

Alliance for children on the move: Standard Operating Procedures for Guardians



TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROTOCOL

FOR GUARDIANS of unaccompanied children in cross-border movement

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Table of Contents

1.	BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION	4
2.	PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES of the Protocol	6
3	GUIDING PRINCIPLES	8
4	TRANSNATIONAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION.....	11
5	TRANSNATIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT: THE 8 STEPS MODEL	17
	Step 1 – Arrival, detection and identification.....	17
	Step 2 – Immediate support and care	18
	Step 3 – Assessment of needs	18
	Step 4 – Temporary integration and quality care arrangements in host country.....	18
	Step 5 – Evaluation in country of origin	19
	Step 6 – Determination of a sustainable solution in the child best interest.....	19
	Step 7 – Implementation of the sustainable solution	20
	Step 8 – Monitoring and follow-up	20
6	THE ROLE OF THE GUARDIAN IN TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION.....	21
7.	THE ROLE OF THE GUARDIAN IN CROSS-BORDER TRANSFERS OF UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN.....	23
8	USEFUL CONTACTS:	26
9	LIST OF KEY REFERENCES:.....	31

1. BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

Cross-border cooperation is widely recognized as a precondition to promote and protect the human rights of children in the context of international migration¹, so as to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration with full respect for human rights and avoiding approaches that might aggravate their vulnerability.²

One of the 10 principles for integrated child protection systems that were discussed during the 2015 European Forum on Children's Rights requires that child protection systems should have transnational and cross-border mechanisms in place: "In view of the increasing prevalence of children in cross-border situations in need of child protection measures, efforts are stepped up by: clarifying roles and responsibilities, keeping abreast of country of origin information, ensuring a national focal point for cross-border child protection matters, adopting procedures/guidance/protocols/processes, for example for the transfer of responsibility within the context of asylum procedures (Dublin Regulation), or when considering out of country care placements, or family tracing and protection in cases of child trafficking. However, for children seeking international protection or child victims of trafficking where contact could put the child and/or family at risk, caution should be exercised."³

Effective transnational cooperation (including in the field of migration management) is the prerequisite for a holistic, durable and child rights-based care approach.⁴ The continuity of care and its quality across borders determine the level of protection and wellbeing of unaccompanied children in a situation of transnational migration. Collaboration across borders is vital to ensure that unaccompanied children move safely from one protection system to another, and receive continuous care across borders.⁵

However, a major obstacle to achieving quality and sustainable solutions for children on the move is the lack of transnational collaboration and training on the implementation of international standards.⁶ In Europe, challenges to transnational cooperation refer to:

- under-developed (cross-border) mechanisms that often result in long delays or lack of access to family reunification and transfer procedures;
- Legal and procedural gaps in protecting the child's information when cooperating across borders⁷;

¹ Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto and the 1996 Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Cooperation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children.

² Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

³https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/10_principles_for_integrated_child_protection_systems_en.pdf

⁴ International Social Service (2017): Children on the move, from protection towards a quality sustainable solution.

⁵ International Social Service (2017): Children on the move, from protection towards a quality sustainable solution.

⁶ International Social Service (2017): Children on the move, from protection towards a quality sustainable solution

⁷ Initiative for children in migration (2019): How better cross-border cooperation will prevent trafficking of children in migration

- Excessive lengthiness of cross-border case management and procedures;
- Insufficient training of frontline and other professionals dealing with cross-border case management;
- The diversity of actors involved in the protection of child rights in each country who need to be able to collaborate with migration management stakeholders both at national and transnational level.

Improved cross-border cooperation would be an important development to better respond to the specific needs of unaccompanied children and contribute to the implementation of meaningful and sustainable life projects, while ensuring effective protection.

Weak and ineffective transnational cooperation is a clear dysfunction of the protection system that creates conditions of aggravated vulnerability for unaccompanied children. The existence of heterogeneous and often disconnected national systems with policies and practices that are failing to apply children rights and provisions create fertile ground for unaccompanied children to be subject to situations that put their protection and wellbeing at risk. These include the phenomenon of unaccompanied children disappearing or going missing, which has increased in the last years in Europe⁸, and that is closely linked with risks of child exploitation and trafficking.

Even if the current situation is still very far from developing structured and functioning cross-border cooperation mechanisms and practices throughout Europe, further efforts towards this direction would definitively contribute at safeguarding children and their rights. It would also help at addressing other child migration-related problems such as the disproportion in the numbers of unaccompanied children hosted in the different EU countries. Under the ASOP4G project, it is endeavoured to develop standard operating procedures for guardians to orientate their practice and a transnational cooperation protocol to define some minimum steps of cooperation between guardians or other actors to ensure children's safety and the respect of their rights.

Acknowledging the existing difficulties of national systems in developing and implementing child-centred policies and practices and assuming that guardianship systems should be further improved and strengthened across Europe, this Transnational Cooperation Protocol for Guardians of unaccompanied children recognizes that:

- guardians and representatives for third country nationals or stateless children are a key protective and safeguarding measure;
- the first step towards outing a protective, quality and sustainable solution into practice is to appoint an appropriately trained legal guardian to oversee and lead the sustainable solution process through the establishment of a close relationship with the child;
- in the absence of caregivers, this person must ensure that the best interests of the child are respected when it comes to all measures and decisions related to his/her care plan and protection setting.

Guardians are therefore in a privileged position to oversee the respect for the rights of unaccompanied children in cases of cross-border cooperation and at the same time as focal

⁸ European Parliament, Disappearance of migrant children in Europe < <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EPRS-AaG-599292-Disappearance-migrant-children-in-Europe-FINAL.pdf> >

points of children on the move be the main actors of cooperation to contribute to the continuity of care and its quality.

2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES of the Protocol

This Protocol is addressed primarily to guardians of unaccompanied children in Europe. The protocol is secondarily addressed to the other stakeholders involved in cross-border case management of unaccompanied children including national and international authorities, officers, caseworkers and service providers. This protocol acknowledges the existence of the European Network of Guardianship Institutions⁹ aimed at providing contact between guardianship institutions, guardians and policy makers responsible for guardianship. This protocol is put at the Network's disposal in a spirit of cooperation and encourages its members to assume a primary role in promoting and advocating for effective cross-border cooperation with the substantial involvement of guardians.

