procedures and international cooperation, including in the application of international protection and Dublin procedures.

- > Quality best interest assessments and decision making, front-loading of resources and consideration of all possible applicable pathways, with the ultimate aim to find a durable solution for the child, can reduce delays, costs and streamline procedures. This would contribute to preventing child disappearances and would reduce the risks of them being subject to harm.
- > The best interests of the child should guide all decisions concerning him or her (see also below on best interests). This should include decisions in the framework of the Dublin Regulation and decisions on the country responsible for examining applications for international protection of children (including as dependents).
- > Children who do not have a family member in the member state where they are should always be able to apply for asylum in that country, unless it can be demonstrated that it is

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in their best interests for the claim to be heard in another country, as stated by the European Court of Justice¹⁸.

- > All procedures should be explained clearly, in a child-friendly manner, to the child in all their steps. Children should receive all necessary information¹⁹ about available and ongoing procedures in a timely manner (e.g. as early as possible to be able to benefit from family reunion possibilities under the Dublin Regulation). To this end, they should be assisted by a guardian²⁰ with the necessary qualifications and expertise from the earliest possible stage and should be kept informed on the progress of their case. Member states should proactively trace the family members, siblings and relatives of a child, with their consent and in accordance with duties under the Dublin Regulation.
-
- ➔ Member states: Focus on quality initial-decision making in all immigration and asylum procedures. Applications for international protection and family reunification involving children, in particular unaccompanied children, should be treated with priority and in accordance with these recommendations. Member states should endeavour to cooperate to the fullest extent possible in the assessment of the best interests of a child, in conducting family tracing and in the verification of family links, to assist in ensuring swift family reunion, in particular in Dublin procedures.
 - ➔ EU institutions and agencies: Support the development of standardised approaches in areas such as best interests' assessments and family tracing, as well as enhanced cooperation between member states, to ensure the efficient functioning of the Dublin procedures for swift family reunion, which is in the interest of children and member states alike. To this end, liaison officers in other member states' Dublin Units, common templates, guidance as well as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) should be in place to facilitate cooperation and ensure participation of all relevant actors. Institutions and agencies should also ensure that the system expected to replace the current Dublin Regulation strengthens best interests assessments in Dublin procedures and maintains the principle that children should stay in the member state where they are present, unless this is not in their best interests, as unnecessary transfers under the Dublin Regulation add trauma for an already vulnerable child, and often constitute a reason for children going missing.
-
- ### 3. Qualified and trained guardians to be swiftly appointed for all unaccompanied and separated children.

¹⁸ CJEU, case [C-648/11 MA and Others vs. Secretary of State for the Home Department](#) delivered on 6 June 2013. The Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) ruled in 2013 on the ambiguous provisions on unaccompanied children who have no family, siblings or relatives on the territory of the member states under the Dublin Regulation. It stated that in these cases, where the asylum application was lodged in more than one member state, the member state responsible for examining it will be that in which the minor is present after having lodged an application there, in order to avoid unnecessary transfers that would delay a child's access to an asylum procedure. According to the Court, that conclusion follows from the context and objective of the Regulation, which seeks to guarantee effective access to an assessment of the applicant's refugee status, while focusing particularly on unaccompanied minors. According to the CJEU, since unaccompanied children form a category of particularly vulnerable persons, it is important not to prolong more than is strictly necessary the procedure for determining the member state responsible, which means that, as a rule, unaccompanied children should not be transferred to another member state. After this ruling, the European Parliament voted in favour of the right for a child to apply for asylum in the country where he or she is, without being transferred back to the first country of arrival.

¹⁹ Cfr. infra – point 4

²⁰ Cfr. infra – point 3

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A guardian should be appointed immediately after the child's arrival, before proceedings take place, as one of the main safeguards for his or her best interests and wellbeing. The guardian should assist and represent children in all proceedings, including in Dublin proceedings, ensure their best interests are respected, that their views are taken into account and exercise legal capacity where necessary, also when children do not apply for asylum. Guardians should be independent, trained, vetted, sufficiently supported and funded and held accountable to safeguard the child's best interests. They should participate in inter-agency coordination, meetings and deliberations concerning services and proceedings involving the child. While children with their parent(s) have their legal guardian present, they should be appointed an independent case worker to fulfil similar functions to a guardian.

- Member states are encouraged to appoint a guardianship authority to organise the functioning of a guardianship service as required by the Asylum Procedures Directive. The authority should recruit, train and support guardians in their work. An independent monitoring system of guardians as well as accountability mechanisms, including a child friendly complaints mechanism, should be put in place.
- EU institutions should monitor the effectiveness of national guardianship systems against the qualitative benchmarks identified by the FRA Handbook on Guardianship for children deprived of parental care. Further development and a continuous support to networks of guardianship services (e.g. ENGI) is important to promote exchange of good practices and information across countries.

4. Better information for children and respect of the right to be heard.

Children should be empowered to express their views on and participate in all decisions concerning them, in accordance with their age and maturity.

- Member states: Providing clear, comprehensive, up-to-date and timely information to children, including follow up information, tailored to their ability to understand (age-friendly, in the language that they understand) and complemented with appropriate support and assistance, is essential to assess their needs and best interest, for them to trust formal systems in the EU and to enable them to make informed decisions about their future, in accordance with their age and maturity. As well as information, this requires adapted procedures, and provision of qualified and independent legal assistance, as well as guardians for unaccompanied and separated children.
- EU institutions and agencies: Organising consultations with civil society which include also direct participation of children. This would ensure that any actions taken have been duly assessed in terms of the impact for children. In addition, it will be important to incorporate child expertise in the team of officials working on migration matters.

5. Identification and implementation of durable solutions for children, in line with their best interests.

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The ultimate aim in addressing the situation of each child in migration is to identify a durable solution that addresses their protection needs in a holistic manner, takes into account the child's views, in accordance with their age and maturity and, in cases of unaccompanied and separated children, reunites them with parents or other primary caregivers wherever possible and in their best interests²¹. This should ensure that every child is able to develop into adulthood, in an environment that will meet his or her needs and fulfil his or her rights as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and will not put the child at risk of persecution or serious harm. Best interest assessments should be multidisciplinary, robust and include participatory procedures, which should involve the views of the child and those of his or her guardian. Such a procedure is not only a legal obligation but would also address children's fear of migration systems and deportation, and ensure that any transfer of the child to another country is in their interests. Family reunification can be facilitated in the country of current residence, country of origin or a third country according to the best interests of the child.

- Member states: The identification and implementation of durable solutions for each child should occur without undue delay. Decisions must be based on formal procedures with sufficient safeguards, assessing and determining the best interests of the child, and be carried out by professionals with the required expertise, because the durable solution will have fundamental long-term consequences for the child. If the durable solution is determined to be in the country of current residence, a secure residence status should be provided that does not expire at the age of 18.
- EU institutions and agencies: Existing tools in best interests' assessments and determination procedures, including those developed by EASO, UNHCR and UNICEF should be used, improved and adapted as needed to provide practical tools for member states to introduce systematic and robust procedures in their migration and asylum structures, with the direct involvement of child protection actors.

6. Support for children to move safely and regularly from one country to another when in their best interests.

Reinforcing the system of Dublin transfers towards the first country of arrival is not a solution to the issue of unsafe movements of children across borders. Instead, as mentioned above, the Dublin Regulation is a key instrument to enable unaccompanied and separated children to reunite safely with their families within the EU, as it prioritises families reunification. In addition, children should have unhindered access to relocation as a tool for protection when in their best interests, and more possibilities should be made available for children to travel to the EU regularly, and for families to migrate together.

