

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS IN NORWAY: POLICIES, PRACTICES AND DATA IN 2014

NORWEGIAN NATIONAL REPORT TO THE
EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

Anne Staver and Hilde Lidén

Institute for Social Research
Rapport 2014:14

Unaccompanied minors in Norway: Policies, practices and data in 2014

Norwegian National Report to the European
Migration Network

Anne Staver and Hilde Lidén

© Institutt for samfunnsforskning 2014
Rapport 2014:14

Institutt for samfunnsforskning

Munthes gate 31
PO Box 3233 Elisenberg
NO-0208 Oslo, Norway

ISBN (trykk):
ISBN (pdf): 978-82-7763-451-7
ISSN: 0333-3671

www.samfunnsforskning.no

Contents

	Preface	5
1	Introduction	6
2	Motivations and circumstances of UAMs for entering the EU	9
3	Entry and assessment procedures	12
	Norwegian border control legislation	12
	Training of border control personnel	13
	Seeking asylum in Norway in practice	13
	Guardianship arrangements	14
	Legal aid for UAM asylum seekers	16
	Age assessment procedures	16
	Residence permits for UAMs	19
4	Reception arrangements, including integration measures for UAMs	23
	Living arrangements and material provisions for UAMs	23
	Reception legislation	23
	Types of accommodation in reception phase	25
	Duties and of the staff in reception centres	26
	Other material provisions in reception phase	27
	Accommodation for settled (former) UAMs	28
	Healthcare for UAM asylum seekers	28
	Education and employment for UAMs	29
	Education	29
	Employment	30

	Challenges in the Norwegian reception system	31
	Accommodation and material provisions	31
	Health	33
	Access to education	34
5	UAMs that go missing	35
	Recognising the problem of missing UAMs	35
	Why do UAMs go missing?	36
	Who goes missing and when?	36
	Procedures	37
	Measures adopted and remaining challenges	37
6	Arrangements when UAMs turn 18 years of age	40
	Loss of status and encouragement to return	40
	Loss of rights	41
	Settled (former) UAMs	41
7	Return practices, including reintegration of UAMs	42
	Detention and forced returns of UAMs	42
	Voluntary Returns of UAMs	43
8	Conclusions and recommendations	45
	Entry and assessment procedures	45
	Reception conditions	46
	Missing UAMs	46
	Recommendations	47
	Statistical annex	48
	References	54
	Institutt for samfunnsforskning	57

Preface

This report was commissioned by the *Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)*, which is part of the *Norwegian Contact Point to the European Migration Network (EMN)*. It was prepared by the *Institute for Social Research (ISF)* primarily as a contribution to the EMN comparative study “Policies, practices and data on unaccompanied minors in 2014”. In its original form, the submission to the EMN was completed as a questionnaire. This report is an adapted and more readable text, but the chapter themes reflect the structure of the questionnaire.

The report relies on policy documents, regulations, legislation and circulars, as well as interviews with professionals in the concerned agencies. Some of the information reflects the perspectives of the informants and may not provide a complete description of or fully represent, the official policy of Norway.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to those who have assisted us from UDI, the *Directorate of the Police*, the *International Organisation of Migration (IOM)*, the *Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, the *Ministry of Justice and Public Security*, the *National Police Immigration Service*, *Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and family Affairs (Bufdir)* and *Agency for Social and Welfare Services, ASWS (City of Oslo Council)*. We could not have completed this report without their input and assistance.

We would also like to thank Vigdis Vevstad (SonConsult) for assistance with quality control and for ensuring that the information in this report pertaining to immigration legislation is as correct as possible. Any errors remain our own.

1 Introduction

In 2009, the European Migration Network carried out a mapping study of policies and practices on unaccompanied minor (UAM) asylum seekers in the European Union. In 2014, it was decided that the study should be updated to reflect the current situation. For Norway, this was the first EMN study on UAMs, as Norway only joined the EMN as an associate member in 2011. This report therefore provides a comprehensive presentation of policies, practices and statistics on unaccompanied minors who come to Norway, presented in a “chronological” order from arrival to return or settlement.

In 2009, Norway received its highest ever number of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers – 2,500¹ – firmly placing UAMs on Norway’s immigration political agenda. Norway did not only receive a high absolute number of UAMs, but in fact received the second highest number of UAMs in Europe. At the time, UAMs from Afghanistan were the largest group. In subsequent years, UAM arrivals have been much lower (850-1,070 per year). Somali and Eritrean UAMs now (2014) make up a larger proportion of UAMs than before, and there are fewer UAMs from Afghanistan.

Following the high arrivals of asylum seekers in 2008 and 2009, the Norwegian government introduced a number of restrictive measures. One such measure targeted UAMs between the ages of 16 and 18. Those UAMs who did not qualify for asylum but who could not be returned *for the sole reason that* there was no proper care situation to return them to, would be granted a temporary permit without possibility of renewal. UAMs receiving this permit would only be allowed to remain in Norway until they turned 18. While it has not been applied widely, this permit has come under criticism from NGOs and other commentators, and it appears that some permit holders abscond from reception centres prior to the transition to adulthood in order to avoid

¹ Note that in this section the term *UAM* refers to a person who claimed to be an unaccompanied minor when applying for asylum: without this claim having been considered by the Norwegian authorities

return. This and other policy concerns related to disappearances of UAMs are discussed in chapter 5.

As we will see in chapter 3 of this report, Norway has made a number of steps in recent years to improve and streamline assessment procedures for asylum seekers, with several changes directly targeting UAMs. Norway has recently reformed its legislation, policy and practice with regard to legal guardians for UAMs, now referred to as “representatives”. In 2011 an on-call guardian service was set up to facilitate police registration of asylum applications for UAM asylum seekers. Important efforts have also been made in order to streamline and speed up application processing times across the immigration administration, with particular focus on UAMs, in order to ensure timely decisionmaking. Norway is also currently funding a research and development project to develop and improve age testing and assessment procedures. Application processing times as well as the waiting time between a positive response and settlement in a Norwegian municipality has gone down over the past few years, and UAMs who obtain asylum or subsidiary protection are now settled within, on average 5-5.5 months of application.

Norway’s reception system for UAMs (described in detail in chapter 4) is divided between one run by the national child welfare services (*Office for Children, Youth and Family Affairs*, henceforth called *Bufetat*) for those under 15, and one overseen by the *Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)*, as part of the general reception system, for those aged 15-18. Evaluations have proposed to transfer responsibility for the 15-18 group to *Bufetat*, but this has so far been put off due to the prohibitive cost.

The 15-18 age group receives generally adequate care in the ordinary reception system (either in specialised centres for UAMs or in separate units for UAMs at ordinary centres), but different concerns have been identified. These relate to access to adequate healthcare (especially specialist care and care for mental health issues), screening of and care for vulnerable groups, access to adequate nutrition, and access to education for those aged 16-18. There are also concerns about UAMs from both age groups who go missing from reception centres. Living in a reception centre is voluntary, but it is of great concern when minors leave and those responsible do not know where they go.

In response to the concern over disappearances, a fast-track registration procedure was introduced in 2014 to ensure that adequate information is gathered about those UAM who fit the profile of UAMs

likely to disappear. Efforts have also been made in recent years to improve coordination among different actors with regard to handling disappearances.

The EMN study targets both “UAMs seeking asylum” and “UAMs not seeking asylum”. In Norway, in principle, there are no third country national (TCN) “unaccompanied minors *not* applying for asylum”. When police encounter TCN unaccompanied minors who have not yet filed an asylum claim, these youth will be directed toward the asylum procedure as there are no other means through which they can regularise their stay in Norway.

2 Motivations and circumstances of UAMs for entering the EU

Why do UAMs come to Europe, and specifically why do they come to Norway? Research from the United Kingdom documents a range of traumatic experiences among unaccompanied asylum seeking children (Thomas 2004; Hopkins & Hill 2008). Such traumatic experiences include forced recruitment (Hopkins & Hill 2008), and among girls a relatively high incidence of sexual violence (Thomas 2004). A few international reports discuss this issue (see for example UNHCR 2010). Most Norwegian research on unaccompanied minors has been applied in nature, and has focused on issues such as their living conditions in reception centres. This research has to a limited extent been concerned with UAMs' migratory trajectory and agency in the migration process, or with the experiences that made them flee.

There is at least one report, however, which investigates this very question. Cecilie Øien (2010) found in interviews with 30 unaccompanied minors that they travelled to Norway for the following reasons: (1) war or armed conflict, (2) family situation and perceived danger in their social networks, (3) the lack of opportunities for education and work at home, (4) existing experiences of migration to neighbouring countries which lead minors to choose onward migration. Broadly speaking, the UAMs were motivated both by a desire and necessity to leave the country of origin or residence, and by a desire to come to Europe; broadly seeking a better life for themselves. Decisions to migrate were usually made by the minor and his or her family together. Øien found that girls were more likely to migrate for reasons related to family (such as being at risk of forced marriage). Furthermore, only young boys would migrate from Afghanistan, as migration was not generally seen as a safe way to improve the life chances of girls there. Øien did not highlight family reunification as an important motivation among the unaccompanied minors interviewed in her study.

Seen in conjunction with other existing Norwegian research on migrant journeys (Brekke & Aarset 2009), this research suggests that UAMs who arrive in Norway rarely planned to go to Norway specifically, but that their final destination was a function of experiences during the journey and often quite arbitrary. Subsequent research, such as Brekke and Brochmann (2014), which investigates (adult) Eritrean asylum seekers in transit, suggests that asylum destinations are chosen as a function of multiple, sequential choices along the way.

UAMs who already have relatives in Norway may be assumed to have come to Norway more deliberately, rather than having accidentally ended up here. The number of UAMs who do have relatives living in Norway varies between groups and over time. Among the under-15 UAMs, it was found in 2009 that 31 per cent were placed to live with relatives, whereas this was the case for only 7 per cent in 2010 (Barne- likestillings- og inkluderingsdepartementet n.d., p.98).

