



Agenda ERPUM Final Conference, Stockholm, Sweden, 22 November 2012

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| 09.00 – 10.00 | Registration and coffee |
| 10.00 – 10.30 | Welcome
<i>Mr Anders Danielsson, Director-General for the Swedish Migration Board</i> |
| | Opening speech
<i>H.E. Mr T Billström, Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, Ministry of Justice, Sweden and H.E. Dr J Anwary, Migration Minister, Afghanistan</i> |
| 10.30 - 11.00 | ERPUM – European Return Platform for Unaccompanied Minors
<i>Ms Susanne Bäckstedt, Swedish Migration Board, Project Manager, ERPUM</i> |
| 11.00 – 11.20 | Coffee break |
| 11.20 – 12.30 | IOM and the EU member states cooperation in Afghanistan -
Challenges with negotiations in third countries
<i>Mr Marco Boasso, IOM Chief of Mission Afghanistan,
Mr Simon Bentley, Joost van Lammeren, Shahrokh Vahabzadeh and
Ulrik Åshuvud, ERPUM senior advisors.</i> |
| 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch |
| 13.30 – 14.20 | Return and the challenge of best interest of the child
<i>Ms Christine Mougne, senior advisor and independent consultant</i> |
| 14.20 – 14.50 | ERPUM Tracing Contact Points Team
<i>Mr Eddy Bakker, Roger Lidberg, Ben Nicholson and Ms Guro Stenersen,</i> |
| 14.50 – 15.10 | Coffee break |
| 15.10 – 15.50 | Panel discussion led by Ms Ophelia Elliot, UKBA
<i>Ms Christine Mougne, Mr Jan Saver, Policy Officer European Commission, Ms
Andrea Vonkeman, Senior Policy Officer UNHCR and ERPUM TCR
representative</i> |
| 15.50 – 16.00 | Closing and concluding remarks
<i>Ms Susanne Bäckstedt, Swedish Migration Board, Project Manager ERPUM</i> |

Since the launch of the EU Action Plan, figures show that the arrival of unaccompanied minors to Europe is not a temporary phenomenon. In 2010 there were 10,845 and in 2011 there were 12,225¹ asylum applications from unaccompanied minors across the 27 EU Member States.

There are many reasons of why young people are leaving their home country. Some are fleeing armed conflicts, discrimination and persecution. Many minors do not leave of their own free will and may have come under pressure to migrate to Europe from their parents, other family members or wider community. The opportunity to gain work, find educational opportunities or receive social benefits are other factors in the decision to migrate. Families will often have paid considerable sums of money to traffickers and people smugglers to arrange their child's journey to Europe and will expect that money to be repaid once the minor has become established in the particular European country.

Many unaccompanied minors arriving to Europe have encountered severe complications during their journey. Therefore it is necessary to improve an understanding of what happens to the minors once they are within the EU territory. Some unaccompanied minors arrive as victims of human trafficking destined for exploitation.

In some Member States unaccompanied minors arrive predominately as asylum seekers. In Sweden for example the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking minors have increased consistently every year from 1,510 in 2008 to 2,655 in 2011². Figures from the other ERPUM countries show an influx to the Netherlands during 2011 of 485, the UK 1275³ and Norway 858⁴.

ERPUM in cooperation with two countries – Afghanistan and Iraq

The basis of the work in ERPUM is to build close cooperation between some European countries, establishing a policy platform that enables systems to be developed that can return minors to their home countries in a way that safeguards their welfare and best interests. To do this there needs to be a requirement for continuous engagement and cooperation with countries of origin and transit.

The EU action plan states that "there is a need for a greater coherence and cooperation within the EU member states as well as with countries of origin and transit. This EU common approach should be based on the respect for the rights of the child"⁵.

The work in the project ERPUM has focused on two third countries Afghanistan and Iraq. The Third Country Relations team has conducted missions to both Afghanistan and Iraq. The core aim of the delegation trips has been to research possibilities for reception and reintegration of returning unaccompanied minors through dialogue with third countries governments, as well as with international organizations and non-governmental organizations. The focus is primarily on family reunification. The work of ERPUM is based on the premises that the Governments of Afghanistan and Iraq are (legally) responsible for minors who cannot immediately be reunified with their families on arrival back in their countries. These Governments therefore need to take overall "ownership" of the care systems that need to be put in place in order to ensure their long term sustainability.

