

EGN Newsletter

July 2026



We are pleased to share with you this first EGN public newsletter.

It includes the latest EGN updates, publications, announcements and the most relevant developments, and events in the field of guardianship for unaccompanied children across Europe.

This newsletter will serve as a valuable resource to stay connected with ongoing efforts, share best practices, and highlight key initiatives that shape the future of guardianship systems.



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Publications

Relevant recent publications that are interesting to read from amongst others EUAA, FRA, ENS and Migration and Home affairs

AGENDA

2 September 11.00 CET:
Child participation WG meeting

3 September 14.00 CET:
Online Network meeting

8 September 14.00 CET:
Cross border WG meeting

9 September 10.00 CET:
Online thematic meeting on Return

27 July, 31 August, 28 Sept 14.00 CET:
EU Asylum & Migration WG meeting

19-20 November:
Network meeting in Lisbon



Flyer EGN Strategy 2026-2028

We are proud to present this overview of the EGN Strategy 2026–2028, outlining our direction and ambitions for the coming years. This flyer provides a clear summary of EGN’s mission and vision, as well as our key objectives and planned activities. It highlights how we aim to strengthen guardianship systems and practices, improve child participation and foster cross border collaboration. Feel free to share this flyer within your network!

[Flyer EGN Strategy 2026-2028](#)

New EGN member

We are happy to announce EGN has a new member: after approval by the Strategic Steering Group, we welcome to Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTG) Service (England and Wales) as our 49th EGN member. The ICTG Service exists to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are, or may be, victims of trafficking or modern slavery. The service consists of over 100 Guardians working across England and Wales and provides an independent, trusted adult who helps children understand their rights, navigate complex systems, and ensure their best interests remain central to all decisions. We look forward to a fruitful cooperation!

General announcements

EGN branding update

Recently the EGN has updated its branding by improving the templates for the powerpoints, newsletter and minutes. Soon this will also be extended to the website.

EGN Members Map

On the EGN website you can now find an [interactive map](#) including most of the EGN members. **Call to all members:** If you do not see your organisation on the map yet, please send some “about” information and a logo file to f.vanderheyden@nidos.nl

Workplan 2027 submitted

In the beginning of May, the EGN Project team submitted the workplan for 2027, after the summer we will receive the evaluation.

Call to action: Upcoming EGN activities

During the last months of 2026, there are still several opportunities to apply for activities or share your input. We truly value the time, effort, and commitment of our members. Your involvement makes a real difference, and we hope many of you will continue to get involved and contribute during the remainder of the year.

Online Advisory Board for Unaccompanied Children

A key goal for EGN in 2026 is to ensure more meaningful participation of unaccompanied children in our network. Therefore, we are starting an advisory board of UAC. For recruitment of the children in the advisory board, we need your help! For more information on the recruitment process, please see the Terms of Reference that has been shared.

Also, we are still searching for participants for the Child Participation working group. If you are interested or have valuable experience to share, you are welcome!

Study Visit 2

We are looking forward to welcoming a delegation from Belgium and from Estonia in the Netherlands in October, during which they will visit the screening center in Ter Apel. We still have budget for a second study visit! Would you like to visit another member of EGN this year to learn about how they are working on implementation of the Pact, children's participation, training of guardians or something else? Let us know as soon as possible!

Network Meeting Lisbon

November 19-20, we have our Autumn Network Meeting in Lisbon. If you have any topics you would like to propose for the agenda or a promising practice you would like to share with other members, let us know.

Newsletter Contributions

Have you made any new resources, do you organise a webinar about a topic related to guardianship or do you have something else you wish to share with other EGN members? Send it to us for our newsletter! The newsletter is shared with EGN members every quarter.

Please send any requests or contributions to both Fleur (f.vanderheyden@nidos.nl) and Jannemiek (j.evelo@nidos.nl) – as due to holidays, this will ensure that at least one of us is able to get back to you.



Looking back: Network meeting Utrecht

A few weeks before the implementation of the European Asylum and Migration Pact, the EGN Network meeting brought together 46 participants from 22 European countries in Utrecht on 28 and 29 May. Hosted by Nidos, the meeting provided an opportunity for EGN members to exchange knowledge, strengthen collaboration and share promising practices to better support unaccompanied children across Europe.

The European Asylum and Migration Pact and its implications for guardianship were a central theme throughout the meeting. Also, Nidos Experts by Experience and Trusted Juniors shared their personal stories and perspectives, offering valuable insights into the realities faced by unaccompanied children. EGN members also showcased inspiring initiatives from across Europe, including a mentorship programme from Greece, a board game developed in Belgium and an information booklet on the asylum procedure from France.

The meeting was opened by Lilianne Ploumen, Chair of Nidos' Supervisory Board, who highlighted the importance of continuing to learn from one another. A delegation from the EGN also met with Utrecht Mayor Sharon Dijksma to discuss the challenges and opportunities the new Pact presents for UAC. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to continue working together to strengthen guardianship systems across Europe. The EGN project team looks back to the meeting with lots of positivity and wants to thank all participants for their participations and enthusiasm!