- Member states: Current commitments on relocation need to be extended and implemented. Additionally, member states should reduce restrictions to qualify for family reunification, reduce waiting times, and speed up procedures to make it possible for children to reunite with their families already in the EU, including with extended family members, both within Dublin procedures and family reunification procedures. Increasing the quotas of resettlement of refugee children from third countries is also a way to avoid children embarking on dangerous

²¹ See [General Comment No 6 on Treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin](#)

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journeys, as well as reviewing labour migration policies and restrictions imposed on family members and family unity.

- EU Institutions and agencies: The EU should monitor that the reasons for migrant children to go missing or move unsafely across borders are properly addressed in the EU legislation and policy. The EU can also play a vital role by looking at mechanisms that exist between Member states and improving cross-border cooperation that protects children. A revision and expansion of the family definitions under the Dublin Regulation should be considered as a way to prevent children from going missing and to ensure family unity and the best interests of the child. The review of the EU regular migration framework should identify strengths and weaknesses regarding the facilitation of family migration and family reunification.

7. More resources for awareness raising and training of all professionals working with children.

This should include for state services on first contact/encounter and in reception or accommodation centres, law enforcement, immigration and asylum authorities, health professionals, carers and school personnel. Training should be tailored to the type of contact that the professional has with the child²². Training modules available should include:

- > modules on risk assessment to target care and protection depending on the individual needs of the child, with a specific focus on early identification of victims of trafficking and/or exploitation and abuse
- > training on good practices to prevent disappearance, including in cases of victims of trafficking (e.g. child friendly communication, building of trust with the child, etc.).
- > training on assessing and determining the best interests of the child
- > training for law enforcement to ensure that all cases of missing unaccompanied children trigger appropriate responses²³
- > training of communicating with and interviewing children and providing information on procedures and rights to which they are entitled in a child friendly way.

8. Formalisation of the cooperation between professionals involved in the situation of a missing unaccompanied child.

Formalisation of cooperation would lead to substantial improvement of the cooperation, as well as faster and more appropriate responses where needed. This is also important to ensure that necessary procedures and protocols are in place to systematically report and respond to instances of unaccompanied children going missing.²⁴ The best interests of the child must be the guiding principle when structuring this cooperation and mechanisms need to be in place for data protection. Missing refugee and migrant children must be treated as missing children first and foremost.

²² See *Heading Back to Harm* http://www.ecpat.org.uk/sites/default/files/hbth_report2016_final_web_0.pdf

²³ From the conclusions of the 10th Forum on the rights of the child

²⁴ From the conclusions of the 10th Forum on the rights of the child.

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- Member states should ensure that the cooperation between actors involved in the protection of migrant children is formalised, allowing for a clear division of tasks, accountability and clear procedures. A child protection authority should play the main role in coordinating the cooperation, including when children are asylum seekers. National child protection organisations with expertise in providing administrative, legal and operational support to parents and guardians in managing cases of missing children should be supported, as an essential complementary resource to the role played by the police. Member states should also standardise practices for the assessment of risks, including enhanced efforts to identify children who are or have been victims of exploitation and/or human trafficking, and appropriate training on trafficking in human beings and risk assessments. A more systematic and efficient risk assessment could allow to prioritise (scarce) resources to the cases of those children who face the most urgent risk to their safety and for whom it is essential to take swift decisions in their best interests to prevent harm.
- EU Institutions and agencies: Support the further development and sharing of good practices and interagency cooperation efforts developed at local level to prevent and respond to missing children in migration and foster their implementation consistently within the country.

9. Stronger cross border cooperation in child protection, on both governmental and non-governmental levels, including when responding to disappearances.

Existing networks with expertise and experience in the protection of vulnerable children should be enhanced, including the network of hotlines²⁵ for missing children - an important ally in ensuring that every child moving across borders is accounted for - as well as the network of guardianship institutions. Collectively, these networks can provide a continuum of protection, care and support for all children involved in cross-border migration, regardless of their migration/residence status, whether in forced displacement or voluntary, and through all stages of their migration journey. European cooperation should seek to develop child protection systems that ensure that children have access to the full range of rights they are entitled to in accordance with European and international law wherever they are.

- Member states: It is essential to provide financial support to strengthen the national civil society organisations that are part of cross-border networks providing essential services to migrant children. For example, member states have an obligation, under the Universal Service Directive (2009/136/EC, art.27a4), *to make every effort to ensure that citizens have access to a service operating a hotline to report cases of missing children. The hotline shall be available on the number "116000".* Member states shall also (art.27a3) *ensure that citizens are adequately informed of the existence and use of services provided under the "116" numbering range, in particular through initiatives specifically targeting persons travelling between Member States.* It is essential, to that end,

²⁵ Hotlines for missing children, operated through the telephone number 116 000, have been set up following EC Decision 2007/116/EC. These hotlines provide free 24/7 administrative, psychological, social and legal support to children and adults in cases of child disappearances. Cross-border cooperation procedures set up by Missing Children Europe as well as extensive quality criteria and indicators allow for swift and efficient support over and above national borders. While hotlines responded to over 850 000 calls in the past 5 years, only 2% concerned unaccompanied children missing in migration – due to lack of reporting of these disappearances to the hotlines. For more information, see <http://missingchildreurope.eu/116000hotline>

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- > to provide support, including financial support, to the national members of the international network of hotlines for missing children,
 - > to support the efficiency of its existing case management system to protect children across border,
 - > to improve awareness on the availability of the number, in order to improve swift reporting of missing children in migration,
 - > take due account of their obligations in assigning the number "116 000" to an organisation capable of providing the high-quality support needed for all missing children.
- EU institutions and agencies: Awareness should be raised on existing networks, reporting tools and existing cooperation mechanisms, also through expert meetings and tailored funding, aiming at ensuring the sustainability of the results of previous projects. Cross-border case management services and information sharing should be developed to effectively channel information between NGOs and national child protection systems across borders and to ensure that the best interests of the child remains central in the management of international missing cases. The development of standard operating procedures and joint investigations is also essential in combating crime against the person, including trafficking. With regard to the aforementioned hotline for missing children, the European Commission's proposal for a Directive establishing a European Electronic Communications' Code (COM (2016) 590 final) provides for a new opportunity to strengthen the provisions regarding the service operated through 116 000 across member states. The proposed new Article 90 (1) which emphasizes Member States' obligations should be kept as such. In addition, measures needed to achieve the 'effet utile' of the Directive should be considered so as to ensure delivery of the necessary quality of the service from the organisation to which the number is assigned²⁶. Due efforts should also be undertaken regarding the review of transposition and implementation of the Directive.

10. Any personal data of children should be used exclusively for the sake of protection, never in the aim to manage migration or return of children.

Eurodac is not a data system designed to protect children or manage cases of missing migrant children, as its primary purpose is for management of migration, including the return of asylum seekers under Dublin and irregular migrants. The existing tool for missing children included in the Schengen Information System (SIS), when and if adapted to managing cases of missing migrant children across national borders, could be a useful instrument to ensure protection across border only if data on children is used exclusively for protection. Putting forward a dual purpose which includes managing return, as pursued in the ongoing reform, contradicts evidence on the reasons for migrant children going missing, and puts them at risk of rights violations. Furthermore, this will discourage reporting of a missing cases for fear of the consequence that this will have on the child and of the use of data included in the report. It is essential for strict operational limitations to be implemented and enforced on collection of data, access to and use of data and data retention. Any personal data including fingerprints of children should be used exclusively for the sake of protection, never in the aim to manage migration or return children. Necessary child protection

²⁶ The European Commission is furthermore encouraged to update the Communication COM(2010) 674 based on the 69 criteria for quality service of hotline operators identified and implemented in a project recently carried out by Missing Children Europe.

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safeguards in this respect should be included in the implementing regulations of all European data systems that hold data on migrant children. Appropriate rules on the collection of data, access to the data and its use, and data retention should be enforced.