Cross-border movement may involve family reunification under the Dublin III Regulation (asylum procedure) or through procedures of embassies (inviting a family member according to the Family Reunification Directive), or irregular movement through illegal channels of travelling. Moreover, cross-border movement may refer to the voluntary return to the country of origin or settlement in a third-country.

The transnational collaboration protocol aims at contributing to the promotion and protection of the human rights of children in the context of international migration by providing guidance and orientations for guardians to ensure the highest possible level of protection of a child in cross-border situations.

This protocol is intended to support and orient guardians' mandate and functions in EU Member States by providing a common framework to operate in cross-border situations involving unaccompanied children under guardianship. It recognizes the heterogeneity and fragmentation of national systems across Europe and therefore proposes minimum essential conceptual and practical indications that each guardian should adapt to the local context where the unaccompanied child resides, having in mind the possible difficulties that may emerge from systemic dysfunctions. This protocol is conceived as a map that could support guardians in getting oriented in extremely complex multilevel systems that do not necessarily recognise the primacy of children rights in policies or practices.

In ensuring the protection and support of unaccompanied children in transnational situations, a coordinated and integrated approach to child case-management among the different agencies and levels must be promoted. The mandates of each agency must be respected, overlapping areas of activities among professionals must be acknowledged, and partnerships must be expanded to more effectively meet the needs of unaccompanied children.

Ideally the guardian should be consulted and informed regarding all actions taken in relation to the child. The guardian should have the authority to be present in all planning and decision-making processes, including immigration and appeal hearings, care arrangements and all efforts to search for a durable solution.¹⁰

⁹ Please find further information at: <https://engi.eu/>

¹⁰ Art. 33 CRC General Comment No. 6

The specific objectives of this protocol are:

- ▶ To provide guardians with relevant information on transnational operations involving unaccompanied children;
- ▶ To provide concerned agencies and stakeholders with useful clarifications on the role of guardians during transnational operations involving unaccompanied children;
- ▶ Suggest minimum standards on the role of the guardian in the framework of transnational cooperation grounded on the CRC and considering the 8 steps model for effective intervention for children on the move¹¹ that could be adapted at the different European countries while setting a common reference in relation to cross-border case management.

¹¹ This model developed by the International Social Service aims to identify, support and re-integrate vulnerable children across borders from a case management perspective and attempts to establish effective transnational systems for their protection. The model is available at:
https://www.ssis.ch/sites/.../Childrenonthemove_Guide_1.pdf

3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The primary reference of this protocol is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This protocol places the child at the centre and considers the implementation of his/her rights as the expected outcome of any action developed with or for him/her. The guardian and its functions should be aimed at translating into practice the logic and the standards that the CRC imposes to all the States that ratified it. Guardians are in a privileged position to allow for greater integration between the different components of the system in favour of the child's holistic recognition.

This protocol is based on the following guiding principles deriving from a child rights-based approach¹²:

- **Non-refoulement and legal obligations** of States in relation to unaccompanied children should be respected. No State should remove any individual, regardless of migration, nationality, asylum or other status, from their jurisdiction when he or she would be at risk of irreparable harm upon return, including persecution, torture, gross violations of human rights or other irreparable harm.¹³ State obligations under the Convention apply to each child within the State's territory and to all children subject to its jurisdiction. Such legal obligations are both negative and positive in nature, requiring States not only to refrain from measures infringing on such children's rights, but also to take measures to ensure the enjoyment of these rights without discrimination.¹⁴

The appointment of a guardian for an unaccompanied child is an essential protective and safeguarding measure. It should be done as expeditiously as possible after the child has been identified as an unaccompanied child. The guardian should be appropriately trained and be impartial and independent from interests that may conflict the child's interests; her or she should be in the position to act as a watchdog of the fulfilment of the rights of the child and determined to contribute to the child's integral protection and wellbeing.

- **No child should be discriminated** for any reason. All children involved in or affected by international migration are entitled to the enjoyment of their rights regardless of the children's or their parents, legal guardians' or family members' situation, characteristics or status.¹⁵ The reason for moving, whether the child is accompanied

¹² UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 6 (2005), Treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, chapter IV.

¹³ Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

¹⁴ CRC General Comment No. 6 (2005) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin.

¹⁵ Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

or unaccompanied, on the move or otherwise settled, documented or undocumented or with any other status should not affect the fulfilment of children's rights.

In fulfilling his/her tasks, the guardian should ensure that the child is treated first and foremost according to his/her age rather than to his/her migration status. By establishing a close relation with the child, the guardian oversees the child's access to equal services and treatment than national children.

- The **Best Interests of the Child** are assessed and taken as a primary consideration in all actions affecting children. This principle constitutes an obligation on both the public and the private spheres, courts of law, administrative authorities and legislative bodies.¹⁶ Unaccompanied children are often placed in situations where other interests or rights tend to prevail or even conflict with what serves the child best.

The guardian is in a privileged position and has the duty to ensure that the best interests of the child are taken fully into consideration in any national or transnational procedure and decision. He or she should act as an independent guarantor of these very best interests.

- All children should be given the possibility to live in an environment that allows the **harmonious and integral development** of their evolving capacities and potentialities. Unaccompanied children may live in conditions that put their physical integrity at stake or that constitute an obstacle for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Children should be supported to move safely from one country to another when it is in their best interests.¹⁷

Guardians should devote special attention to the protection of unaccompanied children and consider the specific vulnerable circumstances and migration-related risks faced by each child. They should verify that the child has a standard of living adequate for his/her development and should support the child in defining a life project in the short and long term and in implementing it with continuity in cooperation with the other actors involved.

- Children are active agents and rights holders, not mere passive recipients of care. They should be granted the possibility to be individually recognized, to express their identity and to actively **participate** in determining their own present and future life situation and perspectives.

¹⁶ Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

¹⁷ States should refrain from applying Dublin transfers towards the first country of arrival and ensure that any system that replaces the current Dublin Regulation strengthens best interest 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 (<http://childreninmigration.eu/Solidarity>)

The guardian should underscore the importance of children’s meaningful participation in all procedures and decisions that affect them. He or she should make sure that the child feels respected and listened to, and that his/her opinions, thoughts and aspirations are given due weight by the different concerned actors. The guardian should support the child in expressing him/herself and in understanding the world that surrounds him/her. In doing this, the guardian should adhere to the necessary trans-cultural perspective that has to be assumed to qualify every functional relationship between persons with different origin and background.

