









Index







## **Handbook**

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#### 1. The project

"Meet Me Trieste Östersund", is a Erasmus+ small-scale partnership project, which involves two organizations, both engaged in the sector of hosting and of inclusion of foreign unaccompanied minors and interested in enlarging their own perspective, by exchanging experiences and practices. Matching two different approaches, formed by the geographical, cultural and historical contexts, Italy and Sweden. Two different ways to support unaccompanied minors in their integration and inclusion into the society; furthermore, from the perspective of one, a public service, the Östersund Municipality, and the other a social Cooperative, part of the private sector.

The overall objective is therefore to improve and increase the competences of the organization staff, to broaden our minds and question prejudices, with the final aim to improve the capacity to support the unaccompanied minors in quality services, to integrate them more efficiently into the society in benefit to achieve their full potential as persons and part of the European society. More specific objectives consist in the wish to impact on several levels:

- OB 1 Organizational level: increase competences and knowledge about the dynamics of migration, strategies and practices of immigration. To strengthen our European perspective so that we can create an understanding of European identity, citizenship and values.
- OB 2 Housing staff: Increase staff competence and knowledge in all areas and create a "library of tools" to improve methods in working with inclusion.
- OB 3 Minors: Improve the situation and quality of life for the minors and increase opportunities of involvement so they are able to influence and take part in an European context.
- OB 4 At the end of the project period, our knowledge and our library of tools will be available for similar organizations in Europe.

#### Methodology

During four transnational meetings, an exchange of experiences and a process of "storytelling" on specific aspects linked to the inclusion of young minors, partners have increased their knowledge and competences and collected the results in two tools:

- 1) Handbook
- 2) Library of tools.

#### 2. The Handbook

The handbook is the result of the exchange, aimed to increase competences and knowledge about the dynamics of migration, strategies and good practices of integration, through the exchange between two European countries, involved in the hosting of young migrants in different geographical areas of the EU.

The Handbook analyses and describes:

- 1. the external context in which the two organizations operate: convention of children institutional processes and relation between Public and Private organizations, legal context, embedding in the European context, funding opportunities, dynamics of migration
- 2. the internal situation and organization of the service: day structure and organization, hosting activities, networking/collaboration and activating of resources (professional schools, associations egg), financing, staff, local situation related to migrants.









Through the process of common realization of the Handbook, partners have been able to analyse their situation in a systematic and comparable way and to have a larger and detailed vision about their local, national and European context and the challenges and priorities they need to develop. Staff members, through a better awareness, well be able to share and transfer their experience.

The Handbook can be delivered both, to the staff and stakeholder network, linked to the two organizations, as well as during the dissemination and sharing with other European realities, working with similar situations.

#### 3. External context

The partners decided to organize the text and the analysis in a way which allows an immediate comparison of the two realities. The two columns delve into the issues that directly reflect on daily work. This concerns both the external context, as for example the legal and institutional situation, and obviously aspects of the internal context.

What is our legal and institutional context? Which services, including the public ones, intervene? How do the unaccompanied minors arrive? Which is the hosting system? What is the mode and way of interaction between public bodies and social enterprise? Which activities are provided and what are the pedagogical and/or ethical foundations of our work? These are some of the questions we wanted to exchange on and understand the related approaches.

#### 3.1 The process of asylum

Sweden

In Sweden we have three groups of unaccompanied foreign minors who has the right to seek protection in Sweden, asylum seekers, quota refugees and Ukrainian citizens who are included under the mass refugee directive.

The **asylum seekers** arrive by themselves across the border to Sweden illegally. They must report their arrival at the police station and then apply for asylum at the migration office. They are placed at a transit accommodation during a short period until they get a permanent placement and housing in a municipality in Sweden.

According to UN Refugee Convention and Swedish law you are a refugee if you have reason to be afraid of being persecuted because of race, nationality, religion, political views, gender, sexual orientation or if you belong to a particular social group. Every asylum seeker is assigned a public advisor who represents them during the asylum

In Italy, like an adult, an **Unaccompanied Foreign Minor** (MSNA) has the right to seek **international protection**.

Italy

Almost the entirety asylum cases of Minors in the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, enter illegally across the border with Slovenia, accessing from the so called "Balkan route".

The reception of MSNAs is provided for and regulated by Law 142/2015, and Legislative Decree No. 220 of December 22, 2017, and Directive 2013/33/EU.

The current system provides for a first temporary reception, of a maximum duration of thirty days, in governmental First Reception Facilities intended for MSNAs, in order to identify and ascertain their age, as well as inform them of their rights, and a second reception in the Facilities of the Reception and Integration System (SAI).

Municipalities that ensure the reception activities of the Minor access the contributions arranged by the









process.

The quota refugees come to Sweden legally and they receive permanent residency upon arrival in Sweden. They are, mostly selected from Africa by UNHCR in a refugee camp. There are certain criteria based on increased need of protection, vulnerability and special needs. Among those identified as quota refugees are vulnerable women and girls. Many who have experienced trauma or have medical issues that cannot be met in their current country of asylum.

The Mass Refugee Directive gives Ukrainian citizens who have lived in Ukraine a chance to get a temporary residence permit if they have lived in Ukraine or has the status or residence permit as a person in need of protection in Ukraine or is an accompanying family member of the two above.

Ministry of the Interior from the National Fund for the reception of MSNAs."

#### 3.2 Legal situation

Sweden

In Sweden we have a right-wing political government since the election in 2022. The government decreased the number of quota refugees in Sweden from around 5000 to 900 in 2023. They have also decreased the number of asylum seekers. In 2015, 35.000 minors applied for asylum in Sweden. After that the numbers decreased every year, in 2020 only 500 applied for asylum. In 2022, 630 minors applied for asylum in Sweden, 77% of the applicants were boys. Recent statistics from the migration office in 2023 shows that from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January to 1<sup>st</sup> of November 295 minors applied for asylum in Sweden and 141 applied for protection according to the the mass migration directive.