Table 1. Total Number of Asylum Applications submitted by unaccompanied minors in Norway 2009 - 2013.

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Applications submitted by UAMs	2,500	892	858	964	1070

Source: UDI

Table 2: Permits granted to UAMs, disaggregated by gender and permit type.

Year	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Refugee Status (28a)	61	50	98	74	98	58	154	98
Subsidiary protection (28b)	698	20	275	10	208	7	153	1
Humanitarian Status	52	32	49	26	23	8	40	10
Limited until 18	39	2	25	5	33	2	15	2

Source: UDI

3 Entry and assessment procedures

In recent years, Norway has undertaken a number of steps to render entry and assessment procedures for asylum seekers in general and UAMs in particular more efficient. In this chapter, we will outline the policies and practices for entry and assessment of unaccompanied minors.

Norwegian border control legislation

Non-asylum seekers of any age who wish to enter Norway and who come from a country requiring an entry visa, must present such a visa ([Immigration Act](#) Section 9) in addition to a passport/travel document. However, a person seeking asylum is not required to present any documents ([Immigration Act](#) Section 9).

Following from the Immigration Act Section 8 and 9, persons who do not present such documentation and who do not apply for asylum shall not enter Norway. Norwegian legislation on border control ([Immigration Act](#) Chapter 2) does not distinguish between minors and adults in this regard, however minors would not be refused entry and sent back alone without further inquiry and contact with authorities in the home country (to make sure they will be received by someone), as well as with Norwegian child welfare services if necessary.

Unaccompanied minors from third countries who are encountered in Norway are generally directed toward the asylum stream, as *not* applying for asylum means one is staying illegally in Norway (there are normally no other permits they could apply for, and registering them as present in Norway in the computer system DUF, used by the immigration administration to register all third country citizens applying for a residence permit or protection in Norway, also requires that they apply for some type of permit). For this reason, “unaccompanied minors *not* seeking asylum” is not a group which is defined in Norwegian regulations or practice with regard to TCNs. The only exception to this is the case of possible victims of trafficking, for

whom there are alternative residence options which one can only apply for by withdrawing from the asylum procedure.

Training of border control personnel

As part of their training, police officers are trained in human rights standards, but they do not undergo lengthy training in border control issues. Implementing more training on such issues is under consideration at the *Norwegian Police University College*.

In response to the 2011 Schengen evaluation, a 4-week course for civilian staff at border control points was held for the first time in 2014. The course, based on the Frontex core curriculum, covered human rights standards, asylum issues, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, and trafficking in human beings. Modules were taught by amongst others the *Red Cross*, the *Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS)*, and the *Coordination Unit for Trafficking in Human Beings (KOM)*. The plan is to run this course regularly in the future.

The National Police Immigration Service (NPIS/PU) provides training with regard to identification of victims of trafficking (Elvegård & Thorshaug 2013, p.20), and also has a specific coordinator on child-related issues.

Two Norwegian representatives also took part in developing Frontex' recent *Handbook on Risk Profiles on Trafficking in Human Beings*.

Seeking asylum in Norway in practice²



Anyone who wishes to lodge an application for asylum in Norway is directed to the offices of the *National Police Immigration Service (PU)* in Oslo. Asylum seekers who approach other offices (e.g. police

² In this and the following sections UAM refers to a claimed unaccompanied minor unless otherwise indicated

stations, border control points) are referred there. In practice, if a UAM seeks asylum at Oslo airport, PU representatives will pick him or her up there. UAMs who approach police in other parts of the country and apply for asylum will be escorted all the way to Oslo, or to the airplane and then be met by PU representatives as they get off the plane at Oslo Airport.

PU registers the formal asylum application into the DUF computer system (used by the entire immigration administration to manage all applications for a residence permit in Norway), and inquires about the claimant's identity and travel route. Since 1 June 2011, there is an on-call representative (guardian) service at the PU offices, which means that unaccompanied minors can have their asylum claim registered at all hours. This system is not regulated in legislation. PU will usually register the stated age of the minor, and assess whether they consider this age likely to be correct (see below).

The *Arrivals Unit* (Ankomstenheten/ANK) in the *Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)* will conduct an initial conversation with the unaccompanied minor in order to obtain consent to carry out an age assessment. If the unaccompanied minor is obviously under age 18, the UDI may decide to exempt him or her from the age assessment. (Circular RS 2010-183, Guidelines for age assessments of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers) ANK will also register the broad outlines of the UAM's asylum claim.

PU will subsequently transport the UAM to a transit reception centre for registration and induction into the reception system.

Since 2014, UAMs who fit a profile of someone likely to go missing will be registered in a fast-track procedure, in order to gather as much information about them as possible early in the process.

Guardianship arrangements

As a matter of principle, minors who do not have a parent present should have a guardian present in order to ensure that their interests are adequately represented when they are in contact with public authorities.

Regulations regarding guardianship for unaccompanied minors in Norway were recently reformed, and chapter 11A concerning representatives for UAMs was added to the [Immigration Act](#) in 2012, in force 1 July 2013. The term "representative" has replaced the former "guardian" for those in the asylum system. In parallel, the [Guardianship](#)

[Act](#) was revised (2010, in force 2013), but this act does not explicitly deal with asylum seekers or mention non-citizens.

The [Immigration Act](#) Section 98a specifically says that the provisions about guardianship “apply to persons under 18 years of age (minors) who are applying for protection and who are in the country without parents or other persons with parental responsibility.” Therefore, the appointment of a representative is linked to the asylum procedure. An exception is made for “unaccompanied minors who apply for a limited residence permit under special arrangements for persons who are assumed to be victims of human trafficking pursuant to section 38”.

In practice, as noted, the UAM will get a representative at the time of the registration of the asylum claim. This is so also in cases where there is reason to doubt that the age indicated by the minor is correct, and an age test thus is agreed upon.

One of the tasks of the representative is to give consent to the age assessment procedure and the representative is therefore present when the UAM speaks to UDI. The Representative shall ensure that all decisions are made in the best interest of the child (including filing appeals on behalf of the child), ensure that the child is heard and that it gets suitable care, housing, education, language support and health care. In addition to advocating on behalf of the child, the representative provides advice and assists in investigating whether parents can be traced. The representative does not have responsibility for the day-to-day care of the child. When the UAM obtains a residence permit and is settled in a municipality, a new guardian will be appointed.³

It is the responsibility of the local County Governor (*Fylkesmann*) where the UAM lives to recruit, appoint, train and supervise representatives. Representatives must provide a police certificate before their appointment, and the County Governor determines whether the person is suited to be a representative.

The asylum interview is carried out *after* the age assessment, if there is one (see below), and usually after approximately six weeks.

³ At this point, we again refer to a “guardian” as the person has left the asylum procedure and thus the “representative” system regulated in the Immigration Act.

Legal aid for UAM asylum seekers

Adult asylum seekers only receive free individual legal advice in order to appeal if their asylum claim is denied. However, in accordance with Section 92 of the [Immigration Act](#), “in the case of applications from unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors [...] free legal advice shall also be given without means testing where a case is handled by the Directorate of Immigration” (i.e. during the first instance decision-making). A lawyer is appointed for each UAM very early on in the application procedure. UDI assigns a lawyer to UAMs as part of the standard procedure. UDI keeps a list of lawyers who avail themselves to such assignments.

The *Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS)* has two distinct functions in the Norwegian asylum procedure. Firstly, they provide information to all recently arrived asylum seekers, including UAMs, on their rights and obligations in the asylum procedure. Secondly, they act as a legal aid organisation, and they may assist or intervene on behalf of rejected asylum seekers.

Unaccompanied minors receive the equivalent of seven hours of legal aid to prepare their first instance claim and five hours for the appeal (Oxford Research 2012).

Age assessment procedures

A central question with regard to asylum applications by self-declared unaccompanied minor asylum seekers concerns their age claim. A significant number of asylum seekers arrive without passports; often the only identity document with sufficient notoriety to document age. The status of UAM brings with it a number of rights during the asylum process, as well as having implications for the refugee status determination itself and possibilities for return. A correct assessment of age therefore is important,

The stated age of the asylum seeker as well as his or her status as unaccompanied is registered by PU on the day of arrival or registration of the asylum claim (see above). The police will assess and express their opinion on the applicant's age: whether the applicant is a) obviously above 18, b) probably above 18, c) probably under 18, but not the age that has been given (either younger or older), or d) probably the age that the applicant has given.

Those whom the police consider obviously above 18 (a) will be registered as such and placed in a reception centre for adults. This is done partly in order to protect other minors in the asylum system, as it is undesirable to have adults residing in the special reception centres for minors.

As noted, it is UDI's Arrivals Unit that normally determines whether to initiate the age assessment procedure; usually because the authorities suspect that an individual who declares him or herself to be a child is actually above the age of 18. Age assessment may also be initiated later in the asylum procedure, e.g. at the interview stage. Although not all (claimed) unaccompanied minors have their age disputed, in most cases those seeking asylum whose declared age is between 16 and 18 are referred to age assessment. In some cases, immigration authorities may also initiate procedures to assess whether a child is below 15 years of age, as children under 15 are placed in special child care facilities administered by child welfare services.

The age assessment is voluntary and requires the consent of the minor, but if the applicant does not wish to complete it or does not show up, this may be taken as an indication that he or she is not a minor ([Immigration Act](#) Section 88), and this may influence his/her credibility and the outcome of the assessment of the asylum claim.

The physical examination for the age assessment will normally take place during the first six weeks, and before the asylum interview. Examinations include a carpal x-ray, dental x-ray and dental observation. Dental and carpal x-rays are conducted by experts in paediatric radiology who conclude independently. Based on the results, a paediatrician from the Oslo University Hospital will make a final assessment about the individual's age.

