

NIDOS

jeugdbescherming voor vluchtelingen

Annual report

2007

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Preface

This report is a shortened version of the annual report 2007 of the Nidos Foundation. It provides you with information about the work and the main events of 2007 at and in respect of Stichting Nidos.

In this annual report, specific attention is paid to two projects that took shape in the year 2007: the guardianship and protected reception of young people who are (potential) victims of human trafficking and the guardianship and reception of children of body stuffers by the team of, what is called, the Schiphol Project. These projects are characterized by close cooperation between police, Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary, the reception facilities and the guardians of Nidos. Due to this cooperation, young people could arrive in a safe environment as quickly as possible and scores of human traffickers have been arrested.

It is typical of Nidos that, even in a period of downsizing, there is sufficient energy and commitment to make such projects a success.

Nidos invites you to read this report and will very much appreciate any reaction from your side.

Tin Verstegen
Managing Director

What Nidos represents

Since 1940 Nidos is a guardianship organization, at first only for Dutch children. In the seventies Nidos carried out the guardianship of the Vietnamese boat refugees and at the end of the eighties Nidos became the guardianship organization for Unaccompanied Minor Asylum seekers (Uma's).

Till 2001 Nidos was named "De Opbouw". Nidos has formally been accepted by the Ministry of Justice as Guardianship and Family Guardianship organization for refugees and asylum seekers.

Nidos is a nationally active organization based on general principles. It provides care to young people pursuant to the custody remedy and child protection measure. The care of Nidos focuses specifically on unaccompanied minor refugees and asylum seekers and young people staying in the Netherlands without a request for asylum and for whom return to the country of origin is a realistic option.

The interest of the children is the main thing here. In so far as the custody is not exercised in the Netherlands, guardianship of these young people must be appointed. In line with the guardianship, the agency takes care of the reception of part of its wards. At the same time, Nidos implements the youth protection measure "Family Guardianship" where it concerns children from refugee families.

With which young people is the agency actually concerned? It concerns young people who because of extraordinary circumstances have had to leave their familiar environment to develop then into independent adults in a social and cultural environment that is entirely new to them. The cultural disorientation, the little knowledge of and integration in that new environment, together with their position according to the law concerning aliens, make them vulnerable and requires education and supervision based on respect, safety and protection. This vision is based on the following statements:

- There is nothing wrong with unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, they lack something.
- Leaving the country of origin is far-reaching for each unaccompanied minor asylum seeker.
- Each unaccompanied minor asylum seeker comes from a different culture, has his/her story, expectations of the future, his/her own will and motives.

In 2007, care was given to 4,769 young people. Compared to 2006, this is a decrease of 36%.

The care was given in the framework of pre-guardianship, (provisional) guardianship, family guardianship and as continued care after the guardianship.

Guardianship and family guardianship

Guardianship

For children who apply for asylum in the Netherlands without parent(s), Nidos provides by means of temporary guardianship and custody. In addition, the Minister of Justice may designate other categories of minors that may be placed under the guardianship of Nidos. This includes: the minor whose mother is under the guardianship of Nidos and for or by whom an application has been submitted for a (regular) residence permit subject to 'stay with mother' and the minor for whom an application for a residence permit is submitted subject to 'victim-person reporting human trafficking'. The Ministry of Justice is extending these categories with unaccompanied minor aliens who have been placed in custody in the framework of denial of entry into the Netherlands or in the framework of deportation from the Netherlands. In addition, due to this extension Nidos could also exercise the provisional guardianship of unaccompanied minor aliens who are found to stay illegally on Dutch territory.

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Nidos is appointed guardian by the court pursuant to Section 1:253r of the Dutch Civil Code.

Article 253r of the Dutch Civil Code: The court will appoint a guardian if:

- a one or both the parents cannot exercise parental authority, whether or not temporarily; or
- b the existence or abode of one of both parents is unknown.

In most cases, there is insufficient knowledge about the abode of the parent(s) and it is impossible for them to actually exercise parental authority over them. In the absence of the parent, the guardian will fulfil the task of the parent and ensure proper exercise of the care offered to the young person and will interfere if this care is not sufficient. This interference may lead to directions that must result in improvement. If these improvements are made insufficiently or do not provide a solution, the guardian may move the young person to another form of reception.

Total number of guardianships:

31-12-2007	2.158	31-12-2003	7.028
31-12-2006	2.563	31-12-2002	10.528
31-12-2005	3.343	31-12-2001	11.947
31-12-2004	4.625		

In 2007, 570 new guardianships were granted, of which 111 short-term provisional guardianships in the framework of the Schiphol Project (about which more details will follow); this is an increase of 97 compared with 2006, when 473 new guardianships were granted.

Pre-guardianship

The pre-guardianship phase is when the children have just arrived in the Netherlands and it is also the first phase of the request for asylum. At the time when children, who arrived in the Netherlands without parents, submit a request for asylum, there is not yet guardianship. The request for asylum is submitted at AC Schiphol. There, subsequently, the intake process of Nidos will start, after which the children will be received in a suitable reception facility. During the intake interview, data are collected about the young person, his/her family and possibly about the story of his/her flight. In 2007, 481 intakes took place that resulted in a request for guardianship.