As of November 1<sup>st,</sup> 2023, the 436 unaccompanied foreign minors that applied for protection in Sweden during the year, the majority came from

In Italy, a Minor who is far from the birth country and is unable or unwilling to return to it can ask for international protection for the following reasons:

Italy

- the Minor has a well-founded fear "of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country."
- or "has well-founded reasons to believe that if returned to his or her country of origin, the Minor would face a real risk of suffering serious harm," due to ongoing conflict or the risk of being tortured or sentenced to death.

The process for formalizing the request for international protection must be promptly initiated when the minor has expressed such a desire, or the need has arisen as a result of the cognitive interview aimed at identifying the minor.









Afghanistan (22%), Syria (21%), Somalia (9%) and Morocco (7%).

May 2017 the Swedish government implemented a temporary law that allowed the minors who arrived in Sweden before November 24th in 2015 and had their asylum case rejected, an opportunity to stay in Sweden if they completed their high school studies, found a full-time job and a permanent place to live within 6 months after finishing their studies. In October 2020 only 55 of the 7.600 minors who were granted the temporary residency were able to fulfil these requirements. In February 2021 the law was adjusted to give the minors more time to achieve the acquirements (due to the corona pandemic). The high school law expires in 2025.

The Swedish right-wing political government elected in 2022, suggested to implement a new law that Authorities and mmunicipalities are obliged to inform the Migration Agency and the Police Authority when they meet people staying in Sweden without a permit or carry valid documents. The agreement was signed by the governing parties and the political party Sweden Democrats. The proposal has been met with harsh criticism from many opponents. According to the proposal, public employees for example healthcare, social services and schools, will be forced to report students and patients who are staying in Sweden without a permit.

#### Legal guardian

Unaccompanied minors who come to Sweden are handed a legal guardian regardless of if they come as an asylum seeker or quota refugee. The legal guardian's duty is to represent the minor in different matters concerning financial, personal, and legal issues.

Legal guardians are appointed by the district court. The responsibility for the minors' daily care rests with their social worker and the staff at Fornborgen HVB (Home for care and living).

If the Commission recognizes the **Political Refugee**Status, the Police Headquarters will issue an Asylum Permit that is valid for five years. Instead, if the Commission recognizes that, if he returned to his home country, he would face the risk of suffering serious harm, the Police Headquarters will issue a Permit for Subsidiary Protection which is valid for five years. If the Commission recognizes Special Protection, the Police Headquarters will issue a Special Protection permit that is valid for two years.

As of June 30 2023, 20,926 Unaccompanied Foreign Minors were present in Italy.

They mainly come from Egypt (5,341 minors), Ukraine (4,512), Tunisia (1,781), Guinea (1,174) and Albania (1,137). Taken together, these five citizenships account for two-thirds of the MSNAs present in Italy (66.6 percent).

The additional most represented citizenships are Gambian (1,086), Ivorian (1,048), Pakistani (924), Eritrean (516) and Afghan (446) in the first half of 2023. There were 1,062 applications for international protection related to Unaccompanied Foreign Minors, with reference to the types of decisions adopted by the Territorial Commissions for the recognition of international protection during the first half of 2023 in respect of MSNA asylum seekers, 71% were granted a form of international protection (asylum or subsidiary protection).

#### Legal guardian

The guardian must accompany the Minor, to the Immigration Office of the Police Headquarters to formalize the application for international protection. Pending the appointment of the guardian by the Juvenile Court, the Program Director of the accommodation center is allowed to formalize but when the Minor compares before the territorial commission, asking for international protection, is the Legal Guardian the only one authorized to be present with the Minor.

The guardian, in essence, has the same powers and exercises functions similar to those of parents, but is









The specific **duties of a legal guardian** are for example to:

- Assist the minor in investigations at the Swedish Migration Agency.
- Apply for financial contributions from the Swedish Migration Agency and the social service.
- Represent the minor in health, medical and dental care.
- Ensure that the minor receives a functioning schooling.
- Manage the minor's assets.
- Contribute to contact with parents and relatives. The legal guardianship ceases in the following situations:
- When the minor's parents have arrived in Sweden and can exercise custody and guardianship.
- If the minor has permanently left Sweden.
- When the minor turns 18.

When the minor turns 18 years old and is considered an adult, he/she no longer needs a legal guardian, but there is the possibility of continued cooperation where the legal guardian instead becomes a contact person if they both agree.

If a minor receives a residence permit before the age of 18, the legal guardians' task is transferred to becoming a specially appointed guardian if both wish to continue the collaboration.

It is important that the proposed person has knowledge of what it means to be a guardian and is suitable for the assignment.

The asylum-seeking minors are not allowed to work during their asylum process unless they obtain an AT-UND which means exemption from the requirement to have a work permit. To be able to receive an AT-UND the minor must be able to clarify he/his identity. After receiving a residence

subject to greater controls, required by law and implemented by the guardianship judge.

Legal guardian supervises education and integration paths considering the MSNA's abilities, natural inclinations and aspirations; supervises the MSNA's reception, safety and security conditions; administers the Minor's assets, if any. He/she signs all the administrative act's, health practices, diagnosis test, bank account, legal issues, etc.

The legal guardian does not receive money for his work, which is voluntary. Sometimes this fact can cause discomfort because the expenses, for example, for mobility, are not recognized or reimbursed. Both Legal Guardian and the Accommodation Center work closely for the best interests of the child.

The Juvenile Court continually offers training courses for new legal tutors, but the number of volunteers cannot cover the need of the reception system. This situation poses a serious problem at the time of the summons to the hearing with the Territorial Commission, at which the guardian must be present.

#### Who are Unaccompanied Foreign Minors?

The most recent Italian law (No. 47/2017) defines MSNA:

" ...is a Minor (i.e., a person under the age of 18) who is not a citizen of Italy or the European Union and who is, for whatever reason, in the territory of the State or who is otherwise subject to Italian jurisdiction, without the assistance and representation of parents or other adults legally responsible for him/her under the laws in force in the Italian legal system". So, the Unaccompanied Foreign Minor is not a citizen of the European Union and does not have parents and/or close relatives in the national territory.