In addition to assessing whether the stated age is likely to be correct, the doctor is asked to determine how likely it is that the claimant is above or below 18 and 16 years old by electing one of the following categories (likelihood in parenthesis):

- A. over 18 (100/0 per cent)
- B. very unlikely under 18 (90/10 per cent)
- C. unlikely under 18 (70/30 per cent)
- D. doubt (50/50 per cent)
- E. under 18 (more than 50 per cent likely).

If the claimant is assessed as possibly being under age 18, the paediatrician will undertake the same assessment in order to determine whether or not the claimant is likely to be under 16 (with analogous categories F-J).

If the claimant is assessed in category A or B, the registered age is likely to be adjusted, unless there are compelling arguments to the contrary. In categories C, D and E caseworkers will closely assess the medical examination in light of other information available to them. There has to be a clear balance of probabilities before an applicant who claims to be a minor is assessed as being above 18.

The final decision concerning the individual's age is made by UDI caseworkers as part of the asylum decision. Taken into account is other information including on psychological, cognitive or behavioural aspects collected through the asylum procedure and any documentary evidence. A consideration of the individual's maturity and age made by professionals in close contact with him/her (e.g. guardian, law enforcement officers, professionals working at the reception centre where the child is accommodated etc.) may also be considered though this is not routinely done. If the UDI caseworker does change the registered age of the applicant at the time of refugee status determination, this is clearly marked in the computer system (DUF) and in the letter to the applicant that the age was "changed based on age assessment". This is the case both for rejected and recognised claims. The caseworker will normally only change the year, and not the date, of birth. The registered date of birth is not considered to be the actual date, only a more likely one.

As the final decision on the UAM's age is only made in the asylum decision itself, all persons who claim to be an UAM (except those who are deemed obviously over 18 by the police) are treated as such during the application procedure. This means that they get a guardian and a lawyer, and that the UDI's special unit for UAM cases (BFE/*barnefaglig enhet*) processes their case.

Norway is currently undertaking a research project on improved methods for age assessments which involves medical, dental and radiological experts from Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom, in addition to experts in statistics and image analysis at the *Norwegian Computing Centre*. The project is financed by the *Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)*, and the 26-month project period began in December 2013.

Residence permits for UAMs⁴

Primarily, a UAM may obtain a residence permit directly in the asylum stream, in the cases where their claims are accepted. There are some other residence permit options for those whose claims are denied, but these are very limited in nature.

UAMs whose claim is accepted

Unaccompanied minors who apply for asylum may obtain either refugee status ([Immigration Act](#) Section 28 a or b) or a permit on humanitarian grounds ([Immigration Act](#) Section 38). In accordance with Section 38 of the Immigration Act and UDI guidelines (PN 2012-011), the assessment of the need for international or a residence permit on humanitarian grounds has a lower bar for minors than adults, given the particular vulnerabilities of children. Furthermore, the best interest of the child principle shall be seen as a fundamental consideration although other immigration regulatory considerations may also be taken into account (See also UDI guidelines (PN 2012-011)).

Immigration Act Section 28a

A foreign national who is in the realm or at the Norwegian border shall, upon application, be recognised as a refugee if the foreign national

(a) has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of ethnicity, origin, skin colour, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or for reasons of political opinion, and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of his or her country of origin, see Article 1 A of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951 and the Protocol of 31 January 1967

Immigration Act Section 28 b

(b) without falling within the scope of (a) nevertheless faces a real risk of being subjected to a death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment upon return to his or her country of origin.

Immigration Act Section 38

A residence permit may be granted even if the other conditions laid down in the Act are not satisfied provided there are strong humanitarian considerations or the foreign national has a particular connection with the realm.

To determine whether there are strong humanitarian considerations, an overall assessment shall be made of the case. Importance may be attached to, among other

⁴ In this and the following sections UAM refers to a person recognised as being UAM, unless otherwise indicated

things, whether

(a) the foreign national is an unaccompanied minor who would be without proper care if he or she were returned,

(b) the foreign national needs to stay in the realm due to compelling health circumstances,

(c) there are social or humanitarian circumstances relating to the return situation that give grounds for granting a residence permit,

(d) the foreign national has been a victim of human trafficking.

Immigration regulations Section 8-8

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors who have reached the age of 16 at the time the decision is made and who do not have any grounds for stay other than that the Norwegian authorities deem that the applicant would be without proper care if he/she were returned may be granted a residence permit under section 38, first paragraph, of the Act until they reach the age of 18. The permit may not be renewed and does not form the basis for a residence permit for family members under chapter 6 of the Act.

Permits granted accordance with Section 28 a or b and Section 38 form the basis for a permanent residence permit. They are initially issued for a three-year period, and holders may apply for a permanent residence permit after three years.

If there is doubt about the unaccompanied minor's identity, however, the permit may be issued with restrictions which bar access to permanent residence and family reunification until the identity has been documented. Permits with such restrictions are usually issued for a 1-year period. Research suggests that while 1/3 of these holders provide identity papers to resolve the situation, most do not, due to difficulties in obtaining valid documents (Sønsterudbråten 2012). As UAMs with limited permits were not previously eligible for settlement in a municipality, this entailed an extensive and indefinite stay in asylum reception centres. To rectify this unfortunate situation, starting in 2011, UAMs with limited permits were settled in municipalities, but were not given access to the *Introduction program for refugees*.

Unaccompanied minors between 16 and 18 years old who do not qualify for refugee status or a permit on humanitarian grounds, but who have no access to proper care, may receive a temporary, non-renewable residence permit which expires once they reach majority ([Immigration Regulations](#) Section 8-8). This practice was implemented in 2009, and was one of the "[Thirteen points](#)" for limiting the number of (unwarranted) asylum applications proposed in 2008 (Grøntoft 2008). Prior to this date such claimants would have received a humanitarian

permit which would have formed the basis for a permanent residence permit. Relatively few UAMs have received this type of permit, see table 2, chapter 2.

Additionally, under rare circumstances a UAM who has been excluded from refugee status in accordance with the [Immigration Act](#) Section 31 (which refers to The 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees Articles 1 D and E), but who are nonetheless protection from *refoulement* in accordance with the [Immigration Act](#) Section 73, may receive a permit in accordance with the [Immigration Act](#) Section 74. This permit is issued for 6 month at a time, until the impediment to return no longer applies. Holders do not have a right to family reunification or to visit other Schengen countries, and may not re-enter Norway if they leave the realm.

Other cases

There are generally no residence options for unaccompanied minors *not* applying for asylum, with the exception of potential victims of trafficking. UAMs (and other asylum seekers) who have had their applications rejected may appeal to the *Immigration Appeals Board* for reconsideration, and UAMs' may stay in Norway while their appeal is considered (their cases are thus given suspensive effect). They may remain in a reception centre until such time as they are returned to their home country or country of residence. Their weekly allowance is reduced, and those aged 16-18 lose their right to access education.

Immigration regulations Section 8-3

Where there are reasons to believe that a foreign national staying in the realm is a victim of human trafficking and is prepared to accept help and participate in measures offered by the authorities, a residence permit (period of reflection) may be granted that does not form the basis for a permanent residence permit under further guidelines established by the Directorate of Immigration

Immigration regulations Section 8-4

A foreign national who applies for protection after having given testimony as an aggrieved party in legal proceedings in which an indictment has been preferred under section 224 (human trafficking) of the General Civil Penal Code shall be granted a residence permit that form the basis for a permanent residence permit under section 38 of the Immigration Act, unless

- (a) the foreign national meets the conditions for protection under section 28 of the Act,
- or
- (b) there are special grounds for not granting a permit.

There are no formal avenues for regularisation of status outside of the asylum system, although there is currently a temporary provision whereby children who have resided in Norway for more than three years may obtain a residence permit under certain very limited circumstances ([Immigration Regulations](#) Section 8-13, not available in English translation). This provision is unlikely to be relevant for UAMs due to the strict requirements (the child must live in Norway without a residence permit; Norway must have a readmission agreement with the home country, and the readmission agreement must have entered into force after the child's application for asylum was lodged; and the UAM must have assisted in documenting his or her identity). For these reasons it will not be of relevance in first instance cases, and it would only hypothetically apply to UAMs who arrived at a very young age and had their claims refused, or whom there are not many.

There are also specific residence options for (potential) victims of human trafficking, which are open to minors as well as adults. Firstly, a "reflection period" permit for 6 months may be granted to potential victims of trafficking ([Immigration regulations](#) Section 8-3). There is no requirement that permit holders cooperate with the police. To apply for such a permit, the individual must withdraw his or her asylum application. Secondly, a limited residence permit for up to 12 months may be granted, but this requires a higher level of cooperation with the police ([Immigration regulations](#) section 8-3). Finally, actual witnesses in trafficking cases shall be granted a residence permit in accordance with the Immigration Act Section 38, unless they qualify for asylum or there are specific reasons why a permit should not be granted ([Immigration regulations](#) section 8-4). This permit, unlike the former two, is renewable and holders are eligible to apply for permanent residence after three years. Applications for this permit are processed through the international protection procedure (for more, see [Elvegård and Thorshaug](#) 2013).

4 Reception arrangements, including integration measures for UAMs

This chapter, which addresses the treatment of UAMs during and after the asylum procedure, forms the bulk of this report. It is divided in four parts: the first part addresses the organisation of accommodation for UAMs, the second their access to healthcare, and the third their access to education. The last part of the chapter outlines challenges in each of these three areas.

Norway's status as a member of the Schengen cooperation and the Dublin Regulation, but not a member of the EU, means that it is sometimes difficult to know what parts of the EU *acquis* in the immigration and asylum area that are binding for Norway. The Reception Conditions Directive is *not* binding for Norway.

