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Reception and integration of unaccompanied children in the Nordic countries
Nordic Welfare Centre

— An institution under the Nordic Council of Ministers
— Offices in Stockholm and Helsinki
— 30 employees
This presentation..

- The situation in the Nordic countries
- Major similarities and differences between the countries
- Main lessons learnt up to now in the reception and integration of migrant children
How have the countries arranged for the reception and care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children?

• The asylum process
• Rights to social services, school, healthcare and leisure time
• What happens when turning 18?
• Measures and routines for children who disappear
• Similarities and differences between the countries
• Some learning examples
2008-2016 Unaccompanied children in the Nordics
Major differences

Where unaccompanied children seek asylum

Differences in reception policies

Daily care, accommodation and school
Major similarities

• A decreased in the inflow of asylum seekers - mainly due to European countries agreement with Turkey and Libya
• Several new laws in all countries – towards more restricted policies (except for a new law in Sweden gives possibility to stay during upper secondary school)
• Temporary residence permits
• Foster homes are not common for accommodation and care, mostly given to younger UC, shortage of foster homes (before 2015 there was a shortage) Expt Iceland
• The possibility of family reunification is difficult
• No national measures or routines for children who disappear. Expt Norway. Work is ongoing
Main lessons learnt up to now in the reception and integration

Local data, learning examples
- Structured support for school, housing, labour market and support after 18 gives results
- Cooperation between social services, school, NGOs
- Combination classes in upper secondary school

E.g. Örebro Sw, Larviksmodellen

Research
- UC are doing better to settle in the labour market than children who have come with their parents (applies for Sweden, not Norway, longitudinal registered data)
- Better outcomes for boys than for girls
Asylum-seeking children in the Nordics 2011-2016, by age groups

Asylsökande barn och unga i Norden 2011-2016

Källa: Eurostat
Asylum seeking children by gender 2016
Main lessons learnt up to now in the reception and integration
Conclusions

Better outcomes for UC boys? Why? More attention needed to girls situation

Better outcomes for UC than children in families. Why? More attention needed to newly arrived children in families, and parents

- School most important arena for inclusion and integration - here and now – and for their future and our society

- School single most important protective factor to prevent future social problems

- Support for families, parental support, early interventions
Early Interventions for newly arrived children and refugee families

Support for families
Parental support
Early interventions
School preparation programs

Nordic day – a pre conference to the annual ESN conference 28-30 of May 2018
Thank you!

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