Another important principle is the Prohibition of Refoulement and Expulsion (Decree 286/1998 and Law 47/2017):

"Moreover, expulsion is not allowed against foreign Minors, except when it is ordered for reasons of public order and state security and without prejudice









permit, they are given permission to work.

The mass migration directive concerning the minors from Ukraine, allows them to work during their stay in Sweden, though the majority receive a temporary residence permit.

to the right to follow the parent or guardian."

The majority of Minors are issued a residence permit for "minor age" which does not allow the minor to work. This is not a legal impediment but accountants say that the legislation is not clear in this regard and they prefer not to make employment contracts for Minors. This does not happen with other types of residence permits, for example, asylum, subsidiary protection, special cases.

When the Minor submits the application for international protection, a residence permit for asylum seeker is issued which allows the Minor to work.

Minors have a health card that allows them to receive free medical attention. The health card expires when minors turn 18 years old.

#### 3.3 Institutional context

The social services in the municipality are responsible for the placement of the minors in our from the state to municipality.

responsible for the placement of the minors in our communities. They are also responsible for making sure that the minors' needs are being fulfilled. The social worker makes a care plan for the individual's needs, the plan includes - making sure that the minor attends school, gets help with language development and has the right conditions to maintain good health.

The reception of unaccompanied minors must be evenly distributed across the country. The migration office and the municipalities have a division system for receiving unaccompanied minors. Each municipality is allocated a certain proportion of the unaccompanied minors. The proportion is calculated based on the municipality's population and previous reception of newly arrived and unaccompanied minors.

#### Individual plan

After the first 10 weeks upon arrival at Fornborgen,

The shift in the role of care and reception of MSNAs from the state to municipalities is defined by "foster care" ("custody"). This institution is governed by Law 184/1983, aimed primarily at resident Minors, but in fact extended to foreigners by the most recent Law 47/2017. The law enshrines the child's right to an adequate and protective family and establishs that, in the absence or impediment of the latter, the child may be entrusted by the Juvenile Court (T.M.) to another family with suitable characteristics.

In the case of foreigners, the T.M. (in the absence of available foster families) issues a Custody decree of the MSNA just (or recently) traced on the territory to the Social Services for protection and control, as well as "placement in a suitable facility."

Consequently, it will be the administration of that municipality that will have to provide for the reception of the child in institutions that respond to the protection of the child's rights, maintenance, care, education, etc.

Very rarely municipalities do have accommodation









the staff observe and identify the minors' needs using material from BBIC (the center of the child's needs).

The minor meets together with the social worker, their contact person from Fornborgen and the legal guardian. Together they plan who will do what and that's where our work in the community begins. We then continuously report to the social services in a monthly report where we describe how things have been and what has been done according to the care plan.

facilities to house minors, managed on their own; therefore, as has been common and established practice for several years now, they rely on non-profit private social organizations (social cooperatives, associations, foundations, etc.) to be able to relocate the Minors adequately (both foreigners and residents) through a system of public evidence acts: tenders, conventions, accreditation, negotiated procedures, register of suppliers, etc.

#### 3.4 Cooperation public and private sector

Sweden	Italy
As we work within a municipal operation, we do not have many private collaborations.	The cooperatives and associations that are involved in our region (and in many others in Italy) for the management of the reception of resident and foreign minors on behalf of municipalities and also (in other cases) of Health Authorities, have recently been collected in the delegated law 106/2016 which defines the Third Sector as: "the complex of private entities established with civic, solidary and socially useful purposes that, without profit, promote and carry out activities of general interest, through forms of voluntary and free action or mutuality or production and exchange of goods and services, in accordance with the purposes established in their statutes or deeds of incorporation".  The law identifies sectors of activities proper to social enterprises within the scope of the activities of general interest, included in the single list common to all Third Sector entities; encourages the widest possible involvement of employees, users and all stakeholders in its activities; provides the obligation to prepare financial statements; coordinates the regulations of social enterprises with the activities carried out by non-profit organizations of social utility; provides for the appointment, on the basis of principles of third party status, of one or more auditors with supervisory functions.









These are the prerequisites necessary to enable private social enterprises, such as our **DUEMILAUNO AGENZIA SOCIALE** to participate in public calls and tenders for the management of services to citizens, borrowed from the competencies of local public administrations, included the reception of MSNAs. In particular, our social cooperative also refers to the Law 381/1991, which establishes social cooperatives and defines their characteristics and roles.

# 3.4 Convention of children. Implementation of the Minors perspective in the daily activities, in theory and in practice

Sweden Italy

Sweden signed the Child convention in 1990. That means that all rights specified in the convention applies to all children living in Sweden regardless of whether they are Swedish citizens, if they are living temporarily in Sweden or if they are asylum seekers.

In 2020 Sweden implemented the child convention into Swedish law, to make sure that every child's legal security is strengthened and that the child's best interests come first in a clearer way, especially within the Swedish legal system.

Östersund municipality has a guideline for how we work to provide that the perspective of children is being met in our daily work within the municipality. The staff at Fornborgen has been educated in the basic elements of the child convention.

In 2022 together with Save the Children, Fornborgen participated in a project called Young & involved, that promoted the participation of minors' involvement for their future. The project worked on inventorying the needs through dialogue in order to obtain a basis for activities that promoted integration and mental and physical health. Fornborgen focus on four main principles of the child convention, but we always make sure that all aspects are being met.

In Italy, the Convention on the Rights of Children and Adolescents was adopted on 20 November 1989 and entered into force on 2 September 1990.

Our daily activities and theoretical approach are based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which is present in the guidelines of educational services for children, services that we provide since almost thirty years to resident Minors and in the last seven years also to Unaccompanied Foreign Minors.

- 2. All children have the same rights and the same value.
- 3. Best interest of the child.
- 12. Respect for children's views

In order to guarantee the rights and values of each Minor and meet the interest of our young migrants, we create, together with the Minor, a personalized project.

