

A **OCMW** Antwerpen

Unaccompanied minors in Antwerp (Belgium)
27/06/20146 Youth Care Platform
OCMW Antwerp

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OCMW Antwerp & UAM

OCMW (Openbaar Centrum voor Maatschappelijk Welzijn)

- Social welfare centre
- Legal task: financial and psychosocial aid to vulnerable people (+ 18 years)
- 20 normal social centres and 5 specialized centres
- 16 000 customers and 500 social workers

UAM
Fedasil: material reception (housing, food) of asylum seekers

↓

OCMW takes care of 22 UAM refugees (16-18 years) for 6 months in the form of individual shelters (LOI)

- ⇒ Still 29 UAM out of shelter and receiving financial support of OCMW
- ⇒ After 6 months nobody has an official mandate to take care of UAM
- ⇒ Lack of good practices

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Figures 2016

- Antwerp is the city with highest amount of refugees with financial aid (2401)
- An increase of UAM since 2nd half 2016 in Belgium
- A lot of them get recognised and come to Antwerp
- In the end they will get financial support from the OCMW
- From march 2016 on: drop in figures

(Bron: VVSG)

| | 2015 | 2016 | Compared to 2015 | Compared to last month |
|-----------|-------|------|------------------|------------------------|
| januari | 53 | 228 | 443,4% | -54,2% |
| februari | 43 | 190 | 341,9% | -93,9% |
| maart | 36 | 127 | 252,8% | -33,2% |
| april | 35 | | | |
| mei | 81 | | | |
| juni | 125 | | | |
| juli | 195 | | | |
| augustus | 338 | | | |
| september | 482 | | | |
| oktober | 563 | | | |
| november | 765 | | | |
| december | 804 | | | |
| Totaal | 3.099 | 605 | | |

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OCMW vision about UAM

UAM have a specific needs:

- Housing
- Psychological trauma relief
- Administration
- Integration
- Social contact
- Leisure time
- Trajectories to job and education
- Dutch language

OCMW recognises their special needs, but is not equipped to provide the proper service for the target group

- > no legal mandate (and money) for specific aid
- > only subsidised projects

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OCMW project 2012-2015

2012: increase of UAM -> welfare systems were unable to cope
-> insufficient public or private organisations
=> OCMW sends in an application for the European Refugee Fund

The UAM project is active from 2012- 2015

- Specific centre for UAM (16-18 year) with intensive aid
- Aid on different levels and different areas of life
- Individual and group work (for ex. about health, administration, schoolwork ...)
- Open house + appointments (permanence of workers)
- Trajectories: 103 (2012) / 132 (2013)/ 74 (2014)/ 39 (2015)
- Mainly Afghan boys
- 15 social workers at the busiest moment
- Building up expertise
- End of subsidy in 2015: 80% of the target group end up in the regular service of the OCMW
- Regular OCMW: 1 appointment/ month -> increased risk of losing these youngsters

Discussion: who is responsible for the intensive care of UAM after recognition? OCMW, Atlas, Fedasil, ...)

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ATLAS: AMIF project 2015-2016

ATLAS is the city of Antwerp's civic integration agency ≠ OCMW

Problem:

- OKAN= (mainly) a 1 year Dutch integration class for minor refugees to prepare them for a school career in regular secondary education system
- OKAN is ill adapted to the older refugees (16-18 year)
- OKAN does not prepare for adult education, part-time vocational training or job training
- High risk of unemployment and being uneducated after OKAN

Pilot project: integrated guidance for 16-18 year old newcomers from third countries

- AMIF funded projects in 7 Flemish regions and Brussels
- 16-18 year newly arrived immigrants
- Focus on three aspects: special civic integration summer course for youngsters, personal counselling and a local coordinator's role
- Future: try to establish an integrated program for older OKAN students (intensive screening, close cooperation and coordination from partners, personal counselling)

A **OCMW** Antwerpen **CURANT ?**
Cohousing and case management for young adult unaccompanied refugees in Antwerp

Adjusted viewpoint in 2016 on UAM:

- Strong psychological need
- Need of independent living, but with support
- Customised education and training
- Focus on Dutch language course
- (Co)housing
- Extension of minority benefits: lots of aid for minors (legal representative, OKAN...)
: gap for +18 UAM
"There is no monitoring with regard to the transition to majority"

Still 212 young refugees without parents (18-21j) in OCMW Antwerp without adjusted and intensive aid

Subsidy application: Urban Innovative Action 2017-2020 => CURANT?

- 70 young adult refugees co-housing with 70 Antwerp youngsters
- Buddy-system with informal learning
- Intensive trajectories for housing, knowing, working and psychological aid
- Collaboration between different partners in Antwerp
- Empirical research during the project

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- Financial challenge: necessary for customised service
- Lack of adequate and affordable (social) housing
- Problems with (co)housing: no legal framework
- No long term vision on refugees and UAM (shelters close as soon as there is a decline in refugees arriving)
- Lots of changes in urban, regional and federal policy
- Assignments for social players change frequently and are not always clear
- Change of school system for young immigrants
- No clear management, coordination and figures on the target group: ATLAS, Fedasil, OCMW: who does what?

A **OCMW** Antwerpen **Future**

Advice for the assistance UAM:

- > specific assistance (they are no adults)
- > intensive assistance
- > more psychological trauma relief in group and individual
- > customised trajectories for education and work
- > focus on education
- > focus on language course
- > more housing and independent living support
- > assistance starting early and does NOT finish at 18 years

Advice for policy and governments

- > 1 clear, long-term policy and task division for UAM
- > more money for the aid of a larger group of UAM; aid has to continue at the age of 18
- > building network of expertise between key players, concerned with UAM
- > More (co) housing
- > Taking the school system under the loop and adapt, where needed

A **OCMW** Antwerpen **Future**

More questions?

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