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1.3 Representation

STANDARD 4: Ensure the appointment of a representative as soon as possible but no later than 15 working days after the application for international protection was made and enable the representative to provide assistance to unaccompanied children with actions related to their legal obligations.

Indicator 4.1: Ensure that the representative is able to verify if the accommodation and residential care arrangements are adequate for the children's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

Indicator 4.2: Enable the representative to report any issues to the reception staff providing housing to the unaccompanied children; involvement and consultation with cultural mediators should be provided, where appropriate.

Indicator 4.3: Enable the representative to provide the unaccompanied children with information on their rights and duties in relation to accommodation and material assistance and in this connection to assist the children to lodge a complaint where necessary.

Indicator 4.4: Enable the representative to verify if the unaccompanied children are informed about the role and responsibilities of the personnel and the caregivers in accommodation facilities.

Indicator 4.5: Enable the representative to verify that the unaccompanied children have effective access to the education system and that the children regularly attend classes.

Indicator 4.6: Enable the representative to promote the children's access to leisure activities, including play and recreational activities appropriate to their age, maturity and interests.

STANDARD 5: Ensure that legal advisers or counsellors, persons representing international organisations and relevant NGOs recognised by the EU+ State concerned have adequate access to reception structures in order to assist unaccompanied children.

Indicator 5.1: The access of the actors above is only limited on grounds relating to the security of the premises and of the unaccompanied children, provided that it is not thereby severely restricted or rendered impossible.

Indicator 5.2: The actors listed above are able to meet and speak with the unaccompanied children in conditions ensuring adequate privacy.

Standard 6: Ensure that a procedure is in place to start tracing [(20)] the members of the unaccompanied children's family as soon as possible after arrival and identification, where necessary with the assistance of international or other relevant organisations, whilst protecting the children's best interests.

Indicator 6.1: Reception authorities and/or other responsible staff and the representative initiate or start the family tracing based on the information given by the unaccompanied children and according to the best interests of the unaccompanied child.

- ***Additional remarks:*** *In cases where there may be a threat to the life or integrity of the unaccompanied child or their close relatives, particularly if they have remained in the country of origin, MS shall take care of necessary safeguards to ensure that the collection, processing and circulation of information concerning those persons is undertaken on a confidential basis, so as to avoid jeopardising their safety. Time for building a relationship of trust with the children is granted allowing the responsible officer to explain the obtain the minimum information needed to initiate the process as well as to assess children's best interests.*

- *A broader definition of family members is applied for tracing purposes taking into account the background of the children, the particular circumstances of dependency and their best interests.*

- *All the actors in contact with the children during the process, including the representative, should provide similar information to the children regarding the tracing process. It is crucial that the children perceive consistency in the information and understands that the primary aim of family tracing is to restore family links if it is in their best interests.*

- *The process should be undertaken on a confidential basis, and in particular no reference should be made as to the status of the children as an applicant for or a beneficiary of international protection during the family tracing process. Special consideration should be taken for unaccompanied children that are presumed or identified as victims of trafficking in human beings.*

(20) EASO, *Practical guide on family tracing*, 2016, available at https://www.easo.europa.eu/practical-tools