Living arrangements and material provisions⁵

The first topic of this chapter – practical living arrangements for UAMs – is perhaps the most complex, as they are divided in two separate systems: There is one system for those UAMs who are under 15 years old, and another system for those UAMs who are (or claim to be) between 15 and 18 years old.

Reception legislation

An UAM who is under the age of 15 at the time of application is the responsibility of the public agency Bufetat (*Office for Children, Youth and Family Affairs*). These young UAMs shall be offered a residence in a special care centre for minors. As of 2014 there are four such care centres. If possible, the asylum interview, health exams and any other related examinations and procedures are carried out there for UAMs under the age of 12.

⁵ In this section UAM refers to those who claim to be UAM, unless otherwise indicated.

The accommodation for UAMs under 15 years old, provided by Bufetat, is regulated in Chapter 5A of the Child Welfare Act (*Barnevernsloven*).

The *Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)* is responsible for providing proper provisions of care for UAMs between the ages of 15-18 while they await the decision of their asylum claim and until they are either settled in a municipality or leave Norway. UDI is the responsible administrative body, but practical responsibility for running these centres has been delegated to other actors (both for-profit and non-profit entities).

Accommodation for UAMs between 15 and 18 years old is regulated in the *Immigration Act*, and is not subject to specific *legislation* different from that concerning adult accommodation. In accordance with the *Norwegian Immigration Act* Section 95 “a foreign national who applies for protection shall be offered accommodation. A foreign national whose application for protection has been rejected may be offered accommodation pending his or her exit.” The *Immigration Regulations* Section 17-28 further provides that asylum seekers may be transferred between different reception centres within the same municipality or between municipalities. UDI does not have to provide reasons for such decisions and the asylum seeker generally does not have the right to appeal a transfer decision (*Immigration Regulations* Section 17-29). However, UAMs may apply to move to a different reception centre and both the current reception centre and the representative shall be heard by UDI. Living in a reception centre or a care centre is voluntary, but receiving an allowance and other material provisions is conditional upon residence in a centre.

We may also add that in 2012, a new provision in the Child Welfare Act (Section 4-29) was introduced, targeted at minor victims of trafficking who need to stay temporarily in a child welfare institution. To protect the children, prevent disappearances and prevent contact with traffickers, decisions under Section 4-29 may entail restrictions on the child freedom of movement etc.

It is important to note that beyond these quite general provisions in law and regulations (with the exception of care centres for those under 15 which are more closely regulated), the entire framework for Norwegian reception and care arrangements are laid out in administrative guidelines, instructions and practice notes. These will be noted where relevant.

Types of accommodation in reception phase

Table 3: Types of UAM accommodations.

Type of accommodation	Target group	Run by
Care centre	UAMs under 15	Bufetat
Transit centre	UAMs 15-18	On behalf of UDI
Ordinary centre with UAM unit	UAMs 15-18	On behalf of UDI
Ordinary reception centre	UAMs travelling with adults	On behalf of UDI
UAM reception centre	UAMs 15-18	On behalf of UDI
Centre run by child welfare services	UAMs with special needs	Bufetat/child welfare services
Specialised accommodation	UAM victims of trafficking	Bufetat

There are several different actors that run centres on behalf of UDI. UDI has delegated the responsibility for running asylum reception centres for those between the age of 15-18 to three different types of operators: municipalities, non-governmental organisations, and private companies. Operators compete to run reception centres in open calls for tender. Reception capacity is determined by the needs of the moment, and the reception centres for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers between ages 15-18 were as follows in August 2014:

- Two transit centres near Oslo, which are both run by private companies (Hero AS and Link AS).
- Two reception centres for UAMs run by municipalities (Sunndal and Levanger)
- One municipal ordinary reception centre with a specialised UAM unit (Sjøvegan in Salangen municipality)
- One privately run reception centre with a specialised UAM unit (Sandnes mottak run by Hero)
- Three reception centres run by private companies (Link AS, Tokla AS and Norsk Mottaksdrift AS)

It varies somewhat between centres how daily life is organised. In transit centres (i.e. upon first arrival) UAMs get prepared meals. Ordinary reception centres are generally self-catering, and UAMs receive a weekly/monthly allowance to purchase food. Reception

centres are supposed to give UAMs lessons on nutrition and cooking, and ensure that UAMs eat healthy and nutritious food (Circular RS 2011-034, see also Lidén et al 2013 chapter 4).

Duties and of the staff in reception centres

UAMs under 15

There are separate guidelines for care centres for under-15s, where there is a higher staff-to UAM ratio than for other centres accommodating UAMs, as well as a requirement that 50 per cent of the staff should have specialised education in child welfare. In 2011 the staff-to-UAM ratio was found to be 2.7 (NOU 2011:10 2011, p.252). Quality and control requirements for care centres are equivalent to those applicable in ordinary institutions run by Child Welfare Services, and should provide a good standard of care and follow-up.

UAMs aged 15-18

As described above the reception centres for UAMs aged 15-18 are run by different agencies and organisations on behalf of UDI. Those interested in providing such services compete for contracts in open calls for tender.

UDI gives detailed guidelines for operators of reception centres, including specific guidelines for how reception centres should organise care for UAMs, outlined in circular RS 2011-034 (Requirements for care work for unaccompanied minors in reception centres). There are no concrete requirements for a specific staff-to-UAM ratio. UDI outlines requirements for staffing and competence (RS 2010-084 on requirements for staffing and competence in ordinary state-funded reception centres). Staff must present a police certificate when hired. Centres with UAM must have at least 2 staff members present on a 24h basis. In 2011 the staff-to-UAM ratio was on average approximately 0.5:1, i.e. considerably lower than for the very young UAMs ([NOU 2011:10](#), p. 252, see also [Lidén et al 2013](#)).

It is emphasised that the reception centre has a role as the care provider of the minor. They should attend to individual needs and they must name individual contact persons among the staff for each UAM. Centres are required to ensure the minor's rights to participation and to maintain communication with the UAM's representative, as well as to take action when an UAM disappears from the centre. The centre staff must ensure a structured daily life for the UAM and follow up their

education, leisure time activities, health situation and need for health treatment (Circular RS 2011-034 and RS 2012-012, see also RS 2005-049).

In accordance with circular RS-2012-018 each UAM in a reception centre should receive an individual plan to ensure systematic follow-up in accordance with individual needs, and to help him or her to make plans for their own life, as well as to ensure that necessary information reaches new caregivers if and when the UAM moves from the reception centre.

In accordance with circular RS-2011-002, when a UAM travelling with an adult (uncle etc.) arrives at an adult reception centre, local child welfare services shall be alerted in order to assess the UAM's care needs and situation. The reception centre shall map the UAM's situation, ensure their access to leisure activities etc.

Other material provisions in reception phase

UAMs in centres run on behalf of UDI are entitled to a number of material provisions. First of all, UAMs 15-18 are entitled to a bi-weekly allowance, with differential rates based on their status and residence situation. (Circular RS 2008-03V1, adjusted rates for 2014).

- UAM in transit centre where food is provided: 480 kr (€52) per month
- UAM in ordinary self-catering centre: 3200 kr (€ 350) per month
- UAM in Dublin procedure 2280 kr (€250) per month
- UAM with final rejection: 1960 kr (€214) per month

The allowance is paid every second week (on the 1st and 16th of each month). Some reception centres appear to pay it weekly (Lidén et al chapter 4). A UAM must reside in reception centres to get an allowance.

UDI Circular 2008-35V1 lists a number of other material provisions which can be made, automatically or upon application. Newly arrived asylum seekers may for example receive sheets or kitchen equipment (if they live in a self-catering centre). UAMs may apply for money to cover the costs of books required for secondary education.

Accommodation for settled (former) UAMs⁶

UAMs who obtain a permit to stay in Norway are settled in different ways. Bufetat settles children under 15 in cooperation with the *Directorate for Integration and Diversity (IMDI)*. Bufetat's objective is to ensure that children under 15 are settled in a municipality and with a proper care situation within 3 months of obtaining asylum.

IMDI is responsible for settling all others accepted for protection or with humanitarian status, including UAMs aged 15-18.

There are four kinds of settlement for UAMs

- with relatives or in foster care (usually those under 15)
- institution (UAMs with special needs)
- shared accommodation (3-5 UAMs with around-the-clock staffing as required; for 15-18s)
- monitored housing (without full-time staff, shared or individual, 15-18s).

Healthcare for UAM asylum seekers⁷

While adult asylum seekers only have full access to emergency health care, minors have access to health care on equal footing with Norwegian children. In practice, this means that UAMs have equal access to emergency treatment and basic medical care. With regard to secondary healthcare, access is equal in principle but not always in practice. Circular [RS I-5/2011](#) from the *Ministry of Health and Care Services* leaves local health care providers to assess asylum seekers' and irregular migrants' requirements for care. [Liden et al's](#) examination of practice with regard to health care for UAMs aged 15-18 found that the follow-up from specialised health care providers is somewhat uneven between different municipalities, and particularly uncertain with regard to psychiatric health issues, for those UAMs who are in the Dublin procedure, and for those with temporary or no residence permit (Lidén et al. 2013).

⁶ In this section UAM refers to persons recognised as UAM

⁷ In this and the following sections UAM refers to persons claiming to be UAM, unless otherwise indicated

In addition to the publicly provided healthcare there is a health centre for undocumented migrants in Oslo run by the *Norwegian Red Cross* and the *Church City Mission*.

Norway lacks a screening process for vulnerable asylum seekers, however all asylum seekers go through a basic mandatory health assessment to check for tuberculosis upon arrival. Upon arrival at an ordinary reception centre, UAMs will generally have a meeting with the local public health nurse (*helsesøster*) to map their possible healthcare needs.

