



## **EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Return of unaccompanied minors**

Requested by Jutta SAASTAMOINEN on 3rd March 2017

### **Return**

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Norway (24 in total)

#### *Disclaimer:*

*The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.*

## **Background information:**

The National Police Board of Finland and the Finnish Immigration Service have received funding from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) for a joint-project “Repatriation”. The key objective of the project is to improve the efficiency of returns of asylum seekers. The project also looks at the situation of unaccompanied minors.

In this regard, we would like to request information from the Member States in order to understand the volume of returning unaccompanied minors and for identifying best practises.

## **Summary**

Responses were received from 24 Member States (AU, BE, CH, CY, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, SI, SK, SE, UK, NO).

All Member States except Austria, France and United Kingdom indicated that their answers were for wider dissemination. The summary is based on the answers of the 21 countries whose answers are for public dissemination.

### **1. How many unaccompanied minors did your Member State return during 2016? Please separate between voluntary and forced returns.**

Half of the responding countries (BE, CY, DE, IT, NO, FI, LU, SE, CH, NL, LT, SI) reported that they assisted unaccompanied minors to return voluntarily during year 2016. Five of the countries (FI, LU, SE, CH, NL) indicated that during 2016 they carried out both voluntary and forced returns. Seven of the responding countries (CZ, EE, HU, IE, MT, SK, ES) had not carried any removals of unaccompanied minors during 2016 and two of the responding countries (HR, LV) carried out only forced returns of minors during 2016.

Only voluntary returns (2016):

- **Belgium** had 17 voluntary returns
- **Cyprus** had 2 voluntary returns
- **Germany** had 170 voluntary returns
- **Italy** had 9 voluntary returns
- **Norway** had 14 voluntary returns
- **Lithuania** had 1 voluntary return
- **Slovenia** had 6 voluntary returns

Both voluntary and forced returns (2016):

- **Finland** had 20 voluntary returns and less than 10 forced returns
- **Luxembourg** had 1 voluntary return and 1 forced return
- **Sweden** had 103 voluntary returns and 21 forced returns
- **Switzerland** had 22 voluntary returns and 2 forced returns
- **Netherlands** had approximately 60 voluntary returns and 10 forced returns

Only forced returns (2016):

- **Croatia** reported 70 forced returns during 2016
- **Latvia** had 22 forced returns

No returns during 2016:

- **Czech Republic**
- **Estonia**
- **Hungary**
- **Ireland**
- **Malta**
- **Slovak Republic**
- **Spain** had 5 minors removed, but none of them were asylum seekers

**2. Does your country remove unaccompanied minors to any of these countries: Iraq, Afghanistan and/or Somalia?**

None of the responding countries carried out forced returns of unaccompanied minors to Afghanistan, Iraq and/or Somalia during 2016. Some Member States however reported that minors have returned voluntarily to these countries.

**3. Has your Member State developed and implemented any specific measures in order to gather information on applicants' family ties in order to ensure a safe return to the country of origin? If yes, please describe (shortly) the undertaken measures.**

Most of the responding countries stated that IOM has been recognised as the body through which family tracing and assessment is done. A total of ten countries (BE, CY, CZ, DE, FI, IT, LT, MT, CH, NO) indicated that they cooperate with IOM. This procedure, however, deals only with voluntary returns.

Other measures that were mentioned include information gained from the minor through interviews (BE, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, HR, LV, NL, SE, NO) and cooperation with diplomatic services such as embassies (BE, CZ, ES, HR, LT, SE).