

Immigration regulations and legal status of (unaccompanied) migrant minors in Spain: A step towards the inclusion?

Policy perspective of the PLA program was introduced through the overview of the current legal status of unaccompanied minors and recent legislation changes that were presented by David Moya, an expert in immigration regulations.

To obtain the residence and work permits, unaccompanied minors and young migrants in Spain faced **numerous excessive bureaucratic barriers**. After continuous pleas for the reform of the legislation by the young migrants and non-governmental sector, a reform of the Foreigners' Regulation is now approved and being implemented.



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One of the main barriers for the successful inclusion of the unaccompanied minors and young migrants was the fact that **immense amount and heaviness of bureaucratic procedures** often led them towards the **exclusion from the integration process** as they would reach the **legal adult age** before the end of the process. Having that in mind, it doesn't surprise that one of the major changes in the reform of legislation relates to the **simplifying and shortening the initial administrative process**, that will now last three months instead of nine, in order to ensure all necessary documentation is received before becoming of legal adult age. Moreover, not only the deadlines for the obtaining residency are reduced but also the **economic requirements**. Unaccompanied minors and young migrants will now have to prove they receive much realistic amount of monthly income (470€) from a social security support program or otherwise. In addition, residence permits will now be obtained for two years which should together with additional complementary measures help with the **access to the labour market**.

As the reformed legislation has only been put in the implementation process recently, it is yet to be seen how it will function in the practice and address the needs of unaccompanied minors and young migrants in Spain, but it certainly feels like a step forward on the way towards the inclusion.