UNICEF and CNZD published study to improve services for children on the move and a leaflet for foster families

UNICEF Croatia published a leaflet in several languages with information addressed to foster parents of unaccompanied children in Croatia and, in partnership with the Center for Missing and Abused Children (CNZD), conducted the study “A path to empowerment: improving services for children on the move” . The study reports on data collected through interviews with unaccompanied children, as well as survey research and focus groups among professionals working with them. Its aim is to empower social service providers, primarily educators, foster parents, and other professionals working with unaccompanied children in the social welfare system and reception centres for applicants for international protection.

The report concludes that most children view Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as transit countries rather than final destinations, though they see these territories as a second option if they find employment. It also finds that language barriers, limited educational backgrounds and frequent illiteracy can significantly hinder access to assistance and services.

Regarding international protection, the study finds that children often wish to avoid seeking asylum due to worries about being returned under the Dublin Regulation, a concern that is shared by childcare providers. The study clarifies that, currently, returns of unaccompanied children under the Dublin framework are not carried out, and finds that childcare professionals are not familiar with the new Pact on Migration and Asylum, and are often unaware of how the new legal framework will affect their daily work with unaccompanied children.

The report proposes developing tools and training materials on a range of matters, including training on the Pact and the standards it lays down for reception, accommodation, procedures, and quality of international protection.

Source(s)

- United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (1 November, 2025), Put k osnaživanju: unaprjeđenje usluga za djecu u pokretu [A path to empowerment: improving services for children on the move], https://www.unicef.org/croatia/izvjesca/put-k-osnazivanju

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