¹ Eurostat

² Mid-term report on the implementation of the EU Action Plan on Unaccompanied minors, EC 28.9.2012, 554 final.

³ Eurostat

⁴ Norwegian Directorate of Immigration

⁵ EU Action Plan 2010 -2014

The Tracing Contact Point team has conducted discussions at a regular basis during the project period where the core aim has been to reflect and focus on different experiences in the field of family tracing and return in connection to the countries of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Workshops on tracing and sharing of best practices have been arranged where staff from the different ERPUM migration offices have participated.

Conference objectives

The objectives for the work in ERPUM have been based on the guidelines from the EU Action Plan and other EU directives and regulations. There are three main topics which will be presented and discussed during the conference.

Cooperation with third countries

ERPUM has developed a model for reception and reintegration assistance for returning minors to Afghanistan. Some of the fine detail of the model cannot yet be shared because of on-going discussions with the Afghan government, but the essential elements reflect the principles set out in the UNHCR Aide Memoire issued in August 2010.

Negotiations with the Iraqi government and relevant authorities are also an ongoing process where ERPUM has managed to identify ways forward concerning tracing. Direct cooperation with tracing has been initiated in a number of cases.

The model concerning Afghanistan does not seek to create entirely new child centred support and care arrangements, but builds on existing reception and reintegration facilities for other categories of migrants returning to Afghanistan from Europe – adapting and enhancing them to meet the particular needs to the target group (males between 15 -18). The model also seeks to complement ongoing efforts to support vulnerable minors in Afghanistan – in cooperation with different stakeholders, international organizations and non- governmental organizations. The relevant government entities involved are the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Key questions for discussions are:

1. What should be the role for the relevant governments in reception and reintegration of minors returning to their countries of origin?
2. How can accommodation and legal guardianship arrangements be made to work within the different country of origin legal system? (Afghanistan and Iraq)
3. Which model for return, reception and reintegration would be most suitable in the Afghan context?

Tracing as a method for family reunification

The EU Action Plan declares that *“it is likely that in many cases the best interest of the child is to be reunited with his/her family and to grow up in his/her own social and cultural environment, Member*

States should be encouraged to develop innovative partnership solutions with third countries of origin and transit...⁶

An understanding of the situation for every individual minor must be taken into consideration when handling the asylum application in the host country. Experiences from discussions about the tracing process will be elaborated at the conference. Furthermore the organizational role for the host country as coordinating with authorities, transmitting messages and verifying identities of parents / relatives and contacting local facilitators, such as different local organizations in Afghanistan and Iraq will be also be high-lighted.

1. What challenges do host countries encounter in working with family tracing?
2. How can family tracing work in circumstances where there may be little incentive for minors and their families to co-operate with the process?

Return and the best interest of the child

The return of unaccompanied minors to their country of origin should only be after a final decision confirming that they are not in need of international protection. However decisions to return also need to respect the principle of the best interest of the child.

1. How do the participating states work with “the best interest of the child “during the return process?
2. To what extent does the principle of best interests need to be balanced by other factors?

Target groups

The conference will be visited by H.E Minister of Migration for Afghanistan and the Swedish Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy, Ministry of Justice. Several senior managers from the different ERPUM countries will participate as well as international experts working in the specialized area of unaccompanied minors.

Expected outcomes

- Presentation of the results from the ERPUM project
- Serve as a forum for changing of experiences and lessons learned among participants.
- Identifying key areas where synergies can be found between different stakeholders and suggestions for achievable durable solutions for unaccompanied minors which must return to their country of origin.
- Conclusions and recommendations on the way forward for the second phase of ERPUM starting in January 2013.

⁶ EU Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010 -2014)

European Return Platform for Unaccompanied Minors, ERPUM

Background

In the EU Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors launched in May 2010, it is stated that there is a need of an EU common approach and activities to directly and indirectly address the specific situation of unaccompanied minors arriving to Europe.

The Swedish Migration Board (SMB) applied during 2010 to the European Commission, The Return Fund for financial support to initiate the project European Return Platform for Unaccompanied Minors (ERPUM). The project is a cooperation between the EU partner countries Swedish Migration Board (SMB), United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA), Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI).

Starting date of the project 15th January 2011 and the end date is decided to 31st December 2012.