- All the measures and actors working with and for an unaccompanied child should cooperate with the aim of contributing to determine and/or implement a **quality durable solution** that addresses all his/her protection needs, takes into account the child’s views and, wherever possible, leads to overcoming the situation of a child being unaccompanied or separated. The process of implementing a sustainable solution requires continuity of care in a safe and enabling environment.

The establishment of stable social relations and individual development opportunities is central and gives migrant and refugee children prospects for the future.¹⁸ The presence of a qualified guardian is key to enable this process and support the child throughout it.

- **Personal data of children in the context of migration should be protected and properly used** for safeguarding purposes. Personal data of children handled by child protection and other related services should not serve interests or priorities deriving from immigration enforcement or border policies.

When appointed, the guardian has a fundamental role in ensuring that confidentiality provisions are respected. Special attention should be paid in monitoring that migration or asylum procedures do not constrain the rights of the child.

- **Due process guarantees and access to justice** are a prerequisite for the protection and promotion of all other rights and as such it is of paramount importance that every child in the context of international migration – with the support of competent adults – is empowered to claim his/her rights.¹⁹ Procedural safeguards are not always respected in the framework of judicial or administrative proceedings concerning children and this undermines children’s trust over the system itself.

The guardian can have a key role in verifying that procedural guarantees are in place and, when needed, he or she should act to claim for their application or improvement, if necessary with the support of a legal assistant.

¹⁸ International Social Service (2017): Children on the move, from protection towards a quality sustainable solution

¹⁹ Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

4 TRANSNATIONAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

Transnational cooperation must be sought in the context of international migration in order to facilitate family reunification, implement best interests assessment and determination, and guarantee children's right to be heard and due process safeguards. Bilateral, regional and international initiatives should ensure the protection of children and their rights in case of children's cross-border movement.²⁰

Such initiatives and practices could further guarantee a continuity in the management of children's cases. In particular, cooperation between States implies transnational case management that requires cooperation among all relevant actors involved in the country or countries concerned to ensure a transnational case handover. These actors primarily include child protection services, judicial authorities, consular authorities, border guards, police, and other entities and actors such as guardians in the case of unaccompanied children.

There are different normative references when it comes to transnational cooperation in Europe. For our ultimate target group, unaccompanied children, who may be asylum applicants, or holders of refugee status or subsidiary protection and thus have a legal residence permit in an EU country, or may have another migration status, the main ones may be:

- Dublin III Regulation²¹;
- Brussels IIa Regulation²²;
- 1996 Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Cooperation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children;
- Vienna Convention on consular relations of 1963.

Particularly with regard to the Brussels IIa Regulation, in Article 20 allows an EU Member State to take provisional, including protective, measures in respect of a person, even if the jurisdiction on the substance of the matter lies with another EU Member State. In this way, EU Member States are allowed to take first emergency measures to protect a child. The Brussels IIa Regulation dedicates a chapter to cooperation between EU Member States. Article 53 establishes that each Member State should designate one or more Central Authorities to assist in the application of the Regulation. For Central Authorities to be able to perform their duties, they will need to liaise closely with different organisations at Member State level, such as child protection services, judicial authorities, police, prosecutors and service providers.

²⁰ Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

²¹ Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast). See this factsheet on unaccompanied children and the Dublin III Regulation elaborated by ENGI to deepen knowledge: <https://engi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Unaccompanied-Children-and-the-Dublin-III-Regulation.pdf>.

²² Regulation (EC) No 2201/2003 - jurisdiction, recognition and enforcement of matrimonial and parental judgments.

This section presents the most common cross-border situations in which unaccompanied children may be involved and, therefore, where guardians are likely to have a role and may need to cooperate with guardians or other actors in other countries:

4.1 Family tracing

Following a rights-based approach, the search for a durable solution commences with analysing the possibility of family reunification. Tracing is an essential component of any search for a durable solution and should be prioritized except where the act of tracing, or the way in which tracing is conducted, would be contrary to the best interests of the child or jeopardize fundamental rights of those being traced.²³ Family tracing is a process that allows to assess the child's family situation and it is a first step to re-establish contacts between the child and the family of origin.

Family tracing can be initiated upon the request of the child or upon the initiative of the authorities. It should be done with the informed consent of the child and the child's views about family tracing should be heard prior to initiating the process. Family tracing can take place in the child's country of origin or another country to where the family has migrated, within the European Union or in third countries, according to the family situation and their history of migration or displacement. Caseworkers and officers can request the assistance of international organisations for family tracing, for instance the national branch of the International Social Service or the Red Cross. In the case of unaccompanied children from third countries who are seeking asylum in a Member State of the European Union, the EU Reception Conditions Directive offers guidance for family tracing within the country where the child's asylum application is being processed or in third country. In both cases, family tracing shall start as soon as possible after an application for international protection is made, whilst protecting the best interests' of the child. In cases where there may be a threat to the life or integrity of the child or her or his close relatives, family tracing must be undertaken on a confidential basis, in order to avoid jeopardising the safety of the child or the family members.²⁴

Tracing members of the family may include parents, brothers and sisters, or other family members. After the family is identified and located, a social evaluation must be conducted that assesses the situation of the child in relation to his/her family and determines the conditions under which the re-integration of the child within his/her family should be organised – if this is indeed in the child's best interests.²⁵

²³ CRC General Comment No. 6 (2005) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin.

²⁴ The Council of Baltic Sea States Secretariat (2015): Transnational Child Protection: Practical guide for caseworkers and case officers.

²⁵ International Social Service (2017): Children on the move, from protection towards a quality sustainable solution

4.2 Family reunification

- a) Under the Dublin III Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013)

The Dublin III Regulation is an agreement among EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland that regulates, about which country is responsible for examining a person's asylum application. The first Member State in which the application for international protection was lodged shall be responsible for examining it, except if particular criteria set in the regulation are met and then another Member state may be responsible. In the case of unaccompanied children, the consideration of their best interests prevails and therefore – unlike any other asylum seeker – in the absence of a family member, sibling or relative, the Member State responsible shall be the one where the child has lodged his or her application even if he or she had already applied in another Member State.

