

# Chapter Twelve

## Experiences from Turkey

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### **Overall National Context, Facts, and Legal Basis**

#### ***Supporting Unaccompanied Minors in Transition to Adulthood in Turkey***

The protracted conflict in Syria has displaced more than 7 million people since 2011, mostly towards the neighbouring countries, leading Turkey to face an immense acceleration in mass immigration. As of April 2021, Turkey is the top refugee hosting country in the world. Until the Syrian crisis, asylum seekers in Turkey were mainly irregular migrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Iran, Iraq, and other countries who were in search of international protection, either in the European States or in Turkey. As the civil war in Syria is in its 10th year, most refugees in Turkey are those coming from the Syrian border, mainly of Syrian origin.

The Directorate General of Migration Management, established in 2013 as the main official institution responsible for migration in Turkey publishes detailed statistical information on Syrian refugees distributed by age and gender. Syrian nationals are entitled to temporary protection status. Number of Syrian refugee population aged between 0-18 who are under temporary protection is 1,778,628 within a total population of 3,747,734 (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2021). The number of young Syrian refugee adults who are under temporary protection aged between 19-24 is 480,239 (12.8%).<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, refugees coming from other countries are eligible for international protection status in Turkey, and the number of applications has decreased over the past few

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638>.

years. The number of applications varied from 114,537 in 2018, 56,417 in 2019, to 31,334 in 2020.<sup>2</sup> The majority of the applicants come from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran.

Refugee children separated from their parents or left unaccompanied have a higher vulnerability among children in need of protection and statistics regarding them is critically important (Atasü Topçuoğlu, 2013; Gönültaş, 2017). In Turkey, the majority of Syrian children who escaped but have lost their parents due to war are separated and protected within the Syrian community whereas those minors coming from other countries like Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran are given the status of unaccompanied and are protected by the State in terms of institutional care. Separate statistics on separated or unaccompanied minors is not publicised. Unaccompanied minors have mainly two options, the first option being registered legally, on their own free will or by authorities in Turkey, and the second one staying unregistered, regarding Turkey as a transit country. The numbers of those who choose the first option are officially followed even if not publicised, whereas the number of those who choose the second option and get in touch with illegal traffickers without entering the Turkish system in order to continue their way towards Western countries is not clearly known (Karataş et al., 2014). Yet, the numbers of applicants heading to European countries who are considered to be unaccompanied minors have decreased in the previous years.<sup>3</sup>

The official number of UAMS in Turkey from 2005 to 2012 had been 876 (Atasü Topçuoğlu, 2013). In 2018, a sub-committee of Refugee Rights under the Committee of Investigation of Human Rights of Grand National Assembly of Turkey was established to focus on migration in Turkey. The Migration and Harmonisation Report prepared by this sub-committee stated that the number of UAMS accommodated within Child Support Centres of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies of Turkey (MFSP) was 288, of those with foster parents was 8 and of those supported socio-economically within families was 450 (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, 2018). The Report provided that among Syrian children living in camps, 3,969 children were separated from their fathers and 390 from their mothers. The number of those who were separated from both parents had been 290. In urban places, the number

<sup>2</sup> <https://en.goc.gov.tr/international-protection17>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00194/default/map?lang=en>.

of Syrian children accompanied by only one parent was 53,253, among whom 85% were separated from their fathers (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, 2018).

Turkey has put considerable efforts in supporting refugee population as far as inclusion in health, education and employment is concerned. The EU-Turkey refugee agreement established in 2016 led Turkey to take restrictive security measures on the borders on the one hand and to provide refugees with help in the field of social security on the other, but challenges regarding social inclusion continue. Turkish society has a rather negative view of refugees. After four years of agreement on refugees between Turkey and the EU, the Turkish government announced an open borders policy for refugees on their way to Europe in February 2020. However, by mid-March, the number of migrants and refugees at the border areas decreased due to the threat of Covid-19 and measures were taken to prevent spreading.