- Member states should ensure strict operational limitations in line with data privacy and child protection are in place, and monitor their implementation in practice. Steps should be taken towards a 'firewall' to ensure that personal data on children collected in the context of child protection or the provision of public services cannot be accessed for immigration purposes.
- EU Institutions and agencies should ensure child protection safeguards in the revision of Eurodac and SIS. Tools for the protection of children across borders, like the SIS, remain to be used exclusively for the purpose of protection, never within the aim to manage migration or return children. Data on children should be stored separately in these systems with restricted access, to ensure that data is used exclusively in their best interests.

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7 cross-cutting recommendations on the overall policy framework, data and funding

1. An **EU Action Plan on all refugee and migrant children** is necessary to coordinate actions and mobilise resources. It would represent EU commitment at the highest level, effectively bring together the various responsible authorities, agencies and civil society in Member States and in the EU, and develop tangible and resourced processes and actions for all refugee and migrant children. Within this framework, national action plans could be developed on promoting the well-being of all refugee and migrant children, and the impact of every aspect of migration and asylum policy and practice on children systematically addressed. The EU has several tools at its disposal. The Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors 2010-2014 provides a useful foundation and many of its priorities remain relevant. However, the next Action Plan should expand its focus to all refugee and migrant children and bring together the EU's internal and external policy tools. A rights and needs-based approach will enable a response that takes into consideration specific aspects such as gender, ethnic origin, religion, health and disability.
2. The ongoing **reform of the Common European Asylum System** offers a significant opportunity to improve the situation of refugee and asylum-seeking children. Guardianship, best interests assessment, the definition of family, age assessment, and criteria for obtaining international protection for child related forms of persecution are key elements of the instruments under reform, which also provide for quicker access to education, preferably within 30 days of a child's arrival. These provisions should be maintained and strengthened in the negotiations. Due attention should be paid to harmonising and speeding up the processes of family reunion, resettlement and relocation. Compliance with identification and registration procedures will be improved if children see their rights guaranteed within the system. There is an opportunity to bring EU asylum law in line with international standards by prohibiting the detention of asylum-seeking children and families. On the other hand, proposals to punish onwards movements with material and procedural restrictions on rights, reinstating the concept of sending children to the country of first arrival or a third country, thereby dismissing existing jurisprudence, and limiting the rights of beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and the length of residence permits, would violate children's rights and push more children and families into destitution and irregularity. These provisions must therefore be changed. The European Commission, the European Parliament and Council of the European Union must ensure that any reforms guarantee the highest level of protection for children.
3. Return is increasingly presented as a key pillar of the EU's asylum, migration and foreign policy. **Any decision on return must be based on children's rights**, not a political agenda, and include an individual determination of the child's best interests. The impact of cooperation with third countries of the rights of children must be assessed and addressed. Any future reform of EU law and policy on return, including the update of the EU Action Plan on Return, must ensure essential safeguards for children and families, and prohibit the use of immigration-related detention.
4. **Policies should be matched by resources.** Funding needs to be made available to support an innovative, integrated response by the European Commission, member states and civil society both within and outside the EU. Various EU financing instruments could earmark resources to address issues related to refugee and migrant children. Investment is needed to support both mainstream and targeted services to ensure the rights of refugee and migrant

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children in the countries where they are residing, regardless of the length of time. EU and national agencies dealing with refugee and migrant children should receive adequate funds to invest in capacity-building on child rights and sound referral mechanisms. The Commission should work with member states to monitor how EU funds are being spent, making sure that EU funds are targeted towards the best interests of children. EU funds should be used in line with EU policy and the guiding principles of human rights law, including non-discrimination, as also enshrined in the Charter of fundamental rights of the EU.

5. A common approach concerning all children, regardless of status, should be included in both the **Global Compacts**, namely that for safe, orderly and regular migration and that on refugees. States have commitments to “comply with our obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child” (New York Declaration, para. 32) and the comprehensive and rights-based approach called for by the Committee on the Rights of the Child should be respected, not be fragmented, through the Global Compact process.
6. The European Commission 10 **principles on integrated child protection systems** should be at the heart of the comprehensive strategy on children in migration expected from the European Union. Integrated national child protection systems in the EU and in third countries should be established and strengthened in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 10 principles. Discussions and actions around the EC Recommendations on Investing in Children, justice, health, education, human rights, development and youth employment should all systematically include the specific situation of all refugee and migrant children, and advance their equal access to protection, public services (e.g. education, health) and justice.
7. **Collect and publish better and disaggregate data.** There is a real lack of disaggregated data on refugee and migrant children in Europe. For example, there are only a few countries where the number of children in immigration-related detention is publicly available. Cooperation among authorities, but also with the European Commission and Eurostat is needed to increase visibility, reliability, comparability and timeliness. Member states should regularly collect - at a minimum - age, gender, disability and nationality disaggregated data (on arrivals, asylum, relocation, family reunification, detention, voluntary return and forced removal), and make it publicly available. Member states should use the full potential of the Statistics Regulation (Regulation EC/862/2007) with a focus on disaggregation by age, gender, disability and residence status. The available data and evidence should be used to inform the development and reform of policy and practice.

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Organisations that endorse these conclusions below:

147 Rat auf Draht
Aditus foundation
ASGI - Association for Legal Studies on
Immigration
Bertelsmann Stiftung
Child Circle
Child Focus
Child Helpline International
Child Rights Consult
Child Rights International Network (CRIN)
ChildFund Alliance
Cidis Onlus
Dedalus Social Cooperative
Defence for Children-ECPAT Netherlands
Don Bosco International
ECPAT Belgium
ECPAT Germany
ECPAT UK
ECRE
Eurochild
European Network of Migrant Women (ENOMW)
FAPMI-ECPAT Spain
FONDAZIONE MUSEKE ONLUS
Fundación ANAR (116000 hotline in Spain)
Global Campaign to End Immigration Detention
of Children
HOPE FOR CHILDREN CRC POLICY CENTER

ICMC Europe
Immigrant Council of Ireland
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE (SWITZERLAND)
Irish Refugee Council
Istituto Don Calabria
Kopin
Lasten perusoikeudet - Children's Fundamental
Rights ry
MALTA EMIGRANTS COMMISSION
METAdrasi
Minor-Ndako vzw
National Institute for Childhood, President's
Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society Malta
Nidos
PICUM-Platform for International Cooperation on
Undocumented Migrants
Save the children
SOS Children's Villages International
Terre des Hommes
The Children's Society
The Salvation Army
The Salvation Army, (EU Affairs Office)
The Salvation Army, Sweden and Latvia
The Smile of the Child
World Vision

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Speaker Biographies

Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta



Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca is the ninth President of the Republic of Malta. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca dedicated her life to the social wellbeing of the most vulnerable in society and brought about effective changes in the social policies of Malta.

On 13 March 2013, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca was appointed as Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity. The key reforms affected during her term of office included those in the area of social housing, as well as the reform for an integrated social system based on community level approaches through the establishment of the Family Resource Centres. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca worked relentlessly in social development and in creating Regional Centres.

Her nomination as President was, for the first time in the history of the Maltese parliament, approved unanimously by a parliamentary resolution of the House of Representatives taken on 1 April 2014, marking a development in the constitutional history of Malta. She took the oath of President of Malta on 4 April 2014.

Coleiro Preca is the youngest President of the country, and is the second woman occupying the office of Head of State after 32 years. Soon after taking office, Her Excellency established a number of entities to ensure dialogue and to foster effective unity among people.

Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca is invited to speak at international fora on a variety of areas, including the wellbeing of children, poverty and sustainable peace.

Her Excellency is a member of the Patrons Council of Missing Children Europe.

She combines her office as MEP with being an alderwoman in the City of Sint-Truiden, responsible for education, agriculture, military affairs and environment.

Maud de Boer Buquicchio, President, Missing Children Europe



Maud de Boer-Buquicchio studied French language and literature and later law at Leiden University. She specialised in international relations and labour law, obtaining her degree in 1969 with a thesis on the equality of treatment between women and men under European Community law.