EGN Network meeting Utrecht 28-29 May 2026

In the spotlight: Online Forum for Guardians

We are delighted to announce the successful launch of the EGN Forum for Guardians. The first meeting took place online earlier this month, 9th July. Fleur and Terry from the Project Team were joined by 11 of our Members from different countries, who all work directly as guardians. After introductions the group talked about their ideas for the Forum, outlining that they wanted to use these meetings to learn from each other; exchange information on each other's practice; develop an understanding of how guardianship systems worked across European States; and provide support to each other. In particular there was an interest in learning about how different Members States supported children through the asylum (and other international protection) procedures; how they set about facilitating and supporting family contact and reunion; methods and mechanisms for supporting and developing guardians; looking at how this forum could help promote a better understanding and awareness of the role of the guardian and the importance of that role.

A discussion followed on the emotional challenges and demands of being a guardian. We identified that whilst there were many positives about being a guardian and lots of opportunities for 'good times' the role was demanding, draining complex and at times it could feel like a lonely and isolated job. The group felt that whilst they wanted the forum to consider good practice (see above) there should also be space to consider these emotional aspects of the role and that the forum should provide an opportunity for members to talk about the emotional aspects of their work.

The meeting then moved on to a short consideration of the EGN Standards for Guardians. These were well received, indeed many of the guardians in the meeting were very familiar with them, and whilst there was some very reasonable discussions on the fine points of delivering the Standards in practice, there was a broad agreement that they stand as a useful tool in supporting guardians in their work.



This first meeting was deemed to have been useful and relevant by those who took part in it and the meeting closed with a sense of positive anticipation for what lies ahead for the Forum. The enthusiasm and engagement during the meeting confirmed the value of the Forum. Thanks to all who attended for contributing and an extra thank you to Wim and Suzy for their time and efforts in supporting the Project Team in making this happen.

The EGN at external events

Throughout the past months, the EGN has continued to contribute to important international discussions on the protection and support of unaccompanied children. By participating in conferences, expert meetings and communities of practice, EGN has shared its expertise on guardianship, children's rights and durable solutions, while strengthening collaboration with policymakers, international organisations and civil society partners. Below, we highlight two recent external events where the EGN had the opportunity to present its work and advocate for the central role of guardianship in safeguarding the rights and well-being of unaccompanied children.



Presentation at the Inter-Governmental Consultation on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC)

EGN presented at the Inter-Governmental Consultations on Migration, Asylum and Refugees (IGC), Network on Children and Youth meeting on April 28-30 held in Dublin, co-chaired by Ireland and Norway. The meeting addressed "Future-ready immigration systems for children and youth: balancing protection, integrity and preparedness". EGN outlined the importance of guardianship for unaccompanied children, the work of the EGN and some priorities, sensitive issues and sources of inspiration for the network.

The guardian as central safeguard for unaccompanied children: presentation EGN at first CoP UcRR

Recently, a new project on strengthening safeguards for unaccompanied children in return procedures has been started, which is coordinated by ICMPD (see [here](#) for more information). The first Community of Practice meeting was held in June in Brussels to kick-start the project. During the first day, EGN was invited among other civil society organisations to ensure discussions were started from a children's rights point of view. EGN gave a presentation about the role of the guardian in finding durable solutions for unaccompanied children. For future project activities, we will consider EGN's engagement on a case-by-case basis.

EU Policy updates

- The EU CEAS legislation, including several provisions intended to strengthen guardianship, entered into force at national level on June 11 2026
- The EU is finalising delegated acts under the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation which will address establishing family links for family reunification purposes amongst other points.
- The new Return Regulation has been agreed by the EU institutions: [European Parliament approval of the Return Regulation](#) | [European Council on Refugees and Exiles \(ECRE\)](#). Its adoption was deeply regretted by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights [UN Human Rights Chief concerned about new EU returns law, urges consistency with human rights and refugee law](#) | [OHCHR](#)
- Our EU Asylum and Migration working group continues to meet on a monthly basis to exchange on EU developments and national implementation measures and practices.



Relevant publications

- [EUAA Operational Standards and Indicators on Reception including Vulnerability-related Aspects](#) | [European Union Agency for Asylum](#)
- [Updated handbook on European asylum, borders and immigration law](#) | [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights](#)
- [Guidance on the use of Detention, Alternatives to Detention and Restrictions of Freedom of Movement under the 2024 Recast Reception Conditions Directive](#) | [Migration and Home Affairs](#)
- [ENS Statelessness briefing for Guardians May 2026](#)
- [RMCC-Benchmarks-and-Borders-June-2026](#)- UK Age Assessment Briefing
- [Children on the move in Greece: April-June 2026](#) - Save the Children's Resource Centre
- [EMN Ad Hoc Query on practices regarding age assessment of third country nationals](#)