The operational actions envisaged in the management of the educational project are:

<u>Reception</u>: first of all, on a special form, where the first information relating to the minor (e.g. family, origin, schooling, asylum request, documents to be completed, etc.) and the indications received from the Services involved on therapeutic/rehabilitative/welfare/social and educational needs;









## **2.** All children have the same rights and the same value.

The staff at Fornborgen try to treat every child the same way. We say that if one minor is offered something, the same should be offered for all of the minors. Example: TV-time in the common areas; we try to divide the tv time between the minors and encourage Swedish film and programs in the common tv room to have learning mixed with entertainment. In Fornborgen we have minors with different religious backgrounds therefore we try to make sure that the common area is a neutral ground.

#### 3. Best interest of the child.

When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for the children. Governments should make sure that children are protected and looked after by their parents, or by other people when this is needed. Governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.

In Fornborgen (and all other health care and social services) to find employment; you need to provide a paper from the police stating that you don't have a criminal conduct report. Every person who wants to work with children (or people with special needs) need to show this paper from the police before getting employment. This paper should be renewed every year.

Fornborgen also have regularly visits from **IVO** (The Inspection of Health and Social Care) who is a government agency responsible for supervising health care, social services and activities under the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments. Every year IVO makes an announced visit at Fornborgen, where they interview the minors who live here, using a translator when needed and they also interview the staff. IVO can also make unannounced visits; this is mainly to make sure

- Observation: a first period of observation is focused on the verification of the person's abilities, obstacles, interests as well as communication and relational modalities, attitudes and typical behaviors, affective manifestations, autonomy and management of daily life. Special observation and survey forms are used to report on the steps taken, the information collected, the results obtained and the prospects for improvement to be set up to prepare the first foundations for a more articulated and in-depth educational project;
- <u>Definition of the personalized project</u>: after the period of observation, an operational project will be defined characterized by short, medium and long-term objectives, pedagogical strategies and actions, activities and times dedicated to the verification of the objectives drawn up. This project, co-constructed with the Minor, will be shared with the local operators and the reference services of the Minors received the services;
- Moments of verification and evaluation of the results: the moments of verification and evaluation of the results contribute to constant monitoring and, where necessary, lead to an update of the projects during team meetings;
- <u>Update</u>: the project will be supplemented by any update reports (at least twice a year) or at the explicit request of the client. Written reports are drawn up as a moment of reporting of the intervention on the cases followed. These creates the possibility to expose, over time, the entire educational path through the description of the process carried out and the verification of the results related to the previously declared objectives;
- <u>Conclusion</u>: at the time of the minor's discharge, a
   Final Report is compiled and sent, together with all
   the other relevant documentation, to the public
   Services and institution of reference of the minors
   received the services.









that everything is in order.

Every year IVO focus on different areas, some more specifically. In 2023 the focus was to check that the staff had updated their conduct reports.

## 6. All children have the right to be alive and develop

Every child has the right to be alive. Governments must make sure that children survive and develop in the best possible way.

At Fornborgen we help to make sure that the minors have their basic needs covered like food and a roof over their head, we help them to buy clothes and make sure they go to health screenings when they arrive. We make sure they get enrolled into educational programs.

#### 10. Contact with parent across countries.

If a minor lives in a different country than their parents, governments must let the child and parents travel so that they can stay in contact and be together.

At Fornborgen we have a phone that the minors can borrow to call relatives, minors usually use this phone during their first few months to stay in contact with their family. In most cases they need time to save enough money to buy a phone of their own. Money to buy credit for their mobile phones are included in their living costs which they receive every month.

The minors can apply for a travel allowance from their social worker to go and visit their family.

#### 12. Respect for children's views

Children have the right to give express their opinion on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take the minors opinions into consideration when it comes to matters that concern them.

At Fornborgen we occasionally have house meetings concerning different topics, this is a good opportunity for the minors to express their

## 6. All children have the right to be alive and to development

Through the hosting in the communities, financed by the public authorities, basic rights and needs of the minors are guaranteed: housing, training/work and socializing.

#### 10. Contact with parent across countries.

The first contact with the child's family is carried out, with the child's consent, as soon as possible/appropriate after the placement in the facility, if it is considered to be in the best interests of the Minor.

Family investigations can then be initiated, i.e. an interview with the family members of the unaccompanied Minor, in which the necessary information is collected to deepen the history of the Minor (family history and migration path of each minor, his needs and projects and the context of origin, their future aspirations...). The collection of this information helps the authorities to take charge and supports the identification of durable solutions for the Minors themselves.

#### Family surveys are a tool for:

- facilitate family reunification procedures, also in accordance with the Dublin Regulation, contributing in this context to ascertaining the willingness of family members to reunite with the child;
- collect information on the condition of family members in the country of residence, retrieve – where available – useful documentation in order to ascertain the family relationship;
- collect information on the history of minors in support of a possible request for international protection and/or other forms of protection;
- collect information relating to any relatives regularly present in Italy and/or in other EU countries to facilitate foster care with them. rules relating to foster care;

The purpose of the family investigations, together with the interview with the minor, is the timely emergence of the elements useful for the protection









opinions. If there's any new information regarding the housing situation, the staff or new rules that imply to everyone.

Every Sunday we have a more informal meeting where we eat "fika"-coffee/tea/snacks and discuss different topics for example if anyone has any ideas about mutual activities for upcoming holidays.

The minors visit their social worker regularly, sometimes together with the housing staff and sometimes by themselves.

of the child in order to promptly direct the intervention towards the most suitable administrative path for each child in his or her best interests.

#### 4. Internal context

In this part of the Handbook, we want to explore the following aspects: Who are the two partner organizations? What do we do? What is our local situation? Which are the places where the activity takes place, how it is organised, what we do? Our pedagogical approaches. Our network of collaboration: schools, training institutions, leisure, language courses, social services/municipalities.

Östersunds kommun Fornborgen, is situated in the central part of Sweden. The area responsible for integration, works to guide the minor to adult life and independence. Fornborgen is the only resident in Östersund municipality for the unaccompanied minors and the unity was founded in 2006.

The municipality was committed to receive 6,39 quota minors in 2023. The amount of quota minors depends on the population of the municipality and the number of Minors arriving in the country.