Education and employment for UAMs

Education

All children under age 16 who are staying in Norway for more than three months (including asylum-seeking children) have a right and duty to education in accordance with the Education Act Section 2-1. It is the municipality where the minor is staying which is responsible for ensuring that this right and duty is respected. In practice, the reception centre will register a UAM at a local school. The school carries out an assessment to ensure that the education provided is adapted to the UAM's age, level of education attained in the country of origin and the level of Norwegian language skills. Many municipalities run special "introduction classes" for recently arrived pupils, who usually will transfer to a regular class after one year (Sletten & Engebriksen 2011). Pupils may also attend ordinary classes but receive additional language instruction (ibid).

The reception centre generally ensures registration of asylum seeking children under 16 quickly, sometimes within a few weeks (Sletten & Engebriksen 2011, p.31). UAM victims of trafficking who are in the care of child welfare services under section 4-29 of the Child Welfare Act may have to wait somewhat longer to receive education as any threats to the individual and necessary security measures must first be assessed and implemented by the police.

UAMs under 16 have the same right to education as Norwegian children. If they are between 16-18 years old they only have the same right as long as they have a residence permit. UAMs between 16 and 18 years old with temporary residence permits in accordance with the [Immigration Regulations](#) Section 8-8 have a right to high school

education. For other UAMs between 16-18 access to high school education is discretionary and decided by the county (*fylke*).

The practical organisation of education for UAMs aged 16-18 varies somewhat. Most UAMs in this group have not completed primary education prior to arrival, and will receive education in separate classes, usually under the auspices of the municipal adult education services. In some places, adult education centres are physically located in high schools, but usually adult education will be given in special centres alongside education for adult asylum seekers and settled refugees. ([Lidén et al](#) 2013).

If the (former) UAM obtains a residence permit and is settled in a municipality, and has not completed primary education, serious efforts will be made to assist them in completing primary education, as this is a prerequisite for attending secondary school.

Employment

As a rule, children under age 15 or who are in compulsory education are not supposed to be employed, although some types of part-time jobs (such as delivering newspapers) are open to those aged 13-15 (with consent from the parent or representative). There are special rules in the *Norwegian Working Environment Act* (chapter 9) to protect children aged 15-18 in employment. Persons older than 15 may take up employment without parental consent. UAMs aged between 15-18, then, are not prohibited from taking up employment.

However, taking up employment is conditional upon having a permit which allows this. For UAMs in the asylum procedure, a temporary work permit is conditional upon the presentation of a valid passport to the immigration authorities. Residence permits in Norway – with the exception of restricted permits for those with doubtful ID - all allow access to employment.

The reception centre may in some cases assist UAMs in getting an unpaid trainee position, though this is rare. Upon settlement (former) UAMs may also receive assistance from the municipality to find employment, in the same way as other settled immigrants.

While UAMs may take up employment, the main focus is to assist them in entering and completing education, and the concern about integrating refugees in the world of work only occurs later, once they are adult and have completed an education.

Challenges in the Norwegian reception system

While the Norwegian reception system is generally considered adequate, and while it provides especially good care for those under 15 years old, a number of challenges can be identified. This section outlines challenges in three of the four areas addressed in this chapter: accommodation, health and education.

Accommodation and material provisions

The *UN Committee on the Rights of the Child* has twice expressed concern over the care arrangements for UAMs in Norway (in 2004 and 2010). In their opinion, the care responsibility for UAMs aged 15-18 should have been transferred to the child welfare services/Bufetat, rather than retaining the current two-tiered structure. The government has so far decided that the current resource situation in the child welfare services prohibits such a transfer of responsibility at this point in time (see Lidén et al 2013, p 32-35).

The need for improving reception conditions for the 15-18 group was recognised in the 2011 *Official Norwegian Report* “In the waiting room of the welfare state” (NOU 2011:10 2011), which argued in favour of raising the staff-to-UAM ratio for this age group but otherwise argued that the 15-18 group should be cared for in ordinary reception centres with special units for UAMs. This would facilitate transition when they turn 18 and enable continuity of operations of centres in the face of fluctuating arrivals.

[Lidén et al](#) (2013) provide the most up to date evaluation of reception conditions for UAMs. This report covers the situation for UAMs under the responsibility and care of UDI, i.e. the 15-18 group, who make up the largest proportion of UAMs. While there are a number of circulars and internal guidelines for how UAMs in this age group are to be cared for in reception centres, the authors note that the applicable standards are consistently below the analogous norms in centres run by child welfare services for the younger age group. The authors find differences in how well different centres ensure living conditions for UAMs. These differences are explained by material conditions, the training and competence of the staff, and the continuity of operations.

The Evaluation of reception conditions for UAMs ([Lidén et al](#) 2013) criticises the living conditions for the UAMs who have a) a limited permission to stay until they turn 18, or b) a rejection of their

application. This criticism is based on an increase in their reported health problems linked to the uncertainty regarding what will happen when they turn 18; their insufficient access to education (see section 3.5) and stress of living on a shoestring budget for a longer period. The researchers found that these UAMs' allowance was not always sufficient to cover their living expenses (healthy food, cost of medical appointments and costs of prescription medications in particular).

Based on these reports and the findings in this review, we can highlight the following challenges:

- Reception centres are intended to serve as temporary accommodation, and this is reflected in the standard of living that they provide and in their staffing levels. However, particularly the small group of UAMs who get temporary permits until they turn 18 may live for a long period of time in the reception system. They face insecurities regarding the future, their living situation and financial means (meant to cover both food and health expenses), which, in combination, make their situation difficult. In this group, many of the youth disappear just before they turn 18. It is disconcerting that little is known about where they go or how they survive.
- There is no set staff-to-UAM ratio in the centres for UAMs aged 15-18, nor are there detailed minimum standards with regard to the quality of accommodation, such as for example the maximum number of residents per room.
- Employees in reception centres are responsible for the UAMs welfare as well as to UDI, giving rise to challenging relations of trust with the minors.
- UDI and employees in UAM reception centres report concerns about persons who are clearly not minors but who reside in UAM reception centres (pending results of their claim/age test).
- Reception centre employees may not be adequately prepared to deal with UAMs who exhibit anti-social behaviour, e.g. by being conflict-seeking or selling drugs.
- Practice with regard to access to health care varies, especially for those with rejected claims or temporary permits. Not everyone receives adequate specialist care, and there is room for improvement: particularly with regard to access to psychiatric care and counselling.

- The access to education for UAMs aged 16-18 is uncertain, especially for those whose application have been rejected and those who have temporary permits.
- Though the government has made efforts to address the issue, procedures for identifying particularly vulnerable minors remain inadequate, as is equally the case in regard to vulnerable adult asylum seekers (Brekke et al. 2010; Sveaass et al. 2012). Identification and follow-up procedures have not been standardised and are not part of the legal obligations pertaining to asylum applicants in reception centres. A government-run pre-pilot project (by UDI and the *Norwegian Directorate of Health*) on identification of vulnerable asylum seekers has recently been concluded and a report is to be presented to the *Ministry of Justice and Public Security* and the *Ministry of Health and care Services*. The report makes a number of recommendations, e.g. to ensure adoption of legislation on the identification and adequate follow-up of vulnerable asylum seekers, appropriate expertise and on facilitation in communication between the different sectors dealing with vulnerable asylum seekers (the reception centres, the health system and UDI) while respecting privacy rules. The police do not have special tools to map vulnerability (Sveaass et al. 2012).

Health

[Lidén et al](#) (2013) discuss health care for UAMs in their report on UAMs' living conditions. They find that the reception centres for UAMs often cooperate well with local health services and that UAMs are able to access necessary health care. The extent of follow-up from specialist healthcare providers varies between municipalities (especially with regard to psychiatric healthcare), and UAMs also report differing experiences with Norwegian healthcare services. They also note that persons who come into contact with UAMs at centres, schools or elsewhere do not always have the training to spot problems that require referral to specialist care (2013, p. 192). Another concern is that the limited pocket money UAMs receive may not always be sufficient to pay for the co-pay required to see a doctor, get a referral to a specialist, or purchase prescribed medication (2013, p. 81).

Access to education

Three evaluations of the standards of educational support provided UAMs and children asylum seekers can be highlighted. The [Østberg Commission](#) (NOU 2010:7 2010) emphasised that children and youth in reception centres should participate in ordinary schooling as soon as possible after arrival. They noted that existing evaluations found highly variable practice in different municipalities. They argued that the rights of young asylum seekers should be strengthened, including the right to attend kindergarten for asylum seeking children, and the right to *primary* education for all who arrive before the age of 18. They also propose a right to *secondary* education for those who arrive before age 18. They propose higher subsidies to municipalities to provide education for children in reception centres, and point to a need to raise the competences for teachers and school managers.

[Sletten and Engebriksen](#) (2011) find that asylum seeking children under 16 get the same access to education as those who have been settled in Norway, but that access to education for those aged 16-18 varies from place to place. This in turn creates problems when they are settled and move to a different municipality. They also find variance as to whether children are allowed to continue in primary education once their asylum claim has been rejected.

[Lidén et al](#) (2013) also find that educational provision for UAMs aged 16-18 varies in terms of how many hours are provided, what is taught, and the quality of the teaching. The study argues for the inclusion of a right to primary education for 16-18-year-olds who have not completed primary education already in the Education Act.

New guidelines for the 16-18-group are under development.

5 UAMs that go missing⁸

Of particular concern with regard to UAMs in Norway, is that every year, some UAMs go missing from reception centres. Despite several reports highlighting this concern, it remains unresolved.

Recognising the problem of missing UAMs

Two reports were published in 2008 on UAMs that go missing; one by a government working group, and one by the NGO PRESS (*Save The Children Norway's* youth organisation) (Justis- og politidepartementet 2008; PRESS 2008). Both reports documented problems with existing guidelines and routines for UAMs that go missing. The government working group made a number of suggestions, including that there should be one person responsible for following up a given case of a UAM absconding, due to the unclear lines of responsibility between different actors.

