



Funded by the European Union's Rights,  
Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020)



# Mapping of Existing Training for Professionals in Austria

Family-based care (FBC) for unaccompanied migrant children in Austria: mapping report on existing training for professionals, inclusive of country-specific analysis of gaps and needs.

Fostering Across Borders (FAB) Project

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## Introduction

This report has been produced as part of the Fostering Across Borders (FAB) project (2018-19), funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) with the aim of improving and expanding the provision of family-based care (FBC) for unaccompanied migrant children (UMC) in six European countries – Austria, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Poland, and the United Kingdom.

The project's objective is to help increase the capacity of FBC services to look after UMC through initiatives that support the recruitment, support and training of FBC providers – driven by the desire to provide the highest quality of care for this group of children.

This reports aims to provide an overview of the status quo regarding the training provision for professionals involved in fostering programmes for UMC, and to identify related gaps and needs. It concentrates exclusively on Austria, where FBC is provided to UMC primarily by foster carers, with the support of a range of professionals.

The report reflects on the findings of two surveys (one addressed to relevant institutions and one addressed directly to professionals) and a series of meetings and telephone interviews with key stakeholders dealing with fostering programs for UMC, which took place between January and June 2018. These surveys and interviews have been supported by a review of literature and relevant reports<sup>1</sup>.

Our findings, as summarized in this report, will inform the next steps of the project: namely supporting our Training-of-Trainers (ToT) offer and the related development of a ToT training package adapted to the specific needs of foster carers and the professionals supporting them, so that their activities are more efficient and fully suitable to the needs of UMC in Austria.

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<sup>1</sup> See Bibliography



## Executive summary

The training provision for professionals involved in fostering programs for UMC in Austria is heterogeneous, in that sharing some similarities with the training provision for foster carers. The main UMC training topics, such as **asylum and alien law, intercultural competences and traumatisation**, are covered in most of the provinces on a needs basis.

Many of the **professionals** dealing with fostering programs for UMC are **not UMC-specialized**, as this cohort of children constitutes a very small proportion of the general foster children population. This was corroborated by our data analysis: out of sixteen survey respondents dealing with a mixed caseload, only one mostly dealt with UMC. Although eight respondents stated they felt well prepared to deal with UMC related questions, four felt very competent and seven felt moderately competent, these views do not equate with having received professional training/qualifications to do so. In fact, the aforementioned findings seem to show a lack of UMC expertise among caseworkers with mixed caseloads, **UMC being a marginal topic**.

This was additionally confirmed by our findings showing that out of eleven respondents dealing with suitability tests of prospective UMC foster carers, only two felt fully competent to fulfil their duties - thus also reflecting a potential **lack of professional qualification to conduct suitability assessments for UMC foster carers**.

The **employment of professionals with prior experience in the asylum field** is often considered good practice and so is the employment of professionals who are native speakers of the languages spoken by the UMC. In a more general sense, **multicultural and multidisciplinary professionals' teams** were highlighted as good practice, as well as professionals' access to **regular casework supervision**. With regards to the UMC-training available to professionals, the main training content needs were identified as **asylum and alien law and traumatisation**.

Good professional practices associated with the fostering matching process were identified as the following: the conduction of a **comprehensive first interview** with prospective UMC foster carers; **mentorships** and **lengthier initiation processes** (such as voluntary engagement in the UMC's living group) allowing both parties to get acquainted with each other and promote a **more organic matching process**; and seeking the support of UMC social workers and/or residential staff when in the process identifying/evaluating whether fostering would be a viable option for individual UMC – this would include having social workers **describe** or provide a **developmental report** on the child, to promote a more informed decision-making process.

Further good practices were identified as the establishment of **time out opportunities** for placements at risk of discontinuation, and the allocation of a **trust persons who speak the child's native language** to UMC placed in foster care.

With regards to preventing and/or managing placement discontinuations, professionals' understanding and thorough knowledge of its causal factors was highlighted as good practice. It was recommended for more predictable factors to be better **identified during the initial matching phase**; while less predictable factors should be better taken into account during the placement preparation/inception phase, such as by better **managing expectations** (on both sides), by acknowledging the UMC's potential **difficulty to bond** (loyalty to biological family, traumatic experiences, etc.), and by understanding the diverse cultural value attributed to the concepts such as



“reality” and “truth”<sup>2</sup>. It was concluded that appropriate training for professionals should increase their ability to identify and prevent predictable discontinuation factors from escalating, particularly by ensuring they promote a sustainable matching process, and by providing foster carers with enhanced support during placement discontinuation, to avoid it impacting on their will to continue to care for UMC.

## Methodology

The data analysed in this mapping report was collected via telephone conversations and one-to-one meetings; desk research; a experts' meeting held at the beginning of the project (February 2018) attended by three institutional representatives<sup>3</sup>, one expert consultant<sup>4</sup> and three IOM staff; and the first Austrian Fostering Across Borders inter-agency meeting (June 2018) which gathered together twenty stakeholders<sup>5</sup>, in addition to the aforementioned expert consultant and IOM staff.

In parallel, two questionnaires were developed:

1) A questionnaire addressed to institutions<sup>6</sup>, sent to youth welfare authorities (YWA)<sup>7</sup> and various fostering service providers, aimed at gaining an overview of how different institutional programs for fostering UMC are developed and implemented (organisational structure, number of professionals employed, training requirements, etc.). Employees at a management or supervision level were asked to answer on behalf of the institution.