Maud De Boer-Buquicchio joined the Council of Europe in 1969 and joined the legal Secretariat of the European Commission of Human Rights. She later worked in a variety of positions in the Council of Europe system, including in the Private Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and as Deputy Registrar of the European Court of Human Rights. She obtained a renewed commitment to children's rights by all Council of Europe States and launched the programme

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"Building a Europe for and with children". The elimination of all forms of violence against children being one of her priorities, Mrs. de Boer-Buquicchio has championed the Council of Europe campaigns against corporal punishment and against sexual violence. She is also the inspiration behind the current Council of Europe work on child-friendly justice. She is a member of the Member of the FRA Executive Board and was elected President of Missing Children Europe, a position she took over from Sir Francis Jacobs on 15 October 2013.

Věra Jourová, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, European Commission



Věra Jourová is currently European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality.

In 2014, before coming to the European Commission, Ms Jourová held the position of Minister for Regional Development in the Czech Republic. Previous to this, from 2006 to 2013, she worked in her own company as an international consultant on European Union funding, and also was involved in consultancy activities in the Western Balkans relating to the European Union Accession. In 2003 Ms. Jourová was appointed Deputy Minister for Regional Development, a position which she held for three years. Previously she worked as Head of the Department of Regional Development in the Vysočina Region, from 2001, and before that as Secretary and Spokesperson of the Třebíč Municipal Office, from 1995 to 2001.

Ms Jourová holds a Degree in Law (Mgr.) from the Charles University, Prague and a Master's degree (Mgr.) in the Theory of Culture from the Charles University, Prague.

Hilde Vautmans, Member of the European Parliament



Hilde VAUTMANS is a Belgian Member of the European Parliament (ALDE, Open Vld) since 12 January 2015. She is member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Security and Defence Committee and the delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. As a substitute she is a member of the AGRI Committee, the PEST Committee and the delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. For the ALDE group she is the Vice-coordinator on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence. She also acts as the delegation leader of Open Vld in the European Parliament.

She combines her office as MEP with being an alderwoman in the City of Sint-Truiden, responsible for education, agriculture, military affairs and environment.

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Cecilia Wikström, Member of the European Parliament



Cecilia Wikström was born in 1965 and raised in Kalix, but has lived in Uppsala since the 1980's. She holds a bachelor degree in theology from the University of Uppsala, and has been a practising priest in the Swedish Church since 1994.

Cecilia Wikström has written several books including the book *När livet går sönder* (When life falls apart), a publication awarded book of the year in its genre in 2004. In 2002, Cecilia Wikström was elected to the Swedish parliament. She was re-elected in 2006, representing the liberal party, Liberalerna. Since 2009, Cecilia Wikström is a Member of the European Parliament.

Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Co-chair of the Intergroup on the Rights of the Child



Anna Maria Corazza Bildt is a Member of the European Parliament, elected by the Swedish people in 2009 and in 2014 with personal votes for Moderate Party, in the European People's Party group. She is the first Vice Chair of the Committee on the Internal Market and consumer protection and Vice Coordinator in the Women Rights Committee. She is also a member of the Civil Liberties Committee as well as of the EU-delegation to Ukraine and Joint Parliamentary Committee with Turkey. She co-chairs the Intergroup on Children's Rights and Single Seat Campaign. Her main areas of activity are migration, the digital single market and food issues. She

is fully committed to peace, freedom and democracy in Europe. In particular, she works to combat trafficking in human beings and to eradicate any kind of violence against women and children. Previously, she has also been an active entrepreneur and received several prizes for her high merits in promoting Italian food abroad and for building bridges between Sweden and Italy. In the current mandate (2014 - 2019) Anna Maria Corazza Bildt is the Rapporteur of the Implementation Report on the Directive on the implementation of Directive 2011/93/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, as well as of the Report on the EU accession to the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women.

Nathalie Griesbeck, Member of the European Parliament



Born in Metz – a city in the North East of France – in 1956, Nathalie Griesbeck obtained a Masters of Law at the University of Metz and two post-graduate degrees at the University of Nancy as valedictorian. She continues to be a lecturer in public law at the University of Metz (on hold).

Very involved locally, Nathalie Griesbeck has occupied several functions in the town hall council of Metz and in the departmental council of Moselle for over 30 years in the areas of economics, social and cultural affairs.

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Elected as a Member of the European Parliament in 2004 for the French "Grand Est" constituency as a centrist candidate (for the UDF (Union for French Democracy) in 2004, the MoDem (Democratic Movement) in 2009, and the list "les Européens UDI-MoDem in 2014) Nathalie Griesbeck joined the Civil liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee (LIBE) in 2009. She also sits in the Employment and Social affairs Committee (EMPL) and takes part in both the Delegations to the ACP-EU and the Latin America-Euro Joint Parliamentary Assemblies. During her former terms in office she was a member of the Budgets and Transport and Tourism Committees. In 2013, she was named as Rapporteur to the European Parliament on the situation of non-accompanied minors in the EU. In 2015, she was named as Rapporteur on the proposal for a directive on the presumption of innocence. In 2017, she was named, in 2017, as Rapporteur on the proposal for a regulation on the mutual recognition of freezing and confiscation orders. On September 2017, she was elected Chair of the new special parliamentary committee on Terrorism. She is also vice-Chair of the Children's rights intergroup.

Dan Biswas, Faros, Children on the Run in Greece



Dan Biswas is the Co-founder and Director of Faros. Faros provides protection, psychosocial care, non-formal education, recreational activities and shelter for unaccompanied refugee children (for more information visit <http://www.faros.org.gr>). Dan holds an MSc degree in Public Health from the University of Copenhagen and brings 5 years' experience working with unaccompanied refugee children. Prior to this Dan worked in research and non-profit organizations in the field of refugee health and trauma care.

Karin Martinsson, Manager for Integration in the Municipality of Kungsbacka (Gothenburg)



Karin Martinsson is Head of integration in the municipality of Kungsbacka, south of Gothenburg. In Kungsbacka, which started taking refugees just a few years ago, Karin is responsible for the whole integration process and has built an organization that includes the whole municipality. Before working in Kungsbacka Karin worked as CEO of an organization for interpreting.

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Marit Buddenbaum, Leiden University



Marit Buddenbaum is a student assistant at Leiden Law School, where she is currently involved in research projects regarding refugee children in the Netherlands and Europe, including a project for the conference Lost in Migration II of Missing Children Europe. Marit is also a part-time student in the Program Advanced Studies in International Children's Rights. Last year, she won the award of Best Applicant Team at the International Children's Rights Moot Court Competition 2017 on the topic of refugee children in Europe. Furthermore, she was active as youth representative of the UNICEF Netherlands and an intern in their children's rights and business team. Before this, Marit graduated with honors from the Masters of Arts in Global History and International Relations and graduated cum laude from her Bachelor of Arts from University College Roosevelt. She is continually motivated by her passion for social justice, human rights and children's rights.

Marit Buddenbaum is a student assistant at Leiden Law School, where she is currently involved in research projects regarding refugee children in the Netherlands and Europe, including a project for the conference Lost in Migration II of Missing Children Europe. Marit is also a part-time student in the Program Advanced Studies in International Children's Rights. Last year, she won the award of Best Applicant Team at the International Children's Rights Moot Court Competition 2017 on the topic of refugee children in Europe. Furthermore, she was active as youth representative of the UNICEF Netherlands and an intern in their children's rights and business team. Before this, Marit graduated with honors from the Masters of Arts in Global History and International Relations and graduated cum laude from her Bachelor of Arts from University College Roosevelt. She is continually motivated by her passion for social justice, human rights and children's rights.

Sandie Blanchet, Director of UNICEF office in Brussels



Ms. Sandie Blanchet was appointed as Director of the UNICEF Office for Partnership with the EU, in Brussels, in July 2017 at a time when the engagement and dialogue on child rights with EU institutions is being strengthened.