In terms of Covid-19, containment measures were introduced, among them closing schools and public places, cancelling social activities, and recommending all residents to stay at home as much as possible. There had been more restrictions for citizens below 20 and above 65 years of age. Movement between cities was restricted and everyone coming from abroad had been quarantined for two weeks. Even if the restriction measures had been eased by March 2021, wearing masks and social distancing in public places is still mandatory, schools are giving hybrid education and the vaccination process is continuing. As of the end of March 2021, the total number of Covid-19 cases had reached 3,208,173, with the number of deaths of 31,076 and 2,957,093 recoveries reported.<sup>4</sup>

Separate statistics for the number of refugees that have contracted Covid-19 are not publicised, but the pandemic measures are difficult to implement in crowded households, where the pandemic affected access to livelihood opportunities considerably. In Turkey, temporary or international protection statuses enable refugees to access a range of free public services, including education, health care and employment but the pandemic certainly exacerbated their vulnerability. Several studies provide that there has been insufficient access to health or education services, loss of employment and difficulties with paying rent and access to livelihoods (SGDD-ASAM, 2020; Concern Worldwide, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> <https://covid19.saglik.gov.tr/TR-66935/genel-koronavirus-tablosu.html>.

***National Legislation***

UAMS and separated children are regarded as children in need of protection in Turkey by law. Turkish constitution and other relevant private laws involve measures concerning protection of children. Article 61 of Turkish Constitution guarantees that the state takes all kinds of measures for social resettlement of children in need of protection. Children whose physical, spiritual, moral development or personal security are under threat and who may lack both or one of their parents are classified as children in need of protection in the Law of Social Services (*Sosyal Hizmetler Kanunu*, 1983, Art. 3). All children, regardless of their nationality, are entitled to their rights according to Turkey's Child Protection (*Çocuk Koruma Kanunu*, 2005), which also addresses the protection needs of UAMS. UAMS who come to Turkey through irregular migration and request international protection are provided services by MFSPT in line with the protective and supportive measures judged by the relevant courts in line with Turkey's Child Protection Law.

Article 66 of Law on Foreigners and International Protection (*Yabancılar ve Uluslararası Koruma Kanunu*, 2013) orders that the principle of 'best interests of the child' shall be observed in all decisions concerning unaccompanied minor applicants. An UAM is defined as 'a child who arrives at Turkey without the attendance of an adult who by law or custom is responsible for him/her or, is left unaccompanied after entry into Turkey, unless he/she is not taken under the active care of a person responsible for him/her' and UAMS are among the 'persons with special need' (Art 3). Hence the Law on Foreigners and International Protection defines UAMS as children who enter Turkey without the attendance of a responsible adult or who are left unaccompanied after entering Turkey. The Law on Foreigners and International Protection (*Yabancılar ve Uluslararası Koruma Kanunu*, 2013) and Temporary Protection Regulation (*Geçici Koruma Yönetmeliği*, 2014), guarantee refugees and asylum-seekers access to education, health care and social services upon registration. When an unaccompanied child is identified, the best interests of the child principle is taken into consideration with respect to relevant provisions of Turkey's Child Protection Law (*Çocuk Koruma Kanunu*, 2005, Art. 66). Article 66 of Law on Foreigners and International Protection also states that the child applicant is referred to an appropriate accommodation facility, the MFSPT taking his views into consideration. The prior age exception, stipulating those children above 16 could be placed in reception or accommo-

dation shelters has been amended in the Law on Foreigners and International Protection in 2019, stating that all children under 18 would be protected under facilities of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services keeping reservation for an age assessment if physical appearance is not compatible with the age declared (Bazı Kanunlarda ve 375 Sayılı Kanun Hükmünde Kararnamede Değişiklik Yapılmasına dair Kanun, 2019).

The Temporary Protection Regulation (Geçici Koruma Yönetmeliği, 2014) which regulates rights and services for Syrian refugees provides that unaccompanied children shall be treated in accordance with relevant child protection legislation and in consideration of the ‘best interests’ principle (art. 48). Regarding the family reunification, the Regulation states that family unification steps shall be initiated without delay without the need for the unaccompanied child to make a request. According to TPR, unaccompanied children are mainly housed in MFSP T shelters but may also be placed in Temporary Accommodation Centres if appropriate conditions can be ensured.