When a family member or relative of an unaccompanied child is present in a Member State, the Dublin III Regulation recognises that the priority for the child is to be placed with them, provided it is in his or her best interests. The Member State responsible for the child's application shall thus be that where a family member (primarily parent or sibling, but also uncle, aunt, grandmother, grandfather) of the unaccompanied minor is legally present. However, before a decision about transfer is taken, evidence of the presence of family members, relatives or other family relations of the applicant child on the territory of another Member State shall be produced. An individual examination ascertaining that the relative can take care of him or her should also be conducted, after which the responsible Member State shall unite the minor with his or her relative.

- b) Under the Family Reunification Directive (Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification)

Is the procedure which allows family members of a third-country national residing lawfully in a certain EU Member State to enter and reside in that country. Its primary aim is to preserve the family unit, which in turn facilitates the integration of third-country nationals in the Member States and promotes economic and social cohesion. Family reunification procedures are regulated, at the EU level, by the Directive on the right to family reunification.

Family reunification is an important part of the durable solution for an unaccompanied child, wherever this is in the best interests of the child. When the child's relations with his or her parents and/or siblings are interrupted by migration, preservation of the family unit should be taken into account when assessing the best interests of the child in decisions on family reunification.²⁶ Family reunification could take place in the country of destination or origin, or in a third country. In the case of unaccompanied children, if he or she has family in the country of destination, the country of origin or a third country, child protection and welfare authorities in countries of transit or destination should contact family members as soon as possible.²⁷

²⁶ Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

²⁷ The Council of Baltic Sea States Secretariat (2015): Transnational Child Protection: Practical guide for caseworkers and case officers.

The decision as to whether a child should be reunited with his or her family in the country of origin, transit and/or destination should be based on a robust assessment in which the child's best interests are upheld as a primary dimension and family reunification is taken into consideration, and which includes a sustainable reintegration plan where the child is guaranteed to participate in the process. Family reunification in the country of origin should not be pursued where there is a "reasonable risk" that such return would lead to the violation of the human rights of the child.²⁸ Such risk is indisputably documented in the granting of refugee status or in a decision of the competent authorities on the applicability of non-refoulement obligations. Accordingly, the granting of refugee status constitutes a legally binding obstacle to return to the country of origin and, consequently, to family reunification therein.²⁹ Caseworkers and officers – and also guardians - should inform unaccompanied children about the possibilities and procedures for family reunification. It is important that the child has access to support when applying for family reunification.³⁰

4.3 Voluntary return

Return to the country of origin is not an option if it would lead to a "reasonable risk" that such return would result in the violation of fundamental human rights of the child, and in particular, if the principle of non-refoulement applies. Return to the country of origin shall in principle only be arranged if such return is in the best interests of the child. Such a determination shall, inter alia, take into account³¹:

- The safety, security and other conditions, including socio-economic conditions, awaiting the child upon return, including through study on the conditions of the child's family, home, district, region, country, where appropriate, conducted by competent professionals usually members of a network of international organizations;
- The availability of care arrangements for that particular child;
- The views of the child expressed in exercise of his or her right to do so under article 12 CRC and those of the caretakers;
- The child's level of integration in the host country and the duration of absence from the home country;
- The child's right "to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations" (art. 8 CRC);
- The "desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background" (art. 20 CRC).

²⁸ Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

²⁹ CRC General Comment No. 6 (2005) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin.

³⁰ The Council of Baltic Sea States Secretariat (2015): Transnational Child Protection: Practical guide for caseworkers and case officers.

³¹ See Returns Directive: Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals. In particular article 10.

In all cases return measures must be conducted in a safe, child-appropriate and gender-sensitive manner.³² When arranging a return, every effort should be made to include the child in any return schemes available, such as those run by the International Organization for Migration or other organisations. The IOM supports the return of children and could possibly also support the family with income-generating projects.³³ In any case, pre and post return phases should be considered when arranging a return plan.³⁴

In the absence of the availability of care provided by parents or members of the extended family, return to the country of origin should, in principle, not take place without advanced secure and concrete arrangements of care and custodial responsibilities upon return to the country of origin. A guardian can play an important role in return procedures. Caseworkers and officers need to ensure continuity of guardianship during return, enable the cooperation between guardians in countries of destination and return and the hand-over of guardianship responsibilities across borders.³⁵

4.4 Resettlement in a third country

Resettlement to a third country may offer a durable solution for an accompanied or separated child who cannot return to the country of origin and for whom no durable solution can be envisaged in the host country. The decision to resettle an unaccompanied or separated child must be based on an updated, comprehensive and thorough best-interests assessment, taking into account, in particular, ongoing international and other protection needs. Resettlement is particularly called for if such is the only means to effectively and sustainably protect a child against refoulement or against persecution or other serious human rights violations in the country of stay. Resettlement is also in the best interests of the unaccompanied or separated child if it serves family reunification in the resettlement country.³⁶

4.5 Children going missing

A significant number of unaccompanied children arriving to Europe go missing from asylum centres or shelters. Europol estimated that in 2015 at least 10,000 children have gone missing from shelters or reception centres³⁷, but national reports suggest that this number could be much higher. Sometimes children leave centres because they become discouraged by the length and complexity of asylum or family reunification procedures, or fear being sent home or to the country where they first arrived. Sometimes they feel compelled to leave because the conditions offered are inappropriate, and they hope to find a happier and safer housing elsewhere. In many case they are forced to leave because they are victims or

³² CRC General Comment No. 6 (2005) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin.

³³ FRA Agency (2019): Children deprived of parental care found in an EU Member State other than their own.

³⁴ For more information see: The Council of Baltic Sea States Secretariat (2015) and International Social Service (2017)

³⁵ The Council of Baltic Sea States Secretariat (2015): Transnational Child Protection: Practical guide for caseworkers and case officers. Available at:

http://www.childrenatrisk.eu/public/PROTECT/Guide_for_case_workers_and_officers.pdf

³⁶ CRC General Comment No. 6 (2005) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin.

