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PRESS RELEASE

Statistical data on the most disadvantaged children -including refugee, migrant and ethnic minority children- is at the heart of closing the equity gap and making sure that “no child is left behind”, Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) and UNICEF concluded after a recent annual meeting “**Network Meeting of National Statistical Offices: Data on Refugee and Migrant Children and Children from Ethnic Minorities**”, which was co-organized, for the first time, in Athens from 24th to 25th of October 2017.

The President of ELSTAT Mr. **Athanasios C. Thanopoulos** opened the event by stressing the importance of protecting the rights of children and the need for cooperation between national and international agencies, by adopting common standards of measurement, to achieve this goal.

Representatives from the Hellenic Police, Asylum Service, Ministry of Education and National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA), as well as the Deputy Ombudsman for Children’s Rights highlighted that the collection of disaggregated data on children and monitoring their access to services would better inform government authorities and the public of their needs. “Greece is on the frontline of the European Union and the refugee and migrant response,” said Mr. **Apostolos Kasapis** from the Hellenic Statistical Authority and stressed that “It is crucial for all of us to be able to count all children, especially the unaccompanied, for their rights to be fulfilled as well as their safety and wellbeing”.

Data is vital to achieve better results for children and inform governments, civil society, donors and academia to help in their decision-making, policies, programmes and agendas. The TransMonEE (Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity) database is updated every year with data on children from National Statistical Offices (NSOs).

“The use of this data has already been translated into concrete outcomes for children such as identifying and referring unaccompanied children in need of help,” said Ms. **Lori Bell**, UNICEF’s Regional Specialist on data and child rights monitoring. “We need not only to promote but also track inclusion, so that no child is left behind and all see the real benefits of coming forward and taking part in census and surveys and being counted.”

Besides Greece, several other countries, such as Turkey, Germany, Moldova, and Kyrgyzstan, are also targeting their efforts to collect and improve availability of data for refugee and migrant children and monitoring equality for ethnic minorities, particularly Roma children. UNICEF is heavily investing in data production and knowledge management with the support of the European Commission - Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST).