



SUN

SAFEGUARDING UNACCOMPANIED
AND SEPARATED CHILDREN'S RIGHTS
THROUGH THE CFREU



SUN NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024



The SUN Newsletter

Welcome to the SUN Project January newsletter!

We are reaching the first year of our project, and significant milestones have been achieved in its development. These last months have been characterized by a detailed assessment of the training needs related to safeguarding the rights of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) under the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFREU). The SUN consortium has actively exchanged knowledge and best practices through exchange visits, fostering collaboration. Additionally, partners have been actively involved in the planning of the Theory of Change for the

project. These efforts have laid a strong foundation for SUN activities, and we are eager to continue our dedicated work towards protecting the rights of UASC.

[More about the project](#)



Exchange visit in Bolzano

On September 20th and 21st, the SUN team conducted the second exchange visit of the project in Bolzano. These visits are designed to promote the sharing of knowledge and expertise among participating countries regarding the safeguarding of unaccompanied minors and the implementation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

This exchange visit was hosted by Associazione Volontarius. They organized a meeting with representatives of local institutions such as the Municipality, Province, and the Court. Additionally, we had the chance to make a field visit to the office of Social, Employment, and Housing Inclusion, as well as to some of the Volontarius facilities, including the second-level shelter for unaccompanied minors, the 'info-point' office for newly-arrived migrants and refugees, and the temporary accommodation for homeless people.



Exchange visit Bucharest

From November 13th to 15th, the SUN Project team visited Bucharest for the third exchange visit, hosted by Terre des hommes, Romania. During this visit, Terre des Hommes organized meetings with their team and stakeholders to share insights into Romania's protection system for unaccompanied minors and present the best practices they've implemented. The project team engaged in various activities, such as visiting the RIF - Centre for Resilience and Innovation for Refugees, exploring the RomExpo Integrated Services Hub for refugees coordinated by UNHCR, and meeting with organizations like JRS Romania (Jesuit Refugee Service) and the Romanian National Council for Refugees - CNRR.

To conclude the visit in Romania, the Terre des hommes team invited the consortium to the final conference of the Promise project. The Promise project focuses on enhancing unaccompanied minors' access to fundamental rights and public services through advocacy, free legal assistance, and capacity-building activities.





SUN ACTIVITIES



Training needs analysis and good practices report

The SUN consortium has been developing a comparative report on training needs and good practices analysis regarding safeguarding the rights of UASC under the CFREU, in Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Romania. It has as its benchmarks the following CFREU rights applicable for UASC: human dignity, right to life, right to integrity of the person, prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, right to liberty and security, respect for private and family life, right to education, right to asylum, protection in the event of removal, expulsion or extradition, nondiscrimination, prohibition of child labor and protection of young people at work, right to social and housing assistance, health care, right to good administration and right to an effective remedy and to a fair trial.

This training needs and good practices report has given the consortium essential information which will be used in the development of the multidisciplinary training curriculum and a practitioner's handbook.

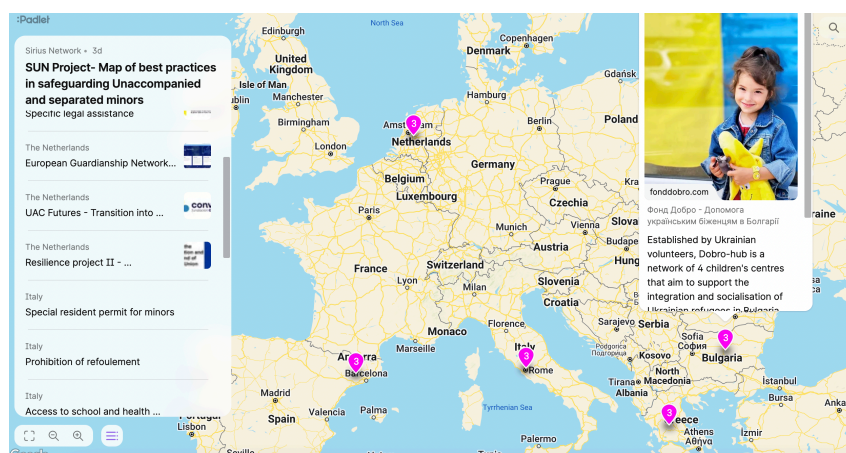
Theory of change plans

The SUN partners have been working in the last months in the development of their strategic goals in relation to the rights of UASC under the CFREU in their countries. This series of national tailor-made action plans has been developed as the framework of the theory of change. The theory of change gives partners roadmaps on how to achieve realistic goals, knowing what are the phases to follow, actions, timeline and stakeholders involved. In order to develop the roadmaps, partners have to work in pairs, so they can support each other in the creation of the plans, the implementation and sharing their experiences and progress.

