



NEW EU STRATEGY ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Wednesday 24 March the European Commission launched the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child.

In particular it contains sections referring to **children in migration** and/or **unaccompanied children**



How does the Strategy address the specific needs of children in migration?

EQUAL RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO SERVICES: Children must be treated equally, regardless of their origin, their family situation or the legal status of their parents. The Strategy reinforces existing policy initiatives (such as the [Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion](#), and the [Asylum and Migration Pact](#)) and proposes actions that will ensure that children in migration enjoy the same rights as non-migrant children, with equal access to services.

PROTECTION AND SUPPORT: The particular vulnerability of children in the migration context or due to their migration background requires additional and targeted protection and support. These specific needs are addressed by the [2017 Communication on the protection of children in migration](#). This Communication is still valid today and the actions proposed are still being implemented and monitored..

For example, the Commission supports Member States in strengthening **guardianship systems**, with the assistance of the [European Guardianship Network](#), to build professional capacity or to develop effective and viable alternatives to detention of children during migration procedures.

The Pact on Migration and Asylum underlined the need to both implement and reinforce EU law safeguards and protection standards for migrant children. The new rules, once adopted, will speed up the appointment of **representatives for unaccompanied children**, and will ensure the **resources** to support their special needs, including their **transition to adulthood and independent living**. Children will be always offered adequate accommodation and assistance, including legal assistance, throughout the procedures. The new rules should also **strengthen solidarity between Member States** in ensuring full protection for unaccompanied children.

Member States are invited to promote **national strategies and programmes** to speed up de-institutionalisation and the transition towards quality, family- and community-based care services including with an adequate focus on preparing children to leave care, including for

unaccompanied migrant children.

The principle of best interests of the child must be the primary consideration in all actions or decisions concerning children in migration and asylum and return procedures.

What funding will be available?

NEW ASYLUM, MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND (AMIF): targeted financial support for trans-national and innovative projects to protect children in migration. The new AMIF will reinforce the protection of unaccompanied migrant children by recognising and providing financial support and incentives for their particular reception, accommodation and other special needs, with a co-financing rate up to 75%, which may be increased to 90 % for projects implemented under specific actions.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND PLUS (ESF+) AND THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF): supports investments in human capacity and infrastructure development, equipment and access to services in education, employment, housing, social, health and childcare, as well as the shift from institutional to family- and community-based services.

OTHER EU FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES can be used for the realisation of children's rights in general, include the Justice Programme, the CERV Programme, Erasmus+, Horizon2020, the Digital Programme, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), REACT-EU, and InvestEU. In addition, the Technical Support Instrument is able, on request, to provide technical support to Member States to develop capacity-building actions..

What role for regional authorities in the Strategy?

PROGRAMMING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EU FUNDS: Member States are invited to ensure a **coordinated approach** in the programming and implementation of EU funds, and involve local and regional authorities in preparing, revising, implementing and monitoring programmes for the 2021-2027 EU funds. Funding for child rights should be prioritised by Member States in the EU funding programmes, according to **identified needs at national and regional level**.

EU NETWORK FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS The Commission will establish this Network by end of 2021. Building on the work of the existing informal expert group on the rights of the child, the Network will reinforce the dialogue and mutual learning between the EU and Member States on children's rights, and support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy. It will be composed of national representatives and **will include in some of its activities, representatives of local and regional authorities**, as well as international and non-governmental organisations and children, among others.

INCREASED COLLABORATION AND DIALOGUE: The Commission will also develop **closer collaboration with regional and local authorities**, along with other relevant institutions, regional and international organisations, civil society and ombudspersons for children. The Commission also calls on the Committee of the Regions to **promote dialogue with local and**

regional authorities.

Kind regards,

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