Ms. Blanchet comes with 23 years of experience with UNICEF and other UN agencies. In her previous position, as the UNICEF Representative in Romania, she led the implementation of the partnership agreement with authorities to accelerate the universal realization of child rights in the country between 2012 and 2017. Some of the joint results achieved under her mandate include a significant reduction in the number of young children in institutions, an increase in the percentage of children with special educational needs going to mainstream schools and a rise in the number of community nurses helping vulnerable children access health care.

From 2008 to 2012, she worked as Deputy Representative in UNICEF Moldova, focusing on education and child protection reforms for the most vulnerable children. Earlier, she was the Knowledge and Communication Manager in UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen, where she improved communication and knowledge management on the procurement of essential supplies for children inside and outside the Organization. Between 1996 and 2002, Ms. Blanchet contributed to UNICEF's advocacy on child rights and partnerships with the media first in Vietnam, and then in India. From 1993 to 1996, she was a consultant for UNICEF, UNDP and UNESCO in the fields of external communication and human rights.

Ms. Sandie Blanchet was appointed as Director of the UNICEF Office for Partnership with the EU, in Brussels, in July 2017 at a time when the engagement and dialogue on child rights with EU institutions is being strengthened.

Ms. Blanchet comes with 23 years of experience with UNICEF and other UN agencies. In her previous position, as the UNICEF Representative in Romania, she led the implementation of the partnership agreement with authorities to accelerate the universal realization of child rights in the country between 2012 and 2017. Some of the joint results achieved under her mandate include a significant reduction in the number of young children in institutions, an increase in the percentage of children with special educational needs going to mainstream schools and a rise in the number of community nurses helping vulnerable children access health care.

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Prof. Ernesto Caffo, President of Telefono Azzurro and Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia.



Full Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (Italy), Professor Caffo is also President of the Scientific Board of the Post Graduate School in Child Neuropsychiatry and director of the Masters research programs on "Evaluation and intervention in situations of child abuse and pedophilia".

Professor Caffo is founder and President of the S.O.S Il Telefono Azzurro Onlus, a non- profit Italian organization that promotes children's rights and fights any kind of abuse and violence against children and adolescents.

He is also President of the Foundation Child for Study and Research into Childhood and Adolescence and he is Director of international training research seminars in the field of child and adolescents' mental health.

Past president of the European Society for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (ESCAP), Professor Caffo is Member of the Board of Directors of the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC) since 2008.

Sophie Magennis, Head of the Policy and Legal Support Unit, UNHCR Bureau for Europe.



Sophie Magennis is Head of the Policy and Legal Support Unit at UNHCR's Bureau for Europe in Brussels. Prior to her appointment, she was UNHCR's Head of Office in Ireland. Previously, she was Head of Policy and Legislation at the Irish Ombudsman for Children's Office and Administrator of the Irish Human Rights Commission.

She co-founded Human Rights Consultants in 2000. Prior to that, she served as Deputy to the Irish Ambassador to the Council of Europe. She has worked with the Council of Europe as Legal Consultant to the Monitoring Unit of the Secretary General and as a Legal Expert at the Council of Europe's Section for Equality between Women and Men.

She is an Attorney and Counselor at Law at the New York State Bar and holds a European Masters Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation from the European Inter-University Centre in Venice, Italy.

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Virginia Gamba, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict



Ms. Gamba has a long career in peace and security, human security and disarmament issues. Virginia Gamba (of Argentina) served most recently as Assistant Secretary General, Head of the Joint Investigative Mechanism Syria. She previously served as Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and Director of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. From 1996 to 2006 she was based in Africa serving inter-alia as peace and security consultant to the Africa Union, Deputy Director of the Institute for Security Studies in South Africa and Director for South-South Interactions of Safer Africa.

From 2007 to 2011 she served as Deputy Director and Senior Coordinator on Safety and Security at the Instituto Superior de Seguridad Publica, Ministry of Justice, Government of the Autonomous city of Buenos Aires. Past engagements with the United Nations include serving as Director to the Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Programme at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in Geneva (1992-1996).

Eugenio Ambrosi, Regional Director of IOM's Regional Office for the EU, Norway and Switzerland.



Eugenio Ambrosi is the Regional Director of IOM's Regional Office for the EU, Norway and Switzerland. Prior to this, he was the Senior Regional Adviser for Europe and Central Asia in the Office of the Director General at IOM's Headquarters in Geneva. Mr. Ambrosi came to IOM in 1991 where he has since held senior positions including Director for the Regional Office in Buenos Aires and Director of the Dakar Regional Office. He has extensive experience and knowledge of European issues and IOM policies, programmes and operations, in addition to several years of executive experience with IOM's Regional Bureau for Africa and the Middle East. Mr. Ambrosi is a Master in Law and holds a Post Graduate degree in International Law and Multilateral Diplomacy.

Janeta Hanganu, Programme Officer in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees



Janeta received a License in International law (1999-2003) at Moldova State University and a Master of Studies in International Human Rights Law (2014-2016) at the University of Oxford.

Her professional experience includes:

- Programme management in legal and judicial reform in Moldova (7 years);
- Domestic law practice in administrative and constitutional law, human rights (5 years);
- Registry of the European Court of Human Rights (4 years);

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- Programme Officer, Officer of the Special Representative of the Council of Europe Secretary General on migration and refugees (since June 2017), main focus on refugee and migrant children.

She has additional professional experience as a media law trainer, non-discrimination law trainer and as a legal consultant on women's rights, freedom of expression, constitutional law and human rights.

Enrico Ragaglia, Senior Project Manager, ICMPD



Enrico Ragaglia has been working in the Anti-Trafficking field for the last 15 years. He is currently Senior Project Manager at the ICMPD HQ in Vienna. He has been managing multi-national and multi-stakeholder projects within the ICMPD Anti-Trafficking Programme since 2006, having been responsible for the implementation of several anti-trafficking projects and initiatives in different regions, such as the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Western Balkans, South-Eastern Europe and the EU. He has also experience in the field of Anti-Trafficking in West Africa (ECOWAS Commission and its Member States) and in Southern Caucasus.

Between 2003 and 2006 he has worked as Child-Trafficking Programme Officer at Save the Children Italy.

His academic background is on public policies and political science. In 2001, he obtained his Master's Degree in European Social Policy Analysis and Evaluation at the National University of Ireland and the Roskilde University in Denmark.

He is fluent in Italian, English and Portuguese and has good working knowledge of Spanish.

Jari Liukku, Head of European Serious and Organized Crime Department, Europol



Jari Liukku is a Head of Europol's European Serious and Organized Crime Department. Before joining the Agency, he worked as a Police Chief in Finland. Jari Liukku has over 36 years' experience from various law enforcement agencies. He has acquired experience in different strategic and operational tasks consisting among other issues performance management and leaderships in demanding field operations and crime investigations. Jari Liukku has also worked as prosecutor and notary/judge. Since 2000 he has implemented several EU funded projects in Asia, Balkans, Caucasus, Europe and Middle East as a Project Leader and Adviser with the aim of developing beneficiary countries' capacities in the prevention of organized and other serious crime.

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Myria Vassiliadou, EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, European Commission



The EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Dr. Myria Vassiliadou, is responsible for improving coordination and coherence among EU institutions, EU agencies, Member States and international actors and developing existing and new EU policies to address trafficking in human beings. The position of EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator is based on the [EU Anti-Trafficking Directive 2011/36/EU](#). Dr. Vassiliadou has monitored the implementation [EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings](#). She holds a doctorate in Sociology from the University of Kent at Canterbury and has worked as an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Nicosia, at the European Commission in the Directorate General for Research, as Secretary General of the European Women's Lobby, and, as director of the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies.

