

**Child Protection Sub-Working Group**  
**05.11.2021 Minutes of Meeting**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Friday, 05 November 2021 at 10.00-12.00 a.m., via Webex</b>	
<b>Participants:</b>	Special Secretary for the Protection of UAMs/ MoMA, Juvenile Probation Office of Athens, EASO/Directorate of RICs/MPRICs, Terre des hommes Hellas, DRC, METAdrasi, Solidarity Now, Municipality of Athens, UNICEF, NCR, ELIL, Faros, EASO/ RIS HQ - Directorate of North Greece Facilities, MoLSA, IOM, The Home Project, MdM, Equal Rights Beyond Borders, Medin, Zeyksis, GCR, Velos Youth.	
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>UNHCR:</b> Theodora D. Tsovili ( <a href="mailto:tsovili@unhcr.org">tsovili@unhcr.org</a> )	
<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Approaches to improve protection of unaccompanied children in Greece</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Updates from UNHCR.</li> <li>➤ Introduction to the Mentorship project of SSPUAM – Claire Pavlaki, SSPUAM’s representative.</li> <li>➤ The unaccompanied minors in the juvenile justice system. Data and experience of the Athens Juvenile Probation Service – Tanya Koskiniadou, Juvenile Probation Officer.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Updates from UNHCR</b>	<b>Action Points:</b> N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>The relocation exercise will continue at least until the end of March 2022.</b> More than 1,000 UAC have travelled to 12 European countries and there is still a caseload of more than 400 children for whom BIAs have been conducted by EASO &amp; UNHCR. SSPUAM is trying to complete the caseload by transferring the remaining children to EUMSs, most of them in Portugal, France and a small number to other countries.</li> <li>➤ <b>SSPUAM is still advocating for a more sustainable, predictable and multiyear relocation scheme.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>There was an interim guardianship programme implemented by EKKA through METAdrasi from February 2021 which concluded on 23 August 2021.</b> SSPUAM is currently working on the amendment of the relevant law in order to proceed with the implementation of it.</li> <li>➤ <b>The absence of Authorized Representatives is followed by challenges</b> during the identification procedures, asylum procedures/RAO registration and Dublin reunion as well as the age assessment procedures. Also, there is lack of presence of a representative during the procedures for relocation of UAC. For the latter, IOM is stepping in to cover the needs as well as CP actors hosting UAC, eligible for relocation. For the rest of the procedures mentioned above, usually CP actors are stepping in voluntarily or when requested by the competent authorities to support.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Introduction to the Mentorship project of SSPUAM</b>	

- **UNHCR welcomes the initiative by SSPUAM** hoping that this is the first step in institutionalizing this approach which has been piloted in the past by other CP actors and has proven to be quite useful.
- **Acknowledging the need to support unaccompanied children through various stages of their journey in Greece**, from reception to adulthood, the Special Secretariat for the Protection of unaccompanied minors created the “Mentorship” project.
- **The project is implemented for the first time in Greece by the Ministry of Migration and Asylum.** It is led by four former unaccompanied children, who reside in Greece and faced similar difficulties and challenges in the past.
- **The four mentors of the project presented themselves and briefly the project.** They are originally from Syria, Guinea, Ivory Coast & Afghanistan.
- **The mentors act as role models for unaccompanied children by providing individualized guidance in every step of their journey;** including reception, accommodation, education, ensuring children’s smooth transition to adulthood as well as their integration into the labour market.
- **The goal of the project is to inform the children, to raise awareness, to motivate and empower them to have the chance to cope and overcome the challenges they are facing.** Also, to create a bridge between the Ministry and the children.
- **The feedback of the children is shared with the Ministry therefore can influence the policy making and the decision makers.** Also, one of the goals of the project is to create relevant child friendly material.
- **The project is still in a pilot phase, currently covering children speaking French, Arabic, Farsi and English.** It is planned that more representatives, including girls, will be participating in the project in the future.
- **UNHCR highlighted that this is the first time that children in general and children’s mentors are participating in the working group and warmly welcomed them.**
- **The selection procedure of the mentors is being implemented by EASO in collaboration with the Ministry.**
- **SSPUAM called the organizations who have implemented similar projects in the past to share with them input that might be useful.**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Since one of the mentors' activity currently is to raise awareness of UAC on the SIL model of care, UNHCR highlighted the importance of SIL apartments and the vital role they could play for the integration of UAC in the Greek society.</b></li> </ul>	
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The unaccompanied minors in the juvenile justice system. Data and experience of the Athens Juvenile Probation Service.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>The Athens Juvenile Probation Service is the main public organization to treat juvenile delinquents who have offended or are in danger of offending. Their main role is the protection and rehabilitation of young offenders while safeguarding their rights during legal proceedings.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>There is internal working group at the Athens Probation Office;</b> it was initiated in 2017 when there were growing numbers of UAC coming from the magistrate to the service due to committed felonies.</li> <li>➤ <b>The Greek Juvenile system is a combination of the welfare and justice model.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Youth aged 12-18 who are accused of committing a criminal act are processed through the juvenile justice system.</b> Youth under the age of 12 are not persecuted, they are going back to the welfare system while youth aged 12-15 are not penally liable and are treated with reformatory/therapeutic measures.</li> <li>➤ <b>The Juvenile Probation Officers are pprofessionals from distinct disciplines,</b> such as social work, sociology, law, social anthropology, psychology, etc.</li> <li>➤ <b>Some of the challenges</b> in the specific area include lack of proper information on the nationality, age of the children, the lack of interpretation, the fact that many of these children are on the move/homeless, etc.</li> <li>➤ <b>The Probation Officers in the Attica region use a specific template when drafting their assessments on each individual case taking into consideration the best interest of the child. This is then shared with the Judges.</b></li> <li>➤ <b>The Probation Officer urged the actors to contact their office when they host children with pending criminal offenses.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>UNHCR mentioned that during the relocation exercise it was observed that some of the children who had pending criminal offenses had their cases paused for quite some time.</b></p>	<p><b>Action Points:</b></p> <p>The Probation Service to share a list with the probation officers per location.</p>