

Present Policy on child migration

5 In England and Wales it is now only the Children Act 1989 (Schedule 2, paragraph 19) which allows a local authority to arrange for, or assist in arranging for, any child in their care to live outside England and Wales with the approval of the court. This provision does not envisage large scale migration. The approval of the court is required in every individual case, in addition to the consent of the child and every person who has parental responsibility for the child (unless their consent is dispensed with by the court on the grounds set out in the Act). Neither does the Children Act make provision for voluntary organisations to arrange for children to live abroad. "

Financial support/compensation

6 The Government is committed to providing financial support to the Child Migrants Trust (UK), and sees this as the best way of helping former child migrants. This is a voluntary, independent, organisation, providing a record tracing, counselling and advisory service. To date the Government has provided cumulative funding of £85,000 to help the Child Migrants Trust (UK), and has authorised £30,000 in each of the last two years ending 1996/97.

Social Security benefits/compensation

7 The schemes were sanctioned by Parliament under successive Governments, none of which dealt directly with individual cases. The government does not, therefore, consider itself in any way responsible for the proportionately small number of cases in which the Scheme failed to live up to its objective. Furthermore, as regards any former child migrants visiting UK to contact their families, the normal social security rules will apply to them.

[This is summarised at ANNEX E].