There is also a 2015 MFSP T Directive on Protection of Unaccompanied Children which regulates the rights and services unaccompanied minors can benefit from (Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı Çocuk Hizmetleri Genel Müdürlüğü Refakatsiz Çocuklar Yönergesi, 2015). According to the Directive, all health expenses are covered under the State Social Security and Health Insurance Law (Sosyal Sigortalar ve Genel Sağlık Sigortası Kanunu, 2006). All the unaccompanied minors who are accepted by an institution or a unit are vaccinated. School age children’s right to access to public schools is also guaranteed and the Directive underlines that children are offered unpaid Turkish courses and given pocket money by the state. Children’s right to be informed in a language that they can understand is also stated.

There are several other important aspects of the Directive. It states that after having consulted child’s views and wishes, the child can be accommodated with a family which has the same origins as the child (art. 5). Hence, unaccompanied, or separated children could be protected and taken care under home based arrangements by this regulation. However, regular supervisions by MFSP T and independent inspections gain importance to preserve the best interests of the child in this regard.

Article 6 of the Directive states that until the age assessment process results, the minors would be settled in reception centres or shelters ac-

according to their physical & psychological development. However, physical & psychological development may not give accurate information about the age of the child. Some children's ages cannot be determined as most either do not bring identity documents or those documents are not reliable. When they appear to be older, age-determining tests should be carried out (Tunç Kaçar, 2020). Moreover, unaccompanied minors may appear older than their age physically and psychologically due to the challenging life experiences they have but still their childhood and their destiny may only depend on the unreliable guess by the migration officers regarding childhood (Crawley, 2010).

Turkish Civil Code states that all children under state protection must be assigned a guardian who is responsible for protecting their interests and represent them legally (Türk Medeni Kanunu, 2001). The assignment of guardians is carried out by Peace Courts of Civil Jurisdiction and guardianship matters are thereafter overseen by Civil Courts of General Jurisdiction. A guardian is an adult 'competent to fulfil the requirements of guardianship, not engaged in an immoral life-style and not having a conflict of interest or hostility against the child in question.' Relatives are given priority. In practice, UNHCR, NGO or staff of the Family, Labour and Social Services Ministry are appointed as guardians for UAMS. As a rule, a guardian is appointed for 2 years and may be reappointed for two more.

Issues concerning UAMS are codified under Turkish law as well as in international treaties Turkey has ratified. Turkey is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that upholds the states responsible for taking appropriate measures for providing appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance for unaccompanied minors along with other children. Turkey has ratified the Conventions below, which foresee protection for children in general along with refugee and asylum-seeking children and UAMS:

- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
- Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC)
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure
- Council of Europe Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (CETS 201)

- Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS 197)
- Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS 210)

### Key Coordinating Actors

The Interior Ministry of Turkey (IMT), DGMMT and MFSPT are the main responsible state institutions concerning UAMS. In MFSPT, the Social Rehabilitation Office is coordinating issues regarding UAMS and in DGMMT, Irregular Migration, Temporary Protection and Human Trafficking Departments are working in this field.

The police under IMT refer UAMS to MFSPT after their registration is completed by Local Directorates of DGMMT. Unaccompanied children have priority in registration. Local Directorates of DGMMT are also responsible for providing shelter to unaccompanied children until the completion of age assessment, health checks and registration procedures. A 'foreign identity number' is provided for refugees who apply for temporary or international protection in accordance with the 2006 Regulation on Registration of Foreigners in Turkey. UAMS may lack identity cards or information, their registration is based on their declaration.