Birgit Van Hout, Regional Representative for Europe, UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR)



Ms. Van Hout heads the Regional Office for Europe of the United Nations Human Rights Office in Brussels. She brings experience in human rights, rule of law, gender, and peace & security from the UN Department of Peace-Keeping Operations (DPKO), the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the European Union (EU), and the Office of the Commissioner-General for Refugees of Belgium. She served in Guatemala (MINUGUA), East Timor (UNAMET) and Bosnia (OSCE), Central Asia (ODIHR), Palestine (EU), Venezuela (EU) and Togo (OHCHR). She also worked with civil society as Executive Director of the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ), an anti-discrimination organization fostering dialogue among cultural, religious and racial communities in the USA. She holds an LL.M., a M.A. in International Politics, and a postgraduate degree in International Human Rights Law.

Adam Elsod, Co-founder and Chairman of the Young Republic



Adam Elsod is an award winning activist, educator and campaigner. He is a member of the advisory council of the Council of Europe, and the pool of trainers of the European Youth Forum. He is the founder of Civic & Co, a company working with designing creative learning solutions for groups and institutions around social change. Adam has been working for the last 10 years for democracy, human rights and refugees social inclusion in the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. Adam is a co-founder and chairman of The Young Republic, an organisation based in Sweden working with young refugees to support their democratic participation and social inclusion in their host communities in Europe. He is also a co-founder of "The Network for Refugee Voices" and "The

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Refugee Coalition for Europe", working to contribute to processes aimed at reforming the international refugee protection regime, including international, European and municipal policies.

Ruth Farrugia, Director General, President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society



Dr Ruth Farrugia is Director General of the President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society. She is an advocate and senior lecturer in the Faculty of Laws at the University of Malta, and coordinator of the University of Malta Human Rights Programme. Dr Farrugia is a former consultant to the deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Policy, the Minister for Family, the Social Affairs Committee in Parliament, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees Office in Malta. She served for a number of years as Chairperson of the Children Care Orders Board, and drafted numerous laws including the Child Protection Bill currently before Parliament.

Federica Toscano, Head of Programme Children in Migration at Missing Children Europe



Federica Toscano coordinates Missing Children Europe's advocacy work for changes in policy and law to better support and protect migrant children at EU level. She managed the EU co-funded project SUMMIT (Safeguarding Unaccompanied Migrant Minors from going Missing by Identifying Best Practices and Training Actors on Interagency Cooperation) and she co-authored the study 'Best practice and key challenges for interagency cooperation to safeguard unaccompanied migrant children from going missing'. Before Missing Children Europe, she worked at the Directorate for Asylum and Migration of the European Commission and as in the international management of the European

Law Students' Association, one of the largest international youth organisations. Federica holds a LLM in International and European Law from the Institute of European Studies of the Vrije Universiteit Brussels and an Italian law degree.

Chiara Sambuchi, Director of documentary 'Lost Children'



Chiara Sambuchi was born in Pesaro, Italy. She studied Philosophy and classical guitar in Italy, Film studies in Germany and Berkeley. She worked as a producer for the correspondent office of RAI in Berlin, for the production company cine plus and co-founded in 2001 the production company LAVAFILM. She has directed documentaries and reportages for several European broadcasters like ARD, ARTE, ZDF, YLE, RAI, and History channel. Her feature length documentary films "Wrong planet", "Good morning Africa!", "City of women, today" and "Lost children" were and are still presented at major film festivals

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around the world. She has cooperated with NGOs on projects in Africa, South America and Europe, she has produced and shot documentary films in post conflict regions of Uganda, in rural areas of Ruanda, in refugee camps during the refugees' humanitarian emergency in 2014 and 2015. She contributes as speaker at panels and seminars related to the topics of her work, organized by universities, European institutions and NGOs.

Bruno Selun, Facilitator



Bruno founded Kumquat Consult in 2013 out of passion to advance progressive ideas in Europe. Before that, Bruno worked in the European Parliament advising over 180 elected Members from six political groups on controversial issues in civil liberties, justice, foreign affairs and human rights.

Since 2003, he has worked with a range of institutions, NGOs and foundations in Europe and the USA. He is widely praised for his analysis, strategic advice and communication skills, coupled with the empathy necessary to understand any organisation's needs.

Bruno is a member of the International Association of Facilitators, and observes its Statement of Values & Code of Ethics.

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About the concert

On the first night of conference, at 7 pm CET, the artists of [Refugees got Talent](#) will perform a one hour concert with music from the Middle-East, including Iraqi, Kurdish, Syrian and Moroccan influences. They also sing in French, Spanish, and Afghan. The group is composed of 7 artists, singers, guitarists, drummers. The artists will be Zaid Alseefo, Omar El Had, Ghasem Mousavi, Stalin Blake, Mirsad Kadriu.

Refugees Got Talent came into being from the unlikely encounters between a Belgian artist who migrated to Peru (Aurelie Beer), two Iraqi-English professors who migrated to Belgium (Mustafa Fallah and Ahmed Fawaz), a Liège psychologist who migrated to Brussels (Julie Artus) and the Brussels-based Sophie Querton. The group is further formed by many others, also on the move, with the desire to express what is goes around, what life is about, dreams, what is lost, what is forgotten and what should be said more often.

Tickets to the concert are free, but you will be able to donate to two very important causes: to support the artists of Refugees Got Talent and to the development of the Miniila app supporting young newcomers in Europe by providing access to child friendly, up to date and accessible information on their rights, procedures and the available support wherever they are. We will collect donations at the entrance and the suggested donations are 10 - 15 - 20 euros. However, larger donations are definitely appreciated.



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About the movie: **Lost Children**

Director: Chiara Sambuchi

Production: Lavafilm

There are thousands of them. Children. Aged between nine and sixteen. They come to Europe from the middle East and Africa, and now they are on the move across our continent – alone, with no adults to accompany them. A blot on European immigration policy. Of all people, minors whose young age should guarantee them special protection and speedy integration into the new society, slip effortlessly through the net of the inadequate security afforded by European asylum procedures, escape to wherever they can, and are easy prey for criminals both from their own home countries and from Europe. Since the beginning of 2014 at least two hundred thousand unaccompanied child migrants have managed to cross Europe's borders. But according to the authorities, at least ten thousand of them have simply vanished en route. These are children, and one estimate of unreported cases puts the figure at twice or even three times that. Who are these children, and how did they manage to make themselves invisible? In Italy, Germany, England and France they are reported missing time and again by NGOs and reception centers, but no one appears capable of doing anything about it. The film goes in search of evidence.



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List of Participants

First name	Last name	Organisation	Job position
Amevi Laurent	Adontui	ATPDE	Assistant Coordinator
Sandra	Akiwumi Lundstedt	Save the Children Sweden	Head of Unit
Jennifer	Allsopp	Becoming Adult and Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford	DPhil student
Natalia	Alonso	UNICEF	Senior Policy and Advocacy Adviser
Isabela	Atanasiu	European Commission - DG Home	Legal Officer
Cicek	Bacik	Deutsche Kinder- und Jugendstiftung	Programmleitung Gemeinsam Mittendrin Gestalten – Geflüchtete Jugendliche stärken
Catherine	Baker	ECPAT UK	Policy and Campaigns Officer
Silvia	Balmas	European Foundation Centre	Thematic Network Coordinator
Giulia	Barnhisel	Network of European Foundations	Programme Assistant
Hanne	Beirens	MPI Europe	Associate Director
Rosaria	Bergamini	Cesvi	Project Manager
Cecilia	Bergling Nauc�ler	SOS Children's Village Sweden	Advocacy Manager
Dan	Biswas	Faros	Founder
Sandie	Blanchet	UNICEF Brussels	Director
Eefje	Blankevoort	Prospektor	Director
Tom�s	Bo�ek	Council of Europe	COE Secretary General on Migration and Refugees Special Representative
Mark	Boekwijt	City of Amsterdam	EU Representative
Esther	Bohe	Caritas Europe	Campaign Officer
Elona	Bokshi	European Council on Refugees and Exiles	Senior Project Officer - Children
Marine	Braun	Defence for Children - Belgium	Juvenile Justice Expert
Lisa	Bronselaer	Missing Children Europe	Junior Communication Officer
Lahrs	Bruhns	Initiative Vermisste Kinder	President
Marit	Bubbendum	University of Leiden	Student Assistant of the Department of Child Law

