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REGIONE DEL VENETO



City of Rotterdam



Ensel-Network



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FORM: a project to develop enhanced of therapeutic foster care

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1.

FORM: a project to develop enhanced of therapeutic foster care

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FORM – Therapeutic Foster Care for UMR

(Erasmus +): *Belgium, Germany, Italy, Cyprus
and ENSA of course!*

- Context
 - Increase of arrival of unaccompanied minors
 - Foster care services (all over Europe) report an enormous need to offer therapeutic foster care
- Goals of the project
 - (a) to work out a model - to be used by professional foster care workers - for the delivery of therapeutic care for this group of minor refugees and their foster families
 - (b) a training on this model, addressed to professional foster care workers
 - (c) a 'knowledge base on research and best practices in the field of foster care for UMR'
 - (d) 'policy and implementation recommendations' will be formulated.





2.

What is the journey of UM?



- How many people have forcibly fled their country of origin in 2022?
- Which % children?
- How many unaccompanied children arrived in Europe in 2022?

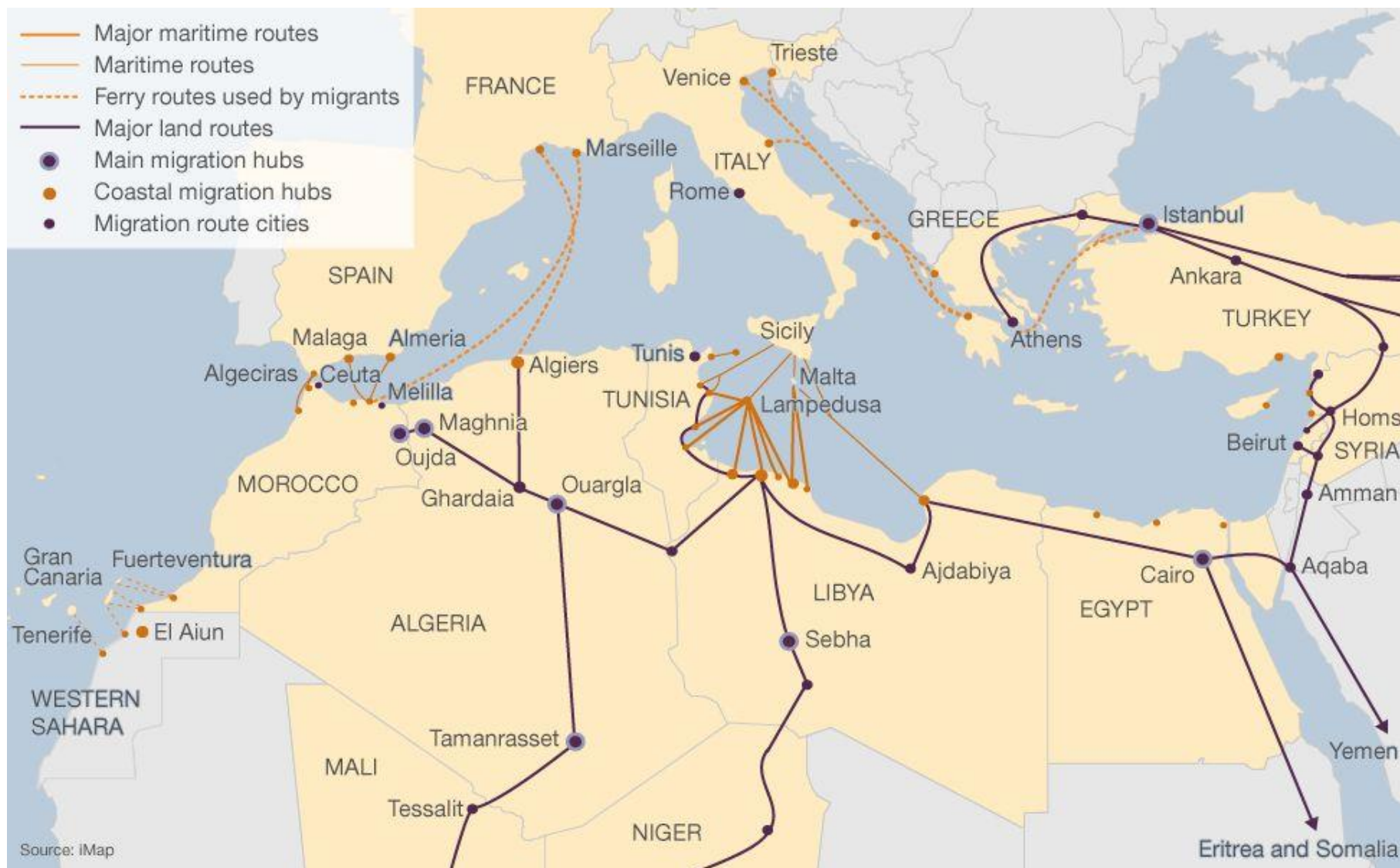


In figures: UM 10%

- In the European Union
 - By 2022: 962,200 asylum applications
- Top 5:
 - Syria
 - Afghanistan
 - Venezuela
 - Turkey
 - Colombia
 - (Ukraine)