Fornborgen is responsible for the integration of unaccompanied minors in society, giving them support to be able to manage their own housing, to be able to support themselves and to be involved in society. The staff team works with integration and introduction of the minors into the society, through the planning of leisure activities, education in economics, society, the environment, and self-sufficiency. Fornborgen provides the minors with knowledge, information about norms, values, traditions, laws, rules and authorities in Swedish society. Another important assignment consists in the collaboration with other different authorities and activities, responsible for different areas, such as school, dental care, healthcare, civil society.

**Duemilauno Agenzia Sociale** has been created in 1989, starting from the commitment of a group of social workers interested in promoting services in favour of persons with vulnerabilities and defending workers' rights. In the last nearby 35 years the Cooperative has grown, promoting quality in personal services in the Friuli Venezia Giulia area, Northern Italy, on the border with Slovenia.

The "TIMAVO Community", opened in 2016 in the industrial area of the city of Monfalcone, was created with the aim to answer to the ever-increasing need to find structures and workers able to deal in the most adequate and dignified way with the social emergency, caused by the exodus of refugees, migrants, adult and minor asylum seekers. A need felt in a territory which through its eastern border, is part of the "Balkan Route", crossed every year by thousands of people.









Duemilauno Agenzia Sociale, with a long-term experience in the hosting of minors and small families in proper structures, decided to start a new community, capable of welcoming Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (MSNA), with the idea to address the widespread and pressing social problem such as migration and to involve citizens and institutions, trying to create a project as a further opportunity for the residents too.

This experience was strengthened in 2022 with the opening in Trieste of two other communities intended for the reception of unaccompanied migrant minors, already active for the 14-day fiduciary isolation period and initial reception services such as in transit of MSNAs during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 4.1. Network organizations and the activities in the field of migration and unaccompanied foreign minors

# Our aim is to maintain good communication between the teachers at the minors' schools and the staff at Fornborgen. We are also able to contact the minors' supervisors at school and sometimes participate in meetings regarding the minors' development.

Sweden

The minors can join all sorts of leisure activities that Östersunds municipality has to offer depending on their hobbies and interests. They receive 800 SEK each month from the social services, this money is to be used specifically for activities.

As we work within a municipal organization, we do not have many private collaborations, but some external ones that we take part in are, for example:

The library in Östersund in cooperation with The Red Cross, offers "language Café" for anyone who wants to practice speaking and writing in Swedish.

**Saving the Children** who come once a week to Fornborgen and help our minors with their homework.

Hej Främling (Hello Stranger) - The association was founded in Östersund in 2013 but today you can find them in several locations all over Sweden. Today, Hello Stranger has regularly activities in a total of six different counties. They work to ensure that everyone can have the opportunity to be part

The **Community "Timavo"**, with a view to networking, is an integral part of the territory and develops significant connections with the services, associations and pedagogical and training agencies present in the local community, contributing to the implementation of specific initiatives, in particular with the Social Services of the Municipalities, the Offices of the Social Service for Minors of the Ministry of Justice, the Health Services Companies, the schools attended by the minors welcomed, the various cultural, recreational, educational and leisure territorial agencies, the companies in the area where the mothers/fathers work or to start for any educational activities of job orientation, etc.

Italy

Collaborations with external specialists are also planned to be activated ad hoc for the purpose of developing individual projects, with specific tasks concerning training, instruction and management of educational, expressive, sports, recreational and leisure activities, etc.

The integrated intervention with specialized services is a necessary condition for achieving the objective of effectiveness.

**CIR:** the Italian council for refugees for legal services, supports in the provision of all legal procedures, linked to the stay and recognition of the MSNA.









of relationships and networks that are valuable for both individuals and society. They offer activities such as running, skiing, choir singing, dancing, art projects and other team sports. They also help with school assignments and give useful information about the Swedish society.

Jämtland's Diversity Association - Jämtland's Diversity Association, JäMå, is a non-profit association who aim to work for diversity, integration, and equality, as well as promoting social community through activities, for example study circles where they discuss social issues, write essays against bullying, and eat dinner together.

Minors from Fornborgen have participated in a democratic project for adolescents, a project that aims to include young people to be more involved in local political issues.

**The Red Cross** -They help minors to reconnect with missing family members who they have lost contact with on the way to Sweden.

Star Finder Academy – A Football team that was started in 2022 together with SISU. Cosmos chairman along with football players from the Cosmos A-team have been coaching 20 minors from Fornborgen. The coaches work voluntarily to give back to society. The minors practice every week during season. The training is free of charge and open to all. Since the startup 17 new players have joined the team - that means that the Star Finder Academy has reached roughly 40 young kids/adults in the municipality of Östersund.

DonK Humanitarian Medicine is an independent and social-health voluntary association, which offers free health care to all people, both foreigners and Italians, who are not guaranteed access to medical care. Although the Italian National Health Service offers free health care for the indigent and asylum seekers in urgent conditions, there are still time gaps in which these people do not have access to basic medical care. DonK HM is also present with initiatives to promote a culture of peace, solidarity and respect for human rights.

#### **Vocational schools:**

**ENFAP Friuli Venezia Giulia:** National Board for Vocational Education and Training. The training initiatives promoted by ENFAP FVG are aimed at qualifying and professionalizing young people, workers, and the unemployed, in any sector and category of work. ENAIP Social Enterprise is a provider of training and employment services.

The association CIOFS FP- FVG operates in vocational training, accompaniment and job placement activities, internships and apprenticeships, and integrated employment services for adolescents, young people, girls in difficulty, women, the unemployed and employed, students at risk of school dropout, drop out, NEET and foreign nationals.

**Ad Formandum** is a social enterprise that works with people for the development and growth of the territory. The fundamental objective of the courses is the social and working integration of people in conditions of weakness and disadvantage for physical, social or other reasons.

Scout Association: The Association of Italian Catholic Guides and Scouts (AGESCI) is an educational youth association that aims to contribute to the formation of the person in leisure and extracurricular activities according to the principles and method of scouting adapted to the Italian social reality.









