

ISS Newsletter

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The particular topic for this edition is "Unaccompanied Minors". The experience of working in this area varies considerably among the ISS units. It is interesting to read the different approaches units have developed to helping the young people. These have been influenced by national policies which have evolved in response to the increased number moving across borders.

The case illustration from EPIKUR, our Swedish correspondent, forcibly reminds us of the human stories behind the statistics. In particular the long term consequences of the separation influences subsequent developments when a child is reunited with the family after many years.

The piece on "mediation" written by Claudine Vermawt of the French branch is important. If as is claimed this is a new method of working across borders it deserves study at an international level in order that the ISS social workers can acquire the necessary skills to use it. Obviously the resource implications have to be considered as well as any changes that might be entailed to traditional intercountry casework.

Another important discussion, also initiated by the SSAE in France concerns the new policies and services being initiated for people who are searching for their roots and wish to know about their biological parents. Again these developments will impinge on the work of the other ISS units. This too is a potential subject for an international training/seminar if the organisation is to arrive at a unified policy.

With best wishes to everyone for 2003.

Eddy