As of 6 July 2018, nine completed questionnaires<sup>8</sup> were submitted and a telephone interview with a fostering service provider in the province of Vorarlberg was conducted. Unfortunately, no questionnaires were submitted for Burgenland and Carinthia, therefore data for these provinces could only be collected via less structure phone conversations and at the FAB stakeholders' meeting.

2) A second questionnaire was addressed to professionals working for YWA or for fostering service providers<sup>9</sup>, with the aim of exploring their views on the preparation and support they receive, and to identify any related needs and gaps.

This online questionnaire was disseminated to key contacts at YWA and fostering service providers' level (supervisors), which in turn were asked to cascade it to relevant professionals<sup>10</sup>. This survey was answered by 27 respondents, answers came from all provinces and thus provide a fairly comprehensive sense of the challenges faced by professionals in this field.

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<sup>2</sup> Different cultures may attribute diverse meanings to concepts such as “truth”, “reality”, “honesty” and so forth. For instance, the concept of truth associated to that of shame in collective societies, often equates with it being more honourable for an individual to omit mistakes/misconduct in order to prevent shaming one's family or community, while, in individual societies honour is better bestowed on those taking individual responsibility for their mistakes/misconduct.

<sup>3</sup> One representative from the YWA in Vienna, one from the YWA in Lower Austria and one from a FBC service provider in Lower Austria.

<sup>4</sup> Katharina Glawischnig is a UMC expert at Asylkoordination (NGO) and former pedagogical manager at KUI (a former non-governmental fostering service provider for UMC over 14). Ms Glawischnig is currently a consultant to the FAB project in Austria.

<sup>5</sup> Including representative from the Ministry of Interior, YWA in several provinces, the basic welfare authority, Children and Youth Ombudsmen Office, FBC providers, etc.

<sup>6</sup> See *Annex One*.

<sup>7</sup> In German: Kinder- und Jugendhilfe (Meaning: Children and Youth support). Youth welfare authorities are regulated by the restructured youth welfare (federal) law of 2013, whose primary aim is to enhance the protection of children and youth and to standardize family support. The adoption/implementation of this federal law at provincial level is regulated by the adoption of provincial laws. Children and youth support includes service provision by state institutions as well as private institutions aiming at protecting children and youth from harm, promote and protect their rights, as well as enhance families. In the context of the FAB project, state institutions are referred to as “youth welfare authorities” or YWA, while other commissioned private institutions providing children and youth welfare services with family-based care are referred to as “(other) fostering service providers.”

<sup>8</sup> Fifteen questionnaires were sent to relevant YWA and fostering service providers across the provinces. It is important to note that some YWA and fostering service providers provided joint responses to the questionnaires, where their work intertwines – subsequently the number of completed questionnaires is not representative of the overall response rate.

<sup>9</sup> See *Annex Two*, which includes the introductory text to the survey for professionals and the questionnaire itself.

<sup>10</sup> Due to this ‘cascading’ model we were unable to ascertain how many foster carers were actually reached.



## Findings

### Professionals involved in fostering for UMC: figures

While being aware of limitations associated with these kind of surveys<sup>11</sup>, the information drawn from the questionnaires, desk research, phone consultations, the preliminary experts' meeting and a national inter-agency stakeholders' meeting have proved sufficient to collect the following findings regarding professionals engaged in fostering programs for UMC in Austria:

- In Lower Austria, twenty-six UMC are currently placed in foster care and are supported by the YWA's legal representatives and social workers. Additionally, two active non-governmental foster service providers have a member of staff responsible for their respective UMC fostering programs.
- In Salzburg, SOS Kinderdorf<sup>12</sup> employs four professionals, but no data was provided in regards to the number of professionals employed by the local YWA.
- In Vienna, YWA's adoption and fostering unit counts ten professionals, one of which specifically focuses on UMC. Furthermore, three professionals are employed under the UMC fostering program at SOS Kinderdorf Vienna and five employees, plus four independent consultants were employed by the Viennese NGO KUI<sup>13</sup>.
- In Tyrol, the YWA includes a UMC team: four experienced professionals have been assigned to the two UMC currently fostered in the province.
- Unfortunately, no data was provided for Upper Austria, Styria, Vorarlberg, Carinthia and Burgenland.

### Professionals' recruitment, induction and composition

The **employment of professionals with prior experience in the asylum field** is often considered good practice, in that it avoids prolonged induction periods, given the complexity of the subject. Professionals' induction and support are also acknowledged to be playing an important role in enhancing service provision. For example, the UMC fostering team at SOS Kinderdorf Vienna, composed of a manager and two staff members, ensures that both staff members receive **individual inductions and ongoing and ad-hoc support** from the manager; while in Tyrol, a **YWA UMC expert team** supervises the UMC agenda in the province.

**Multidisciplinary and multicultural teams** are also considered good practice: for instance, the team of the Viennese fostering service provider KUI included psychologists and jurists, as well as professionals from the same or similar cultural background as the UMC (e.g. Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and Somalia), while the staff gender ratio is generally made to match that of the supported fostered UMC. The employment of professionals who are **native speakers** of the languages spoken by the UMC is also deemed important.

<sup>11</sup> Some of these limitations include: difficulty to identify and reach professionals involved in fostering programs for UMC due non-standardised specialisations; cascading of survey reliant on key contacts' engagement; and heterogeneous YWA structures at provincial level (Austrian federal system).