PRESS released a follow-up report in 2013. They identified several areas of improvement, in particular with regard to regulations, and they found that the police took disappearances more seriously than before. They argued, however, that responsibility for following up individual disappearances remained inadequately delineated. PRESS (Espeland 2013) suggest that many UAMs who disappear either have had their asylum claim rejected or are in the Dublin procedure, suggesting that some went missing to avoid being transported out of Norway.

Lidén et al (2013) also discuss UAM who go missing. They review statistics for 2008 – 2012 of UAMs who have left reception centres without notifying anyone of where they were going, finding that over half of those who absconded or disappeared left from transit centres within the first few weeks of arrival (there appears to have been a rise in the rate of disappearances early on in the process). The report pointed out that the routines for how local child welfare services should

⁸ In this chapter UAM may refer to both claimed and recognised UAMs.

follow up such disappearances should be improved. It also noted that routines for cooperation between child welfare services and the police also need improvement.

Why do UAMs go missing?

As implied above, it appears that some UAMs abscond to avoid removal (e.g. those who are in the Dublin procedure or who abscond after their asylum application has been rejected). Others may abscond early on in the procedure to avoid contact with the authorities altogether, or if they believe that the results of the age assessment will not confirm that they are minors.

There have also been concerns that UAMs that go missing may be victims of trafficking in human beings, and that UAMs in the Dublin procedure are particularly vulnerable in this respect. Social workers in Oslo began to observe young migrants from North Africa in the Oslo street drug trade from 2008 onwards, and they had often disappeared from asylum reception centres immediately upon arrival or never applied for asylum. Sometimes, adults appeared to “control” them and prevent them from interacting with social workers, indicating a form of organisation and raising concerns that the youth were victims of trafficking (Vollebæk 2014, p.107).

Who goes missing and when?

The UAMs who go missing from transit centres or early in the process are mainly young migrants from North Africa who only sought asylum when they came in contact with the police or social workers, for instance on the streets of Norwegian cities.

UAMs who go missing later on in the process do not present a clear socio-demographic profile, and mirror the diversity of the UAM population.

Existing studies suggest that UAMs are more likely to disappear in the following situations:

- Within the first few days of arrival to the transit centre or reception centre
- If they are in the Dublin procedure and awaiting return to another Dublin country (as UAM cases may be more likely to

be processed in Norway under the new Dublin III Regulations, in the future fewer UAMs may feel compelled to abscond to avoid Dublin returns)

- If they have received a final rejection of their asylum claim (Espeland 2013)

There are more disappearances from reception centres for the group aged 15-18 than care centres for those under 15 (Espeland 2013, 5), but some under-15s also disappear (sometimes to avoid return to the home country). Bufetat knows little about them, and it is highly worrying that disappearances of such young UAMs are not resolved.

Procedures

Guidelines have been issued for all concerned actors with regard to the kind of action to take in case of a disappearance (UDI RS 2010-153). The reception centres will report to UDI, to the local police, the representative, the lawyer and to the local child welfare service immediately after an UAM is discovered to have gone missing.

When any minor is reported missing the local child welfare service/Bufetat is responsible for the follow-up on the case. The police are responsible for initiating a preliminary investigation in each case to determine whether a missing persons alert should be put out and whether a full investigation should be initiated. The police keep the reception centre, the representative and the lawyer informed throughout the process. The representative ensures that the follow-up from public authorities is satisfactory. If there is reason to believe that the minor is in the Oslo area (which is quite often the case), the report that the minor is missing will also be sent to the Oslo child welfare services (*Barnevernsvakten*).

Measures adopted and remaining challenges

Following the 2008 government working group's report, coordination responsibility for missing UAMs was moved from the PU to UDI's Eastern Regional Office. Stronger guidelines were developed for all actors with regard to how to act in the case of a disappearance.

In June 2014 UDI introduced a new fast-track procedure for UAMs with a profile consistent with a high risk of absconding. In the fast-track procedure the PU registration, UDI initial conversation and the carpal

x-ray procedure are all carried out on the same or next day. The purpose is to secure enough information in order to carry out the age assessment and to make a decision in the asylum case. The conversation with UDI shall also investigate whether the UAM is at risk of trafficking or, violence, or whether there are health issues. If there is concern that they are at risk because of trafficking, Child Welfare Services shall be notified of this concern, and they may be referred to special accommodation by Child Welfare Services (see above).

The following groups of asylum seekers are put through the fast-track procedure: UAMs from North-Africa, UAMs who apply for asylum after having been apprehended by the police, UAMs who have resided in Norway for some time before making an asylum application, and UAMs who have previously absconded from reception centres. The fast-track procedure also aims to better coordinate between the different agencies that work with UAMs who disappear.

Several problems with regard to how disappearances are identified:

- insufficient follow-up from local child welfare services
- insufficient coordination between different agencies and unclear allocation of responsibilities (as such, the *Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs/Bufdir* has been called on in 2014 to develop better and unified routines for coordination between Bufetat, municipal child welfare services and care centres, as well as other stakeholders, with regard especially to child victims of trafficking)
- Those who disappear before the age assessment and interview may «fall between the cracks» (e.g. because some agencies may treat them as minors while others say they are not). The new fast-track procedure should prevent this.

It is particularly worrying that very young UAMs may disappear from care centres without adequate follow-up and investigation.

If followed the new fast-track procedure initiated in 2014 can represent good practice as it ensures that the age assessment and refugee status determination can be carried out, and also investigates whether the UAM is at risk of THB or violence or has health issues. The fast-track project has also aimed to create better routines for cooperation between relevant authorities with regard to following up disappearances.

UDI has also made plans to create a single contact point for police and child welfare services with regard to disappearances, and an internal coordination group, to ensure a better flow of information.

6 Arrangements when UAMs turn 18 years of age⁹

What happens when a UAM “age out” and is no longer considered to be a minor? Different groups of UAMs face different consequences from reaching majority. There is no specific monitoring in place with regard to the transition to majority.

Loss of status and encouragement to return

For those (former) UAMs who hold a temporary permit, the transition to 18 is the most consequential. As they only received a residence permit because there were no proper care arrangements to which they could be returned, the fact of turning 18 means that the residence permit expires and that they face return to the home country.

UAMs that have a temporary permit that expire once they turn 18 may have an incentive to “go underground” or disappear from reception centres once the transition to 18 draws closer.

Efforts to motivate failed asylum seekers to return have been intensified in recent years. *Hero Kompetanse*, a private provider of reception facilities, set up a program for qualification and training for UAMs on behalf of UDI in 2009-2010, which was evaluated in 2010. Ideally, UAMs would be motivated to apply to IOM for assisted return (Sønsterudbråten 2010). The program was subsequently amended, and currently the reception centres work with the minor to develop a plan for his or her training which is then organised locally. A centre may receive up to 27,500 NOK (3,245 euro) to finance training for each UAM. Examples are language training, IT training, welding, and hairdressing courses. To be eligible, the UAM must be under 18 and have a rejected asylum claim (this includes those with a temporary permit that expires when they turn 18).

⁹ In this chapter UAM may refer to those who are claiming to be a UAM as well as to those who are recognised as such, depending on the context..

All UAM reception centres also have a return adviser who talks to residents with first instance rejections, final rejections and temporary permits. UAMs with Dublin procedure cases are also offered to talk to these advisers, as they may apply to return to the home country through the IOM return program if they so wish.

UAMs who do apply to return as part of the IOM's *Voluntary Assisted Return Programme (VARP)* for vulnerable migrants are given information and advice from IOM in the period leading up to departure.

Loss of rights

UAMs who are still awaiting a decision when they turn 18 will be moved to an adult reception centre and lose access to the education provisions that are in place for UAMs (the Road Ahead program etc, see above) as well as leisure activities in place in UAM reception centres. They also lose their right to access primary education.

Settled (former) UAMs

Former UAMs who have obtained a residence permit in Norway and are settled in a Norwegian municipality, have the right to remain in their special accommodation until they turn 20 years old.

7 Return practices and reintegration

Returning UAMs presents its own challenges. There are relatively few returns of UAMs in general, and particularly very few forced returns to a UAM's country of origin. Most UAM returns occur in the context of the Dublin procedure, and there are also some voluntary returns with IOM's program for vulnerable migrants. Overall, however, there are few returns of UAM asylum seekers, despite this having been a political priority for several years. It should be noted that the return of former UAMs who have "aged out" and turned 18 are not addressed in this section.

Detention and forced returns of UAMs

Returns of UAM to the home country under the auspices of the Immigration Police (forced or escorted returns) are rare, while returns under the Dublin procedure are more common. Practice with regard to returns under the Dublin procedure is undergoing changes in light of the transition to the Dublin III Regulations, and we have not been able to fully map the conditions under which UAMs are returned under the revised Dublin procedure. Like adult asylum seekers, UAMs may be detained in accordance with Section 106 of the Immigration Act under certain circumstances, most importantly due to risk of absconding during the return process.

Such stays in detention are almost always very short, under 24 hours, as stays longer than this requires that the police present his or her case before the district court with a demand that he or she be remanded in custody. Adults may be detained over longer periods of time in cases of serious doubts over their identity (but only for 4 weeks at a time, a period which can be prolonged up to 12 weeks if so decided by the district court. In particular circumstances, detention may last longer, but no more than 18 months). In practice, prolongations are rarely sought in UAM cases.

In practice, then, UAMs who are detained, are only detained for very short periods at the Trandum holding centre on the day of or day preceding his/her removal (usually under Dublin rules)

Normally, there is no reintegration support for rejected asylum seekers who are returned as part of a forced return measure; however UDI may decide to award UAMs who are forcibly returned some reintegration support. PU reported that this was the case in the few recent (2014) forced returns, and that the amount awarded had varied from approx. 1200 euro to 2400 euro.