Humane and orderly return

The ERPUM project focuses on humane and orderly return of unaccompanied minors that need to return after a final negative decision (rejection) has been received on the asylum application. In order to accomplish the objectives for the project, ERPUM will provide a basis for direct cooperation between a number of EU Member States and with third countries authorities in the practical work in returning unaccompanied minors primarily to their parents/-guardians or other forms of organized reception in the country of origin.

Program definitions and project key milestones

- Agreements and/or arrangements on tracing and organized reception with at least two third countries in place.
- Methods identified for direct cooperation on tracing and other forms of cooperation with third countries on returns of unaccompanied minors.
- A cooperation between the ERPUM partner countries in the field of tracing.
- A study of the participating Member States reintegration programmes shall be completed.
- A digital log book developed and established as a tool for on-line support and communication between the participating EU Member States.
- A dialogue together with the selected third countries on formal processes in the EU and about actual cases on unaccompanied minors reintegration and reunion with their families.
- EU seminar of the main results and experiences of the project disseminated and communicated.

ERPUM main actors and tools

To accomplish the negotiations with third countries as well as find new solutions for tracing of parents and also to be able to cooperate with the local NGOs and other institutions, the project is composed on different components.



The Project Management is managing the ERPUM project by leading, coordinating and is accountable for the finances. The project management is a Swedish team consisting of a project manager, finance officer and an administration officer.

The Third Country Relations team (TCR) which consists of one senior representative from each country the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK. The team will negotiate and establish direct cooperation with third countries authorities. The work which will be carried out of the team is based on different actual experiences from the participating EU Member States. The team will also make use of the knowledge and assistance of different international organizations such as IOM and UNHCR which already are in place.

Tracing Contact Points team (TCP) is established for the exchange of experience and direct cooperation in tracing of parents of unaccompanied minors. The team consists of one representative from each ERPUM country. The TCP team will focus particularly on methods of tracing of parents/guardians. The TCP team is also sharing the latest developments in methods and forms of tracing.

In addition to the TCP team each ERPUM country has appointed two case officers which also should be involved and take part in the tracing workshops for the project.

Local facilitators are established for cooperation between the ERPUM countries and national staff already in place. The local facilitators will also assist in upholding the different forms of cooperation negotiated and agreed by the third country relations team i.e. tracing of parents.

A digital platform, a log book is created, the ERPUM log book. The overall aim is to continue to create a digital platform which can facilitate the work between ERPUM partner countries and be used as a tool for administration where different agreements, statistics, models and other relevant information can be coordinated for the partners in the project. It will also serve as an on-line tool for the ERPUM partner countries exchanging of information on a continuous basis. The log book is not including any personal data.

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BIOS

European Return Platform for Unaccompanied Minors ERPUM Conference, 22 November 2012 Stockholm, Sweden

Third Country Relations Team (TCR)

Simon Bentley

Simon Bentley is the Head of Operational Policy for Asylum Support in the UK Border Agency. He has many years experience of asylum and migration issues, including policy work on safeguarding unaccompanied minors and how their best interests should be considered in decision making.

Susanne Bäckstedt

Project Manager for ERPUM , Swedish Migration Board. Earlier positions as national integration expert at Swedish Ministry of Education, positions as senior adviser in human rights, gender and education for 15 years. International positions in Bosnia & Herzegovina, and special adviser for EU in Kosovo.

Ophelia Elliott

Head of Returns, Unaccompanied Minors at the UK Border Agency. Policy functions include best interests, family tracing and return and reintegration. Prior to this, she led on the policy provisions for the accommodation and support of destitute asylum seekers, failed asylum seekers and their children. She has worked in the field of asylum and migration for over 10 years.

Joost van Lammeren

Has been working in the field of migration for over 10 years. Having started as a case manager with the immigration service and with previous positions at policy level, he is currently policy advisor at the Repatriation and Departure Service. In this function he coordinates the division for strategic relations management. The division is responsible for enhancing cooperation to return on the part of the authorities of countries of origin, the focal countries are Afghanistan and Iraq.

Shahrokh Vahabzadeh

Head of Transit Division at the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration. Long experience in the fields of migration and integration as well as establishing reception centres based on tendering. Good

insight into work related to unaccompanied minors and vulnerable asylum seekers. Intimate knowledge of efforts done pertaining both to voluntary and involuntary return.