<sup>12</sup> SOS Kinderdorf's main aim is to provide children with a nurturing home. To fulfil this tasks SOS offers several services to support children in distress (e.g. crisis accommodation, advice centres, out-patient clinics and aftercare) and promotes children's rights. The organisation is currently partnering with the Viennese YWA and the Viennese Social Fund, to enhance the provision of foster care for UMC namely by providing information, training and support to (prospective) UMC foster carers. More information is available at: <https://www.sos-kinderdorf.at/so-hilft-sos/wo-wir-helfen/europa/oesterreich/gastfamilien-wien>

<sup>13</sup> **KUI** stands for Kinderflüchtlinge Unterstützen und Integrieren, meaning Support and Integration of refugee children. The NGO was founded specifically as a fostering service provider for UMC, however it ceased all activity at the end of 2017.



The employment of “**trust persons**”<sup>14</sup>(Vertrauenspersonen) is also to be considered an example of good practice. Trust persons were appointed to all UMC placed in foster care by KUI<sup>15</sup>: thus, each UMC could turn to their independent trust person, who had a similar cultural background and spoke their language, with any pressing questions regarding their life in fostering care (e.g. culture, gender, religion, etc).

### Existing training for professionals

With regards to the UMC-training available to professionals, findings showed that:

- In Upper Austria, the fostering service provider *Plan B* offers an internal one-day training (7.5 hours) to its employees on the topic of **asylum and alien law, intercultural competences and traumatisation**. It is also worth mentioning that regional administrative authorities' civil servants (Bezirkverwaltungsbehörde - BVB) received training on how to address queries from potential UMC foster carers.
- In Lower Austria, an internal training course on **trauma and PTSD** is available to interested provincial administration civil servants: the training is delivered over seven one-day modules.
- In Salzburg, SOS Kinderdorf has a team of experts on UMC, who were enabled to access training on relevant **law, trauma, and interculturality**.
- In Vienna, the YWA offers internal courses to its employees on **asylum and alien law** and on **interculturality**. These courses last 3-6 hours each. Additionally, KUI employees completed a 2-day training on **asylum law** and other relevant topics as needed (**Country of Origin** information and **interculturality**). They were also able to attend relevant Children and Youth Ombudsmen<sup>16</sup> conferences and a number of liaison meetings. SOS Kinderdorf Vienna adopted a more individual approach: the project manager enrolls, individually trains and provides support to the two professionals dealing with fostering programs for UMC (both started their functions as of early 2018).
- Finally, in Styria, a one-day training (6 to 7.5 hours) for YWA's civil servants was conducted by the fostering service provider *Alternative: Pflegefamilie* on the following topics: **legal and practical responsibilities of the YWA; fostering provision's concepts and strategies (accommodation, support, education)**.

### The professionals' perspective

Our findings show that **17** respondents were responsible for **UMC case management in fostering programs**; **15** were responsible for **UMC supporting activities** and **6** were responsible for UMC foster carers' **suitability checks**. Additionally, 7 selected the “other” option, which included: UMC coordination/single point of contact, support to service providers, UMC guardians<sup>17</sup>, pedagogical management, training provision and leading foster carers' meetings and supervisions.

<sup>14</sup> Trusted persons (TP) were recruited along the following criteria: no previous trauma; no sexual offense convictions; refugee or migration background to enhance credibility in their relationship with the UMC (in almost all cases TPs and UMC had the same nationality); relevant previous professional experience. TP were employed by KUI as full-time or part-time staff, or as consultants. They received training on the job according to their needs, which were assessed by the head of the organisation. All TPs received supervision. This service was discontinued due to budget cuts.

<sup>15</sup> Available at <https://verein-kui>

<sup>16</sup> The central task of the Children and Youth Ombudsmen office (CYOO) is the enhancement of a child-friendly society as well as the defence of the nonviolent education's postulate. It has been established in each Austrian province, while the federal office is a unit of the federal Ministry for Family and Youth. The federal CYOO work together with its provincial offices and other relevant child and youth welfare state and/or private institutions. All CYOOs are independent institutions, not bound by governmental instructions. They offer services such as counselling and free advice, and advocate for children and youth's rights.

<sup>17</sup> In general, the legal guardianship is assigned after application by the district court to the provincial YWA, the legal guardianship is then exercised by the local representatives of the YWA responsible for the place of residence of the foster family. The care and upbringing part of the legal guardianship is delegated to the foster carers, however the YWA authority mostly stay responsible for more important legal decisions.





Sixteen out of twenty-four respondents stated they do not carry out **suitability tests** of prospective foster carers for UMC. For those that do, the assessments follow general guidelines that do not include specific information on how to successfully assess the suitability of a fostering placement for UMC. Among the respondents, only three were conducting such assessments exclusively for prospective UMC foster carers, two of which mentioned that due to low numbers they had switched from formal suitability assessment to individual interviews. Out of the eleven respondents dealing with suitability tests, six felt they were well suited to carry out this task, three felt only moderately suited to do so and only two professionals felt very competent. These responses possibly reflect a **lack of standardised training and/or qualification on how to conduct such suitability assessments**.

Of the sixteen respondents who mentioned being involved in case management, seven dealt with 50-100 cases per year, six with 11-50 cases per year, and three with less than 10 cases per year. Out of the first category, about three worked exclusively with UMC foster carers.