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Milan	Burban	Médecin du Monde	Assitants missions belges
Stephan	Burger	EPIM	Programme Officer
Ernesto	Caffo	Telefono Azzurro	President
Ermioni	Chaltogiannidou	University of Helsinki	Master student
Thomas	Charalambidis	ARSIS-a member of the Destination Unknown campaign	Child Protection Lawyer
Sera	Choi	European Commission - DG Migration and Home	Policy Officer (NEPT)
Marie Louise	Coleiro Preca	Government of Malta	President
Laura	Colini	URBACT	Policy Advisor
Rocio	Comas	Friedrich Alexander Universität, Erlangen	PhD Candidate
Anna Maria	Corazza Bildt	European Parliament	MEP
Catherine	Cosgrave	Immigrant Council of Ireland	Lawyer
María	Cosgrave	UNICEF	Partnerships Specialists - relations with the EU institutions
Ariane	Couvreur	ECPAT Belgium	Project Manager
Andrea	Couzy	ECPAT France	Project Manager
Charlotte	Crahay	IOM	Unaccompanied Migrant Children focal point
Daria	Crimella	Fondazione Albero della Vita	Desk Officer Europe
Agata	D'Addato	Eurochild	Senior Policy Coordinator
Maud	de Boer-Buquicchio	Missing Children Europe	President
Priscillia	de Corson	Paris2 and Migrinter	PhD student
Jolien	De Crom	City of Antwerp	Project Manager CURANT
Isolde	De Vogel	Stad Gent	Social Worker
Helena	De Vylder	Vluchtelingenwerk	Lawyer - Advocacy Officer
Roos	de Wildt	Defence for Children - The Netherlands	Project Coordinator
Stephanie	Defoer	Belgian Migration Office	Expert UAM's
Paola	del Vecchio	Telefono Azzurro	President's Assistant
Olenka	Delanghe	PES	Policy Advisor
Catherine	Delanoë-Daoud	Vareilles-Daoud Avocats Associés	Lawyer
Hilde	Demarré	Missing Children Europe	Project Officer
Caroline	Denham	Europol	Seconded National Expert
Ayten	Dogan	Senate of Berlin for Integration and Migration	Policy Adviser
Ana	Draper	Coram	Clinical Lead
Adam	Elsod	The Young Republic	Co-founder and chairman

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Audrey	Eprinchart	International Committee of the Red Cross	Legal Adviser
Olivier	Fagel	Mentor-Escale	Project Manager
Ruth	Farrugia	The President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society	Director General
Tom	Feeley	European Parliament - ALDE	
Jessica	Fiorelli	Terre des Hommes	Junior Advocacy & Policy Officer
Katja	Fournier	Platform Kinderen op de vlucht – Plateforme Mineurs en exil	Coordinator
Silvia	Fuligni	European Commission	Former Blue book trainee
Virginia	Gamba	United Nations	Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict
Sara	Garcia de Blas	JRS Europe	Assistant
Brian	Gatt	Government of Malta	Aide-de-Camp of the President of Malta
Fanny	Georges	EPIM	Programme Officer
Lea	Gerbaud	European Parliament	
Zoe	Giordano	Cooperativa sociale Dedalus	
Silvia	Giulini	Generation 2.0, Greece	Advocacy Officer
Emanuela	Giunti	Telefono Azzurro	Rome Office Coordinator
Rebecca	Granshaw	Missing Children Europe	Fundraiser Officer
Nathalie	Griesbeck	European Parliament	MEP, ALDE
Evdokia	Grillaki	Metadras	
Semma	Groenendijk	Minor-Ndako	Project Officer
Muhammed Taha	Guvendi	TRT World	Press
Hilary	Harmon	Children's Rights Alliance	Project Manager - Child Refugee Initiative
Amir	Hashemi Nik	County Administrative Board of Stockholm	National Coordinator for missing children in migration
Kosuke	Hatta	Mainichi Newspaper	Brussels correspondent chief
Farid	Hazara	Coalition for Unaccompanied Minors (Ensamkommandes Förbund Göteborg)	
Francis	Herbert	Missing Children Europe	Legal Counsel (Pro-bono)
Zozan	Hussein	Coalition for Unaccompanied Minors (Ensamkommandes Förbund Göteborg)	
	Islam	Active Citizen Europe	Director
Francis	Jacobs	Missing Children Europe	Patrons' Council
Colette	Joris	Aletheia	Chief Manager

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Sally	Joseph	Camden local authority Children's services	Head of Children Care Provision
Vera	Jourová	European Commission	Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality
Beatriz	Juanes	EU Social Protection Projects	Advocate
Maha	Jweied	Kids in Need of Defense	Consultant
Athanasia	Kakaroumpa	The Smile of the Child	Coordinator of the Helpline Department
Lena	Kainz	Migration Policy	Research Assistant
Lilana	Keith	PICUM	
Fotini	Konstantopoulou	The Smile of the Child	Coordinator / Psychologists of Community Homes
Joanna	Kopacka	Friedrich Naumann Foundation	Fellow
Salla	Korhonen	City of Tampere	Social Counselor
Vivian	Kounio	ARSIS-a member of the Destination Unknown campaign	Case Manager
Evdokia	Kouvara	Metadras	
Lyudmila	Krastanova	Bulgarian JHA Counsellor	
Linda	Krbcova	European Commission	Trainee
Shanna	Latrez	Minor Ndako	Pedagoog
Lucy	Leon	The Children's Society	Service Manager - Child Trafficking
Lavinia	Liardo	Terre des Hommes	Senior Policy Officer
Elisabeth	Lindholm	Municipality of Strömsund	Project Manager - Best interest of the child in return practices
Jari	Liukku	Europol	Head of the European Serious Organised Crime Centre (ESOCC)
Ana	López Fontal	SOS Children's Villages International	Global Refugee Coordinator
Sophie	Magennis	UNHCR Brussels	
Sofia	Mahjoub	Child Focus	Policy Analyst
Stefan	Maier	UNHCR	Senior Policy Officer
Karin	Martinsson	Municipality of Kungsbacka (Gothenburg)	Head of Integration
Carlos	Mascarell Vilar	Council of European Municipalities an Regions	Policy Officer
Maryanne	Massa	Government of Malta	Private Secretary of the President of Malta
Marzia	Mauriello	Università Magna Graecia Catanzaro	Adjunct Professor Medical Anthropology