"Collegio mondo unito" (United World colleges) of the Adriatic is an independent school, part of United World Colleges, an international movement that brings together students with the aim of promoting peace and international cooperation.

Parish Don Bosco Oratory, is an educational venue for youth gathering. It can host Parties, school and extracurricular tournaments of soccer, volleyball, basketball. It offers the opportunity to participate in the various groups present: catechism, preteens, Youth Group, Family Group, Caritas, Missionary Gr., Band, basketball, Theater, etc.

**Community of Sant'Egidio**: is a Christian community today spread across 70 countries around the world. They are engaged in a voluntary and free service to the least and offer language learning courses for Migrants.

Youth for Peace: They implement the School of Peace, a free after-school program where they help children study and play together. They become friends with the elderly in nursing homes to combat loneliness by sharing some of their time at a party or visit. It is an alliance between young people and the elderly, which can start from the middle school years.

#### **Local Sport Associations:**

*UFM A.S.D.* The Sport's Social Association. Union Fincantieri Monfalcone, is the main football team of Monfalcone, in the province of Gorizia.

A.S.D. Pallavolo Staranzano

Associazione Sportiva Ronchi Calcio

Associazione Sportiva San Canzian D'Isonzo

**Voluntary activities** in the collection of food (reduce poverty) with local **supermarkets** 

**Environmental Association "Eugenio Rosmann"** autonomous voluntary association, **WWF Isontino**, local territorial structure of WWF Italy for the entire Province of Gorizia

**Save the children:** provide psychological support, thematical training activities (migration, gender diversity, migration issues)









#### 4.2 Situation of unaccompanied foreign minors in our local context

Sweden Italy

Xenophobia exists in our country and in Östersund, but thankfully it's not very common that our minors come across these views. It has happened that we have had conversations with our minors, and the subject of racism has come up. The minors have sometimes received racist comments from members of the public, and they are often surprised by their prejudice attitudes.

In the municipality of Östersund Fornborgen is the only accommodation for newly arrived unaccompanied minors from the ages of 14 to 21 years old. Fornborgen provides staff working 24/7. Besides that, we also have an employee on standby during the night, who is prepared to come in if needed in case of a sudden emergency. Fornborgen can provide housing for a maximum number of 17 minors.

The municipality also provides a supported housing called Nova for young adolescent boys and girls from the age of 16- to 21 years old. The youths at Nova are a mix of foreign minors and Swedish inhabitants with different backgrounds concerning their social welfare. The staff at Nova don't work night shifts, but they also have someone on standby during the night. At Nova they help the minors according to their individual needs. It's very common that the minors from Fornborgen moves on to live at Nova when they are more independent.

The unemployment rate in Östersund was 10% in October 2023. That makes it hard for the minors who want to help their family members back home economically, to find an employment or part-time work combined with their studies. We have noticed that many who hand in their CV's and apply for jobs rarely get a response from the employer.

In Italy there is no "quota" for migrant minors. Every MSNA tracked down and identified by law enforcement on our territory is taken in and entrusted to the Social Services of the municipality that has administrative jurisdiction over the place where the child was found.

Until the migrant turns 18, he or she remains in the area, in prepared and certified communities, without being transferred (except in very special cases) to other regions or abroad. In particular, there are a high number of MSNAs in our region Friuli-Venezia Giulia (about 800 on average per year, out of a population of 1.2 million). This is because of the geographical exposure to the European goal of the "Balkan route."

They are scattered in about 37 reception facilities of different sizes (about 10 in Trieste alone), 6 of which are also vocational training institutions. Unlike adults (present or transiting in about 10 times the number), Minors are not perceived by the population and institutions as a hostile or problematic presence, except in sporadic cases of repeated acts of micro delinquency. It should be considered that the regions of north-eastern Italy currently have a very low unemployment rate (5%) and a high demand for personnel in almost all sectors, some of which is not being met. That is why the presence of adolescents to be trained (compensating for our birth rate among the lowest on the planet), represents a potential resource for the labor market, through vocational training and socio-social integration to which the reception centers themselves work.









#### 4.2. Integration of young migrants aims, methodology, places, activities

#### 4.2.1. Methodology

Sweden

Fornborgen Community offers a 24-hour housing service for a maximum of 17 unaccompanied minors, divided into two operational modules of 8 and 9 each. The modules are divided according to age and independency level.

When the minors arrive at Fornborgen we have a set of routines that we go through the first couple of weeks. Including everything from fire and safety routines, routines for homecare and hygiene, laundry, food shopping, cleaning. We show them the city and how to get around.

Minors that live in Fornborgen usually lives here for a longer period, so the methodology changes during the integration process.

Independency is a strong factor in the Swedish society. The Staff at Fornborgen works with the individual approach as a core element, we teach the minors to practise independence, for example everyone must learn to grocery shopping and cook for themselves.

Ethnical differences in the community/residence: how connect and overcome prejudices, arouse curiosity. The younger learns from the older ones. We have conversations with the minors about equal rights and social codes in the Swedish society.

#### Meeting points/interaction

The Swedish school need to enhance the integration between the inside and outside community: identify possible "meeting points", especially when the school classes are composed only by migrants.

The minors in primary school (Up to 16 years old) goes together with Swedes of the same age but

**TIMAVO Community** offers a 24-hour housing service for a maximum of 24 unaccompanied minors, divided into two operational modules of 16 and 8 each, divided as homogeneously as possible according to age, origin and the respective migration project.

Italy

In particular, the service is committed to the implementation of an educational project for the benefit of minors, aimed at social integration, providing:

- Restoration and/or enhancement of the child's individual resources in order to promote the growth process;
- Advice and legal protection: assistance in carrying out identification procedures, issuing residence permits;
- verification of the presence of relatives and cooperation in the possible initiation of family reunification procedures;
- psychological and primary health care. Activities to meet needs characterized by a high social and health burden are excluded;
- support measures, assumption and rehabilitation of vulnerable or special needs;
- fulfilment of compulsory schooling;
- teaching in Italian, also in the context of the regional plans for civic language training;
- secondary and/or vocational education;
- placement in jobs, apprenticeships and/or traineeships;
- Inclusion in social and leisure contexts and activities.