Children younger than 12 years are not allowed to submit a request for asylum independently. A representative must do this on their behalf. This may be the family or guardian. Nidos will then submit an urgent request for guardianship for unaccompanied asylum seekers who are under twelve years old, so that, as guardian, it can submit the request for asylum on behalf of these children. For unaccompanied children under twelve years old who arrive in the Netherlands unaccompanied by family, Nidos will ensure the reception in foster families from the day of arrival.

Provisional guardianship Schiphol children

Mid-2005 Nidos was approached by the Ministry of Justice with the request to ensure the reception and exercise provisional guardianship of children who stay behind at Schiphol Airport after their parents or the adults accompanying them were arrested and remanded in custody because of suspicion of committing an offence. Unaccompanied minors, who have been remanded in custody at Schiphol because of committing an offence, may also be put under provisional guardianship of Nidos. Nidos started executing this task as from 1 July 2005. About the implementation of the reception and guardianship of these children, every two months consultations are held between the Child Care and Protection Board, the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary (Youth and Vices Section) and Nidos. In 2006, a separate team was set up at Nidos for the performance of this task.

Schiphol Project

In July 2005, the Schiphol Project started at Nidos. The Schiphol Team works from The Hague and at Schiphol. Within the guardianship, the team has two special tasks. One of them is to exercise the provisional guardianship of the children of the 'body stuffers', pursuant to the Youth Care Act. To protect the children as well as possible, they are placed in own foster families specially selected for this specific target group and living at secret addresses.

In addition, since July 2007 the team has had a fixed place at the reception centre (AC) Schiphol so that, if necessary, it can act quickly as guardian. Adequate action is especially important in respect of 'high-risk juveniles': for example, young people

who run the risk of disappearing in the sex industry. Characteristic of the Schiphol Team is the intensive cooperation between various chain partners. The cooperation between the Child Care and Protection Board, the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary and Juvenile and Vice Police is low-threshold and solution oriented. At various levels frequent consultations take place, including about casuistry. When cases were not very successful, they are discussed so that there will be better results next time.

Ohad Topper, regional manager Nidos:

“The interests of the children always comes first”

“The strength of our team is that, besides expertise and professionalism, we’ve never underestimated emotions. The child is sometimes even literally removed from its mother’s breast.” “The interest of the child always comes first, which is why we, together with our chain partners, have coordinated everything meticulously. Within the world of care organizations, our method is unique, therefore.

Due to very close cooperation with the Youth and Vices Department of the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary and the Child Care and Protection Board in Haarlem, we’re able to arrange the provisional guardianship within two hours after arrival at Schiphol and there’s always a place for children in a foster family. No matter how late and when.

That mothers take their children is based on the conviction that they’ll attract less attention with a child. That subsequently the mother has to give permission to hand over her child to us is very distressing. We lay down every detail of this handing over, so that in 20 years time the children will be able to read what exactly happened. It’s very painful for a child to read that it was ‘given away’ by the mother.

If it says in writing that the mother fought for her child, this will soften the pain. For us the dilemma is at present: do we or don’t we wish the mother to protest strongly? Emotions have a function, painful

ones too.”

“From 2007 we’ve also been active at the reception centre at Schiphol. For children who request asylum, the guardians will arrange the guardianship immediately. The identification of who are high-risk juveniles also takes place there. It isn’t a watertight system: in case of the slightest doubt, a young person will be received therefore in a protected environment. More things happen at Schiphol. A 16-year old girl travelled from Germany, via Schiphol to Syria accompanied by her brother and father. Suddenly, half-drugged, she hung on to a policeman, stammering ‘help, help’. It turned out that she had married outside of her ‘clan’ and would therefore be stoned. Her father and brother were arrested. The girl was back in Germany within four days and was placed in protected reception. In this matter, we cooperated expressly with the Expertise Centre Honour-Related Violence (Dutch: ‘Expertisecentrum Eergerelateerd Geweld’).

Renate Edelman, guardian:

“The provisional guardianship will only stop when they’re on the plane again”

8 “There are indications beforehand that body stuffers will be on a specific flight. In such case the inspection is 100 percent. The entire action takes place in an as child-friendly manner as possible. Suspects with children are handled first and are transported to the cell complex by ordinary car as fast as possible. Meanwhile the Child Care and Protection Board in Haarlem is phoned. The juvenile court judge orders the provisional guardianship – also by phone. Thanks to this intensive cooperation that’s effective day and night, everything’s arranged within two hours.”

