

# Expression of interest

# Title: Study of children joining family in England under the Dublin Regulation

**Project reference: EOR/SBU/2017084**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: 12noon on Monday 22nd January 2018**

## Summary

Expressions of interest are sought for a contractor to undertake a study of children that have joined family members in England under the Dublin Regulation. Outside of the Dublin Regulation, but within scope of the study, will also be children transferred to England from Calais, France, in 2016 on the basis of qualifying family members in England. . The aim of the research is to understand the experience and outcomes of children that have been transferred to England and the impact and challenges facing local authorities supporting them.

The expression was posted on Monday 8th January 2018.

## Background

The Dublin Regulation is an EU directive which determines the EU country responsible for examining asylum claims made within the EU. Article 8 states that if an unaccompanied minor seeking asylum in an EU country has family (up until uncle/aunt or grandparent) in another EU country, that country will be responsible for examining the minor’s asylum claim and he/she will be transferred there to be reunited with them.

This is a new area of activity for both local and central government, and children being brought over to join family members in England under the Dublin Regulation are a distinct cohort. Like many unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) they are highly vulnerable and may have been trafficked, or experienced other harm, in their journey to Europe. Despite the intention, unlike UASC, that they will be living with their families and not accommodated and looked after by a local authority both central and local government have had a significant involvement in the arrangement to ensure that the children are being appropriately safeguarded, and their welfare promoted, as for all other asylum seeking children arriving to the UK.

## Research aims

The aim of this research is to develop a clear picture of the experience and outcomes of children that have been transferred to England to join family members under the Dublin Regulation, and a comprehensive understanding of the impact and challenges facing local authorities supporting them. Findings will be used to inform policy development and support the implementation of the commitments outlined in the “*Safeguarding Strategy for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children*”. The overarching research questions are:

1. What are the current arrangements, and outcomes, for all the children transferred to date? For example, are they living with their families as planned or are they being looked after by local authorities?
2. What are the experiences of the children and families; what support have they received and what are their needs?
3. What are the specific challenges faced by local authorities in trying to support these children and families? What are the key interventions/ support which LAs have provided which have enabled children to stay residing with families?
4. What are the key risk factors and circumstances in which family placements breakdown, and how this can be prevented?

## Methodology

We anticipate that this research is likely to include:

1. **A feasibility and scoping stage** that will test the study approach and inform the design of the data collection instruments. This will explore issues such as: the availability of the data and ease of access to the data and records; explore best/ most reliable way mode/s to collect the data. A key output from the stage will be a feasibility report and recommendations for the study design.
2. **A quantitative data collection exercise** **with local authorities** to build an up to date picture of the children that have been transferred to England since January 2016. This would include gathering information on: whether the child was initially able to live with the named relative; whether the children is still living with that named relative; the services, if any, they were referred to; circumstances that led to family breakdowns. We also wish to explore the possibility of identifying a comparison group.
3. **Qualitative interviews with local authorities** to understand specific issues and challenges for LAs in supporting these children and promoting their welfare. Including understanding the support needs of Dublin children; the interventions or support provided by the local authority which have enabled children to stay residing with families; how the process can be strengthened or improved to promote children being able to stay living with named relatives?
4. **Qualitative interviews with families and children** that have arrived more recently to provide an in-depth understanding of their experience of joining family in England; the interventions or support they received; and what help would they have liked/ needed.

## Timing

We are seeking expressions of interest by 12noon on Monday 22nd January 2018, and we anticipate issuing the tender to successful organisations week commencing 5th February 2018. The deadline for bids will be confirmed in the Invitation to tender but is likely to be around the 23rd February 2018. It is anticipated that the evaluation will begin in April 2018 and complete in July 2019.

## Assessment criteria

Expressions of interest will be assessed using the following criteria:

* Understanding the Department’s requirements. **(25%)**
* Knowledge and experience of research and practice in this area, particularly with:
* designing and collecting quantitative data from a large number of local authorities across England and securing high response rates; and,
* undertaking qualitative research with highly vulnerable families and children and hard to reach groups **(50%)**
* Capacity to deliver the work to time and budget, and evidence of writing good quality reports with clear evidence based conclusions and lessons for practice.**(25%)**

Expressions of interests submitted must be no more than 1000 words – anything longer will be disregarded.

| **Closing date for EOIs: 12 noon Monday 22nd January 2018**  **Send your EOI form to: maura.lantrua@education.gov.uk** |
| --- |

## How to submit an expressions of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the NEW EOI Form which can be found under attachments. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

All contracts are let on the basis of the [Department’s Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eoi-guide). You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.

© Crown copyright 2018