In the case that minors present health problems, the competent health authority (AS), in consultation with the competent social service, guarantees therapeutic-rehabilitative treatment pathways









have an individually adapted schedule for their language level.

Minors from 16-20 years old, who read up their primary school grades at upper secondary school are a little more isolated from the other Swedish students. Their only meeting points with the Swedish students are at the lunch break and in mutual areas such as the library, hallways and the cafeteria.

consistent with the problems identified.

The daily life organization is based on the principles of the "Educating Community": the young guests are constantly encouraged to interact, collaborate and integrate with the community of peers, invited to discuss, plan and decides about the common life, by maintaining the balance between the individual needs and the necessities of the community life.

In accordance with the above approach, for each minor is developed and implementated a specific and individual project, aimed to achieve the short, medium and long-term objectives elaborated by the community team itself with the territorial operators and external service providers for the minors admitted.

At the same time the collective dimension has an important value and impact. The minors live in a "Community" and all activities are aimed to inclusion and integration. Common cooking and meals are inspired by an approach close to a "family Model"

#### 4.2.2. Practice

# Sweden Italy The organization of the daily activities at The organization of the daily activities it

## Typical Daily Chart:

Fornborgen:

- Wake-up calls, reminding the minors to eat breakfast and preparing for school, look at bus schedule and preparation of school supplies.
- Daily activities of the management of the structure (cleaning, tidying up common and personal areas), administrative task, medical visits, appointments with the social services, contact with legal guardians and contacts with schools.
- Activities with minors, homework, job search, apartment search for minors who are turning 21 years old, extracurricular activities, language learning, reading the newspaper together,

The **organization of the daily activities** included in the educational program of the community and specific-extraordinary activities for the individual guests is planned during the weekly meetings of the entire working group and in the meetings with the guests.

#### **Typical Daily Chart:**

- Wake-up calls, assistance in preparing breakfast and preparing for school (personal hygiene, dressing, preparation of school supplies, etc.)
- Daily activities of the management of the structure (cleaning, tidying up common and personal areas), administrative, medical visits, appointments with the services, job search, contact support/accompaniment of the recipients in the processing of administrative









organization of activities in the structure, accompaniment of minors invited to various activities, one-on-one meetings with minor and contact person at Fornborgen using an interpreter when needed.

- Assisting the minors to cook dinner, grocery shopping, cleaning and doing laundry.
- Weekly meeting with the staff to discuss the minors needs and upcoming planned activities.

We show the minors all authorities that concern them, that are important to know, a list of such places can be found in our finding the right material. procedures, visits to the doctor, appointments with the services, job search, contacts with schools and training agencies.

- Lunch preparation, tidying up, resting.
- Activities with minors, assistance in carrying out school deliveries, extracurricular activities, organization of activities in the structure, accompaniment of people invited to various activities.
- Weekly meeting with the guests to discuss community life, critical issues that need to be addressed, and definition of common activities
- Preparation of dinner in collaboration
- One-on-one meetings with the young persons hosted

#### 4.3. Language learning. A special focus.

## Sweden Italy

**School system:** Sweden has compulsory schooling. The minors in primary school (Up to 16 years old) goes together with Swedes of the same age but have an individually adapted schedule for their language level.

Minors from 16-20 years old, who read up their primary school grades at upper secondary school are put together in classes with other foreign student where they foremost study Swedish language, mathematics and social science.

**Language support.** The municipality offers language support in various languages, so that anyone employed within the municipality can book this help if needed.

**Red Cross** in cooperation with the Library in Östersund, offers language Café for anyone who wants to practice speaking and writing in Swedish two days a week.

**Summer job** - We help minor to apply for a job during the summer holidays. They get the

**School system:** the minors are integrated in the normal school classes and follow the general rules regarding compulsory schooling.

**Language schools:** Provincial Adult Education Center (CPIA) Gorizia, Monfalcone.

Literacy and Learning of the Italian Language (AALI) for foreign citizens, aimed at obtaining a qualification certifying the achievement of a level of knowledge of the Italian language not lower than A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for the knowledge of languages, developed by the Council of Europe.

The certificate of knowledge of the Italian language at level A2 is useful for issuing the residence permit for long-term residents.

**Voluntary teacher:** a volunteer Italian language teacher is present in the community. Italian classes are held in the morning from 9 a.m. to noon and in the afternoon from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m

Within the Erasmus+ Project MILMET, we are









opportunity to encounter working life. Gain work experience and get the opportunity to earn own money during the summer holidays. Despite language difficulties, the young people can take on simpler tasks such as cleaning and gardening. The summer job is a good way for the minors to practice their Swedish vocabulary.

**Saving the Children** who come once a week to Fornborgen and help our minors with their homework.

**Homework** The staff at Fornborgen helps the minors with their homework and practicing speaking Swedish.

creating training materials for work integration in the green and social labour market.

#### 5. Intercultural exchange through job shadowing and the Impact

Fornborgen and Timavo did four transnational meetings, both teams did two visits to the other partner. Especially during the second half of the exchange, beside the continuous work and discussion on our specific situations, thanks to the activity of job shadowing, the teams were able to experience first-hand realities of the hosting services and the related activities and network actors. The following part collects some impressions which have been collected after each meeting in the "learner diaries" fulfilled by the participating teams.

	Sweden	Italy
ı		

There were some things that were different in Italy compared to how it is in Sweden, but a lot of the accommodation was the same and it was nice to see, it was nice to "feel at home" in a place we had never visited before.

We got to meet many wonderful colleagues in Italy and wonderful minors, there were committed staff who described their daily work and showed us around, we participated in language lessons, cooking, sports and study visits.

We got to see what the reception looks like when new minors arrive from the Balkan route, how they got to Italy and what they had gone through to get there, as well as what condition they were in upon arrival. We also got to listen to the minors' An approach which tailors the project on the single person, gives priority to the individual over the collective group. They focus on personal goals, independence; this approach leads the minors to take their own responsibility: Everyone lives in a single room with kitchen. every minor cook for himself, goes to buy groceries.