Of the caseworkers with a **mixed caseload**, only one stated he/she dealt predominantly with UMC foster carers (almost 70% of cases); two persons indicated that UMC represent respectively about 11 and 22% of their caseload; two other persons indicated that this shared is between 5 and 10%, and lastly three persons have up to 2,5% of UMC within their caseload (1 to 3 UMC out of 50 to 80 cases). Although eight respondents stated they felt well prepared to deal with UMC related questions, four felt very competent and seven felt moderately competent, these views do not equate with having received professional training/qualifications to do so. In fact, the aforementioned findings seem to show a lack of UMC expertise among caseworkers with mixed caseloads, **UMC being a marginal topic**.

According to eight of the responding professionals, **mental health issues, traumatisation and/or substance misuse** constitute **the main challenge** in placing UMC in foster care, but also in ensuring their placements last. **Cultural differences** and **asylum procedures/outcomes** are the second foremost challenges being mentioned by respectively 5 and 4 respondents; for 3 of them contact with **biological families** also constitutes a challenging issue; while for 2 respondents the **management of expectations** is considered as major challenges.

### The matching process: good practice examples

Experienced stakeholders also identified the following good matching practice examples:

- **Comprehensive first interview** with the prospective foster carer(s), where they have the opportunity to share, among others, what is important to them, which hobbies they pursue, what is their background, what they identify as their strengths and weaknesses, if they would feel better suited to foster a child of a certain gender, if there are pets in the household, and what expectations they have for their foster child, including which characteristics they should or should not have.
- **Comprehensive interview with the UMC:** to explore their expectations and wishes, what is important to them, and how they picture their life in foster care.
- **Mentorships** are also considered a very good practice in that they allow for regular meetings between mentor(s) and UMC, giving both the time and opportunity to get to know each other and potentially turn the mentorship in a fostering arrangement.
- A **lengthier initiation process** in the form of a volunteer engagement with the UMC's living group, allowing both parties to get acquainted with each other, and for potential UMC foster



carers in particular to develop a realistic understanding of UMC's experiences and needs and promote a **more organic matching process**.

- Seeking the support of UMC social workers and/or residential staff when in the process identifying/evaluating whether fostering would be a viable option for individual UMC – this would include having social workers **describe** or provide a **developmental report** on the child, to promote a more informed decision-making process.

### Fostering placements' sustainability: good practice examples

The establishment of a **comprehensive care concept**, which includes the provision of support to foster families on all kind of matters, is another form of good practice with direct impact on placement sustainability. For instance, the **support** foster families receive from social workers to **develop suitable household rules** at the start of a new placement is important to ensure its duration. Other valuable components of this comprehensive care concept are the **support and guidance** provided by relevant professionals to **prevent conflict**, but also to **resolve it if/when triggered**.

Working together with **trusted persons** speaking the **UMC's native language** was also identified as good practice to ensure placement stability; and so was working with **professionals with similar cultural background to the UMC**, thanks to their ability to **mediate** between cultures, therefore enhancing better understanding in case of conflict based on cultural differences.

The concept of trusted person was established by the fostering service provider KUI and deemed as essential by foster carers during an internal service evaluation. This practice added value is that of providing UMC with a safe independent space where to talk about their fostering experience, namely in recognition of the fact that the child may be reluctant/find it challenging to open-up with a professional, such as a social worker, allocated to the support of the fostering family *and* the child at one time – particularly when not speaking the child's language.

While this measure is time-consuming, as the social worker supporting the foster family and the ex must find the time to share information in order to best analyse and support the child and the overall placement, it has seen to be bearing positive fruits.

Another positive example prompting placement sustainability is the **time-out opportunity** offered by SOS Kinderdorf Vienna<sup>18</sup>: UMC can be temporarily accommodated in the SOS housing group<sup>19</sup> following strong conflict with their foster family, which would alternatively likely result in immediate placement discontinuation. This practice allows all parties to benefit from some distance, while receiving ad-hoc support, namely intensive solution-focused conflict-resolution work with the support of professionals.

Lastly, stakeholders emphasised the **importance of supervision** in enhancing service provision and ensuring placement sustainability. While social workers are entitled to receive supervision according to relevant collective agreement for social work, its specifics (frequency, duration, costs, etc.) are determined by each organisation or institution they are employed by. KUI's employees attended **monthly casework supervision** (approximately), which allowed them the space and time to reflect on their active cases – this was highlighted by some stakeholders' as an example of good practice.

<sup>18</sup> SOS Kinderdorf's main aim is to provide children with a nurturing home. To fulfil this tasks SOS offers several services to support children in distress (e.g. crisis accommodation, advice centres, out-patient clinics and aftercare) and promotes children's rights. The organisation is currently partnering with the Viennese YWA and the Viennese Social Fund, to enhance the provision of foster care for UMC namely by providing information, training and support to (prospective) UMC foster carers. More information is available at: <https://www.sos-kinderdorf.at/so-hilft-sos/wo-wir-helfen/europa/oesterreich/gastfamilien-wien>

<sup>19</sup> The SOS housing group specifically sets aside rooms for this purpose.



### Placement discontinuation: good practice examples

Different causal factors were identified with regards to placement discontinuation, although it is important to acknowledge that it is the combination of more than one factor that generally causes a placement discontinuation. These have been divided into three main categories:

1. Non-predictable or hard to predict factors. Generally difficult to detect during the matching phase between UMC and foster carers, they include: **conflict** between family members, **divorce**, **illness**, poor expectations' management leading to the **overburdening of foster carers**, and UMC **radicalisation**.
2. Predictable matching phase factors, including pre-existent or deteriorating **mental health conditions** (e.g. UMC depression), or the fact that **remote placements** (e.g. small, remote villages) could make the UMC feel isolated.
3. Predictable inception phase factors, including poor management of expectations on both sides, lack of understanding of the effects of trauma on relationship building, conflicting allegiances (biological vs fostering family), and diverse cultural value attributed to the concepts such as **"reality" and "truth"**<sup>20</sup>.