“The moment when mother and child are separated is tense. The understanding with the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary and the police is that the guardians will start the talk with the mother in their absence and will explain what will happen with the child and how contact will be maintained. The guardians, we always work in pairs, meet mother and child in the children’s room, an oasis within the cell complex. Due to the fact that the composition of our team is multicultural and we talk in the absence of the military constabularies, a relationship of trust can be built. The guardians explain quietly what the intention is and that the child will be taken anyway. Often the child is handed over willingly. Sometimes emotions rise high. Afterwards,

the child is allowed to visit its mother once every three weeks. Then also the guardianships work in pairs. Children, after all, react sometimes very fiercely when they’re separated from their mother again. Due to the travelling time – child and mother are placed anywhere in the Netherlands – the visit takes an entire day. Sometimes the child is angry when it sees its mother, sometimes somewhat ill at ease. Then it will start sniffing and cuddling.”

“We know a few days ahead when the mother will be released. But it may take longer until mother and child are reunited. If it concerns mothers without the Dutch nationality who therefore don’t have accommodation or means of existence in the Netherlands, they can’t be reunited. Until the mother has a roof over her head and has arranged income, the child will remain with the foster family.

That mothers and children are put on a plane by the authorities, is absolutely untrue. They’ll have to arrange themselves how to go, for example, to the Antilles. In that respect, the provisional guardianship will only stop when mother and child are on the plane again.”

Henk Hooghuis, guardian:

“The best situation is when the child’s received in its own colours and smells”

“Sometimes, children become attached to us within two hours. Therefore the child must be handed quickly to a foster family, else the child thinks we’ll return it to its mother. Because the mother’s involved in a criminal organization and the smuggling has failed, we bring children to secret addresses, so that any blackmail is excluded. After three days the mother’s allowed to make a three-minute call to someone of our Schiphol Team. It’s very important to reassure the mother in those three minutes. The person who talks with the mother on the phone is therefore fully informed of all particulars of the child: from the sleeping and eating rhythm up to the number of full diapers. Most children placed by us are between a few months and three years old.”

“Of crucial importance is the moment when we know whether or not the mother has a social network in the Netherlands. If so, the concerned persons will be screened immediately. The best situation is when the child’s received in its own colours and smells. Of course, we only do that if the situation is completely safe. No matter how difficult the target group, we haven’t yet had a single error. This is certainly due to our close cooperation. Renate coordinates the path from the beginning to the end. It’s my task to ensure sufficient reception capacity and to place the children in foster families. Ohad can

be reached day and night to ensure that everything runs in accordance with the protocol. Sometimes a child’s even received in the country of origin. That’s only possible if the path is watertight – including the feedback to us – and there’s therefore an organization in that country that screens the families, visits them, also those families that live in the bush.”

“We must perform our task well. And in the case of provisional guardianship we must also take action immediately when there’s a calamity. Summer 2006, for example, we were called by someone of the checkpoint of the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary. A twelve-year old boy and his fifteen-year old sister from Somalia had arrived at Schiphol accompanied by a woman, who was arrested. The military constabularies had doubts about the age of the boy and wished to hold the children at Schiphol during the weekend. We requested to report this anyway to the Child Care and Protection Board. As a result, an hour later we were appointed provisional guardians. When we fetched the children to take them to a foster family, we noticed that the boy was very pale. We decided then, despite the late hour, to take him to a First Aid station. After a short examination, they diagnosed the child with a serious kidney disease and he was dialyzed immediately. The internist said we shouldn’t have come much later.”

In 2006, the legislation pertaining to violence of the Opium Act was amended drastically. This amendment, considerably extending the period of detention of the offender required a change in the procedure and a direct increase in the reception capacity of foster families. In 2007, Nidos exercised the provisional guardianship of 130 Schiphol children. The provisional guardianship is ordered for a period of six or twelve weeks.

Nidos Guardianship Method

The guardianship method as described in 1996 was updated recently. The developments in the field of policy in respect of aliens, in particular unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, required this. In the method, problems relating to return and various forms of reception are discussed.

The objectives of the guardianship can be divided in judicial and pedagogic objectives. Children up to the age of 18 are legally considered to be dependent and without the legal capacity to act. Consequently, they cannot and are not allowed by the legislator to live without custody.

The pedagogic task of the guardian aims to teach children and young people to participate actively and productively in the social relationships within the society of which they are part at present. From these two objectives the domains in which the guardian must be active methodically can be concluded. The domains are:

- Promotion of interests
- Education and care
- Identification and prevention with a view to preventing abuse, preventing disappearances and preventing an existence in illegality.

Method:

Nidos has always aimed at dialogue-oriented action, in which the client contacts form the basis of the procedure. The new method supports this. With the clients, with the 'plan on the table' we work on the four steps. Based on this, the 'Action Plan' is drawn up. This is written within six weeks after the start of the guardianship.

After the Action Plan has been drawn up, during the year we always work on the objectives and the progress is continuously evaluated. During each contact we consciously work on an operational objective. At the end of the year the obligatory evaluation takes place to examine the development of the young person.

The guardianship method is based on the 'four-step model'. The four-step model in the guardianship method is described as follows:

Step 1: listing points for attention and strong points

Step 2: analysis of conditions and impediments for the development of the young person

Step 3: formulation of desired development results

Step 4: operational agenda

The guardianship model differs from the youth services, because not so much the threatening factors must be removed but the development possibilities of the young person must be optimized. The result is a personal development profile and a systematic listing of impediments that may hamper a healthy development.