Social service institutions under MFSPT are responsible for the protection of minors who are left unaccompanied before or after entering Turkey as well as refugee and asylum-seeking children who have been subject to child abuse. UAMS are accommodated in appropriate institutions, namely Child Support Centres after referral by Security Forces with decisions for protective and supportive measures and referred to another institution if there is a lack of capacity in the city where referral is made. There are 10 Child Support Centres in Turkey.

Temporary protection beneficiary unaccompanied children aged 0–12 are transferred to a child protection institution under the authority of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services. Unaccompanied children between the ages of 13–18, may be placed in dedicated child protection units in refugee camps. Most of them are placed in child protection units established by the Ministry in Ağrı, Konya, Yozgat, Gaziantep, Bilecik, Erzincan, Istanbul, and Van.

After admission to an institution, all UAMS must enrol in schools and get education. The Ministry of Education provides monthly scholarships for children who are under state protection, but this does not

apply to children with foreign nationality. Turkish language classes take place in shelters, before children enrol in school. Security Forces are informed if children leave the institution without permission. Visits to children in MFSPT institutions are under control of the Ministry of Interior and a relevant permission is required. In case of a request for transfer to another institution, Local Security Directorates are informed.

Various NGOs are working with refugee youth, either at a Turkey-wide level or at a local level. Refugee Rights Centre, Support to Life Association, Human Resources Development Foundation, Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants Association may be counted among them. These NGOs are engaged in a variety of activities ranging from legal consultancy, psycho-social support, health, education, vocational or language training, supporting means for employment, information, and advocacy for refugee rights. Sometimes there are difficulties regarding coordination and cooperation within the state institutions themselves, and within civil society.

Given the large number of children living within Turkish society with no state protection, it is important that all the public institutions regarding health, education, shelter, and protection work in cooperation to protect the best interests of every child. From headman's offices to family health centres, from schools to vocational education centres, all public institutions as well as NGOs working in these fields should take responsibility regarding unaccompanied and separated minors.

### *Minor Migrants in Transition to Adulthood*

Under Turkish law, state protection ends when the child reaches the age of 18, with the possibility of a short extension in certain circumstances. Youth protection can be extended until the age of 20 for those continuing secondary education, until the age of 25 for those going to university, and until obtaining a profession if they do not continue their education. The reason for extension of protection may be a lack of place to go to, or a lack of security.

A period of adaptation awaits ex-minors who have checked out from the institution. They are generally transferred to satellite cities other than İstanbul, Ankara or İzmir. There are 62 satellite cities. When in place, they have to report to the authorities every week. They need permission to travel from one city to another. For Syrian children who are entitled to the right to receive temporary protection, they are no longer



provided accommodation in metropolitan cities such as İstanbul unless they have a first-degree relative formally resided in İstanbul.

They are generally not provided with a specific place for accommodation, and they must find ways to meet their needs, such as shelter, food, clothes, and medical care. After the age of 18, health insurance is also not provided anymore. Occasionally, UNHCR or state support is given to those youngsters who continue with vocational training. Often, youngsters are engaged in irregular work as their chances for acquisition of a work permit are also low due to difficulties and unfair competition for refugees in the employment context of Turkey. Even before becoming of age, many youngsters may be in search of earning money or travelling to another country rather than extending state protection. They work casual and irregular jobs in work environments that require long hours of work such as paper collection, textile, construction, auto repair, and bakery. In Turkey, children under state protection could legally be employed in state institutions after they come of age, according to Law No. 3413. However, this right is not guaranteed for foreigners.

Options for UAMS to be resettled in a third country seems to have decreased in the last few years, which is why more and more young migrants want to build a life in Turkey after reaching the age of majority. Still, applying to UNHCR or another non-governmental organisation for asylum in third countries may not only serve as a starting point of the asylum procedures but also legitimise minor's presence and safety in Turkey (Yılmaz, 2014). Very few UAMS who go to the university may enjoy the possibility of dormitories from the Credit and Dormitories Office. Most of them are irregularly employed in service, industrial, or agricultural sectors. They also experience a considerable aversion among Turkish society towards immigrants.