Predictable factors should be better **identified during the initial matching phase**; while less predictable factors should be better taken into account during the placement preparation/inception phase, such as by better **managing expectations** (on both sides), by acknowledging the UMC's potential **difficulty to bond** (loyalty to biological family, traumatic experiences, etc.), and by understanding the diverse cultural value attributed to various concepts. Training for professionals on the identification of early warning signs was suggested as a productive counter-measure to placement discontinuation<sup>21</sup>.

Interestingly, some stakeholders expressed the view that placement discontinuation does **not necessarily have to be interpreted as a negative occurrence**: change is part of life, and changes are particularly common during adolescence - given that most of the UMC are over 14 years old, discontinuation could simply be due to a growing sense of independence on the part of the UMC or due to having reached majority. Additionally, discontinuation could be caused by family reunification.

Where discontinuation is experienced as a negative event, the opinion of the experts is that it is mostly the **foster carers** that perceive it so in that they are often left with a **feeling of failure**. The experts' impression is that, for many UMC who have experienced numerous changes and losses during their flight, the discontinuation may instead simply mean that the "next step" is ahead. Stakeholders' recommendations include that **professionals be trained to better support foster carers during placement discontinuations** to prevent foster carers from withdrawing their services to prospective UMC.

<sup>20</sup> Different cultures may attribute diverse meanings to concepts such as "truth", "reality", "honesty" and so forth. For instance, the concept of truth associated to that of shame in collective societies, often equates with it being more honourable for an individual to omit mistakes/misconduct in order to prevent shaming one's family or community, while, in individual societies honour is better bestowed on those taking individual responsibility for their mistakes/misconduct.

<sup>21</sup> This stems from the work of Marlene Weber, Social Work student of the University of applied sciences, with whom IOM Austria is currently in contact. Ms Weber current research focuses on the topic of "How SOS Kinderdorf Vienna can support UMC and their foster parents". It aims to identify the causal factors of fostering placement discontinuation in order to promote preventive measures, including the identification of early warning signs. The research is based on interviews with UMC and their foster parents. The research has not been published yet.



## Fostering programs: challenges, needs and gaps

The **heterogeneity** of the fostering regulations between the different Austrian provinces is a challenge and a source of frustration for many stakeholders: due to the diversified nature of the system, it is difficult to gain a comprehensive general overview of the current state-of-play of fostering for UMC in Austria. In fact, stakeholders were very impressed to hear about the single national guardianship institution (NIDOS) responsible for UMC placements in the Netherlands (mostly in foster care), which was discussed at the first FAB Austrian inter-agency meeting.

**Current asylum trends and generalised negative attitudes towards migrant and refugees were also identified as a challenge to the recruitment of new UMC foster carers.** On the one hand, the **dropping numbers of UMC asylum claims** has led many to assume there is no longer a need for UMC to be fostered. On the other hand, **anti-migrant resentment and negative stereotypes** spread by the media, where incidents are given more attention than successful integration/positive contributions examples, has led many potential foster carers to develop reservations about fostering UMC. Yet, foster carers are also bringing a highly valuable contribution by being role models in their own communities and dismantling fears and prejudices against refugees.

## Conclusions & Recommendations

As the heterogeneous nature of the UMC fostering systems **at province level in Austria** has been identified as a recurrent issue, we would recommend to invest more **effort in harmonising it across provinces**, which is an already existing recommendation in the domain of mainstream fostering<sup>22</sup>, and also in the broader domain of child and youth protection.

As mentioned, professionals working within the framework of fostering for UMC mostly do so as part of mixed caseloads: thus, although they are child protection experts, they lack the specialisation needed to address and understand the specific needs of UMC. Stakeholders emphasized that the decentralised nature of the YWA's work, where strategies are implemented at local level sometimes without the guidance of a centralised institution at provincial level, may cause professionals to feel isolated when dealing with UMC cases. In this context, stakeholders believe **training** provision to be very useful to professionals, alternatively suggesting that attention is given to the drafting of **standardised guidelines**, for instance on carrying out suitability assessment of prospective foster carers for UMC. Specifically, these guidelines should include instructions on what factors should be taken into account during the assessment, what challenges are to be expected and how the foster carer would overcome them, and include a wide range of practical questions. Additionally, it seems that the **establishment of UMC focal points in each province** could provide professionals in each district with valuable support.

Attention should be given, within the context of the FAB project, to include relevant guidance on the aforementioned topics in its training manual with the aim of providing an additional tool to YWA (or other entities) looking to produce standardised guidelines for professionals at national, province or local level. Such manual could include reference to the benefits of appointing UMC focal points at province level, while the FAB team in Austria should further consult with stakeholders on the suitability of training such professionals within the scope of the project.

Within the scope of the FAB project, the Training-of-Trainers (ToT) offer may contribute to such endeavours by offering a standardised training to all professionals supporting UMC foster carers across

<sup>22</sup> Christine Geserick, Wolfgang Mazal, Elisabeth Petric, Forschungsbericht: [Die rechtliche und soziale Situation von Pflegeeltern in Österreich](#). Juristische Expertise und empirische Erhebung, Austrian Institute for Family Studies, Nr 16/2015, April 2015



the provinces. Aware that attendance may vary considerably between regions, we still believe this would be a good starting point, the ToT pilot also promising to allow the FAB to gather important information on how to enhance this provision in the future.