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Family guardianship

In 2007, Nidos was newly appointed as family guardian for 93 children and for 192 children the order was extended. It concerns both young people with residency status and young asylum seekers. These children are in the Netherlands with their parents. The aim of this supervision order is to protect the child and to improve the relationship between the child and the parents as educators in the interest of the child. The family supervisor organizes the help required to overcome upbringing problems. If necessary, the child may be placed in care.

The following numbers of young people were supervised in the framework of a family guardianship measure:

As from 31-12-2007	285	As from 31-12-2003	363
As from 31-12-2006	274	As from 31-12-2002	424
As from 31-12-2005	304	As from 31-12-2001	443
As from 31-12-2004	376		

There are several reasons for this child protection measure. There may be, for example, educational problems due to differences in speed of integration of parents and children, which may result in problems in the authority relationship between parents and children. The tensions of being refugees, the asylum procedures and the lengthy stay at asylum seeker centres may burden the educational relationship to such an extent that a family supervisor is appointed to help improve the situation. In addition, problems may arise due to the fact that in the country of origin parents used to educate their children in a family context, whereas in the Netherlands they have to cope without that family support. It may also concern children who, together with their parents, are no longer entitled to reception in the Netherlands, but who cannot be removed either, due to which an educational crisis may arise. Nidos has requested the Ministry of Justice to include in the regulatory framework that Nidos may also implement the family guardianship measures of children in families whose return to the country of origin is a realistic option.

Of these children 64% lives with their parents, 26% in a foster family, 7% in a residential care centre for young people, and 3% independently or elsewhere. These percentages are largely the same as in the previous years.

Nationality and age

At the end of 2007 we counted 95 different nationalities with our wards (guardianship and family guardianship, 18-plus and young people for whom Nidos has stated to be prepared to exercise the guardianship). The most frequent ones are:

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Angola	646	990	2.019	2.568	3.061	3.759	3.657
Somalia	405	462	621	806	1.007	1.275	1.671
China	216	431	1.078	1.158	1.237	1.732	2.318
Congo/Zaire	210	268	410	467	531	636	682
Afghanistan	162	186	308	356	413	545	629
Sierra-Leone	157	195	377	471	656	1.025	1.484
Iraq	124	133	196	275	312	385	538

Age overview of the underage wards in percentages:

	2007	2006	2005	2004
Total	2.557*	2.848	4.119	5.471
Up to age 12	26%	26%	33%	28%
Age 12 - 16	31%	30%	28%	27%
Age 16 - 18	43%	44%	39%	45%

**This includes 79 declarations of willingness for guardianship*

Percentage 18-plus wards on the total number of Nidos pupils

	2007	2006	2005	2004
Total	3.046	4.077	6.365	8.857
18 - plus	19%	30%	44%	41%

The decrease in the number of 18-plus wards in 2007 is a direct consequence of the general amnesty that became effective in June 2007. The group of former unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, some 1180 who still received continued care at the end of 2006, was eligible for the later part for a residence permit pursuant to the general amnesty.

At the end of 2007, over 770 young people received a letter informing them that they were eligible for a residence permit pursuant to the general amnesty.

Residence

Residence of the wards on 31 December in %:

	2007	2006	2005	2004
COA central reception/residential project	20%	16%	23%	32%
receptions in families	37%	36%	34%	26%
independent	6%	10%	12%	13%
parents	8%	7%	6%	11%
residential care centre for young people	2%	3%	3%	3%
various	27%	28%	22%	15%

Left for an unknown destination (LUD)

Just as last year, the number of wards who left for an unknown destination constitutes a large part of the category 'various'. One of the causes is that the young people know that the supervision from Nidos will stop on their 18th birthday. For that reason, if they do not hold a residence permit, they decide to disappear before that date.

In the framework of LUD prevention, Nidos, partly upon the request of the Ministry of Justice, started to play a more active role in the AC upon call, at the end of 2006. To act as guardian more quickly and to work preventively for high-risk juveniles, in particular during the first period of the stay, in 2007 Nidos started participating fully in the AC. This way, Nidos, together with the Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary and IND (Immigration and Naturalization Service) can quickly determine what is best for both the young people who request asylum and may be victims of human trafficking and for the young people who do not request asylum but may run the risk of becoming involved in criminal activities.

In addition, in 2006 Nidos started organizing special protected protection for the 'high-risk juveniles'. (see also: Reception and supervision of high-risk juveniles, pages 18-21 and Protected reception, page 31).

Termination of guardianship

In 2007, the guardianship was terminated for 940 young people. For 748 young people, the reason was that they became of age. For 115 young people, the guardianship ended in favour of reinstatement of the parental authority. This concerns also children of underage mothers. When the mother becomes of age, Nidos assumes that the mother is able to exert the authority over her child, unless the child is not yet staying with the mother or there were problems in the education and care of the child that have not yet been solved satisfactorily. The other guardianship terminations concerned mainly family reunification and young people who returned to the country of origin.

