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7.1 Access to the education system and other education arrangements

STANDARD 31: Ensure effective access to the education system under similar conditions as nationals and no later than three months after the application for international protection was lodged.

Indicator 31.1: All unaccompanied children should have access to the education system under similar condition to nationals.

- **Additional remarks:** The RCD provides that MS shall grant applicants of international protection who are children access to the education system under similar conditions to their own nationals for as long as an expulsion measure against them is not actually enforced. Once enrolled in school, unaccompanied children should benefit from the same services as national children taking into account their special needs.

Indicator 31.2: All unaccompanied children who have reached the age of majority should be able to continue the secondary education.

- **Additional remarks:** According to Article 14(1) RCD ‘Member State shall not withdraw secondary education for the sole reason that the minor has reached the age of majority’. Therefore, unaccompanied children who have reached the age of majority should be given the opportunity to continue their education beyond the compulsory period provisioned in the national legislation of the MS.

Indicator 31.3: Education is available outside the reception facility at a reasonable distance or inside the facility and if needed unaccompanied children are accompanied by staff or the representative.

- ***Additional remarks:*** *The transport costs should be covered by the daily expenses allowance or organised transport should be provided.*

Indicator 31.4: Unaccompanied children who attend school or other education arrangements are enabled to participate in compulsory national school trips.

- ***Additional remarks:*** *This could mean enabling unaccompanied children to participate in activities without curfews preventing them to do so.*

STANDARD 32: Ensure access to other education arrangements where access to the education system is temporarily not possible due to the specific circumstances in the EU+ States or the specific situation of unaccompanied children.

Indicator 32.1: Specific arrangements are in place where the education services are provided within the accommodation facilities or other suitable locations.

- ***Additional remarks:*** *Sufficient and adequate infrastructure, curriculum and trained staff for education activities are provided.*

Indicator 32.2: Specific arrangements are in place for unaccompanied children with special needs.

- ***Additional remarks:*** *Unaccompanied children with substantially reduced mobility should not be expected to access public schools by walking. Alternative education arrangements (e.g. home schooling, transportation, and accompaniment) or access to specialised educational structures should be provided in such cases.*

Good practice on access to the education system and other education arrangements

It is considered good practice to:

✓ Prepare schools, including curricula and teachers, to receive unaccompanied children. Equal treatment with nationals can sometimes lead to a situation in which the specific needs of unaccompanied children are not considered.

✓ Develop mechanisms for monitoring the access to education, data collection and ensuring mainstreaming in policy and practice at national level.

✓ Distribute unaccompanied children across local schools in order to avoid segregation.

✓ Involve civil society, including NGOs as providers of informal education, to facilitate interactions with local communities and understanding of local culture and customs.

✓ Raise the awareness of the relevant authorities of the obligation to provide access to education.

✓ Adjust of the system for children with special needs to the situation and specific needs of unaccompanied children.

✓ Provide special guidelines and training for teachers and education personal on identification of unaccompanied children with trauma.

✓ Provide support that takes account of combinations of vulnerabilities of the individual child.

✓ Develop the possibility for education activities in their own language.

✓ Enable the participation of the unaccompanied children who attend school or other education arrangements in extracurricular school activities.

✓ Provide counselling and psychological support for traumatised unaccompanied children within the school system by specialised staff.