

Concluding remarks

Jan Murk

The conference succeeded in approaching the care and reception for unaccompanied minors from a child protection perspective instead of a migratory one.

The context was set out on day 1. Margaret Tuite reflected on behalf of the European Commission on the current fragmentation concerning child protection in Europe and stressed that responsibility is not always properly addressed; regarding level of government and regarding funding. Tin Verstegen spoke about the reasons for Nidos to undertake a project such as this one on a European level. Jorge Fernández del Valle gave an overview on out of home care, more specifically foster care, in different European countries and especially for unaccompanied minors, which provided participants with a good starting point for a closer look at practice in the UK, by Ravi KS Kohli and Jim Wade, and Ireland, by Muireann Ni Raghallaigh. During the panel discussion the fact that countries have different challenges to address became clear once more.

On day 2, Liedewij de Ruijter de Wildt presented the results of the visits and the desk research, which was succeeded by eight workshops that gave participants the opportunity to have a closer look at good practices revealed by the project. Former unaccompanied minors from the Netherlands finally shared their experiences with living in a family with the participants of the conference.

We hope this project is a starting point for working together on this important issue and that it will lead to convincing governments on applying RLF on a national level and to development of training of professionals and foster families on both on a national and a European level.