During the Covid-19 period, illegal immigration has been restricted more due to extended border securities. The number of children who came to Turkey by land route decreased, while the number of those who came by air increased. For children coming from Iran and Iraq by air, family reunion procedures can be followed more rapidly. During Covid-19 period, UAMS are being accepted in Child Support Centres after their health and Covid-19 tests. The lack of separate facilities within the Centres during testing periods leads to occasional difficulties. Family, adaptation, psychosocial support, and language education services were slowed down especially during the first terms

period of Covid-19 epidemic. As there were restrictions for people under 20, young adults had to stay at their workplaces. Lots of young adults lost their jobs, especially within service sectors like hospitality, others who work in places like bakeries started working over-time as there has been a higher demand. Applications regarding protection of the children subject to human trafficking were also slowed down, as NGOs started working from home as well. Covid-19 pandemic may have caused difficulties in children's protection from abuse as such services were not fully operational.

### **CISOTRA Qualitative Research Findings**

Within CISOTRA project, a focus group which involved social workers from state and civil society organisations was created. The focus group participants emphasised the need for more support for UAMS in transition to adulthood. Key areas of support for minors and youngsters in transition include equipping them with the knowledge and skills for accessing education as much as possible and providing employment so that they can survive after they leave state protection. Psychosocial support and extracurricular skills development as well as legal advice and knowledge of the mechanisms concerning their rights is also important.

UAMS may have difficulties in reaching the support system. Experts who assist unaccompanied minors during procedures state that the existing systems for age determination, namely opening a file for the unaccompanied minor and applying for asylum, sometimes triggers secondary traumas and depression in them, as they are forced to narrate their painful story over and over to the authorities with the fear of not being able to convince them nor obtain their consent. Besides, it is particularly important to ensure that children receive services in their own language. Interviews should be held in an environment where the child can express herself/himself and feel comfortable, especially during the first-time s/he enters the country.

No legal action can be taken without the appointment of a guardian. Hence in the absence of a guardian, rights and obligations regarding social services and protection cannot be realised. Lack of appointment of guardians for UAMS has been regarded as a problem to be addressed immediately.

Child Support Centres in various cities have different facilities and can provide various levels of social inclusion depending on where they are situated. Most Child Support Centres are built in the outskirts

of cities. Their capacities are divergent and may need enhancement. Hence the opportunities for education, psychosocial support, and employment later are divergent with respect to the Child Support Centre UAMS are accommodated in. The Turkish State has left Institutional Care towards home arrangements since 2010. However, institutional care is still provided for UAMS and refugee children. Syrian children without parents who live within the Syrian community also receive differential support, depending on the city they reside in. Sometimes families may receive cash transfers (Red Crescent Social Cohesion Funds and others) in one city but not in another one despite conditions being the same.

Competency of staff working with refugee children has been underlined as a problem. A crucial requirement is to acquire the skills to become an advocate for children and to be able to understand their perspectives. All the parties, MFSPT, the police – each of them has their own perspective but none of them is looking at the situation from the point of view of the UAMS, as the focus group participants said. In-service training for the staff on the subject of child rights, refugee rights and human rights need enhancement and dissemination. Effectiveness of current training sessions for social services staff were questioned within the focus group. Another important need for the staff was psychosocial wellbeing. Social workers, social services specialists and staff working directly with UAMS suffer from burn-out and depression and they need to acquire skills for self-help and treatment. All the support staff, social workers, police, caring mothers and volunteers need protection to be able to protect the children. Teachers also need enhancement of knowledge regarding refugee children since language differences appear as an obstacle.

In Turkey, UAMS and refugee children in general are at risk of being engaged in child labour. Age 15 is the legal working age for children in Turkey. After that age, children's work should be monitored for whether it interferes with physical, psychological, emotional, or educational development of children. Sexual abuse of children and young women among refugees is also a concern, as there are increasing cases of Syrian girls marrying early and potentially being targeted by criminals for sexual exploitation or trafficking.

