

**Child Protection Sub-Working Group**  
**28.11.2024 Minutes of Meeting**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Thursday, 28 November 2024 from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m., hybrid mode (at UNHCR premises and via Webex)</b>	
<b>Participants:</b>	GSVPIP/MMA, MoE, IOM, EUAA, UNHCR CO, UNHCR FUA, UNHCR SOL, WHO, GCR, METAdrasi, IRC Hellas, PRAKSIS, NCR, EPAPSY, ELIL, Velos Youth Center, The Smile of the Child, The Home Project, Vela Greece	
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>UNHCR: Theodora D. Tsovili (<a href="mailto:tsovili@unhcr.org">tsovili@unhcr.org</a>)</b>	
<b>Agenda</b>	<p>Activities provided for the <b>refugee youth in Greece</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates on child protection in the mainland (<b>pending from last meeting, UNHCR</b>)</li> <li>• Presentation of the guidance for employability for UAC, as updated by GSVPIP, reflecting the role of the guardian (<b>GSVPIP</b>)</li> <li>• Mapping tool of the youth activities in Greece (<b>UNHCR</b>)</li> <li>• Discussion on the potential initiation of a Task Force on Refugee Youth</li> </ul>	
<b>Updates on child protection in the mainland (UNHCR)</b>	<p><b>Interpretation services</b></p> <p>Interpretation services on the mainland are entirely absent across the 25 CFTAAs. In the 3 RICs (Evros, Diavata, Malakasa) and CCACs on the islands, interpretation is limited solely to registration procedures. On the islands' CCACs, apart from registration, asylum interviews are also being conducted, but the lack of interpreters creates significant delays.</p> <p>This gap significantly hinders the smooth operation of the facilities and disrupts refugees' and asylum seekers' access to services. Additionally, children and their families are unable to effectively communicate with the RIC staff, creating further challenges.</p> <p>Currently, there are 80 interpreters nationwide supporting RIS, sourced via the interim EUAA pool of interpreters, whereas the actual need is estimated to require 400 interpreters.</p> <p>On the mainland, service provision in areas such as vulnerabilities assessment or case management faces severe gaps. The Hippocrates project, which has deployed social workers, doctors, and psychologists, cannot effectively assist the population without interpretation services.</p>	<p><b>Action Points:</b> n/a</p>

As a result, refugees and asylum seekers on the mainland are unable to receive crucial information, and asylum interviews are postponed unless prioritized due to urgency by GAS and conducted via the EUAA's limited pool of eight interpreters.

This situation causes psychological distress among asylum seekers, especially as they are unable to receive clear updates or information about their status and next steps.

#### **Unaccompanied children (UAC)**

The UAC population in RIC Malakasa has risen to nearly 200. Additionally, 70 UAC have been transferred from Malakasa to Diavata, where there is no designated safe area, similar to the situation in Malakasa and this raised protection concerns.

The UAC population at these two sites primarily consists of UAC from Search and Rescue (SAR) operations or shipwreck survivors from Crete (Gavdos island) or Rhodes.

#### **Cash assistance**

Monthly cash assistance has not been provided since July 2024. This has exacerbated the financial difficulties faced by refugees and asylum seekers.

#### **Non-Formal Education activities**

Since the conclusion of the ACE project at the end of summer 2024, no other organizations have been providing non-formal education activities in the sites.

#### **Healthcare challenges and the Hippocrates Program**

The Hippocrates project is a positive development amidst these challenges. However, doctors are unable to make medical diagnoses or issue prescriptions for medication without interpretation services.

#### **Root Causes of Challenges**

The gaps in interpretation services and delays in the provision of monthly cash assistance stem from difficulties in ensuring an uninterrupted flow of funding to the implementing entities. These challenges are due to administrative burdens and bureaucracy both within the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and in coordination with other ministries.

**Presentation of the guidance for employability for UAC, as updated by GSVPIP, reflecting the role of the guardian (GSVPIP)**

The GSVPIP has received reports of UAC being engaged in informal labour under conditions unsuitable for children. These conditions may expose children to risks of human trafficking or labour exploitation.

