The International Protection Act 2026 introduces a structured, statutory framework for the appointment and role of a child representative for unaccompanied minors. The provisions are materially stronger and more explicit than under the 2015 Act, and are aligned with the EU Pact requirements.

Every unaccompanied minor applying for international protection is assigned a representative in line with their best interests. The legislation requires the representative to represent, assist and act on behalf of the unaccompanied minor, safeguarding the best interests and well-being of the child.

Specifically, the process is designed to ensure that minors have the support they need with clear, accessible information about the international protection process, and are given meaningful opportunities to express their views in a manner appropriate to their age, development, and individual needs.

Under the Act, the Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration is responsible for appointing the representatives required, and an information booklet for organisations interested in applying was prepared, setting out the required delivery of services. The contract was advertised on Immigration Service Delivery's website and on Activelink. A total of seven applications were submitted and reviewed by an evaluation panel.

Upon reviewing the criteria set out in the information booklet, AllPro Services was identified as the strongest applicant for this role. The value of the contract cannot be disclosed at this time as it is commercially sensitive.

AllPro confirmed previous relevant experience in a number of locations, including responding to emergency welfare presentations involving underage homeless individuals and vulnerable young people. Child representatives are CORU registered, provide cover across the country and are available to attend airport or port as necessary with a very short timeframe.

This contract is in place for an initial six months, during which time a comprehensive evaluation will take place. This evaluation will inform discussions on how the programme should continue.

Source(s)

- House of Oireachtas | Tithe an Oierachtais (23 June, 2026), [International Protection, Dáil Éireann Debate, Tuesday - 23 June 202], https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2026-06-23/503/

Date of development

© European Union Agency for Asylum, 2026. Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged.

23.06.2026

Country

Ireland

Thematic area(s)

Applicants with special needs, Unaccompanied minors, Pact on Migration and Asylum

Development type

Practice

© European Union Agency for Asylum, 2026. Reproduction is authorised, provided the source is acknowledged.