Stakeholders identified **three main training content needs: interculturality, asylum and alien law, and trauma**. Other topics were also mentioned, but were seen as far less pressing and included country-of-origin information, developmental psychology, relationships, contact with biological family, and adolescence. With reference to the trainings' target audience, stakeholders first cited the **need to train professionals responsible for supporting foster carers and UMC**, followed by **professionals conducting suitability assessments** of prospective foster carers, and lastly foster carers themselves. In addition, stakeholders suggest training should include guidance for professional on how best to **support foster carers during placement discontinuation**.

These finding will be used to define the audience and content of the Training-of-Trainers (ToT) materials, for example by including an analysis of placement discontinuation early warning signs in its training.

Furthermore, a few examples of good practice were identified, such as **time-out opportunities** to prevent or accompany placement discontinuation; **lengthier initiation processes**; the employment of **multidisciplinary** and **multicultural professional teams**; and the allocation of a **trust person** to UMC placed in foster care. Consideration should be given to extended these practices beyond the single local context and although such endeavour falls outside the remit of the FAB project, good practice examples could inform the content of the ToT training and supporting materials.

Supervision was also identified as an important supporting too for professionals: employers should ensure **regular supervision** is made accessible to professionals, with the aim of enhancing practice and increase the quality of program delivery. The provision of direct supervision to professionals is outside the scope of the FAB project. Nonetheless, our findings will inform the ToT content in that they will be related to participants as good practice examples with the secondary aim of prompting further project development by the recipient of our training and their colleagues and/or superiors.

Additionally, in order to scale up and extend the mentioned good practices to other provinces, professionals should receive more consistent training and be provided with opportunities to exchange methods and practices. For example, professionals could **share standard operating procedures or guidelines** with each other, or benefit from the implementation of **job shadowing** opportunities, allowing for a direct experience of how other systems are functioning. Several stakeholders mentioned that **networking platforms** would be very useful for them in order to allow for meaningful exchange between professionals. While such activities are no substitute for trainings, they still are **valuable capacity building opportunities**, as they allow for **self-reflection on one's own practice** and to gain **new inspiration**. Although once again falling outside the remit of the FAB project, such examples will feed into the project implementation where most suitable and could represent a viable alternative to training delivery where this option would appear to be non-viable. Additionally, the FAB stakeholders meetings could and have been structured in part to respond partly to this desire for more networking opportunities.



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## Annex One

### Questionnaire for the institutions



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency

## „FAB – Fostering Across Borders“

### Fragebogen für die Status Quo und Bedarfserhebung im Bereich der Familienunterbringung für UMFs

Fragebogen für Institutionen: Kinder- und Jugendhilfe und Trägerorganisationen.

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

Im folgenden finden Sie den Fragebogen, der für die die Status Quo und Bedarfserhebung im Bereich der Familienunterbringung für Unbegleitete Minderjährige Flüchtlinge (UMF).

Der ersten Teil soll bereits beim Projekttreffen am 19. Juni auf interaktiver Weise präsentiert und besprochen werden, was ein besseren Überblick und Verständnis über die Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten der verschiedene Länderprogrammen. Daher bitten wir Sie die Antworten am 19. Juni mitzunehmen, falls Bundesländer nicht anwesend sind, werden wir die übermittelte Antworten vorstellen. |

Der detaillierte zweiten Teil wird in den Erhebungsbericht einfließen und eine gründlichere Analyse erlauben, auf Grund deren Trainingsmaterialien adaptiert und Trainingsdurchführungsplan festgelegt werden können.

Wir sind über eine Übermittlung der Antworten bis zum 15. Juni dankbar.

Vielen Dank im Voraus für Ihre Unterstützung und Mitarbeit!

das Integrationsteam des IOM Landesbüro für Österreich



FAB – Fostering Across Borders

"This project is funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020)."



## Allgemein

- Institution:
- Bundesland:
- Ansprechperson für eventuelle Rückfrage:

## Ester Teil: Schulungssysteme für Pflege-/Gastfamilien

### Besprechungsgrundlage am 19. Juni 2018

- Gibt es in Ihrem Bundesland verpflichtende Schulungen für (zukünftige) Pflege-/Gasteltern?
- Gibt es in Ihrem Bundesland verpflichtende Schulungen für (zukünftige) Pflege-/Gasteltern für UMFs?
- Wie viele solche Schulungen für angehende Pflege-/Gastfamilien für UMFs wurden seit 2015 durchgeführt? (Anzahl pro Jahr)
- Wie viele Personen wurden seit 2015 in der Vorbereitung bzw. Begleitung zur Aufnahme eines UMF als Pflege-/Gastkind geschult? (Anzahl per Jahr)
- Wie viele der geschulten Personen haben tatsächlich einen UMF als Pflege-/Gastkind aufgenommen?
- Wie lange dauern diese Schulungen? (Ausmaß in Stunden)
- Wer hat Zugang zu diesen Schulungen? Wie erfolgen die Anmeldungen? Welche Institution verwaltet die Anmeldungen?
- Wer/ welche Institution führt die Schulungen durch?
- Welche Praktiken und Aktivitäten in Bezug auf die Schulungen von angehenden Pflege-/Gast Familien für UMF betrachten Sie als besonders gut oder erfolgreich?
- Welche Themen werden in den Schulungen behandelt? Sind die Curricula öffentlich zugänglich?