The guardianship is terminated by operation of law when a young person reaches the age of eighteen. As a consequence, the supervision from youth care also stops. The young people are considered to maintain themselves independently. The young people with a residential permit are eligible for

student grants if they are still studying and for municipal provisions if they cannot work. The young people who have exhausted all possible proceedings must leave the country as soon as they have reached the age of eighteen.

Continued care

At the end of 2007, 589 young people received continued care. In the previous years the numbers were:

2006	1.193
2005	3.246
2004	3.786
2003	3.265
2002	2.787

In the year prior to the reported year, the reason of the extreme drop of the number of young people who received continued care was the result of the fact that the policy regulations *'Termination provision of living allowances to former unaccompanied minor asylum seekers'* became effective in the middle of 2005.

These regulations had two consequences:

- when a young person reaches the age of eighteen, the supervision of Nidos would stop from then on and so would the financial support by Nidos;
- and for the former unaccompanied minor asylum seekers who were still supervised by Nidos, the life allowances were discontinued pursuant to a decision of the COA (Agency for the Reception of Asylum seekers), via a step-by-step plan, comparable with that for the adult asylum seekers.

In 2007, the decrease in the number of young people receiving continued care was a direct consequence of the fact that the general amnesty became effective.

Client policy

Involving the young people in the care offered to them advances their independence and makes the supervision more effective. Both Nidos and the environment in which young people stay attention is paid to involvement of the young people. Because Nidos is of the opinion that the usual method of client participation in decision-making in the Netherlands does not catch on well with its wards, a different approach has been looked for in the past few years. The method of the guardianship entails that the young person is actively involved in the drawing up of the supervision plan. This involvement is also measured in the performance indicators in the framework of the quality policy of Nidos.

In the method development in respect of the second stage of reception, Nidos has also ensured that attention is paid to the client policy. Experiments to form feedback groups made up of young people were not successful in 2007.

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In 2007, Nidos developed other forms of client policy. When the guardianship is coming to an end, for example, the young people fill in a form giving quantitative information about the satisfaction. In 2008 this will be changed into a monitor of youth satisfaction.

In addition, the University of Applied Sciences in Utrecht has a project in which the 'stories' of young people are collected to extract items from them that are important for the supervision.

Furthermore, in 2008 Nidos will organize 'World-café's' for young people. The aim of the World-café is that in one way or other the young people start discussing with one another and with the supervisors (including guardians) matters that are important to them, such as their mutual expectations in respect of reception, stay, education.

Handling of complaint

At the first meeting, each young person or caretaker is given a folder in the own language. That folder contains information about Nidos as an institution and the possibilities for care that the institution can offer them. The folder also explains how a young person or his/her caretaker can submit a complaint if he/she is not satisfied with the care offered.

Nidos has a fully independent complaints committee, set up in accordance with the Youth Care Act. In the reported year one complaint was submitted. This complaint was withdrawn by the concerned

complainants after it had been solved in a manner that was satisfactory to them, after consultation with Nidos.

Inspection of files

Upon termination of the care to the young person, the file is closed and a final report is drawn up. The final report is discussed with the young person and handed to him/her. At the same time, the term within which the file must be kept is discussed with the young person. The maximum term is ten years after becoming of age. During the period when the young person receives care, he/she is allowed to inspect the file.

Reception and supervision of high-risk juveniles

High-risk girls include girls who come to the Netherlands with the instruction to prostitute themselves in the illegal and criminal circuit. They must pay the money they earn this way to their traffickers. From the moment that Nidos, Assen district, and Stichting Jade, which implements the reception of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in small-scale reception in the north of the Netherlands, were confronted in 2006 with the problem of 'high-risk girls' from Nigeria, they started focused, protected reception and systematic supervision. At present there are 39 reception places in the north of the Netherlands and 9 in the province of North-Brabant. Meanwhile the district must increasingly deal with high-risk target groups from

other countries, such as girls from China, Guinea, Congo and Sierra Leone and boys from India. The three interviews in this annual report provide particulars of the experience that our staff has with the girls from Nigeria, the problems and the cooperation with the police, COA and Jade.

Eline Toren, guardian

“After pioneering there’s the stage of professional cooperation”

“It started in September 2006. We received 4 underage Nigerian girls in a residential group unit. We suspected they were victims of human trafficking. But we weren’t sure. When all four of them had disappeared after a couple of weeks, we were terribly shocked. Soon it appeared that an increasing number of Nigerian ‘high-risk’ girls were intercepted at Schiphol. From our commitment that human trafficking – and the more so of underage girls – is completely unacceptable and because of the Nidos vision that young people need supervision and education from a point of view of respect, safety and protection, we immediately started discussions with Jade to formulate a special approach. Almost immediately, together, we succeeded in organizing things like 24-hour supervision, taxi transport to school, camera’s, professional security at night, etc.”

“Meanwhile the Criminal Investigation Department had started a large-scale investigation into the disappearance of the girls. The Department was pleasantly surprised by our intensive supervision. By cooperating closely we were able to prevent high-risk situations.

