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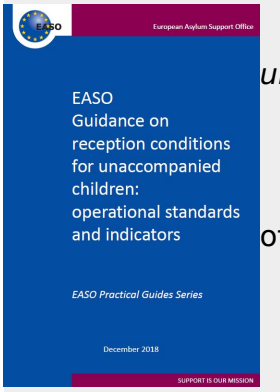
Guidance reception unaccompanied children

EASO Guidance on reception conditions for unaccompanied children: operational standards and indicators

December 2018



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The European Agenda on Migration (1) has underlined the importance of a clear system for the reception of applicants for international protection as part of a strong common European asylum policy. Specifically, it refers to the need for further guidance to improve the standards on reception conditions across MS.

The arrival of vulnerable migrants to the EU, and in particular of children, including unaccompanied children, significantly challenges national systems and administrations, including child protection systems. These systems have increasingly found themselves under pressure when confronted with the need to provide, inter alia, qualified staff to address and provide for special needs, and adequate housing as well as additional resources for education and to prevent children from disappearing.

While the *EASO Guidance on reception conditions: operational standards and indicators (2016)* applies to all applicants for international protection, this guidance focuses on aspects regarding

the specific reception conditions for unaccompanied children (2) as well as their special needs. Due to their **vulnerability**, children in migration, and especially unaccompanied children, require specific and appropriate protection. Therefore, the standards and indicators laid down in this guidance address the specific needs of unaccompanied children (3). Nonetheless, the standards and indicators spelled out in this guidance may also be applicable for accompanied children e.g. on the identification of special reception needs of children, on healthcare, on education as well as on leisure and group activities. To some extent, reception needs of accompanied children are also addressed by the aforementioned EASO Guidance on reception conditions (2016).

The **overall objective** of this guidance is to support EU+ States in the implementation of key provisions of the RCD while ensuring an adequate standard of living for unaccompanied children that takes into account their special reception needs.

(1) European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament,* the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A European Agenda On Migration, 13 May 2015, COM(2015) 240; for the protection of children in migration see European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament: The protection of children in migration*, 12 April 2017, COM(2017) 211final, Section 4, p. 8ff.
(2) For a definition of 'unaccompanied children' refer to the terminology section of this guidance.
(3) Based on discussions within the EASO Network of Reception Authorities and in line with the European Commission, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament: The protection of children in migration,* 12 April 2017, COM(2017) 211 final, the development of guidance on operational standards and indicators for the reception of unaccompanied children has been identified as a priority development in the framework of the Network in 2017.

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