## Zweiter Teil: Details über die Pflege-/Gastfamilienprogramme

### Detaillierte Informationen für die Status Quo Erhebung und Bedarfsanalyse

Folgende Fragen zielen darauf ab, das vorhandene Schulungsangebot an die Mitarbeiter/innen besser zu verstehen und Bedürfnisse zu identifizieren. Dazu werden drei Kategorien von Mitarbeiter/innen identifiziert:

1. Mitarbeiter/innen der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe, die mit direkten und regelmäßigen Aufgaben betreffend Pflege-/Gastfamilien fürs UMFs (Pflegeaufsicht, Fallführung, Betreuung usw.) betraut sind
2. Mitarbeiter/innen der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe, die mit Aufgaben betreffend Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs auf ad hoc Basis (z.B. Eignungsprüfung) betraut sind
3. Mitarbeiter/innen von Trägerorganisationen/ Vertragspartnern, die im Rahmen eines Programms für Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMF beschäftigt sind (Schulung, Betreuung, Supervision, usw.)

#### Fragen für die Für die Kinder- und Jugendhilfe:

- Wie viele Mitarbeiter/innen sind in Ihrem Bundesland mit direkten und regelmäßigen Aufgaben betreffend Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs (Pflegeaufsicht, Fallführung, Betreuung usw.) betraut?
  - Wie viele dieser Mitarbeiter/innen haben eine Schulung zum Thema UMF (d.h. explizit zu der Thematik UMF oder mit direkt damit verbundenen Themen: Asylrecht, Trauma, usw.) bekommen (Anzahl pro Jahr, seit 2015)?
  - Fanden die Schulungen intern oder extern statt?
  - Wie lange dauerten die Schulungen? (in Stunden)
  - Im Fall von externen Schulungen, welche Anbieter haben die Schulung durchgeführt?
  - Welche Inhalte wurden während dieser Schulungen vermittelt?
  - Wie viele Schulungen zum Thema UMF (d.h. explizit zu der Thematik UMF oder mit direkt damit verbundenen Themen: Asylrecht, Trauma, usw.) werden für die Mitarbeiter/innen angeboten?
- Wie viele Mitarbeiter/innen sind in Ihrem Bundesland mit Aufgaben betreffend Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs auf ad hoc Basis (z.B. Eignungsprüfung) betraut?
  - Wie viele dieser Mitarbeiter/innen haben eine Schulung zum Thema UMF (d.h. explizit zu der Thematik UMF oder mit direkt damit verbundenen Themen: Asylrecht, Trauma, usw.) bekommen (Anzahl per Jahr, seit 2015)?
  - Fanden die Schulungen intern oder extern statt?
  - Wie lange dauerten die Schulungen? (in Stunden)
  - Im Falle externer Schulungen, welche Anbieter haben die Schulung durchgeführt?
  - Welche Inhalte wurden während dieser Schulungen vermittelt?





- Wie viele Schulungen zum Thema UMF (d.h. explizit zu der Thematik UMF oder mit direkt damit verbundenen Themen: Asylrecht, Trauma, usw.) werden für die Mitarbeiter/innen angeboten?

Frage für die Trägerorganisationen:

- Wie viele Mitarbeiter/innen sind im Rahmen des Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMF Programm beschäftigt? D.h. Mitarbeiter/innen, die z.B. mit den Schulungen, der Betreuung oder Supervision
- Wie viele dieser Mitarbeiter/innen haben eine Schulung zum Thema UMF (d.h. explizit zu der Thematik UMF oder mit direkt damit verbundenen Themen: Asylrecht, Trauma, usw.) bekommen (Anzahl per Jahr, seit 2015)?
- Fanden die Schulungen intern oder extern statt?
- Wie lange dauerten die Schulungen? (in Stunden)
- Im Falle externer Schulungen, welche Anbieter haben die Schulung durchgeführt?
- Welche Inhalte wurden während dieser Schulungen vermittelt?
- Wie viele Schulungen zum Thema UMF (d.h. explizit zu der Thematik UMF oder mit direkt damit verbundenen Themen: Asylrecht, Trauma, usw.) werden für die Mitarbeiter/innen angeboten?

Schulungen von Mitarbeiter/innen:

- Welche Praktiken und Aktivitäten in Bezug auf die UMF Schulungen für Mitarbeiter/innen betrachten Sie als besonders gut oder erfolgreich? Aus welchen Grund?

Informationskampagne:

- Wie viele Informationskampagnen wurden seit 2015 durchgeführt, um Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs anzuwerben? Wer war die Zielgruppe? Mit welchen Medien (Anzeigen, Internet, Radio, Fernsehen)? Mit welchem geographischen Wirkungskreis? (Wenn Informationskampagne mittels Plakate: Wo wurde es plakatiert? Wenn Inserate: Lokale oder nationale Medien? etc.) Welche Wirkung konnte erreicht werden bzw. konnten Sie wahrnehmen?
- Welche Informationsaktionen haben Ihre Meinung nach besonders gut funktioniert? Warum?
- Wurden Informationskampagnen durchgeführt, mit dem Ziel muslimische Familien, bzw. Familien mit Migrationshintergrund anzusprechen?
- Welche Herausforderungen sehen Sie, in Bezug auf der Rekrutierung von muslimische Familie, bzw. Familien mit Migrationshintergrund

Rekrutierungsprozess:

- Wie läuft der Rekrutierungsprozess ab? Welche Schritte gibt es?
- Welche Hindernisse bzw. Schwierigkeiten haben Sie bisher in Rahmen des Rekrutierungsprozesses identifiziert? (Finanzierung, Kapazität, Expertise, Sprache, kulturelle Hindernisse, etc.)
- Gibt es Praktiken, die sie hervorheben möchten? Wenn ja, welche?