“By intensive consultations with the counsellors and the police, by trial and error, by searching and trying, steadily we have found out more about the girls and about which supervision suits them. For,

although the girls know that they will end up in prostitution, that doesn’t mean that prostitution is normal in Africa. We’re speaking here about damaged girls who grew up in bad circumstances where sex is offered in exchange of food or a place to live. The criminal circuit in which they end up here breaks their spirit. By approaching, supervising and protecting them with respect, we can give them something positive. And that’s already much.”

Brigitte Claassen, Regional manager Nidos North

“These girls must not be locked up”

20 “In the cooperation with the police and the Criminal Investigation Department we are sometimes faced with conflicting interests. Where the police and the Criminal Investigation Department want us to keep the girls indoors because of high-risk situations, from our point of view more freedom may be the only solution. There was a moment, for example, when the girls behaved like tigers in a case and the situation even became threatening for the counsellors. Because of the code ‘bright’ red, by which the Criminal Investigation Department indicates that the risk of disappearance of the girls is very big, we’ve transferred them to Ameland without consultation and from one day to the next. After three days the situation there was so explosive – counsellors no longer slept, were afraid – that we stopped this intensive reception immediately and in May 2007 they were transferred to a campus with more freedom. The girls fell on their knees with gratitude. Of course, a few girls disappeared. But a few stayed and a number of girls returned.”

“You can’t lock these girls in, they aren’t prisoners. We supervise the girls based on a growth model: from intensive protection, to more and more freedom. They deserve to have clarity about which protecting measures are applied and for how long, and to which aims we strive. The girls are already

so damaged. On 23 October, for example, raids were carried out in the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Italy, France and Nigeria and an important line was rounded up. A girl who returned said: ‘I don’t want to experience this again, help me.’ But she was afraid to report what had happened. Later she told her story after all. The police very much wants the girls to report, so that they can convict the traffickers. Some girls cooperate, despite their enormous fear for the consequences. Girls who tell their story deserve recognition, a residence permit. In the political work the fear exists that this will have a ‘pull’ effect. And that false statements will be made. In our opinion, political interests may not counterbalance the interests of these damaged girls. Moreover, a residence permit gives more rest. It proves that they are believed and supervised.”

“By the way, a residence permit doesn’t mean that the girls will leave prostitution forever. What we do know is that we can give the girls a positive self-image. What they learn here, for a year, cannot be taken from them. We keep hoping therefore. Recently more than 60 arrests were made in Italy. That must have consequences. We are curious, therefore, which girls will return. The objective is not to hold the girls. The objective is to give the girls insight in their chances and opportunities.”

Karin Veurink, guardian

“High-risk girls deserve clarity”

“When the girls come here, they have instructions. The pressure is enormous. Voodoo, the money they owe to the traffickers, the agreements with their families. They’re very afraid of the consequences. A fear they can’t put into words. The first one or two weeks are fine. They receive food, clothing. But then they realize it’ll take long. They withdraw and become restless. They have instructions they’ve to execute. And they don’t trust anybody. Not even each other. The threat, the ‘danger of explosion’ are always there. The only ‘trusting’ bond they have with one another is their belief. A religion, for that matter, that is experienced very intensely with profanities and sometimes group hysteria.”

It’s hard to reach the girls. That requires time. Through attention, professional supervision it slowly dawns on them that things can be different. That they’re entitled to respect, their own opinion, opportunities, education and a future. They deserve to know that they matter, that people are interested in them in a positive manner. Of course, we hinder them. They have come, after all, with instructions. The inner conflict they’ve to cope with – the choice between protection and the traffickers – is considerable and creates a stir. Our experience is that we can achieve much in a year.”

“We don’t demand trust. They don’t trust anybody.

In the course of time, we’ve developed a more matter-of-fact-like contact with them. That works well. We’re clear, set borders, inform them. When we’ve a conversation with them, the counsellor and guardian are always present in order to prevent lack of clarity. What we as guardians can do, is being reliable. For what we agree on with them, must occur. Sometimes we have to deal with others and we get stuck. The girls are completely put off if we don’t keep the agreement.”

Reception contracted by Nidos

Reception and living in the framework of a foster family (RFF)

The largest group of underage wards over whom Nidos has the guardianship is received in a foster family. Whereas in other forms of reception it concerns a (more) professional relationship of the counsellor with the child, in the natural environment of a family the (vulnerable) child is able to enter into a lasting personal relationship that may also continue after the age of eighteen. The necessity of reception in a family does not arise from a personal (development) problem related to the young person, but from the need of secure reception. In the case of reception in a family, the young person is offered maximum development opportunities, in respect of security and perspective. These young people must receive room to develop towards their own personalities based on their culture and, if this is not possible, then at any rate with much respect and understanding for their culture, and to work on a network of contacts of their own.

