

External Senior Research Coordinator

Tender for Services notice

Deadline for applicants: 7th January 2020

Eurochild is partnering with UNICEF Regional Office for Europe & Central Asia to coordinate a 12-month study aimed at mapping data collection systems on child protection across the 27 EU Member States. Eurochild is therefore seeking to contract an external **Senior Research Coordinator** to lead and coordinate the design of the research study and protocol, oversee a junior researcher and guide the work of national correspondents. The work is roughly estimated at around 70 days from February to December 2020.

Background

The lack of timely and reliable quantitative and qualitative data on children without or at risk of losing parental care is a major obstacle in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive deinstitutionalisation strategies. Indeed, the systematic collection of accurate data on the numbers and characteristics of children in care, the root causes of institutionalisation and the function of the child protection system as a whole is crucial and can help ensure better policies, improve the state's ability to protect and promote children's rights and lead to sustainable reforms and better outcomes for children.

Data collection and dissemination in the area of child protection continues to be haphazard and often relies on NGOs to interpret the available data, analyse sex and age distribution and bring this to the attention of policy makers. National child protection policies often lack monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks including an agreed set of national child protection indicators, and child protection data systems vary greatly in terms of their level of development. It is therefore difficult to trigger EU legislative initiatives without a sound evidence base and strong child protection data systems.

In 2009 Eurochild carried out a [survey](#) of the situation of children in alternative care in Europe through its member organisations. The survey requested information on the numbers of children in alternative care including residential, community and family-based care; the profiles of children in care; the outcomes for children in care; the institutional framework and availability of data; and the existence of standards and support for children's participation. 30 European countries participated, including the 4 nations of the UK and Moldova. The survey was not intended as a scientifically rigorous research exercise but rather to identify what information is readily available and to note some common trends across Europe.

In 2020 Eurochild, in partnership with UNICEF, will map the child protection data systems across the 27 EU Member States. Eurochild is therefore recruiting an external Senior Research Coordinator who is helping us to design and implement the research protocol for that mapping, oversee a junior researcher and guide the national correspondents. The external Senior Research Coordinator will be expected to

work remotely as an external consultant, with a to-yet-be-agreed number of face-to-face meetings in Brussels.

The results of the study will inform a discussion paper and policy briefing that will identify recommendations to the EU and steps that could lead to agreement of comparable benchmarks on child protection data collection systems across Europe. An advocacy toolkit and power mapping will also be carried out by the Eurochild Secretariat to support this work.

The study will build on the findings of a feasibility phase, which mapped the data systems and corresponding data available in 4 EU countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, France and Ireland). Importantly, this research is expected to take an advantage of the window of opportunity offered by a new EU legislature, as well as the Child Guarantee Initiative, which the incoming European Commission (2020-2024) has identified as one of its political priorities.

Deliverables

- Designing an overarching research study and developing a corresponding draft research protocol that sets out the rationale and background to the research, its goals and objectives, the research plan and methodology including data analysis and management, as well as ethical considerations; and includes the required research instruments for data collection (Feb 2020).
- Presenting the draft research protocol and instruments during a meeting that Eurochild will convene in early Spring 2020 with a Research Advisory Group.
- Overseeing the junior researcher based in Eurochild, who will carry out a desk research and data analysis of existing data on child protection systems across the EU 27 Member States.
- Guiding and liaising with the national correspondents, who will be identified at national level across the 27 EU Member States of the study to support data access, collection and validation.
- Coordinating and overseeing fieldwork at national level across EU Member States to fill gaps in data provision. This fieldwork, facilitated by the Eurochild Secretariat, is to be carried out by national-based experts using a to-be-developed interview framework (one of the research instruments that will be developed by the Senior Research Coordinator).
- Supervising and editing country reports, a technical discussion paper and a policy brief, together to be combined into a final report (Summer/Autumn 2020). This will contribute to the preparation of a policy brief that issues recommendations to the EU on child protection data collection systems.

Support and supervision

The Senior Research Coordinator will receive support and guidance from staff at the Eurochild Secretariat and its expert advisory group (comprising several Eurochild members and external experts), as well as experts from the UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia. However, he/she is expected to be propositional and take initiative to drive the work forward. He/she will need to be pragmatic and creative with a view to delivering high-quality and useful outputs taking into account time and resource constraints and the project ambition.

Candidate requirements

The selected candidate will have the following skills and competences:

- An in-depth understanding of data systems, data quality management and building/strengthening data systems
- Demonstrable and extensive experience in research design, implementation and management – preferably of multinational research – on the topics of child protection and alternative care for children
- Postgraduate degree in data science, statistics, social science or a similar discipline
- Advanced analytical skills
- Working experience in building data systems including the development of indicators is an asset
- Proven understanding of how data informs policies
- Advanced analytical skills
- Strong writing skills
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Disciplined, organised, respects deadlines
- Fluent written and oral English, other EU Member State languages an advantage

Conditions:

- Location: Home-based, with at least 4 trips to Brussels
- Duration: 11 months, from February to December 2020
- Remuneration: Competitive (commensurate with a management/senior advisor position)

How to apply

Please email your application to agata.daddato@eurochild.org by 7th January 2020.

In your email, please include an up-to-date CV and a cover letter with the following components:

- Clearly describing your understanding of the task and its importance to strengthening child protection systems in Europe
- Providing evidence of how you meet the candidate requirements outlined above
- Remuneration expectations
- Contactable references
- Availability to start work

Applicants are also required to submit 2-page research proposal to give ideas for the framework for collecting data.

Please note that only short-listed candidates will be notified and invited to interviews.

If you have any questions, please email Agata D'Addato, Senior Project Manager: agata.daddato@eurochild.org.