³⁷ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/EPRS-AaG-599292-Disappearance-migrant-children-in-Europe-FINAL.pdf>

become victims of trafficking, including labour and sexual exploitation, forced begging and drug smuggling.³⁸

The Schengen Information System (SIS) Regulation (EU) 2018/1862, provides a tool to identify missing children and to prevent those who are at risk of abduction by a parent, family member or guardian from travelling further.³⁹

The role of guardians in the context of transnational child protection⁴⁰

Unaccompanied or separated minors are appointed guardians who represent and promote the best interests of the child and support the child when in contact with the authorities and service providers. Ideally caseworkers, officers and service providers involve the guardian in the care planning and decision making processes, in hearings concerning immigration matters and appeal, and all other matters relevant to the child's case. In order to enable effective communication with the child, guardians may need access to quality interpretation. The guardian or representative does not usually give legal advice. Children who are involved in administrative or judicial proceedings, including asylum proceedings, are provided with a lawyer and legal assistance separately. When a child is moved from one accommodation facility to another, i.e. shelter, reception centre or foster family, continuity of guardianship ensures stability for the child. When a child is returned to a country of origin or third country, caseworkers and officers should ensure continuity of guardianship to enable the cooperation between guardians in countries of destination and return and the hand-over of guardianship responsibilities across borders.

³⁸ <http://missingchildreurope.eu/Missingchildreninmigration>. See also about SUMMIT project: <http://missingchildreurope.eu/summit> (Safeguarding Unaccompanied Migrant Minors from going Missing by Identifying Best Practices and Training Actors on Interagency Cooperation) and Following their Footsteps project's report: http://www.faros.org.gr/other-files/UASC_ABSCONDING_REPORT_ENG.PDF

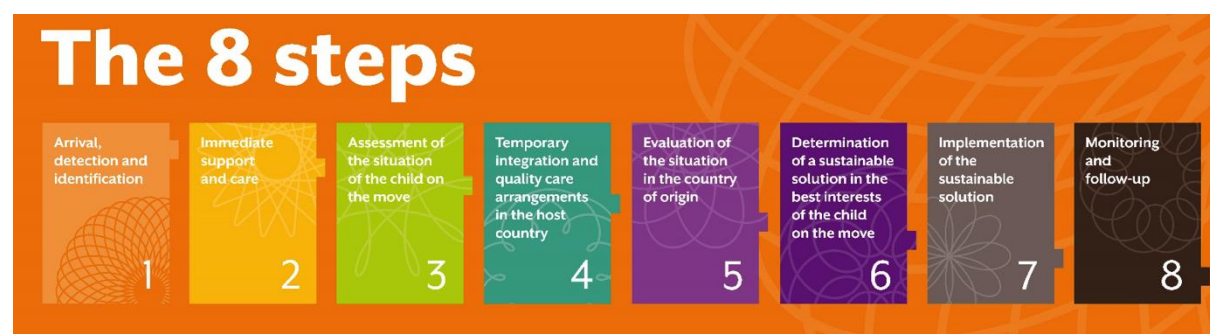
³⁹ FRA Agency (2019): Children deprived of parental care found in an EU Member State other than their own.

⁴⁰ The Council of Baltic Sea States Secretariat (2015): Transnational Child Protection: Practical guide for caseworkers and case officers. Available at: http://www.childrenatrisk.eu/public/PROTECT/Guide_for_case_workers_and_officers.pdf

5 TRANSNATIONAL CASE MANAGEMENT: THE 8 STEPS MODEL

In the absence of caregivers, one of the first measures towards determining a quality, sustainable solution with the child and putting it into practice is to appoint a guardian and/or care professional to oversee and lead such process. The implementation of the sustainable solution may require cross-border movements in case, for example, of family reunification or re-settlement in another country. The guardian may also be involved in transnational operations if the child has gone missing towards another country. In all those cases, transnational cooperation has to be sought in order to ensure continuity of care and a minimum standard of protection. However, in light of the heterogeneity of national systems across Europe and considering the lack of structured and consolidated transnational cooperation channels, the guardian may face difficulties in cooperating with stakeholders in other countries or may find him/herself a bit lost or disoriented. One of the most recent attempts to improve transnational care of children on the move involves the International Social Service that in 2017 developed a model of transnational case management to favour cross-border cooperation divided into 8 steps.⁴¹ Based on a case-management approach, this model establishes the foundations for effective intervention and re-integration for children on the move, putting the child at the centre and applicable also to children who become young adults. Based on the analysis of practices in different countries, this model depicts a sequence of measures and actions that correspond to a common case-management logic used by child protection professionals that applies to a greater or lesser extent to different countries and regions. Guardians may refer to this model as a framework of reference to interact with and hand over a case to guardians or professionals in other countries.

The eight-step model:



Step 1 – Arrival, detection and identification

Definition: The process of detecting and identifying unaccompanied children and any vulnerabilities that have to be addressed, such as establishing identity and responding to immediate protection and care needs.

Objectives: Wherever an unaccompanied child is discovered, information on their identity and situation is collected to establish specific vulnerabilities. If a child exhibits indicators of risk factors, actors can decide if it is in the child's best interests to be referred to a

⁴¹ International Social Service (2017) Children on the move: From protection towards a quality sustainable solution – A practical guide.

competent protection service (ie, shelter centre). The aim is to remove the child from the risky environment immediately. Registration with a competent service can meet his/her basic needs and provide a safe space where protection professionals can provide emergency care (see Step 2).

Methods: Identifying the child as a child on the move (COM; i.e passively through arrival at the border or actively through identifying COM at places where vulnerable children are likely to be); Ensure age assessments are carried out using common child centered standards; Ensure that appropriate measures of protection are put in place, that the child is interacted with in empathetic and child friendly manner and that individual risks are identified; Supporting the child through legal and administrative procedures, and ensuring registration.

Step 2 – Immediate support and care

Definition: Meeting a child’s immediate physical and psychological needs to stabilize situation / secure basic human rights.

Objectives: Availability of an emergency care framework to respond to COM’s immediate needs; Appointment of independent guardian; provision of legal advice / assurance of rights; ensure continuity in meeting the child’s well-being and overall care needs.

Method: Ensure Access to medical care, psychosocial services, and any other relevant specialised services; assess any trafficking risk associated with any adult travelling with the child; appoint a legal guardian or person of confidence; commence family tracing; connect child with any other relevant actors.

Step 3 – Assessment of needs

Definition: Gather all information necessary ⁴² to: determine the appropriate method of temporary care and support; identify the situation in the country of origin; and formulate a quality sustainable solution.

Objectives: Listen to the voice of the child; Expeditiously assess the child’s vulnerabilities, resources and the circumstances of separation from family (if separated); Consider legal and psychosocial needs; Work towards an individualised support plan.