Map of best practices in protection of UASC rights

The SUN team has created a map of best practices, consolidating notable initiatives related to the protection of UASC in the project countries. These practices were identified through a national needs assessment report conducted by partners as part of the project. Recognizing the significance of this information, we have chosen to present it in the form of a map for easy accessibility by stakeholders across Europe.

We encourage you to explore the map and share it with your network!



[Discover the map](#)



SUN MEMBERS



ARSIS- Development on the M2 permit for UAMS who have completed three years of education

The Greek Parliament's approval of the new Code of Migration in March 2023 marked a significant breakthrough, particularly for former Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs). The legislation, effective upon publication, enhances eligibility conditions for the ten-year residence permit (M2) for adults who arrived in Greece as unaccompanied children. To qualify, individuals must have successfully completed a minimum of three years of secondary education in a Greek secondary school before turning 23.

The subsequent Joint Ministerial Decision, issued on August 4, 2023, outlines crucial conditions for implementing the new residence permit. Applicants must furnish documentation proving entry into Greece as an unaccompanied minor, a declaration affirming an uninterrupted stay of no more than two consecutive years, and evidence of completing at least three classes of secondary education in a Greek school before reaching the age of twenty-three.

This reform provides a legal pathway for former unaccompanied children, addressing a longstanding gap in migration regulations. It not only facilitates their regularization but also contributes to their integration into Greek society.

TDH- A Consultative Forum for Migrants was established and operates in Romania

On the framework of the Promise Project, Terre des hommes - Romania Foundation and JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service) initiated a Forum - the Consultative Forum for Migrants in Romania – in order to protect migrants' rights, help them integrate more easily and be better represented in the host-society. Currently, the Forum includes 10 migrant students, 18-22, from Japan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Philippines, Columbia, Syria, Peru, Afghanistan, Yemen, Ukraine, most of them studying in Romanian universities with scholarships offered by Romanian Government or Erasmus programme.

The Forum migrants found out that there is very little information for foreign citizens about how to live in Romania, which makes them vulnerable and exposed to risks. They decided to improve this situation through meetings and discussions with Romanian authorities. Among the discussed topics, they mentioned integration difficulties, human trafficking risks, potential aid sources and prevention methods. The young migrants presented the authorities the difficulties they encountered when they came to Romania, from the Romanian language barrier to their integration into the national education system, health and legal systems.

Meet Volontarius!

Gruppo Volontarius manages the first shelter and the second level reception centers for unaccompanied minors in South Tyrol, providing essential social services and case management. Additionally, they implement projects for human rights and education rights protection, and the promotion of volunteering.

Their approach consist of:

ASSIST: Covering essential needs such as food, clothing and health.

LISTEN: Listen and collect the needs of the individual in order to promote awareness, conscience and creativity as regenerative forces.

ACCOMPANY: Support activation and change paths in a participatory and community development perspective.

Meet the SUN consortium!



[More about voluntarius](#)

Meet Terre des Hommes!

Terre des hommes Romania continuously facilitates the integration of refugee children in Romania by involving them in educational, social and sports activities.

They develop methodologies for professionals who work with children in conflict with the law and child-friendly practices, with focus on mental health and resilience.



[More about TdH](#)



INTERNATIONAL NEWS



5 040 unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in EU countries

In October 2023, 5 040 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum for the first time in the EU, mostly from Syria (1 975) and Afghanistan (1 150).

The EU countries that received the highest numbers of asylum applications from unaccompanied minors were Germany (1 635), the Netherlands (950), Austria (720), Bulgaria (485) and Greece (425).

[Read more](#)

More than half of children fleeing to Europe face danger on their journeys, survey finds

Save the Children launches the report Hope and Harm: Children's Experiences of Seeking Safety in Europe with key findings from more than 500 refugees and migrants living in European host countries.

56% of children from countries in Asia, the Middle East and Africa who responded to Save the Children's questionnaire reported feeling in danger on their way to Europe,

with some children describing being beaten and threatened by border officials and police, and sleeping in forests.

[Read more](#)

Children in migration: fundamental rights at European borders (2023)

Under EU law, Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU states that children have the right to such protection and care as is necessary for their well-being. Children are regarded as “vulnerable persons” in the context of asylum and return procedures. EU Member States are required to take into account their specific situation and needs when implementing EU law.

This joint note of the Council of Europe and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights summarizes some key safeguards of European law as they apply to children in the context of migration at the EU’s external borders, bearing in mind that the relevant CoE standards apply to all borders.

[Joint note](#)

A newly harmonized approach to vulnerability in the EU’s protection systems

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) has adopted a new Strategy on Vulnerability. With vulnerability assessments becoming an important part of the Agency’s operational and technical support to EU+ countries; the Strategy provides an overarching framework for our work in this field, and aims to equip asylum and reception practitioners with a clear understanding of how to operationalise the concept of vulnerability – in all aspects of the Common European Asylum System.

[More about EUAA new strategy](#)

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