Voluntary Returns of UAMs

The [return program for vulnerable migrants](#), which includes UAMs, is more comprehensive than IOM's other return programs and offers the following: Return information and counselling; assessment of reintegration needs, consideration of security concerns and fitness to travel; assistance with acquisition of travel documents (if necessary); travel arrangements; airport assistance and escort (UAMs up to and including the age of 15 are always escorted while 16-18s are escorted if needed); return and reception assistance upon arrival at the airport, assistance with onward journey to the minor's final destination; post-arrival information and counselling; reintegration assistance and monitoring.

UAMs may apply to IOM to return under this program with the consent of their representative, and UDI will determine whether IOM may take them on. If so, the local IOM office in the country of return will locate family members and determine whether the family is willing and able to take care of the minor. IOM Norway will assist in Norway with travel documents if necessary, and inform the minor about the return process and what to expect. IOM Norway will also develop a reintegration plan in collaboration with the minor, his or her representative and other possible caregivers in Norway, as well as their family in the country of origin. The reintegration plan lays out how the minor's reintegration assistance should be used in order to best serve the minor in the reintegration process. While it is mainly for the minor, it may also be used for the benefit of the family (for instance through some financial support for a family business). The local IOM office in the country of return will assess the feasibility of the plan and ensure that it is to the minor's benefit.

The reintegration assistance, which for vulnerable migrants is \$7,800, includes different components. \$1,500 is allocated to accommodation support (IOM will try to find a care centre if the minor cannot live with the family), but can be converted to other purposes. In-kind support of \$4,500 can be put toward education (e.g. school fees which are then paid directly by IOM to the school, books, vocational training), starting a business or subsidise a salary (including supporting the family business). \$300 is allocated to medical aid. Finally \$1,500 will go toward subsistence (food, clothes etc). UAMs will not get this as cash but in kind.

Under the program, UAMs are monitored for 6 months from the date of return. This period may be extended up to 12 months in some cases if needed, as determined by UDI and IOM in cooperation. Monitoring will generally take the form of a home visit carried out by the local IOM office. The return program for vulnerable groups has been run as a project, and for the purposes of a project report, all returnees have received an additional monitoring visit.

IOM may carry out additional home visits as part of the reintegration support process, depending on need and how far from the IOM office the minor lives. IOM focuses on whether the minor has felt that he or she has been taken care of in the return process, whether they have been able to re-establish an ordinary daily life and so on. The reintegration plan developed prior to departure may be revised and money reallocated if needed.

Table 4: Returns of UAMs 2009 -2013.

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Forced Returns	57	158	102	80	58
Voluntary Returns	3	5	4	7	15

Source: UDI

8 Conclusions and recommendations

In this report we have reviewed laws and regulations, policies and practices concerning unaccompanied minor asylum seekers from arrival to settlement or return (to another Dublin country or to the home country).

In this chapter we will focus on three of the most important aspects: assessment procedures, reception conditions and UAMs who go missing.

Entry and assessment procedures

In recent years Norway has made several efforts to develop better and faster asylum assessment procedures, with particular focus on UAMs. Processing times are now significantly shorter than they were only a few years ago, and for those UAMs who obtain a residence permit – which are a majority of UAMs – the road from asylum application to settlement in a municipality is only about 5 months.

The creation of an on-call service for representatives, facilitating registration of UAM asylum claims, and the fact that UDI has a dedicated UAM unit, merit particular highlighting as best practices. Ongoing improvements include efforts to further develop the age assessment procedure as well as the new fast-track procedure for certain groups at risk of disappearing.

While relatively few UAMs have been issued temporary permits which expire when they turn 18, this is a practice that has been widely criticised as it places the UAMs concerned in limbo. Furthermore, Norwegian authorities appear not to have addressed the concern highlighted by Oxford Research in 2012 that lawyers may lack knowledge and training on child protection issues, and screening procedures for vulnerable asylum seekers are still not in place.

Reception conditions¹⁰

While reception conditions for UAMs in Norway are generally adequate, many of the concrete challenges that we have identified in this report are related to them. UAMs with temporary permits or who are awaiting return may reside over long periods in the reception system. The system is not adapted to such long stays as it is intended as a temporary residence measure. We have identified several challenges especially with regard to the centres for UAMs between the ages of 15 and 18. There is no specific staff-to-UAM ratio required at these centres, nor are there clear minimum standards with regard to the number of UAMs per room etc. The staff may not be adequately prepared for addressing potential anti-social behaviour among UAM residents.

It must also be noted, here as in previous reports, that UAMs between the age of 16 and 18 have insecure access to education. Access to adequate secondary healthcare, especially mental health-related care, may also vary depending on the UAM's residence status as well as where s/he is residing.

Missing UAMs

The most disconcerting finding in this report is arguably the inadequate follow-up and coordination when UAMs go missing – despite that fact that this problem was recognised as early as 2008. Among those UAMs who go missing, different groups can be identified who have different reasons for absconding, and strategies for addressing this problem should be tailored to these different groups.

As we noted in the introduction to this report, Norway does not recognise the group “non-asylum seeking unaccompanied minors”. Migrants who come to Norway without identity documents may only register their presence through an asylum application. Some young migrants – sometimes described as ‘children adrift’ – are neither motivated to seek asylum nor likely to obtain it. The fact that some (claimed) UAMs disappear early on in the asylum process, or do not wish to apply for asylum in the first place, may suggest that the asylum

¹⁰ In this and the following section UAM may refer to either claimed or recognised UAMs.

procedure as such is not well tailored in order to ensure that their rights *as children* are met.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in this report, we conclude with the following recommendations:

- Norwegian authorities should continue to develop and implement screening procedures for vulnerable asylum seekers.
- UDI should pursue the fast-track procedure as well as efforts to coordinate better with other relevant actors, ensuring a clear allocation of responsibility as well as the rights of UAMs
- UDI should ensure that lawyers who take on UAM cases have adequate knowledge about child protection issues
- Norway should consider inscribing reception conditions in law. In contrast with the EU's Reception Conditions Directive, Norway's reception provisions are almost exclusively found in internal UDI guidelines. The recast Reception Conditions directive could serve as a model for future legislative efforts
- Relatedly, minimum staff-to-UAM ratios as well as minimum standards for material conditions should be specified
- Norway should introduce legislation ensuring a right to primary and secondary education for UAMs between the age of 16 and 18. This would reflect the requirements in the EU Reception Conditions Directive.
- Finally, in the context of efforts to better follow up and coordinate the response to missing UAMs, it should be considered whether the asylum stream is always the best locus for such a response. We recommend that the challenges with regard to ensuring the basic rights of this group of minors are raised on the political agenda.

Statistical annex

Applications for asylum by (claimed) UAMs, 2009 - 2013.

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Applications submitted by UAMs	2,500	892	858	964	1070

Source: UDI

Applications for asylum by (claimed) UAMs, by nationality. 2009 - 2013.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Afghanistan	1719	376	426	419	252	3192
Somalia	246	119	162	208	317	1052
Eritrea	144	89	46	60	213	552
Ethiopia	50	38	21	12	33	154
Algeria	23	33	26	40	32	154
Iraq	84	35	19	9	7	154
Morocco	10	12	20	41	38	121
Stateless	18	27	13	18	23	99
Russian Federation	27	17	13	10	7	74
Sri Lanka	37	19	7	4	1	68
Syria	13	9	3	6	21	52
Iran	15	13	7	9	6	50
Libya	4	2	21	10	8	45
Nigeria	14	5	6	6	5	36
Guinea	6	8	6	9	7	36
Pakistan	3	7	6	9	5	30

China	1	13	3	3	7	27
Tunisia		4	8	9	5	26
Sudan	8	5	4	3	5	25
Uzbekistan	6	3	6	4	4	23
Uganda	3	3		7	9	22
Dem. Rep. Congo	5	4	6	3	4	22
Gambia	8	1	1	7	3	20
Bangladesh		3	1	11	2	17
Albania	1		3	4	7	15
Kosovo	5	2	1	1	6	15
Zimbabwe	3	5	3	1	1	13
Angola	5	1		3	3	12
Yemen	4	3	1	1	2	11
Ghana	3	2	2	2	2	11
Cote d'Ivoire	3		2	4	1	10
Sierra Leone	2	1	3	3		9
Myanmar	3	2		4		9
Tajikistan	7	1			1	9
Kirgizstan		2	1	3	2	8
Lebanon			1	4	3	8
Niger	3	2	1		1	7
Mali			1		6	7
Liberia	1	3	2		1	7
Senegal		3		1	2	6
Guinea-Bissau	1	1		3		5
Vietnam	1	1	1	1	1	5
Burundi	2	1		1	1	5
Belarus				2	3	5
Ukraine		2		2		4
Mongolia	1			2	1	4

Rwanda	1	1	2			4
Serbia	1	2		1		4
Congo (Brazzaville)		1	1		1	3
Cameroon	1	1			1	3
Egypt				2	1	3
Mauritania	1	1			1	3
Bosnia – Hercegovina		1	1		1	3
Jordan		2				2
Turkey	2					2
El Salvador		2				2
South Sudan				1	1	2
Kenya	1				1	2
Nepal					2	2
Tanzania	2					2
Georgia		2				2
Chile			1			1
USA		1				1
Zambia		1				1
Central African Republic	1					1
Colombia					1	1
Jamaica					1	1
Burkina Faso				1		1
Spain					1	1
Armenia	1					1
Total	2500	892	858	964	1070	6284