Method: Carry out a Best Interests Assessment, through: communicating with the child in a language he or she understands; use of a multi-disciplinary team; consider both the child’s individual situation and broader family and social situation; provide support to the child; develop an individual support plan.

Step 4 – Temporary integration and quality care arrangements in host country

Definition: Implement the individual support plan to assure quality care for the child and promote their personal development

Objectives: Adequate care arrangements should be put in place in accordance with what is outlined in the individual support plan. The COM must have appropriate accommodation, access to health services, education and training – in accordance with his or her needs.

⁴² Un Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, para 147

Efforts should be made to socially integrate the child, and at the same time professionals should work to define a sustainable solution. It needs to be recognised that the process of finding a sustainable solution for the child that is in their best interests may take several months or more. There must be investment in ensuring temporary integration, and support / development of the child's personal skills and resources to strengthen his or her resilience, and promotion of his or her future personal, social and educational development. This is a dynamic process that must be adapted to the needs of the individual child.

Methods: Access to essential services (Health services; School and educational services; Appropriate residential care / accommodation; Migration / asylum authorities and procedures; Child protection services; Community Services; Police and judicial authorities; Victim support Service; Legal services); Provision of small and family based accommodation; Review and monitoring of placements; Consideration of the child's future needs; Identification of a person of reference.

Step 5 – Evaluation in country of origin

Definition: Locate the child's family / evaluating family and community circumstances to determine if conditions are suitable for successful family re-unification in country of origin.

Objectives: Evaluating the situation in the country of origin to understand risks and opportunities related to any reunification, and inform decisions around maintaining family ties; Gather objective information about COM's family, extended family and/or former caregivers into a social evaluation report; Assess the family / caregivers ability to meet the child's needs and fulfil their rights; Allow assessment to form the basis of any decision on reunification and provide information on any necessary future support.

Methods: Assessment of risks and social / familial conditions in the child's country of origin by State authorities; Gathering of practical information; Steps to ensure the maintenance of links.

Step 6 – Determination of a sustainable solution in the child best interest

Definition: Determine the practical and sustainable solution that is in the COM's best interest – in the country of origin, the host country or a third country.

Objectives: Analyse all previously gathered information by a multidisciplinary panel (with the participation of the child – either directly or through the representation of a legal guardian or caseworker); Consider all elements of the child's situation in the host country, and the situation of the family in the country of origin; Develop an individually tailored sustainable solution which meets the best interests of the child can be determined.

Methods: Ensure that a child or young person is protected and can have a healthy development by: i) Meeting their Physical and Practical Needs; ii) Ensure proper social structures are in place; and iii) Considering the family context; Determine the geographical option for the child (re-integration in the country of origin; integration in the host country; or integration in a third country); Centralise information with one key person for the child

(legal guardian / person of reference); Protect the interests and rights of ‘aged out children’.

Step 7 – Implementation of the sustainable solution

Definition: Develop action plan for implementing the sustainable solution – with the participation of the child.

Objectives: After determination of a sustainable solution, a long-term action plan is necessary to set the child on an appropriate life course, and support development into adulthood. The action plan (or ‘arrangement plan’) defines the roles and responsibilities of each actor in the host country, country of origin or third country. The action plan will cover education, training and employability, highlight where co-operation and coordination between actors is needed, and if support is needed for the child’s family and the community.

Methods: Collaboration between all relevant actors in the country/countries concerned; Developing a clear arrangement plan that coordinates the various stages of any return or reintegration; Support for a full integration into the host country.

Step 8 – Monitoring and follow-up

Definition: Mentoring and support (in agreement with the child) following the implementation of the sustainable solution ensures continuity of development, wellbeing and the adequacy of the life project.

Objectives: Based on the individual plan, professionals (in cooperation with any relevant civil society actors) must provide the necessary support to the child and his or her family, and take into account any new risk factors that may arise and require the plan to be modified. The ultimate objective of the follow-up is to ensure that adequate resources are dedicated to the child – at all times.

Methods: Ensuring a support network of State actors and civil society are in place; Regularise relation with family members and other important persons; Provide individualised monitoring in the country of integration / or host country if reintegrated.

6 THE ROLE OF THE GUARDIAN IN TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

The guardian should, inter-alia, take into account the following considerations when performing his or her mandate in cross-border situations:

- The guardian interprets his or her role as the person of reference for the child. He or she establishes a relationship with the child based on mutual trust, comprehension and independence.
- The guardian should appropriately inform, support and accompany the child before, during and after transnational cooperation operations.
- The guardian should represent the child and complement his/her legal capacity when necessary, ensuring that all actions are undertaken in the child's best interests.
- The appointed guardian should be informed and consulted regarding all actions taken in relation to the child. Depending on the individual circumstances of the case, the guardian may also be actively engaged in obtaining relevant information from the child.
- The guardian contributes to ensure that the child participates meaningfully during cross-border procedures.
- The guardian acts as a bridge between the child and all the other actors involved in actions and decisions that concern the child. He or she cooperates with the concerned stakeholders to achieve a durable solution in the best interests of the child. If needed, he or she opposes to any decision going against the child's best interests and other rights.⁴³

When performing his or her tasks, and in particular when contributing to decision-making processes involving the child, the guardian should refer to a holistic understanding of the person, taking into account his or her needs, rights and specific characteristics as interrelated components of a comprehensive subject. In this way, the guardian may represent an opportunity to have more integrated interventions that put the child at the centre in front of extremely fragmented systems that tend to dissect the child's needs according to the organization of policies, services and resources.

Guardians are in a privileged position to qualify the centrality of the child in case-management. The following rights-based dimensions directly derived from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are the minimum elements related with the child's situation that the guardian should refer to for a holistic consideration of the child when orienting and planning decisions, actions and interventions that concern him or her⁴⁴:

⁴³ Please see the 10 core standards on guardianship in the framework of "Closing a protection gap" project. Available at: www.corestandardsforguardians.eu

⁴⁴ Reference to UN CRC General Comment N°6 2005



The consideration of these six dimensions needs to be understood as a dynamic and continuous exercise where the various components are constantly changing as it does the child's life. This approach will allow the guardian to understand the comprehensive situation of the child and inform case-management, decision-making and other procedures accordingly.