Ulrik Ashuvud

Senior Adviser/Development Manager for Return and Detention at the Swedish Migration Board (SMB). Earlier positions as Head of Reception Unit and Chief of Staff for European and International Cooperation in SMB, Deputy Director at the Swedish Ministry of Justice, Justice and Home Affairs Counselor in Brussels and Founder/Managing Director of JustDevelop.

Tracing Contact Points team (TCP)

Eddy Bakker

Supervisor Special Departures at the Division Special Departures for the Dutch Repatriation and Departure Service. Has been working in the field of migration for over 15 years now. Started as a legal representative with the immigration service, caseworker residence permits and since the immigration service is divided in an immigration service and a departure service working in the field of voluntary and forced return.

Jan van Boekhout

Started, after many years abroad, in the field of migration some 20 years ago as a repatriation officer in the first detention center for illegals, became a case manager and later senior officer at the Immigration Service. Is a senior staff officer since the start of the Repatriation and Departure Service in 2007, started at the Directorate for Expulsion and Detention, currently working at the Directorate for Repatriation Facilitation. Coordinated the detention of UAMs and the establishment of the first family center. He now focuses more on how family tracing is conducted and how the results of tracing are processed.

Roger Lidberg

Work in reception unit in Gothenburg. Has been working with unaccompanied minors since 2000 and return since 2003. Participated in various return projects, both for adults and unaccompanied minors. Representative in the Swedish Migration Board coordination group for Returns.

Ben Nicholson

Senior Executive Officer within the UK Border Agency. He currently delivers a range of asylum training to case officers. Prior to this he lead on the UK Border Agency's age assessment policy and was heavily involved in other UAM policy issues.

Guro Stenersen

Senior Adviser at the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI). She is currently working in the special unit for children, Department of Asylum. Previously, she has held a position as a special envoy for immigration issues to Sri Lanka and has experience of family-tracing in the field.

Guest speakers

Marco Boasso

Marco Tulio Boasso (born in 1962 in Montevideo, Uruguay) currently serves as the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) Special Envoy and Chief of Mission in Afghanistan. He was appointed to this position by IOM Director General in March 2009.

His other posts at IOM include Deputy Regional Representative for Central America and the Caribbean based out of Costa Rica; Senior Officer of the Division of Programme Support at Headquarters; Chief of Operations in Guatemala responsible for the return and reintegration of former combatants of the National Revolutionary Unit of Guatemala and refugees; Chief of Operations in Iraq; Program Manager in Haiti for the return and reintegration of vulnerable populations as well as demobilized members of the Armed Forces of Haiti.

Prior to his IOM career, Boasso worked for the Organization of American States (OAS) as Chief of Operations for the return and reintegration of refugees and those displaced by the armed conflict in Nicaragua. He was actively involved in the implementation of the Peace Accord of Central American Presidents in the region.

Boasso obtained his law degree from the Universidad de la Republica del Uruguay in 1988 and his Masters of Arts in Peace Building from the University of Coventry in the UK.

Christine Mougne

Dr Christine Mougne is a social anthropologist with thirty years' experience in working with unaccompanied refugee and asylum-seeking children. In the early 1980s she worked for Save the Children Fund (UK) and Refugee Action with young Vietnamese resettled in the UK. This was followed by a 23-year career with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, during which she served in SE Asia, and Central and West Africa. As Senior Regional Community Services Officer in SE Asia she was responsible for developing special procedures to determine durable solutions in the best interest of unaccompanied children from Vietnam and for regional coordination of these procedures. Since leaving the refugee agency, she has acted as a consultant on many projects for UNHCR, the UK Border Agency and other organisations, dealing with unaccompanied asylum seeking children in Europe. In 2010 she led a review of unaccompanied Afghan children in Europe¹ and more recently conducted research for the development of the UNHCR/UNICEF Guidance on determining the best interests of the child in industrialised countries.

Andrea Vonkeman

Andrea Vonkeman has a master's degree in international law from Amsterdam University and started working with UNHCR in 1995 in the Great Lakes region in Africa. From then she worked in various capacities for UNHCR in West Africa, Asia, East Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and currently as Senior Policy Officer at the Policy and Legal Support Unit at the Europe Bureau in Brussels. In the Europe Bureau one of her Portfolios includes unaccompanied and separated children.

