



The U-CARE project is funded  
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# Exchange on Alternative Care

*Lost in Transition?*

**Unaccompanied Children in Alternative Residence**  
***U-CARE* Project**

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## U-CARE

U-CARE aims to develop and improve alternative care systems for unaccompanied minors in Belgium, Germany and Greece

### Key objectives

1. Recruitment of foster care providers (specifically including families with a migratory background) for young UMC (14 and younger)
2. Development of alternative care prototypes (other than foster care) tailored to the needs of older UMCs (14+ and 18+)
3. Training and capacity building of professionals and care providers
4. Organization of (trans)national exchange of best practices within implementing EU MS



*What are the key challenges for unaccompanied minors as they make the transition to an independent life?*

*Please go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and enter this code: 87908720*



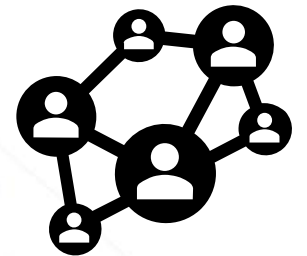
## Key findings

- ❑ The **parallel termination of youth welfare and guardianship** often undoes the positive developments reached by the young persons in the past years and puts many of them at risk of marginality.
- ❑ **Voluntary Guardians often can offer contacts and assistance** for which official guardians do not have time and they often remain a trusted, reliable contact for young adults, even after the guardianship has come to an end.
- ❑ The **uncertain housing situation** after the termination of youth welfare is a big burden for the young people and has far-reaching consequences for further integration efforts.
- ❑ **The social networks of care leavers are comparatively small** and often completely limited to the youth welfare context.

# Prototype 1: Self-Advocacy

**Initiation of a self-advocacy network that serves as a point of contact for care leavers and promotes the mutual support and self-organization of unaccompanied minors**

- Open weekly meetings accompanied by social pedagogues
- Low-threshold contact point for care leavers as well as unaccompanied minors who are currently still living in a residential group or SIL
- Peer-to-peer interaction – mutual support and guidance
- Assistance in everyday issues, contact with acquaintances as well as psychosocial support
- Promotion of active participation and self-advocacy skills



## Blueprint for the planning and implementation of innovative accommodation and care arrangements for unaccompanied minors and young adults

- Differentiated forms of accommodation and care for young unaccompanied adults up to the age of 21.
- Extensive support for the transition to independence
- New planning alliances with city actors: employment and social welfare office, municipal housing company
- Incorporation of legal innovations (SGB VIII reform)
- Continuity in care and accommodation



# Prototype 3: Mentorship

**Support for young adults within the framework of a voluntary mentorship, which can be arranged in three different forms**

- Transition of guardianship to volunteer mentorship after 18th birthday
- Individual assistance during the challenging transition phase
- Collaboration of state and voluntary actors
- Flexible concept that can be adapted to the needs and local conditions
- Continuous advice and support for volunteer mentors
- Strengthening autonomy and necessary everyday skills





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**Many thanks for your attention!**



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