Reception in Belgium
Federal Agency for the reception of asylum seekers

Reception in Belgium

Fedasil: core business

- Reception of asylum seekers
- Reception policy
- Voluntary return
- Observation and orientation of unaccompanied minors
Reception in Belgium

Fedasil: key figures

- Agency created in May 2002
- 1,200 workers
- Expenditure in 2012 = 370 Mi €
- 23,800 reception places in 2012

Reception in Belgium

Reception in three steps

- First step: stay in collective reception centre (during 4 months)
- Second step: stay in individual reception facilities
- Third new step: stay in a reception centre for voluntary return (during 30 days)
Reception in Belgium

48 reception centres: locations in Belgium

Individual housing

- Furnished private lodging
- Material aid
- Providing assistance
The reception crisis

2008 - 2011

- Increase of asylum applications
- Opening of emergency facilities
- Reception in hotels (short-term solution)
  - From May 2009 till December 2012
  - Around 1,000 (max 1,200) people have been accommodated in hotels in Brussels
- Enlarging the reception capacity till 24,500
- Finally, additional staff for the asylum agencies to bring down their backlog
Out of the crisis

► Integrated asylum and reception policy

1 State secretary for Asylum, Migration and Social Integration (since December 2011)

► Increase of reception capacity
► Restricting the inflow into the reception network

No reception for:

- multiple asylum applications

List of ‘safe countries’: accelerated asylum procedure
Out of the crisis

▸ Investing in a broader and better assistance for voluntary return

▸ Third new step in the reception model: a 30 days stay in a reception centre for voluntary return

▸ Staff member for voluntary return in each reception centre

▸ Voluntary return counter at dispatching service (from the beginning of their stay)

Today

▸ occupancy rate: 71%
The reception of unaccompanied minors in Belgium

3 concerned actors

The Guardianship Service – Federal administration of the Ministry of Justice

The authorities in charge of residence permits
Asylum authority – Minister in charge of Asylum, Migration and Social Integration

Fedasil – Minister in charge of Asylum, Migration and Social Integration
History

- March 2004: creation of the Guardianship Service (Ministry of Justice)
- August 2004: opening of the 1st Observation and Orientation Centre (OOC)
- June 2005: opening of the 2nd OOC
- 2011: new working method between Fedasil and the Guardianship service to accelerate the age tests
- January 2013: special cooperation between Fedasil, the Guardianship service and the Asylum authorities for the registration of UM non-Asylum seekers

Definition

- According to the reception law:
  
  UMA = is an unaccompanied person younger than 18 years old and must be in one of the following situations:

  - Either having introduced an asylum application
  - Or not meeting the conditions for access to the territory.
Reception model

► A three-step reception

1. Observation and orientation centre (OOC)
2. Asylum seeker: collective facilities (Fedasil)
   No asylum seeker: fitted reception (reception facilities for minors, foster home, etc.)
3. Individual housing, supervised autonomy (Fedasil)

‘Pre-reception’ step

► Any authority (Police, Immigration office, …non-profit association) reports the presence of a UMA on the Belgian territory or border to the Guardianship Service

► The Guardianship Service checks whether the UMA is known to them and whether he needs or not accommodation

► If he needs accommodation the Guardianship Service contacts Fedasil
Step 1: reception in an OOC

Observation and Orientation centre:
2 x 50 places (Steenokkerzeel and NOH)

‘Green’ Observation and Orientation centre:
30 places (Sugny)

COO: mission and objectives

Open centre
Reception for all UMA:
- provides the 1st reception,
- offers an adaptation period
- permits to make a psychosocial analysis - orientation
- permits the Guardianship Service to identify the minor and to assign a guardian.

Period of 15 days renewable only once (max 1 month)
Step 2: collective reception

- The UM Asylum seeker is accommodated in the Fedasil network
- The UM non-Asylum seeker is accommodated by the Communities (not enough facilities actually)

Mission and objectives

- Open collective reception centre
- Supervision of the UMA 24/7
- Social and medical assistance,…
- Individual follow-up, individual evaluation
- Schooling
- Together with the minor and the help of his guardian his autonomy is prepared
- Period: 4 months to 1 year
Specializations in collective centres
= good practices

▶ Unaccompanied minors: young mothers or pregnant girls (30 places)
▶ Time Out facilities (10 places)
▶ Minors with mental disorders (15 places)
▶ Very young children from 8-9 years to 14 years old (15 places)

Step 3: individual reception

▶ If the UMA is still entitled to benefit material assistance: local reception facilities with supervised autonomy
Where?

- Flat, rooms
- Easy access via public transport
- In the neighbourhood of collective reception centres

Mission and objectives

- Offers more individual help and supervision
- This stay is a transition towards greater autonomy and responsibility
- Offers the necessary tools to acquire full autonomy
Conditions for individual housing

- From his 16th birthday
- Has stayed previously in an OOC and at least 4 months in a collective reception centre
- Is still entitled to benefit material assistance
- Meets the schooling obligations and is a regular pupil
- His autonomy is sufficient to make the step.

In need of facilities for individual housing

- Registration on the candidates list
- ‘Matching’ between supply and demand
- Acceptance (or refusal)
- First meeting and reception
Who?

- Mainly asylum seekers (70%)
- Mostly boys (nearly 80%)

Top 5 nationalities:
- Afghanistan (40%)
- Guinea (25%)
- DR of Congo
- Iraq
- Somalia
Challenges

► Convert collective reception facilities into individual housing (third step)
► More resources to organise new specialised facilities for UMA
► More resources to the Guardianship service to recruit new guardian-candidates
► ...

Thank you for your attention!