While Italian approach is collective; Minors live in a "Community" where all activities are aimed to inclusion and integration. Staff and minors cook together, eat together. By taking the extended family model.

Individualism and collectivism are two cultural models that have strengths and weaknesses. Exchange is the key to get the best out of everyone









personal stories about their way to Italy, which was interesting and emotional.

The situation in Italy is very different from the Swedish context due to differences in our geographical location.

We recognized similar stories from minors in Sweden telling us about similar difficult journeys but it's not something we've seen this up close before, it was moving to see and made us feel that we do an important job and how important it is that the minors are received with a warm reception when they arrive.

The intercultural exchange showed us the importance of creating both a place with a collective, more familiar feeling for the minors, but also to strengthen the minors independence, since individualism is an important cultural model in Sweden.

to rethink and improve our work with minors.

In Italy, all activities that minors follow: work, study, driver's license, volunteer work, etc., are positively considered in the decision to the asylum application.

Minors have to leave the community when they turn 18. after 18 y.o. they can stay only by a Court Decree).

Topic of individual integration process vs. Italian collective integration process. Individualism and collectivism are two cultural models that have strengths and weaknesses. Exchange is the key to get the best out of everyone to rethink and improve our work with minors.

Intake procedures and the service plan (Individualized Educative Project), Legal Services, School orientation, community living.

#### 6. Library of tools

The "library of tools" is a collection of methods based upon our shared experiences in the project. In the Library of tools, we have collected the methods that we use to promote the integration of unaccompanied minors into the society, to promote language learning and our best strategies for well-being and good health.

The toolbox is divided into methods we use to promote mental health, educational development and play and games. The latter is everyday methods we use with the minors in daily life to help them develop their language learning.

During our exchange visits between the staff at Timavo and Fornborgen, we focused on how we best can support the minors in their everyday life by using our learning tools. We tested some of the different ways to use some of the other organization's inspiring methods.

The project aims to exchange experiences and knowledge between the two communities for minors in Östersund, Sweden and Trieste, Italy. An overall objective with the project is to share our experiences with other organizations in Europe that work with housing of unaccompanied minors. Each community in Östersund and Trieste has done two exchange visits to the other organization to increase competence of our housing staff, broaden our minds and become better at supporting our unaccompanied minors and to efficiently integrate them into our societies. In the Library of tools, we have collected the methods that we use to promote the integration of unaccompanied minors into the society.









#### 7. Conclusions and future developments

An overall objective of the project has been to share the experiences between two different organizations in Europe, both working in the sector of housing of unaccompanied minors, one representing the Public Services, one representing the private sector. The purpose has been to increase the competences of our housing staffs, by getting inspired from different approaches, aimed to broaden our minds, change perspective and discover different ways, able to support the unaccompanied minors in their pathway of integration in our societies.

We could explore in a more structured and systematic way the aspects and dynamics of migration, strategies and practices of immigration, strengthening a European perspective (OB1); increase staff competences and knowledge in all areas and create a "library of tools" in order to improve methods in working with inclusion (OB2); therefore collect possible inputs able to improve the situation and quality of life for the minors and to increase opportunities of involvement (OB3); finally share our experience both, through the European Platform of results, as well as a sharing conference with our workers and further European countries and organizations, involved in the European Network SFE CEFEC, contributing in this way to the sustainability of the project (OB4).

After each meeting, a learner diary has been fulfilled by the participants, aimed to take advantage of the common and different aspects discovered and developed.

The following two main aspects have been highlighted:

The **general approach** of hosting in Östersund (Sweden) is based on a "one to one relation" between staff members and the single person hosted. The main focus is on personal goals and independence; this approach leads the minors to take their own responsibility. The approach adopted in Timavo (Italy), while developing a personalized project for each guest (Individualized Educative Project), puts a strong focus on the common life within the community and a constant exchange and sharing between the young personas hosted. A social and emotional support is provided also through a formal and informal Peer-based communication.

Regarding this aspect, partners could identify two main motivations. The first is based on the different numbers of unaccompanied Minors, arriving in the two partner regions. The flow of arrivals of unaccompanied minors at Trieste through the Balkan Rout is continuous and solutions for hosting are in continuous state close to emergency. The smaller presence of unaccompanied minors in Östersund and the longer stay of the singles, allows to maintain solutions of housing based on a more individual approach.

The second reason has been identified in the two different cultural models, one more based on individualism and the other on collective/family based structures. Partners exchanged on the related strengths and challenges and agreed that exchange is the key to get the best out of everyone to rethink and improve the work with the young hosts.

In case of Sweden, partners would like to explore and introduce the resource of PEER-Education. Not only, it allows us to increase a complementary communication to the one between young hosts and their adult referents, but also to increase self-awareness and self confidence in the young persons,









involved in their capacities of being protagonists. For the Italian partners, an approach aimed to encourage the minors to fully take responsibility of their own life, stimulates the introduction of further educational strategies.

Regarding the practical execution of the hosting services in favour of unaccompanied Minors - beside the different bureaucratic and administrative steps of the asylum process – hosting services in Sweden are directly managed by the public service. It seems there is a shorter chain of connection from politicians to the practical activities, with a strong relationship and integration between different areas in the municipality and with civil society. In Italy the municipality delegates the practical execution of this services to the third sector, for example through the public procurement procedures to the social cooperatives which are an important sector and partner for the execution of health, educational and social services in Italy, with a tendency to continuous innovation and development of the service proposals.

"...We learn to see our own community with a new pair of eyes and broaden our perspective on the work with the unaccompanied minors. We can use this experience to implant directly in our organization if needed. It can also help us to evaluate the work we already do." (quote from one of the learner diaries)

Finally, the partners agree, that the exchange on European level on this topic represents a valuable, precious and necessary opportunity for the future of the organizations and a cooperation between European countries when it comes to taking care of all refugees in Europe.









### Meet Me Trieste Östersund Handbook and Library of Tools

are available for similar organizations in Europe.



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