**Sustainable Integration** of UAC through education and employment is critical, equipping children with skills and creating opportunities for career development, so they are not limited to unskilled labour roles. The goal is to provide structured vocational training for unaccompanied children and youth and help them acquire skills to achieve sustainable integration.

**Institutional Barriers:** One major institutional challenge is language proficiency in Greek. Moreover, enrolment in Vocational Training Schools (DYPA) requires a Gymnasium school diploma, which many UAC do not have.

GSVP is in discussions to amend the legal framework to accommodate the specific needs of refugee UAC and youth accessing education and employment opportunities. Mapping efforts are underway, in collaboration with shelters, to better understand the Greek language proficiency levels of UAC hosted in shelters.

**Helios Junior Program**

Target Group: Young adults aged 18-21, primarily former UAC, who meet the following criteria: legally residing in Greece, being self-sufficient and non-users of illegal substances

Capacity: 1,000 accommodation places available for up to 18 months.

Services Provided: Housing, integration services, financial assistance of €150 per month for 16 months.

Referrals are made through shelters, SILs, day centers, and similar organizations.

*(More information can be found in the attached presentation.)*

**PYXIDA Program**

Operation of five centers providing specialized services in the following locations: Athens (Syniparxis), Thessaloniki (Syniparxis), Larissa (Solidarity Now), Ioannina (Solidarity Now), Lesvos (Solidarity Now)

*(More information can be found in the attached presentation.)*

**Action Points:**

n/a

	<p><b>Legal Framework for UAC Employment</b></p> <p>The GSVPIP outlined the legal framework and provisions regarding child labour, including time limits for minors aged 15-18 to work, specific rights of working adolescents, prohibited activities and formal requirements for employment.</p> <p><i>(For information see attached updated letter from the GSVPIP with clarifications on employment for unaccompanied children dated in October 2024.)</i></p> <p>If these formal and substantive requirements are met, an unaccompanied minor over 15 years of age who is part of the National Guardianship System for Unaccompanied Minors (as per Law 4960/2022) may work with permission from the <b>Guardianship Council</b> for unaccompanied minors.</p> <p><i>(See attached documents for detailed steps on how to apply for such permission through the Guardianship Council, along with the application form shared by GSPV.)</i></p>	
<p><b>Mapping tool of the youth activities in Greece (UNHCR)</b></p>	<p><b>Collection via Online Questionnaire:</b> Utilizing the 4W Methodology (Who, What, Where, When), an online form has been designed to gather information on services and their locations.</p> <p><b>Scope of the Online Form:</b> The goal is to collect detailed data from state actors, NGOs, and IOs regarding services provided for refugee youth. This data will later be visualized to create a comprehensive referral pathway.</p> <p><b>Accessible Online Table:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an overview of available services.</li> <li>• Includes a detailed table with information from organizations that have completed the form.</li> <li>• Users can filter by type of service, location, and active actors to identify relevant resources.</li> <li>• Includes additional details such as contact information, operating hours, and the languages in which services are offered.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mapping View:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers a synopsis of the collected data in an easily interpretable format.</li> <li>• Updated in real-time based on new inputs to ensure accuracy and relevance.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNHCR will share an email with CPsWG members with instructions on how to complete the form and upload information to the mapping tool.</li> <li>• Each organization will designate focal persons who will be granted access to manage the data of the mapping tool.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Next Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An email will be sent with instructions on how to complete the form and upload information to the mapping tool.</li> <li>• The process is password-protected, with designated Focal Persons in each organization granted access to manage the data.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Discussion on the potential initiation of a Task Force on Refugee Youth</b></p>	<p>The CPsWG chair proposed the initiation of a Task Force on Refugee Youth, which would involve stakeholders, including state authorities, NGOs, and IOs providing services for the sustainable integration of youth.</p>	<p><b>Action Points:</b> UNHCR, as the chair of the CPsWG, will reach out to GSVPIP to coordinate the next steps and organize the first Task Force on Refugee youth meeting.</p>
<p><b>AOB</b></p>	<p>The next CPsWG meeting will take place in January 2025. The exact date and time will be confirmed.</p>	<p><b>Action Points:</b> n/a</p>