Nidos has a large archive of reception families. This archive is called the reception pool. The families in the reception pool have been screened by Nidos. In addition, the young people are placed with family, people of their clan or tribe. These are called network places. An increasing number of young people can be placed in a 'culture family'. By culture family is meant a family that to a large extent approaches the culture from which the young person originates, if possible because (one of the) foster parents originates from the same country of origin. Because of the composition of the ward archive, showing a diversity of cultures, there must be a wide range of choices. We are working hard to achieve differentiation in reception, so that (cultural) reception can also be provided for (more complex) family systems, such as brothers/sisters or mother and child. In the recruitment of the families, regional offices are involved because often they have a network of families that might be eligible. In the screening of the foster families, Nidos explicitly includes the question if the foster parents are able and prepared to receive those young people for whom the perspective is 'return'. We discuss explicitly with the candidate foster parents what their expectations and desires are and what could be the consequences of a particular result of the asylum procedure and the procedure for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, both for the young person and for themselves.

In 2007 the Electronic Family Archive (EFA) became operational. The EFA is an electronic system in which various steps and procedures are shown, documents are drawn up and stored and family data can be

compared and stored. Via the setting of filters (search programs), for example, we can search placement possibilities for a specific ward. The EFA is linked up to the Electronic Ward Archive (EWA) of Nidos. In June 2007, it was decided to grant project status to the RFF for a period of two years. The reasons for this are the importance of this form of reception for the implementation of the guardianship; the importance of the quality and the quantity of this form of reception; prevention of loss of knowledge and experience by retaining the present RFF workers and, as a result, maintaining continuity in professional care. In the organizational composition, the RFF project falls under the responsibility of the sector manager North. Two cluster managers engage in the direct steering of the RFF workers. The RFF worker is a guardian who performs specific work pertaining to, amongst other things, recruitment and selection of foster families, the creation, expansion, if necessary, and maintenance of the pool of foster families and the actual matching of a child with a foster family.

Reception by the COA

As a result of the reception model as applicable from 1 January 2007, contracts with the contract partners for Children Living Groups (CLG) and Small Living Units (SLU) were taken over from Nidos by the COA (the governmental agency for the Reception of Asylum seekers as from 2007).

Residential provisions

As from 2007, asylum seekers aged 13 to 17 inclusive who arrive in the Netherlands without adult relatives by blood or affinity have been received by the COA in special Children Living Groups nearby the Application Centre (AC) for the first period of maximum three months. The young people are subsequently moved to the next stage of reception that is most suitable for them: reception in a family framework (RFF/Nidos) or Children Living Groups or Small Living Units (COA) or a Uma-campus (COA). The Children Living Groups are designated for children aged up to and including 15. In the residential

units there is 24-hour supervision. In those units, also small groups of children stay who belong together and where the oldest is considered the head of the family but for whom it would be too much to take on the care of the other children. The Small Living Units are designated for young people aged 15 to 18, usually of various nationalities. In a small residential unit, four young people stay under supervision. For each four young people a counsellor is present 28.5 hours per week who counsels and helps them. The experience of Nidos is that the young people function well in this environment.

In 2007, in addition, there were four uma-campus locations in Drachten, Baexem, Oisterwijk and Middelburg. On 31 December 2007, 211 guardianship wards stayed in these receipt locations.

Campus

In the COA-Nidos scenario "Receipt and supervision of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in the central reception" the positions and responsibilities of both parties have been laid down. In 2007, the new version of the scenario was applied. This new scenario is based in the first place on the own responsibilities of COA and Nidos and the tasks arising from that. In addition, it emphasizes that the supervision plan of the guardian and the planned path of the counsellor are important documents for the coordination, both in respect of the content and in respect of terms. Moreover, further arrangements in respect of a number of difficult points are set out in the scenario, for example relating to missing persons, penalties and leave, and the information and consultation moments are indicated.

Protected receipt

In October 2006, Nidos, in cooperation with Stichting Jade, started the protected reception of Nigerian girls who are (potentially) victims of human traffickers or human smugglers. In 2007, much knowledge was accumulated at Nidos because intensive work was done with and for this target group. This knowledge has been laid down in a document, so that other regional offices also have knowledge and guidelines when they start the specialized supervision of the high-risk target group. The document contains relevant information, i.e.: the specific legal proceedings in respect of victims of human trafficking (the B9 Regulation), background information about the Nigerian girls, the method that has been developed and the cooperation with third parties.

What is special in respect of this target group is that there is immediate intervention in the situation. The girls start the guardianship process in an extremely protected form of reception. This is because Nidos wants to protect the girls by removing the risk of disappearance as much as possible. The purpose of the reception and supervision is to change the desire of the girls to return to the trafficker into a desire for another perspective.

The guardian cooperates intensively with the counsellors of the reception centre. Intensively, because it often concerns sudden developments in the residential group unit. In addition, there is close cooperation with Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary, the Criminal Investigation Department and the police. As a result, in October 2007 a large number of human traffickers was arrested in various countries in Europe but also in the United States.

There are also high-risk juveniles from other countries, e.g. the children from China, Guinea, Congo and Sierra Leone. Often these young people have a history in which exploitation played a clear role. Voodoo and pressure from human traffickers on the people who stay behind in the country of origin are less prominent for these young people than for the young people from Nigeria. This causes them to be more open to the supervision of Nidos and to have less of an urge to return to the trafficker. Finally, there is the group of Indian young boys. Recently, the COA, in close cooperation with Nidos, has also started reception in a closed setting for them. Nidos will start monitoring how these boys can be looked after most adequately.