### *Recommendations*

As emphasised by law, protection of the best interests of the child should prevail, regarding policies for unaccompanied minors and sep-

arated children rather than the security dimension. Rights based approach should prevail in policies and their implementation. Besides, more participatory child and migrant oriented services are required. Agency for Children and Migrants must be taken into account. Along with the best interests of the child, other basic children's rights principles, namely non-discrimination, child participation and the right to life, survival and development need to be preserved by policies in effect.

Cooperation and coordination between different actors in the system who are responsible for UAMS need to be enhanced. The capacity of Child Support Centres for UAMS needs enhancement. Additionally, refugee camps are generally not the place where best interests of the child could be preserved. Since 2010, the Turkish state has been phasing out institutional care and replacing it with home-based arrangements for children. However, institutional care is provided for UAMS and refugee children. A plan on moving towards home arrangements might be useful for UAMS and refugee children as well. Establishment of independent inspection mechanisms is critically important for both institutional and home arrangements.

As for educational inclusion of UAMS and refugee children in general, resources and additional infrastructure is essential to cover the needs as well as material and financial support and efforts at enhancing inclusive education at schools. In Turkey, UAMS need knowledge and skills enhancement both for education and employment in the aftermath. Enhancement of language capabilities along with academic skills, as well as vocational and professional skills, are critical requirements. Personal development in accordance with needs and interests is a question of concern, while the number of UAMS who are under state protection and able to continue higher education is limited. Social and emotional support is another field of requirements for UAMS. They need psychosocial support and extracurricular skills development.

State protection, its content and duration must be given more consideration. Not every person who turns 18 is ready for adult life. Also, the coping capacity expected of any adult after the age of 18 cannot be expected from unaccompanied minors, considering their history. Restricting the duration of protection according to age might become a disadvantage in some cases. It is necessary to produce service models that can be shaped according to the unique needs of each UAM

in transition to adulthood. Most of the time employment seems to be a favourable possibility. However, child labour continues to be a serious concern. UAMS who are not registered and protected by the State are exposed to the worst forms of child labour. Protection and support systems need to be enlarged and enhanced. Awareness raising programmes regarding risks and relevant legislation on early and forced marriages and child labour in Turkey are required for UAMS and support staff.

Social inclusion and social contact with locals are important areas of development. General public opinion is stereotypical and discriminatory against UAMS. Contacts with local communities represent a challenge for UAMS even if they are under protection. Replacing institutional care for UAMS with family-like units could facilitate socialisation and contact within the local community.

Professionals working with UAMS need regular training and supervision. Sensitivity and knowledge of the staff that provide services, teachers, health personnel, migration specialists, and social workers should be enhanced. Training on various competencies, refugee, child, and human rights training are important. They also need to acquire certain skills to become advocates for children and to be able to understand their perspectives. A common language among the staff, especially between social workers and police is important. Assignment of translators or bilingual staff is also a critical need. UAMS and professionals working with UAMS need to get more legal advice and knowledge of the mechanisms concerning UAM's rights. To ensure monitoring and protection of UAMS' rights, guardians have to be assigned by law. Technical knowledge regarding assignment of guardians and curators needs to be increased. A system of voluntary guardianship could also be set up. An important need for support staff emerges as treatment for psychosocial well-being. Social workers, social services specialists and staff working directly with UAMS may suffer from burn-out and depression and they need to acquire skills for self-help and treatment.

### **Relevant Good Practices**

Regarding support for UAMS in transition to adulthood in Turkey, there are several good practices by the public institutions, NGO's, and international organisations, some of which are summarised below.

1. In 2010, UAMS who had left Yeldeğirmeni Child Support Centre

established an organisation called Young Refugees Union. They attempted to become an Association, but it was not possible by law. They were supported by the Human Resources Development Foundation and Association for Solidarity with Refugees and Asylum Seekers. A group of young UAMS pioneered this organisation whose aim was to enable solidarity among UAMS after leaving state protection. Although the initiative did not last long, it was good practice because it gave young adults the opportunity to speak for themselves, rather than having someone else in a more senior position speak on their behalf.