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Laura	Mercieca	President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society (PFWS)	Member of the young persons council
Bernardette	Mercieca	President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society (PFWS)	
Natalia	Mereanu	European Commission - DG Home	Trainee
Karen	Mets	Save the Children	Senior Advocacy Adviser
Elaine	Micallef	The President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society	Consultant
Henrietta	Mizzi	Office of the Commissioner for Children Malta	Teacher
Delphine	Moralis	Terre des Hommes	Secretary General
Sylvain	Mossou	Quaker Council for European Affairs	Human Rights Programme Officer
Kate	Murphy	Translators without Borders	Head of Editor
Marie	Naass	Rescue united	Head of advocacy
Josie	Naughton	Help Refugees	CEO & Co-founder
Caroline	Nève de Mevergnies	Dame d'Honneur de Sa Majesté La Reine Paola	
Rossella	Nicoletti	ICF	Senior Consultant
Erin	O'Brien	European Parliament - ALDE	
Marta	Oliveira	Caritas International	Legal guardian of unaccompanied minors
Malaika	Oringo	The Salvation Army Europe	Policy Assistant
Sofoklis	Panagiotou	The Smile of the Child	Coordinator / Health Department
Queen	Paola	Belgium	
Nikolaas	Pape	Secrétaire de la Maison de Sa Majesté le Roi Albert II	
Vincent	Pardoën	Conseiller privé - Fondé de pouvoir du Roi Albert et de la Reine Paola	
Rupinder	Parhar	The Children's Society	Policy Officer
Rebecca	Petras	Translators without Borders	Deputy Director
Enza Roberta	Petrillo	Save the Children Italy	Anti-Trafficking Project Coordinator
Eva	Pons	IOM	Policy and Programme Analyst
Johan	Ponsaerts	Croix-Rouge de Belgique	Volunteer
Evi	Robert	European Parliament - ALDE	
Chiara	Sambuchi	LAVAFILM GmbH	Journalist and film director
Laurie	Sarrasin	Médecin du Monde	Assistante projets belges
Chiara	Savina	Ecorys	Junior Consultant
Stefan	Schäfers	King Baudouin Foundation	Head of European Affairs

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Janette	Schembri	The President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society	Treasurer
Lea	Scheurer	European Urban Knowledge Network	Programme Manager
Olivier	Schotte	European Parliament - ALDE	
Lea	Sedlmayr	Bavarian Youth Council	Policy Officer
Joakim	Selén	Municipality of Strömsund	Co-manager
Hawar	Shekhany	One World Citizen	Member
Daniel	Sjoberg	European Parliament	
Salvatore	Sofia	Eurocities	Policy Advisor Migration & Integration
Sara	Sommer	EPIM	Senior Programme Manager
Joke	Sonjeau	European Parliament	
Melina	Spathari	Terre des Hommes Greece	Advocacy Manager
Mike	Stannett	The Salvation Army Europe	EU Affairs Europe
Jean-Pierre	Stroobants	Le Monde	EU Correspondent
Nathalie	Suvéé	Missing Children Europe	PA to Secretary General & Administration Officer
Emilie	Tafanel	European Parliament	Policy Advisor - ALDE Group
Päivikki	Tähti	City of Tampere	Social Worker
Jure	Tanko	European Parliament	Advisor to MEP Tanja Fajon
Lucia	Tejero Ruiloba	Fundacion ANAR	Lawyer
Marianne	Todd	Camden local authority Children's services	Project Manager
Federica	Toscano	Missing Children Europe	Head of Programme
Frances	Trevena	Coram Children's Legal Centre, UK	Legal & Policy Manager
Camille	Trinquet	Samilia Foundation	International cooperation trainee
Birgit	Van Hout	OHCHR Regional Office for Europe	Regional Representative for Europe
Niels	Van Paemel	Child Focus	Prevention & Development Manager
Ellen	Van Vooren	Children's Rights Knowledge Centre	Research, Policy and Communication
Nel	Vandevannet	Doctors of the World	Direction Operations Belgian Projects
Menno	Vangemeren	European Parliament - ALDE	
Julie	Vanhoorick	European Parliament - ALDE	
Myria	Vassiliadou	European Commission	EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator
Hilde	Vautmans	European Parliament	MEP
Georgina	Vaz Cabral	OSCE	Advisor

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Wouter	Verheij	Gemeente Rotterdam	Policy Advisor Asylum and Refugee
Thijs	Verheul	Erasmus University of Rotterdam	Student Research Master
Charlotte	Verhofdstadt	European Parliament	Parliamentary Assistant to Hilde Vautmans
Laure	Vierset	Missing Children Europe	Junior Project Officer
Julie	Ward	European Parliament	MEP
Marie	Weissbach	Bridge / Commissioner of the Senate of Integration and Migration	Legal Adviser
Cecilia	Wikström	ALDE	MEP
Omer	Yalcin	UN Human Rights Office	Consultant
Naciye	Yuksel	Volkskrant	Free-lance photographer
Diletta	Zonta	Ecorys	Senior Consultant

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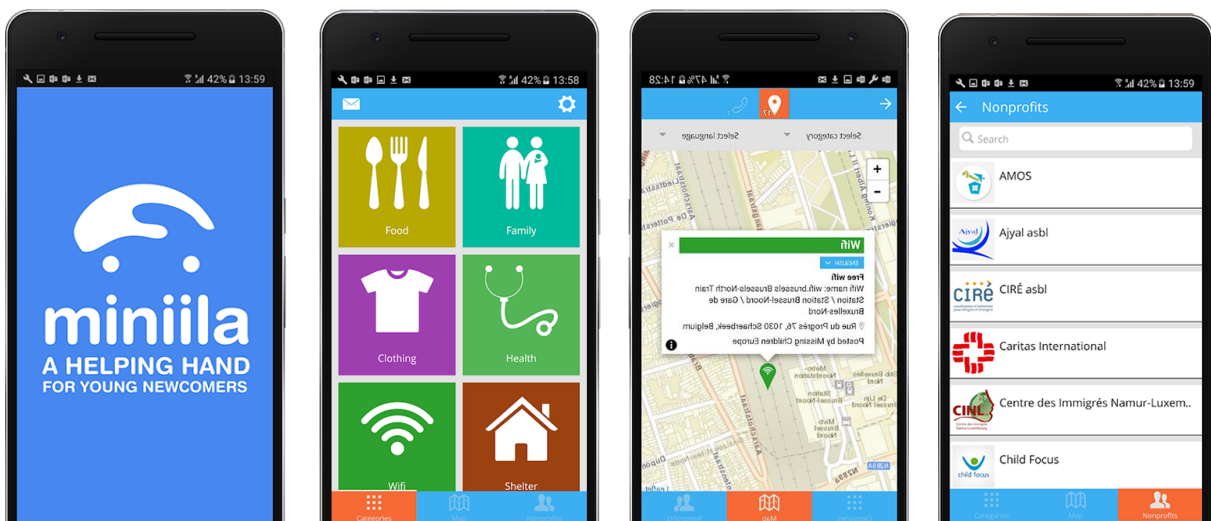
Miniila App: smart technology to help young newcomers find their way to safety

Children have repeatedly stated that they still lack access to food, shelter, medical assistance and other critical information about their rights. Many migrant children have a smartphone to navigate and speak with family back home. Missing Children Europe saw the opportunity of leveraging this crucial bit of technology to give children access to child friendly, up to date and accessible information on their rights and the support services available wherever they are in Europe. The [Miniila app](#), developed in cooperation with children, launched today, will empower children (especially those unaccompanied) to take informed decisions and be better protected, rather than be forced to trust those who profit from their vulnerability.

Miniila is the essential app for young newcomers and is specifically tailored to the needs of children on the move. It focuses on providing clear and child friendly information about dedicated services such as shelter, food, legal assistance, and health services in the area they are in, but also information on the rights of children in the EU and on relevant procedures for international protection and family reunification. The mobile app will be accessible in eight countries in Europe, used by hundreds of aid organisations. The realisation of the app was made possible by software company [trelyz](#) and the [H&M Foundation](#). Other key partners involved are [Save the Children](#) (Radda Barnen, Sweden), [Child Focus](#) (Belgium), [UK Refugee Council](#) (United Kingdom), [Médecins du Monde](#) (Belgium) [Terre des Hommes](#) (Germany), [The Nadja Centre Foundation](#) (Bulgaria), [Ecpat](#) (France), [The Smile of the Child](#) (Greece), [Telefono Azzurro](#) (Italy) and [Translators without Borders](#). More information on [Miniila.com](#)

The app provides child friendly information on the existing support for migrant children, in their own language, wherever they are, making the Miniila app unique.

The realisation of the app was made possible by the financial support of the H&M Foundation and developed by software company trelyz, currently making the app available in 8 countries in Europe.



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Ideas I want to take back home

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People I should reach out to after the conference

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