

Child protection systems in EU

Project description

The promotion and protection of the rights of the child is one of the objectives of the EU on which the Treaty of Lisbon has put further emphasis. Notably, Article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union today explicitly requires the EU to promote the protection of the rights of the child. The rights of the child are furthermore enshrined in Article 24 of the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**. In addition all EU Member States ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The **EU Agenda for the rights of the child** (2011), adopted to ensure the effectiveness of children's rights and to step up efforts in protecting and promoting the rights of the child. It contains actions to protect children when they are vulnerable and are subject to or at risk of violations of their rights.

In the course of the implementation of the Agenda the legislative framework has evolved with the adoption, among others, of the **EU Anti-trafficking Directive**, the **EU Victims' Directive** and the **Directive on Sexual exploitation of children**, where specific provisions for the protection of children are enshrined.

Furthermore, the 2013 Commission **Recommendation on investing in children** took a comprehensive view of child protection issues and placed a strong focus on early intervention and preventive measures. In a broader context, several Member States are currently engaged in reforming their child protection systems. Member States are called to strengthen their child protection systems and address the needs of the most vulnerable.

In the **EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012–2016** (COM (2012) 286 final), is provided that "Comprehensive child-sensitive protection systems that ensure interagency and multidisciplinary coordination are key in catering to diverse needs of diverse groups of children, including victims of trafficking to better protect children, the Commission will in 2014 fund the development of guidelines on child protection systems".

FRA has been requested to support the Commission in developing child protection guidelines by providing a mapping of child protection systems in EU.

More specifically, the FRA will review child protection systems in place in the 28 EU Member States.

The research will cover the general scope and the **key components** of the national child protection systems: **structures** and **functions** and their **interactions**. Moreover the review will examine the **normative context** in which child protection systems operate, more precisely the existing legal framework, and the manner in which these systems engage on priority issues of direct concern to both EU and national policies.

The research aims also to offer a snapshot of the specific ways in which the child protection systems respond to child rights violations and of the procedures in place in this regard (the process of care: identification, reporting, referral mechanisms, assessment, intervention and follow-up). Furthermore, the research will identify the actors involved and their assigned roles. It will also focus on key features of interagency and multidisciplinary cooperation and coordination.

The feature of transnational cooperation and coordination will be particularly addressed, given the EU specific role in relation to it. Depending on the identified needs, the project may also cover other elements of child protection systems such as: monitoring and accountability mechanisms (data collection, quality standards, communication with stakeholders etc.) and capacities (human resources, financial resources, existent infrastructure etc.

Objectives

The **main objective** of the research is to provide a mapping of the child protection systems in place in the 28 EU Member States.

Other **specific objectives** are:

- To identify the general scope, the structures and functions of the child protection systems in place in the 28 EU Members States
- To provide information on interagency cooperation and describe how diverse needs of diverse groups of children are addressed.
- To provide information on transnational cooperation of child protection systems
- To identify and prioritise opportunities for the EU to support child protection systems

Beneficiaries and target groups

- European Union institutions and agencies;
- EU Member States

Activities and results achieved so far

- Research conducted in 2013 on guardianship systems for children victims of trafficking in EU 28
- Research conducted in 2012-2014 on children and justice
- Research conducted in 2012-13 on children with disability
- Research conducted on victim support services (on going)
- Up-coming work of the Agency on child poverty

Planned activities in 2013

- To collect (desk research) and analyse data covering 28 EU Member States

Planned outputs in 2013

- Reports on child protection systems (June 2014)
- Contribution to the preparation of the EU guidelines on child protection systems

FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES ALLOCATED TO THE PROJECT - PRIORITY B: FRANET, Report of Various Sizes , EU 28, estimated budget: 270.000

	Temporary Agents	Contract Agents	Seconded National Experts	Total	Budget 2013 (first priority)
Research and stakeholder cooperation	0.25	-	0.50	0.75	€ 350.000
Communication awareness-raising	-	-	-	-	-
Total	0.25		0.50	0.75	€ 350.000