

In protracted limbo: Transitions to adulthood and life trajectories of former unaccompanied migrant children in Europe

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Aims

In Protracted Limbo aims to examine:

- The wellbeing outcomes of former independent migrant children in Europe (including those who remain in Europe and those who are returned to countries of origin).
- Young people's experiences of negotiating the various structures which govern their legal, social and economic statuses as well as their political and social identities.
- The types of service and support arrangements most likely to facilitate the best possible economic and quality of life outcomes.
- Methodological possibilities for monitoring the longer-term outcomes of former independent migrant children across Europe.

Rationale

Young adults who previously entered Europe as independent migrant children face a range of possible outcomes. The majority are denied refugee status or humanitarian protection but are afforded time-limited welfare support and care under provisions of discretionary leave.

Once they become adults, young people frequently end up in limbo – uncertain of whether or not they will be able to remain in the country of immigration/asylum and for how long. To date, there has been little exploration of the longer-term trajectories of those young people across Europe who make the transition to adulthood with under-determined political or citizenship status.

Theoretically framed by concepts of wellbeing and human rights, In protracted limbo will explore the gaps in theory and knowledge surrounding these dimensions of youth migration and identify the implications for contemporary national and international policy governing the treatment and support of young people subject to immigration control across the EU.

Outputs

- The fifteen month preparatory project will develop links with institutions and organisations across Europe working with unaccompanied young people, and will lay the foundations for a larger programme of research on the subject.
- Working paper on policy and practice governing youth independent migration in the EU.

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