



Synthesis Essay

Unaccompanied Minors and Migration

There has been growing concern on the influx in numbers of unaccompanied minors arriving in the European Union states. It is however difficult to establish the exact number of these kids who make entry into the EU because of the fact that some of them sneak their way into the EU countries hence getting unnoticed by authorities. Most of them are often seeking for asylum especially those from African countries that are laden by wars. Those claiming to be minors sometimes give untrue information as regards their age hence skewing the magnitude of this menace. The menace is not only experienced in EU nations but the same situation is also happening across the border in the United States of America where children from Central America flock their way into the US border in pursuit of the American dream. This essay will therefore focus on the impact of unaccompanied minors in the migration process and how it affects their lives in the places they move into.

For Europe it is not known the exact number of unaccompanied minors who get into the borders without claiming asylum. Those claiming to be minors sometimes mislead those in authority their exact age hence it is quite difficult to tell the real age. There is however several type of legal restriction hence the implementation of several types of age testing methods that have been put in place to ascertain the age of the minors. From the statistics by EMN most the unaccompanied minors into the UK claim to be asylum seekers. Some of the leading asylum seeking unaccompanied minors in the UK includes the following nationals Somali, Afghan, Nigeria, Eritrea and Iraqi. Of these five four of them have a high asylum protection rate.

The influx of Somali and Eritreans unaccompanied minors has been of great concern to Sweden in recent past. Most of the unaccompanied minors from Africa

come from West African countries like Guinea and Ivory Coast. Most of this unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in Europe are between the age of 17 and 18 and mostly male. The minors go through quite a hustle to access entry into Europe with some impersonating others, making border crossing and stealing and robbing their way as they make way across the region. This is quite an alarming trend that needs attention. For instance the Somali minors through organized crime cartel make quite a journey through Addis Ababa and making a stop in Sudan where they are taken via small convoys through Libya and Egypt. Such like cartels are some of the contributors to this increased rate of unaccompanied minors gaining entry into Europe.

To strengthen child protection the EU and its member states must come up with an action plan that will result in the protection of these minors. This includes engaging in collaborative initiatives with the other countries affected by this menace to break down the cartels that profit from the trafficking of minors into Europe. This would go a long way in breaking down those who benefit the most from exposing the minors in such inhumane conditions. European Union member states must also come up with laws that reduce on the detention time of these minors before they allowed asylum in European countries. The negative of this is the fact that this results in exposure of the children in very inhuman conditions because of the large numbers putting a lot of pressure on available resources. Passage and enactment of such like laws and policies would ensure that the pending immigration cases on unaccompanied minors are fast cleared by the immigration officials. This will ensure the brutality of the European Union as regards to this menace is dealt with.

The fate of almost fifty thousand children from Central America questions the US laws on humanitarian values. The concept of separation of children from their parents and their families comes into play as to whether it is morally or legally right to deport these children back to their mother countries with the lack of justification of them seeking asylum in the US. This has become the greatest concern as regards to the influx of unaccompanied children in the US. Most of these children who arrive in

the US are mostly from countries like El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. The journey to cross the Grande Rio valley into Texas is quite a dangerous and risky sojourn by the children in their quest to meet up with their parents. The statistics from the border patrol in 2014 reveal a disturbing trend that almost 90000 unaccompanied children are apprehended by the authorities as they make attempts to cross into the border.

These figures are quite enormous and it is quite impossible for such a huge number of children to be housed and processed in immigration courts. This puts a strain on the resources available. The immigration law in the US stipulates that these children have to wait for over 2 years for a court hearing and thus they are dispatched to stay with family member who vouch for their appearance in court. Such a provision allows for parents to be re united with their children as they are able to attend school within that time hence raising hope of the child remaining in the US.

Several factors contribute to the increased number of unaccompanied children migrants. This includes the following: poverty and youth unemployment in their mother countries, violence in Central America, criminal networks that provide trafficking routes for the unaccompanied children. This therefore calls for a reaction by the Federal law enforcement authorities. It could include the hunting down and prosecuting of the criminals who reap rewards from the entry of these unaccompanied children into the US, thorough screening of this children to determine the validity of their claim of seeking asylum, quick resolution of special immigration status and refugee asylum and clearing the backlog of cases of immigration cases that leads to an increase in the number of immigrants.

The analysis above has given an in-depth insight on the immigration nightmare of unaccompanied minors into the EU and the US. From the analysis it is evident the great role that the relevant stakeholders have to play to put to an end this menace.

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 3. Negroponte, Diana Villiers . "The Surge in Unaccompanied Children from Central America: A Humanitarian Crisis at Our Border ." July 2014. *Brookings*. May 2015 <<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2014/07/02-unaccompanied-children-central-america-negroponte>>.