2. Refugee Rights Turkey (RRT) launched a project on unaccompanied minors (UAMS) with the support of the Embassy of Switzerland in Ankara in June 2018. The project aimed to strengthen awareness and sensitivity for UAMS in Turkey and contribute to national policy making in this field. The public awareness component of the project generated a publication to channel the experiences and desires of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers (UAMS) in Turkey 'in their own voices' as a vehicle for self-expression, among other activities aiming to elevate public concern and support for child protection challenges within Turkey's increasingly multifaceted national migration debate. The publication has been a periodical prepared by UAMS named 'Children's Voice.' The policy component of the project involved study visits to selected European countries to draw from approaches and experiences in protection of UAMS with a view to channelling perspectives to the evolving policy discussion on UAMS among refugee protection stakeholders in Turkey. A comparative report is prepared about the UAM protection systems in 3 different countries of Europe and a panel is held in cooperation with Bilgi University in Turkey (Refugee Rights Turkey, 2018).
3. Since 2017, UNHCR Turkey carries out a cash transfer project for those UAMS who leave state protection after reaching the age of 18. Cash transfers are provided on condition that the young refugee who receives it moves to a satellite city and starts to follow a vocational course. This one-year cash transfer project involves research in areas of interest of refugee minors and possibilities of fulfilling these interests in the courses provided by municipalities and Public Education Centres, which provide life-long learning opportunities for everyone. UNHCR holds regular communi-

cation with the beneficiaries of these monthly cash transfers to make sure that refugee minors receive the possible vocational educational opportunities in line with their areas of interest. There are young refugees who go to cooking courses, language courses or other courses in the Public Education Centres.

4. In 2014, the Family, Work and Social Services Ministry initiated ANKA Child Support Program for children at risk involving unaccompanied minors in cooperation with UNICEF. The program involves topics such as 'individual risk assessment,' 'components of supportive environment,' 'group work,' 'individual consultancy,' 'family work,' 'principles for supportive staff' and 'institutional approach against crisis.' The program also involves sections such as addiction, nutrition, problem solving, communication and daily life skills in English, Arabic and Farsi. Three-phase training programmes have been piloted in different centres for around 100 support staff (social workers, psychologists, sociologists, child development specialists and teachers) and the programme to be implanted towards UAMS and their families was revised according to the results. A group of experts and academics participated in workshops related to the programme, which is now being implemented throughout Turkey. The programme includes Individualised Needs and Risk Evaluation Forms, Supportive Environment, Individual Consultancy, Family Work, Principles of Approach for Support Staff, and Institutional Approach to Crisis Intervention components. For each child who is received at the centre, a support staff member is assigned as a consultant and individual needs and risk assessment is carried out in the first 10 days. With this form, the content of individual psychosocial support for that very child is determined. Individual consultancy deals with escape from home, self-mutilation, suicide, abuse, crisis management, intervention and trauma components. Group work is made up of 68 sessions in 5 sections involving self-development and healthy life, emotional regulation, character development, addiction, and pregnancy. Self-development and health modules are carried out for all children, whereas others are provided if needed by the child. Family work involves determination of the needs and the risks for the family, a contract is made with the family where the individual consultancy programme focuses on family-child relations, parenting skills, and approach to risks. The programme is evaluated in

three-month terms and the developments in the programme are followed. Later on, child's return to family-based support, continuance with the program or transfer to another social services centre is evaluated.

5. In 2017, Foster Family and Adoption Association (KOREV) carried out a workshop with 22 experts from state, civil society, and international organisations. The workshop aimed at determination of major problems in the field, as well as development, publishing, and dissemination of solutions for relevant institutions. The report underlines the current situation, emphasises problems in the field, underlines the basic rights of UAMS, communication and awareness raising, legislation, registration, and statistics. The workshop and the report prepared in the aftermath is important as it brings the best-interests of the child forward rather than the security dimension for UAMS (Korev, 2017).

Practices are detailed in the document *Compilation of National Reports* (CISOTRA, 2021).

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