7. THE ROLE OF THE GUARDIAN IN CROSS-BORDER TRANSFERS OF UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN



Transnational cooperation may imply cross-border movement of the child. This means that the child will move to another country, where he/she will settle in a new environment. Such measure should respond to the child's best interests and should be part of the child's sustainable solution, unless it responds to a situation in which the child has gone missing and reached another country by his or her own.

The following considerations refer to the role of the guardian in respect of cross-border transfers involving unaccompanied children. In particular, they contain a series of orientations to be taken into account by the guardian of the child in the country of departure. They can, however, be taken as a reference for other professionals and holders of the parental responsibility in the country of destination. They are divided into three phases:

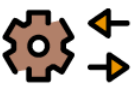








1. Assessing and planning cross-border movement
2. Transfer arrangements
3. Follow up after transfer

These considerations must, of course, be adapted to each case and type of procedure.





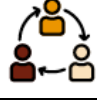
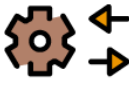

ASSESSING AND PLANNING CROSS-BORDER MOVEMENT	
	Verify that the transnational movement responds to the child's best interests and that the child has been actively involved in the decision. Make sure that an assessment in the country of destination has been done in order to ensure appropriate living conditions, protection and services. In case of family reunification, the capacity of the family or relative to take care of the child should be assessed. Oppose to the decision if it is not in the child's best interests.
	Prepare emotionally the child for the transition; try to understand if he or she is OK with the transfer and if there is something he or she would like to talk about.
	Inform the child about the upcoming steps and new situation. Get informed about the new context (weather, food, habits, culture) and try to share this information with the child. Ask the child if he or she has any question.
	Accompany and assist the child during any procedure prior to the transfer. Get informed about all the documentation that will be required and check if the child is in possession of it. If not, make sure that the child will have all the required documentation on time.
	Prepare a child's folder containing all the relevant information about the child and his/her story and integration path, to hand it over to the person responsible in the new country, with respect for the child's privacy and the rules of confidentiality.
	Develop contact with relatives or professionals in the country of destination and cooperate with them to ensure adequate case transfer and management.

	<p>Try to identify one actor that can act as the national focal point in the new country. This person should become your main interlocutor; all communications and information should pass through this focal point.</p>
	<p>Tell the child that you will no longer be the legal guardian and that someone in the new country (depending on the case) will most probably assume this role. Tell the child if you are available to keep in touch. Try to do together a balance of the experience shared, as a possible way to close a phase of your relationship.</p>

TRANSFER ARRANGEMENTS

	<p>Make sure there is a travel arrangement plan and play a part in its development. Attention should be paid to the communication between authorities of both countries. They should agree on the necessary measures to be taken for the child's safe travel and initial reception in the destination country (transfer of necessary legal documents: passport, laissez passer, medication of any or medical record if needed).</p>
	<p>Provide concrete indications to the child on how the transfer will take place. Ensure that the child has with him some written documentation that explains his/her situation in both the language of the country of departure and the one of the country of destination. Any special need – such as medication requirements – must be included in this document. If possible, read it with the child before departure.</p>
	<p>Ask the child if he/she has some worries, concerns, doubts or feelings that he/she wants to share with you in relation –or not – to the transfer.</p>
	<p>If the child does not speak the language of the country of destination, ask the authorities there to ensure the presence of an interpreter who speaks the child's language upon arrival.</p>
	<p>As the child's guardian, you may be the primary contact person for the child during the transfer. Tell him or her that he/she can call you whenever necessary. Ideally, give a card to the child with your contact details written, her or she may show it to authorities or other persons in case of need.</p>
	<p>Identify a solution to ensure that the child is accompanied by an appropriate adult during the transfer if necessary for his/her protection.</p>
	<p>Verify with the child that he/she brings with him/her all the documentation needed to travel and make sure the child is in possession of or has access to minimum economic means in case of an emergency.</p>
	<p>Accompany the child to the point of departure (station, airport or any other location) or make sure that someone trusted does so. Get informed about who will be waiting for the child at destination and try to get in touch with this person in advance and once the child is on travel.</p>
	<p>Take time to say goodbye to the child. Leaving is always an important moment that deserves proper attention, space and reflection.</p>

FOLLOW-UP AFTER TRANSFER

	Ask the child to confirm you that her or she is safe and where.
	Remind the child that he/she can contact you from the country of destination in case of need or if desired.
	Inform the child about the next steps that will be taken in the new context and make sure that he/she understands the new situation. Seek information from the child to verify his/her conditions remotely.
	Make sure that the child can refer to someone trusted in case of need or if he wants to express something.
	Ensure a correct handing over of the case with the professionals in the country of destination. Try to establish direct contact with the new guardian or holder of the parental responsibility.
	At the beginning, try to follow-up the case remotely. Communicate to the focal point in the country of destination and to any other relevant professional your availability to cooperate for a smooth transition of the child's case. This may assume greater importance in cases involving children in situations of particular vulnerability.
	Is doubts about the appropriateness of the child's conditions in the new situation arise, contact the focal point or any other competent child protection authority or agency to report your concerns. If possible, ask for an official assessment of the situation.

8 USEFUL CONTACTS:

The following list of useful contacts include organisations that could provide support to guardians and other actors in transnational cases involving unaccompanied children:

- **European Asylum Support Office:** The European Union is working towards a Common European Asylum System. EASO supports its implementation by applying a bottom-up approach. The aim is to ensure that individual asylum cases are dealt with in a coherent way by all Member States.
Website: <https://easo.europa.eu/>
E-mail: info@easo.europa.eu
Tel: +356 22487500
- **International Organization for Migration:** established in 1951, *IOM* is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.
Website: <https://www.iom.int/>
E-mail: hq@iom.int
Tel: +41.22.717.9111
- **International Social Service:** international NGO founded in 1924; today a network of national entities and a General Secretariat that assist children and families confronted with complex social problems as a result of migration.
Website: <https://www.iss-ssi.org/index.php/en/>
E-mail: info@iss-ssi.org
Tel: (+41 22) 906 77 00
- **Missing Children Europe:** European organisation that supports the development of effective cross-border solutions, awareness raising campaigns, cooperation channels and supportive legislation to tackle the most pressing and ever-evolving issues that led to child disappearance. Missing Children Europe manages a hotline for missing children: 116 000.
Website: <http://missingchildreneurope.eu/>
E-mail: info@missingchildreneurope.eu
Tel: +32 2 894 74 84
- **The Hague Conference on Private International Law:** With 83 Members (82 States and the European Union) representing all continents, the Hague Conference on Private International Law is a global inter-governmental organisation. A melting pot of different legal traditions, it develops and services multilateral legal instruments, which respond to global needs. Central authorities acting as the national references can be consulted here: <https://www.hcch.net/en/states/authorities>
Website: <https://www.hcch.net/en/home>
Address: Churchillplein 6b, 2517 JW THE HAGUE, The Netherlands
Fax: +31 (0)70 360 4867

USEFUL CONTACTS IN THE PARTNERS' COUNTRIES

Guardianship authorities: institutions in charge of implementing guardianship responsibilities. They can be central institutions responsible for the whole country or a regional or local institutions.