Admission and reception policy in respect of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers

The admission of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers

The Dutch admission policy for young people prescribes that first and foremost a decision is taken whether a young person is eligible for asylum status. If this is not the case, it is examined if there is “adequate” reception in the country of origin. The basic principle is that the country of origin should provide reception for the young person. The Dutch government assumes for some countries that there is adequate reception because of the presence of reception centres. Children from countries where there is no adequate reception or where it is not clear whether there is adequate reception receive a temporary residence permit because they are underage. This permit may be issued three times for a one-year term, but if the young person reaches the age of eighteen before expiry of these three years, this residence permit is cancelled and the young person must leave the country unaided.

The reception of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers

As described before the first reception of all 13- to 16-year olds is implemented in designated Childrens Living Groups nearby the Application Centre (AC-CLG). Children who are twelve years old or younger are placed directly in foster families. Within a period of three months the guardian decides, after consultation with the counsellor, which next form of reception is most suitable for a young person. In the end it is the guardian who decides where the young person will stay.

In all forms of reception – also the families – the young people will be supervised in accordance with the perspective resulting from their asylum procedure (return or integration). Nidos ensures that the foster families are equipped for this task; the COA ensures that the staffs of the campuses, CLG’s en SLU’s are equipped for this. The supervision in the campuses, Children Living Groups and Small Living Units will be based on a systematic approach that takes into account both options – return and integration. At the start of the supervision, the guardians of Nidos already discuss the residential perspective of young people with the young people and their environment.

If, based on decisions in the asylum procedure, it has been established that “return” is the future perspective relating to a young person, this future perspective is included explicitly as an objective in the supervision plan for the young person of the guardian.

This objective is also translated into concrete, return-oriented actions. Possibilities are visits to the IOM (International Organization for Migration), participation in practical education that due to its content and professional perspective relates to opportunities in the country of origin, making contacts with family, if any, in the country of origin, examining together with the young person the formal steps that are to be taken in respect of return and participation in return-oriented projects organized by third parties. In view of the effectiveness, the formulated actions must be tailor-made.

The organization

In the reporting year there was a substantial decrease in the number of personnel and the number of regional offices. Due to the decrease in the number of underage asylum seekers, the organization was forced in 2007 to decide on one-time dismissals throughout the organization. Because the order of dismissals was determined based on age and seniority, the dismissals were not parallel to the closure of branches. This made transfers necessary, with continuous attention to setting up the organization in such a manner that the quality of the care remains at the desired level. We aim at continuity in the supervision of the young person, both in respect of the content of the supervision and in the person of the guardian.

Overview of the number of employees and permanent positions

Position	Employees 31-12-2007	Permanency 31-12-2007	Employees 31-12-2006	Permanency 31-12-2006
Guardians	168	144	227	199
regional administration	20	16	31	24
regional managers	12	12	17	17
head office	32	28	42	39
total	232	200	317	279

Overview full-time and part-time employees

	Part-time 31-12-2007	Full-time 31-12-2007	Part-time 31-12-2006	Full-time 31-12-2006
women	121	38	167	48
men	30	43	46	56
total	151	81	213	104

Regional formation

The policy in respect of the region formation has been maintained: decentralized implementation of the care. We aim at 250 wards on average per region. Per region, a team guardians, under a region manager, ensures clients care in that region. Each regional office has two employees for the client administration and for secretarial support. In 2007, various regional offices were closed or combined, in accordance with planning. The number of regions dropped from 15 to 9 in 2007.

Electronic Ward Archive

For the support of the primary process, Nidos uses the ICT systems PRS (Ward Registration System) and EPD (Electronic Ward Archive). In the development of PRS and EPD much attention has been paid to how the two systems support the quality of the primary process. One of the main aims of the EPD is to relieve the administrative process for the guardians and to ensure time saving through a computerized user-friendly reporting system. This way the guardians have more time available for contacts with the young people. At the same time, the EPD will have to offer support to the guardians and regional managers in the execution of their daily work by providing an overview of work that has to be carried out and pointing out when they exceed terms. The electronic archive can be transferred faster and, because of its lack of ambiguity it is an improvement in the continuity of the guardianship supervision. Besides, the EDP will improve obtaining management information.

Media Policy 29

Nidos will be pleased to give information to journalists about the organization itself and about its activities. Questions about individual wards will not be answered: the interest of the ward comes first. The objective is to protect the privacy of the young person as well as possible and to guarantee as much security for them as possible.

Quality Policy

In 2007, the quality policy was further developed. Due to the development of the Electronic Ward Archive more insight was obtained in the main work processes of the guardian: the face to face contacts with the young people; the commitment of the young people to the supervision and reporting of the development of young people in a supervision plan and report. At present, these elements are surveyed periodically and included in a management report. In 2007 a start was made in the field of employee satisfaction survey and client satisfaction survey. In April 2008 a separate report about the quality policy will appear.