- In Belgium
 - 35,535 asylum applications
- Top 5 Unaccompanied minors
 - Afghanistan Afghanistan
 - Syria Ukraine
 - Palestine Morocco
 - Burundi Algeria
 - Eritrea Eritrea

Migration routes



A flight full of dangers and violence

- Human trafficking
 - Price of the trip
 - Constant changes
 - Trust
- Human trafficking
 - Forced labour
 - Prostitution
- The crossing
 - Seeing people die





3.

What is a refugee?

Why do children flee?



What is the definition of refugee?

- A person fleeing his or her country of origin because of **well-founded fear of persecution**.
- Reasons for prosecution (inhuman treatment/life-threatening) may include:
 - Race (ethnicity)
 - nationality
 - religion
 - political opinions
 - belonging to a particular social group.



WHY DO UNACCOMPANIED MINORS FLEE?



Child-specific risks of persecution

- **Politics**

- Student movements against regime
- Children of political opponents

- **Religion**

- Children of religious leaders
- Weakening religious groups by targeting children



Child-specific risks of persecution

- **Racial/ethnic group/nationality**
 - Children are a specific target to limit future of certain groups
 - Rape as a weapon of war
- **Social groups:**
 - Boys recruited as child soldiers
 - Girls forcibly married off
 - Bacha Bazi
 - Genital mutilation
 - LGBTQI+ young people
 - Children accused of witchcraft
 - Forced labour (in crime)

War

- 32 countries at war/international conflict
- International
- Civil War
- Terrorism
- Drug-related





4.

Why (therapeutic) foster care?



WHY FOSTER CARE?

- Mental health review (Daniel-Calveras, A., Baldaquí, N., & Baeza, I., 2022) shows high prevalence *from 4.6 % to 43 % for (PTSD), 2.9 % to 61.6 % for depression, 32.6 % to 38.2 % for anxiety and 4 to 14.3 % for behavioral problems*
- Foster care: better mental health, better school results, better integration, increased resilience
- Deinstitutionalisation - large reception centres can be triggering and an additional experience of unsafety or violence



Enhanced or therapeutic foster care

*“Enhanced Fostering, often called Therapeutic Fostering, therapeutic foster care or treatment foster care, is the type of care needed for children that have experienced a **high degree of trauma and/or abuse** in their life. This trauma is often compounded by the fact that they have been through several failed placements – often both fostering and adoption. As well as **developmental difficulties and attachment disorders**, this trauma often manifests itself through a variety of mental health problems. Giving care to our most troubled young people is an extremely challenging job, which is why there is an increasing demand for foster carers to undertake the additional training necessary to become Therapeutic Foster Carers.”*

www.socialcaretrainingsolutions.com/therapeutic-fostering



Primary target: Foster care workers

- Foster Care Workers
- are part of a caring environment around foster families
- offer foster care to vulnerable children and youngsters with a background of exile-related loss and trauma
- engage in understanding ongoing dynamics within families or in relation to other care figures of the foster child (f.e. teachers)
- help the foster parents to navigate through challenging situations and enhance their reflective functioning level
- experience the impact of traumatic experiences on human relationships à need spaces to slow down and reflect on their own professional role & attitude within relational dynamics



10-point programme + Guidance

1. Specificities of complex trauma and its psychodynamics within foster families
2. Self- and affect regulation
3. (New) attachment relations
4. Mentalizing state of mind and self-reflection
5. Symbolizing and finding a narrative
6. Getting in touch with hidden expressions of relational losses and dysregulation
7. Biopsychosocial loops
8. Identity and autonomy
9. Developmental psychology
10. How do you work with your network of foster care organizations

Follow-up?

- Deepen knowledge on family dynamics in foster care with UM from different perspectives
- Practice support: tools for families and UM
- Capacity building: twinning and/or train the trainers in other EU countries



- Questions?
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