¹ Trees only move in the Wind. A study of unaccompanied Afghan children in Europe.
Christine Mougne. UNHCR/PDES/2010/05 June 2010

Jan Saver**Studies:**

2002: Applied Economics, University of Ghent, Belgium.

2003: MA in European Studies, CIFE, Nice, France.

2003-2005: Political Science and International Relations, Bosphorus University, Istanbul, Turkey. (2 year programme, unfinished)

Work experience

2005: Trainee, European Commission, DG Enlargement

2006-2008: Consultant, Accenture, Public Sector consulting 2008-now: European Commission, DG Home Affairs

2008-2012: planning and programming officer: development of the 2nd generation Schengen Information System

As from 1 June 2012: policy officer: Legal migration, economic aspects of migration, negotiations on proposed directive on intra-corporate transferees; follow-up of action plan on unaccompanied minors



**ERPUM I Final Conference, Stockholm, Sweden
Participants list
22 November 2012**

Belgium	
Ms. Stefanie Defoer	Attaché, Belgium Immigration Office
Denmark	
Ms. Sidsel Kathrine Møller	Special Legal Advisor, Ministry of Justice
Netherlands	
Mr. Joost van Lammeren	ERPUM Senior Advisor, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
Mr. Jan van Boekhout	TCP Member, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
Mr. Eddy Bakker	Former TCP Member, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
Norway	
Mr. Cato Næverdal	Attaché, Norwegian Embassy, Kabul
Mr. Shahrokh Vahabzadeh	ERPUM Senior Advisor, Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)
Ms. Guro Stenersen	TCP Member, Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)
Ms. Line Schei Mogenstad	Head of Section A, Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)
Ms. Marie Holten	TCO Member, Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)
Ms. Rita Helene Bolstad	Advisor, Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)
Ms. Stine Mürter	Senior Advisor, Ministry of Justice
United Kingdom	
Mr. Simon Bently	ERPUM Senior Advisor, UK Border Agency
Ms. Ophelia Elliot	ERPUM Senior Advisor, UK Border Agency
Mr. Adrian Trigg	Senior Caseworker, UK Border Agency
Mr. Ben Nicholson	TCP Member, UK Border Agency
Mr. Paul Cooper	Asylum Case-Owner, UK Border Agency
European Asylum Support Office (EASO)	
Ms. Helen-Marie Fraher	Expert

European Commission	
Mr. Jan Saver	Policy Officer
IOM	
Mr. Marco Boasso	Chief of Mission Afghanistan
Ms. Ana Fonseca	Senior Specialist
UNHCR	
Ms. Andrea Vonkeman	Senior Policy Officer, Brussels
Ms. Karolina Lindholm Billing	Senior Regional Legal Office, Stockholm
Guest speaker	
Ms. Christine Mougne	Senior Advisor
Ministry of Justice, Sweden	
Ms. Johanna Peyron	Deputy Director
Ms. Annika Kempas	Desk Officer
Embassy of Sweden, Kabul	
H.E. Mr. Peter Semneby	Ambassador
Save the Children Sweden	
Ms. Mikaela Hagan	Programme officer child protection
Swedish Red Cross	
Ms. Ewa Jonsson	Project manager
Swedish Prison and Probation Service	
Mr. Marko Lepistö	REVA Project
Swedish Migration Board	
Mr. Anders Danielsson	Director-General
Ms. Caroline Henjered	Director of Division for Reception
Mr. Ulrik Åshuvud	Acting Head of Coordination for Internal Development
Mr. Anders Rydén	COI Analyst
Ms. Ann Nordberg	Expert
Ms. Claudia Morner	Head of Unit for International Strategies
Mr. Fabio Santa	Case Officer
Ms. Eva-Katarina Ekermann	Project Manager
Mr. Fredrik Bengtsson	Head of Unit for External Communication
Mr. Johan Jönsson	Head of Reception Unit
Mr. Kjell-Terje Torvik	Expert
Ms. Kristina Kranjcevic	Expert
Mr. Magnus Edalen	Senior Migration Officer
Mr. Mårten Koch	Case Officer
Mr. Niclas Axelsson	Expert
Ms. Katarina Wåhlgren	Expert, Division for Reception

