

FUTURA - Fostering the Transition of Unaccompanied childRen to Adulthood

The International Rescue Committee (IRC), through funding from EEA Grants, will establish 10 Supported Independent Living (SIL) apartments in Athens, with a capacity of 40 places to accommodate asylum seeking unaccompanied children aged 16 years old and above. The IRC will provide quality accommodation and a holistic package of individualized support services to at least 120 UAC over a duration of 33 months. In cooperation with public entities, we will facilitate access of these adolescents to training opportunities and accelerate the referral and transfer of unaccompanied children in Supported Independent Living apartments.

Four children will live in each apartment and they will receive a range of services, including legal aid, individual and group psychosocial support, non-formal education and skills building activities tailored to their needs, by a core team of experienced social workers, caretakers and interpreters. The caretakers will further ensure that adolescents develop their independent living skills, are able to perform household tasks, manage their budget and live peacefully with limited supervision from staff. Unaccompanied children and IRC staff will jointly develop individual development plans that will include their goals and means to achieve them in order to reach their full potential in life.

SIL apartments are considered as alternative accommodation options with a great potential to support unaccompanied children's transition from a supported living environment to independence and integration in the local community. In SIL apartments, children are provided with a series of personalized support services tailored to their unique needs, strengths and weaknesses, and particular emphasis is placed on their empowerment and self-reliance. Our goal is for adolescents who turn 18 to have the ability to rent their own accommodation and benefit from the same services as the Greek population. The SIL method distances itself from the current traditional accommodation system in Greece, which is primarily institutional.

The project will contribute to improved quality of accommodation and services for UAC, and increased chances of success for children in their path to independence and autonomy, outside of the institutional system.