Source:UDI

**Applications for asylum by (claimed) UAMs, by age and gender.
2010 - 2013**

	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
From 0- 14 years old	125	41	124	29	98	34	117	29
15 years old	142	22	101	16	144	21	111	21
From 16 to 17 years old	371	92	387	61	459	73	449	103
UAM over 18¹¹	92	7	126	14	120	15	202	38
Total (should equal 1.1)	730	162	738	120	821	143	879	191

Source: UDI

Asylum decisions for (recognised) UAMs, by gender and type of permit. 2010 - 2013

Year	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Gender								
Decisions	1097	122	629	129	566	89	472	117
Positive Decisions	812	102	422	110	323	73	347	109
Refugee Status (28a)	61	50	98	74	98	58	154	98
Subsidiary protection (28b)	698	20	275	10	208	7	153	1
Humanitarian Status	52	32	49	26	23	8	40	10
Limited until 18	39	2	25	5	33	2	15	2

Source: UDI

¹¹ UAMs over 18 are those defined to be over 18 by age assessment, having been included in the asylum process and reception conditions for UAMs

**Forced returns of (recognised) UAMs, by destination country
(returns to EU countries denote Dublin returns). 2009 - 2013**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Italy	14	57	28	20	10
Denmark	9	20	19	11	7
Netherlands	7	14	4	3	1
Germany	6	25	12	10	7
Sweden	3	9	16	15	16
Malta	3	9	2		3
Austria	3	2		4	2
Rumania	2	3	1	2	3
Hungary	2	7	1		
Chile	2			1	
Slovenia	1	1	2		
France	1	1			
Lithuania	1	1			
Slovakia	1				
Spain	1		1	1	
Switzerland		1	8	5	1
Belgium		2	3	3	
Kosovo			2		
Latvia			1		
United Kingdom	1	1	1	1	
Finland			1		
Afghanistan			1		
Russian Federation				2	1
Albania				1	
Greece				1	
Sri Lanka				1	1

Poland	4				2
Turkey	1				
Nigeria					1
Pakistan					1
Stateless / GAZA					1
Portugal					1
Total	57	158	102	80	58

Source: PU

Recognised UAMs returned as part of assisted voluntary return measures (arranged by IOM). 2009 - 2013

	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Afghanistan			2			1				
Albania							1		1	
Georgia				1						
Iraq	3		2		1		2	2	1	1
Yemen									1	
Kirgizstan									2	1
Kosovo									2	1
Morocco									1	
Russian Federation					1		1	1	1	
Sri Lanka					1					
Tunisia									1	
Ukraine										2
Total	3		4	1	3	1	4	3	10	5

Source: UDI

References

- Barne- likestillings- og inkluderingsdepartementet, *Arbeid med enslige mindreårige asylsøkere og flyktninger - en håndbok for kommunene*,
- Brekke, J.-P. & Aarset, M.F., 2009. *Why Norway Understanding Asylum Destinations*, Institute for Social Research. Available at: <http://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/handle/11250/177523> [Accessed July 3, 2014].
- Brekke, J.-P. & Brochmann, G., 2014. Stuck in Transit: Secondary Migration of Asylum Seekers in Europe, National Differences, and the Dublin Regulation. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, p.feu028.
- Brekke, J.-P., Sveaass, N. & Vevstad, V., 2010. *Sårbare asylsøkere i Norge og EU*, Institutt for samfunnsforskning.
- Elvegård, K. & Thorshaug, K., 2013. *Identification of victims of trafficking in human beings in international protection and forced return procedures: Norway*, NTNU Samfunnsforskning/European Migration Network. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/28.norway_emn_trafficking_study_final.pdf.
- Espeland, K.E., 2013. *Savnet - en rapport om enslige asylsøkende barn som forsvinner fra mottak*, PRESS. Available at: <http://www.press.no/files/Rapport-om-asylsokende-barn-som-forsvinner-fra-mottak-ferdig.pdf>.
- Grøntoft, K., 2008. Her er Stoltenbergs 13 punkter. *Aftenposten*. Available at: <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/Her-er-Stoltenbergs-13-punkter-6577567.html> [Accessed July 5, 2012].
- Hopkins, P.E. & Hill, M., 2008. Pre-flight experiences and migration stories: the accounts of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. *Children's Geographies*, 6(3), pp.257–268.
- Justis- og politidepartementet, 2008. *Mindreårige som forsvinner fra mottak: forebygging og oppklaring*, Available at:

http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/JD/Vedlegg/Rapporter/G-0399B_EMA.pdf.

Lidén, H. et al., 2013. Levekår på mottak for enslige mindreårige asylsøkere. Available at: <http://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/handle/11250/177431> [Accessed November 3, 2014].

NOU 2010:7, 2010. *Mangfold og mestring: Flerspråklige barn, unge og voksne i opplæringssystemet*, Available at: <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dok/nouer/2010/NOU-2010-7.html?id=606151>.

NOU 2011:10, 2011. *I velferdsstatens venterom*, Available at: <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/jd/dok/nouer/2011/nou-2011-10.html?id=645250>.

Oxford Research, 2012. *Evaluering av advokatordningen for asylsøkere*, Available at: http://www.udi.no/globalassets/global/forskning-fou_i/beskyttelse/evaluering-av-advokatordningen-for-asylsokere.pdf.

PRESS, 2008. *Ute av øye, ute av sinn: En rapport om forsvinninger av enslige mindreårige asylsøkere fra norske asylmottak*, Available at: <http://www.press.no/files/Rapport-om-forsvinninger2.pdf>.

Sletten, M.A. & Engebriktsen, A.I., 2011. *Kartlegging av opplæringstilbudet til enslige mindreårige asylsøkere og barn av asylsøkere*, NOVA. Available at: <http://www.digibiblioteket.no/files/get/5Sa/Oppl%C3%A6ringstilbud.pdf> [Accessed November 3, 2014].

Sønsterudbråten, S., 2012. *Lovlig med forbehold: Bruk av oppholdstillatelser med begrensninger for å øke andelen asylsøkere som dokumenterer sin identitet*, Fafo.

Sønsterudbråten, S., 2010. *Veien videre. Evaluering av kvalifiserings- og opplæringsopplegget som tilbys enslige mindreårige med begrensede oppholdstillatelser*, Fafo. Available at: <http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/20190/20190.pdf>.

Sveaass, N., Vevstad, V. & Brekke, J.-P., 2012. Sårbare asylsøkere i mottak – identifisering og oppfølging. In B. Berg & M. Valenta, eds. *Asylsøker: I velferdsstatens venterom*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, pp. 225–46.

Thomas, S., 2004. “I was running away from death” – the pre-flight experiences of unaccompanied asylum seeking children in the UK. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 30(2), pp.113–122.

UNHCR, 2010. *Trees only move in the wind: A study of unaccompanied Afghan children in Europe*, UNHCR PDES. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4c21ae2a2.pdf> [Accessed November 5, 2014].

Vollebæk, L.R., 2014. *Sosialt arbeid med sårbare migranter: Mindreårige og voksne asylsøkere, papirløse, EØS-borgere og mulige ofre for menneskehandel*, Oslo Kommune, Velferdsetaten.

Circulars

Ministry of Health (2011) RS I-5/2011 " Helsehjelp til personer uten fast opphold i riket og personer uten lovlig opphold" (Health care for persons without regular/permanent residence in the realm and persons without legal residence)

UDI (2005) RS 2005-049 Retningslinjer for arbeidet med enslige mindreårige asylsøkere i ankomstfasen (Guidelines for working with UAMs in the arrivals phase).

UDI (2010) RS-2010-153 Krav til varsling og oppfølging når enslige mindreårige forsvinner fra statlige mottak (Requirements to notify and follow up when UAMs disappear from state-run/funded reception centres)

UDI (2010) RS 2010-183 Retningslinjer for aldersundersøkelser av enslige mindreårige asylsøkere, jf. utlendingsloven § 88 (Guidelines for age assessments of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers)

UDI (2011) PN 2012-011 Behandling av asylsaker fra enslige mindreårige søkere - særlig om aldersvurdering (Processing of asylum claims from unaccompanied minor asylum seekers – with particular focus on the age assessment)

UDI (2012) RS-2012-012 Krav til arbeid med oppvekstmiljø, beboermedvirkning og aktivitetstilbud for enslige mindreårige i mottak (Requirements for work with a childhood environment, resident participation and activity offerings for UAMs)

UDI (2011) RS 2011-034 Krav til omsorgsarbeid for enslige mindreårige i mottak (Requirements for carework for unaccompanied minors in reception centres)

Institutt for samfunnsforskning

2014:14

Forfatter/ Author	Anne Staver and Hilde Lidén
Tittel/Title	Unaccompanied minors in Norway: Policies, practices and data in 2014 Norwegian National Report to the European Migration Network
Sammendrag	Denne studien inneholder en oversikt over regelverk, praksis og statistikk om enslige mindreårige asylsøkere gjennom ankomstfasen og fram til bosetting eller retur. Den er Norges bidrag til et sammenlignende studie fra European Migration Network.
Emneord	Enslige mindreårige asylsøkere, asylmottak, asylsøknad, retur, politikk, Norge
Summary	This study presents policies, practices and statistics on unaccompanied minor asylum seekers from arrival until settlement or return. It is a contribution to a comparative study by the European Migration Network
Index terms	Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, reception centres, asylum applications, return, migration policy, Norway

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS IN NORWAY: POLICIES, PRACTICES AND DATA IN 2014

This study presents policies, practices and statistics on unaccompanied minor asylum seekers from arrival until settlement or return. It is a contribution to a comparative study by the European Migration Network

Institutt for
samfunnsforskning

Institute for
Social Research

Munthes gate 31
PO Box 3233 Elisenberg
NO-0208 Oslo, Norway
T +47 23 08 61 00
samfunnsforskning.no

ISBN (trykk):
ISSN (Online): 978-82-7763-451-7
ISSN: 0333-3671