Eignungsüberprüfung:

- Welche Punkte werden im Rahmen einer Eignungsüberprüfung überprüft? Mit welcher Methode?

Nachhaltigkeit:

- Welche Maßnahmen werden eingesetzt, um Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs zu halten (Matching, Unterstützungs- und Betreuungsmaßnahme, Prävention von Abbrüche, Unterlage)? Welche Herausforderungen sehen Sie, um Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs zu halten?
- Was funktioniert besonders gut, um Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs zu halten?
- Haben Sie Materialien zur Sensibilisierung, Rekrutierung und Beibehaltung von Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs entwickelt? Wenn ja, welche?

Vielen Dank!



## Annex Two

### Introductory text to the survey for professionals and related questionnaire.

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

Die Internationale Organisation für Migration führt aktuell das Projekt „[FAB – Fostering Across Borders](#)“ durch und verfolgt dabei das Ziel, bereits bestehende Angebote für die Betreuung bzw. Unterbringung von unbegleiteten minderjährigen Flüchtlingen (UMF) in Familien auszubauen und die Qualität solcher Betreuung zu verbessern.

Dazu brauchen wir zuerst ein gutes Verständnis über den derzeitigen Stand in diesem Bereich und führen daher eine Status Quo- und Bedarfserhebung durch. Die erhobenen Daten werden in einem Erhebungs- und Analysebericht zusammengefasst. Bei Interesse senden wir Ihnen gerne eine Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse zu. Auf Grundlage der erhobenen Bedürfnisse werden anschließend Trainingsmaterialien entworfen bzw. wird bereits vorhandenes Material adaptiert und entsprechende Schulungen werden angeboten.

Zur Durchführung der Status Quo- und Bedarfserhebung bitten wir Sie um Ihren Input, da sie in direktem Kontakt mit in Familien untergebrachten UMFs bzw. deren Pflege-/ Gastfamilien stehen. Mit der Beantwortung des untenstehenden Fragebogens unterstützen Sie uns, den Bereich der Familienunterbringung für UMFs besser zu verstehen und ggfs. auf Bedürfnisse einzugehen und mögliche Verbesserungen vorzuschlagen bzw. umzusetzen. Wir wären Ihnen sehr dankbar, wenn Sie diese Fragebögen bis zum 15. Juni 2018 ausfüllen könnten; hier finden Sie den Link zum Fragebogen.

Bei Fragen melden Sie sich gerne jederzeit unter [odelavelle@iom.int](mailto:odelavelle@iom.int) oder 015853322/14.

Vielen Dank im Voraus für Ihre Unterstützung!

Das Integrationsteam des IOM Landesbüro für Österreich



International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The UN Migration Agency

## „FAB – Fostering Across Borders“

### Fragebogen für die Status Quo- und Bedarfserhebung im Bereich der Familienunterbringung für UMFs

Fragebogen für Mitarbeiter/innen der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe sowie der  
Trägerorganisationen.

#### Allgemein

1. Bundesland:
2. Wie oft haben Sie mit dem Thema UMF bzw. UMF in Pflege-/Gastfamilie zu tun:
  - o Täglich
  - o Wöchentlich
  - o Monatlich
  - o 3-11 Mal pro Jahr
  - o 1 bis 2 pro Jahr
3. Welche Rolle haben Sie dabei?
  - o Eignungsbeurteilung
  - o Betreuung
  - o Fallführung
  - o Andere, bitte ausführen

#### Eignungsüberprüfung:

4. Wie viele Eignungsüberprüfungen führen Sie jährlich durch?  
Wie viele davon betreffen Pflege-/Gastfamilien für UMFs?
5. Wie kompetent fühlen Sie sich, um die Eignungsüberprüfungen für Pflege-/Gastfamilien für UMFs durchzuführen?
  - o Sehr gut
  - o Gut
  - o Mäßig
  - o Nicht genug

#### Betreuung, Fallführung, etc.:

6. Wie viele Fälle betreuen bzw. wickeln Sie jährlich ab?  
Wie viele davon betreffen UMFs?
7. Wie viele Pflege-/Gastfamilien betreuen Sie jährlich?  
Wie viele davon betreffen Pflege-/Gastfamilie für UMFs?
8. Wie kompetent fühlen Sie sich, um mit Fragen betreffend UMFs umzugehen?



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- o Sehr gut
- o Gut
- o Mäßig
- o Nicht genug

Unterstützungssysteme:

9. Was würden Sie brauchen, um sich kompetenter zu fühlen?
- o Mehr Schulungen
    - o Wenn ja, zu welchen Themen:
      - Asylrecht
      - Fremdenrecht
      - Herkunftslandinformationen
      - Umgang mit Trauma/traumatisierte Jugendliche
      - Anderes, bitte anführen:
  - o Leitfäden
  - o Supervision
  - o Mehr Austausch bzw. Unterstützung durch erfahrenen Kolleg/innen
  - o Anderes, bitte anführen:
10. Welche Themen erleben sie als besonders herausfordernd?
11. Haben Sie Zugang zu Kulturvermittler/innen in Ihrer Arbeit mit UMFs?

Abschluss:

12. Möchten Sie uns noch etwas mitteilen?

**Vielen Dank!**