In Cyprus

Social Welfare Services - Central Offices

PO Box 40184

Address: 63, Prodromou

1468 Lefkosia,

Cyprus

Telephone: +357 22406709

Fax: +357 22667907

Email: central.sws@sws.mlsi.gov.cy

In Greece

National Center for Social Solidarity ("EKKA")

Directorate for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors

Department of Coordination, Assistance and Assessment of professional guardians of unaccompanied minors

In Italy

Based on law 47/2017, there are two type of authorities responsible for the management of guardianship for unaccompanied children. On the one side the regional ombudsman offices⁴⁵ are responsible for the training of guardians. They create a list of suitable guardians that is sent to the Juvenile Court⁴⁶, which is the second authority involved. It is responsible for the appointment of the guardian and supervises his or her performance. The overall monitoring of the guardianship system for unaccompanied children is in charge of the [National Authority for Childhood and Adolescence](#).

In Lithuania

State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour

Adress: Labdariai str. 8

LT-03221, Vilnius

Lithuania

Telephone: +370 5 231 0928

Fax: +370 5 231 0927

Email: info@vaikoteises.lt

Refugees Reception Center

Adress: Karaliaus Mindaugo 18, Rukla,

⁴⁵ Contact details of regional ombudsmen are available here: <https://www.garanteinfanzia.org/rete-dei-garanti>

⁴⁶ Contact details of the Italian juvenile courts can be found here: <http://www.tribmin.milano.giustizia.it/it/Content/Index/28721>

LT-55283, Jonava district
Lithuania
Telephone: +370 349 73377
Fax: +370 349 73377
Email: centras@rppc.lt , www.rppc.lt

Dublin Units (central offices)

In Cyprus

Ministry of Interior
Asylum Service
70 Arch. Makarios III Avenue, Afemia House, 1077 Lefkosa
Tel.: 22445265, Fax: 224302310
Email: info@asylum.moi.gov.cy

In Greece

Ministry for Citizen's Protection
Asylum Service – Dublin Unit
2, Kanellopoulou Avenue
Tel: (0030) 2106988500 (central line)
Email: dublingr@asylo.gov.gr
Website: <http://asylo.gov.gr/en/>

In Italy

Unità Dublino within the Direzione Centrale dei Servizi Civili
Dipartimento per le Libertà Civili e l'Immigrazione del Ministero dell'Interno
Piazza del Viminale, 1 - 00184 Roma (RM)
Mail: dlci.feriii@interno.it
Tel: (+39) 0646536968
Fax: 0646549273

In Lithuania

Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania
Adress: L. Sapiegos g. 1
LT- 10312 Vilnius
Lithuania
Telephone: +370 5 271 7112
Email: info@migracija.gov.lt

Brussels IIa Regulation – central authorities

In Cyprus

Ministry of Interior
Asylum Service
70 Arch. Makarios III Avenue, Afemia House, 1077 Lefkosa
Tel.: 22445265, Fax: 224302310

Email: info@asylum.moi.gov.cy

In Greece

Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights
General Directorate for the Administration of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights
Directorate of Legislative coordination, international legal affairs and international judicial cooperation
Department of International Judicial Cooperation in civil and criminal matters
96, Mesogeion Avenue
Athens 11527
Tel: (0030) 2131307000 (central line)
Tel & fax: (0030) 2131307312

In Italy:

Dipartimento per la Giustizia Minorile e di Comunità
Via Damiano Chiesa, 24 - 00136 Roma
Mail: autoritacentrali.dgmc@giustizia.it
PEC: autoritacentrali.dgmc@giustiziacert.it
Tel. (+39) 06 6818.8535
Website: https://www.giustizia.it/giustizia/it/mg_12_4_4_4.wp

In Lithuania

Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania
Adress: Gedimino ave. 30
LT-01104, Vilnius
Lithuania
Telephone: +370 5 266 29 81
Fax: +370 5 262 59 40
Email: rastine@tm.lt

Ministry of Social Security and Labour
Adress: A. Vivulskio st. 11
LT-03610 Vilnius
Lithuania
Telephone: +370 5 266 42 01
Fax: +370 5 266 42 09
Email: post@socmin.lt

International Social Service (ISS) national local points

In Cyprus

Non-existent

In Greece

International Social Service – Greek Department
24 Derigny Street, 2nd floor
Athens 10434
[visiting hours: Mon-Fri 09:00-19:00]
Tel: (0030) 210 3636191/ (0030) 210 3617710

Fax: (0030) 210 3612433

Email: issgr@otenet.gr

Website: <https://iss-greece.gr/en/>

In Italy:

Defence for Children International Italy

Piazza della Meridiana 2/27

16124 Genova, Italy

Mail: info@defenceforchildren.it

Tel: (+39) 010 0899051

Website: www.defenceforchildren.it

In Lithuania

Non-existent

9 LIST OF KEY REFERENCES:

- CRC General Comment No. 6 (2005) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin.
- The Council of Baltic Sea States Secretariat (2015): Transnational Child Protection: Practical guide for caseworkers and case officers.
- Joint General Comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligation regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.
- International Social Service (2017): Children on the move, from protection towards a quality sustainable solution.
- FRA Agency (2019): Children deprived of parental care found in an EU Member State other than their own.
- Initiative for children in migration (2019): How better cross-border cooperation will prevent trafficking of children in migration
- Core Standards for Guardians of Separated Children available at: corestandardsforguardians.eu