NGOs coalition expresses concern over risks of limitation of initiatives for inclusion of unaccompanied minors

A coalition of 27 civil society organisations has urged the Italian Government and Parliament to safeguard protections for unaccompanied migrant children and young people, warning that proposed immigration reforms could undermine established integration pathways and weaken safeguards enshrined in the 2017 Zampa Law.

The appeal follows the introduction of the Immigration Bill (S.1869) before the Senate Constitutional Affairs Committee on 19 May. Organisations working with unaccompanied foreign minors have raised concerns that several provisions in the legislation could adversely affect thousands of young people who arrived in Italy as children without parental or family support.

The groups noted that the Zampa Law has played a significant role in developing protection and integration mechanisms recognised at both national and European levels, enabling young migrants to access education, vocational training, employment opportunities, and pathways towards independent living.

Particular concern has been expressed over proposed changes to the system of “administrative continuation”, which currently allows young people reaching adulthood to remain in support programmes until the age of 21 while completing their studies, training, or transition into employment. The bill would introduce a fixed limit of 19 years of age for continued reception and support, a measure organisations argue could interrupt successful integration pathways and increase the risk of vulnerability, social exclusion, and exploitation.

The coalition has also raised concerns about planned reforms to assisted repatriation procedures, which would transfer decision-making authority from the judicial system to administrative authorities. According to the organisations, decisions of this nature have profound implications for the rights and future of minors and should remain subject to robust judicial oversight and the principle of the child’s best interests.

Further concerns relate to provisions enabling the implementation of the European Pact on Migration and Asylum. The organisations warned that aspects

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of the Pact, including accelerated procedures, screening measures, and detention-related provisions, could have significant implications for the protection of unaccompanied minors upon arrival in Italy.

The signatory organisations have called on lawmakers to use the legislative process as an opportunity to strengthen rather than weaken existing protections. Specifically, they are seeking the preservation of administrative continuation on a case-by-case basis up to the age of 21, the maintenance of procedural safeguards and the right of young people to be heard, the retention of Juvenile Court jurisdiction over assisted repatriation decisions, and full protection for unaccompanied minors throughout the implementation of the European Pact on Migration and Asylum.

The appeal is being promoted by ActionAid, Ai.Bi. Amici dei Bambini, Amnesty International Italia, Associazione Agevolando, ASGI, ARCI, Caritas Italiana, Centro Astalli, CeSPI, CIDAS, CIES ONLUS, CIR – Italian Council for Refugees, CISMAI, Cooperativa CivicoZero, CNCA, Defence for Children International, Fondazione Migrantes, Fondazione Terre des Hommes Italia, ICS – Italian Solidarity Consortium, International Rescue Committee Italia, Intersos, Oxfam Italia, Refugees Welcome, Salesians for Social Welfare, Save the Children Italia, SOS Children's Villages, and Tutors in Rete.

Source(s)

- MeltingPot (19 May, 2026), [Risky inclusion pathways for minors arriving alone in Italy], https://www.meltingpot.org/2026/05/percorsi-di-inclusione-a-rischio-per-i-minori-arrivati-soli-in-italia/

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