

Newsletter

Update on International and European activities in the field of children's rights

Second flash Euro barometer survey on the rights of the child (n° 273)

Over 10,000 young people (15-18 years old) across the EU were interviewed in a survey published in August 2009. The survey looks into the level of awareness of children of their rights, as well as their ideas about national and EU-wide actions to be taken in this area.

The survey shows that **65%** of the respondents were aware of their rights as children. At the same time, **80%** of the respondents believed that children in this age group would not know who to ask for help or how if they thought that their rights had been violated. *Education, protection from violence (security) and health* were considered as policy areas of primary importance in view of the protection of children's rights.

For the full text of the survey, click http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_273_en.pdf

Communication from the European Commission

The European Commission published a communication which identifies priority actions in the area of Justice, Liberty and Security for the next 5 years (the full text is available under <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0262:EN:NOT>).

One of the priority actions is the preparation of an action plan on unaccompanied minors the content of which is not decided yet.

In this context, an ongoing research is carried out in the 27 EU member states in order to 1) identify the profile of unaccompanied minors (age, sex, nationality), the scope of the phenomenon, the itinerary they follow, their motivations; 2) to detect measures taken by states, measures of prevention, possibilities of return in the country of origin, measures of cooperation.

Members of ENOC situated in EU member states and which are closely following the question of unaccompanied/separated children might approach their Government in order to make sure that the research is properly carried out.

Conference "20 years of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child", Vienna, Austria

The Ombudsoffices for Children and Youth of Austria together with the Chairperson of the Parliament of Austria, Ms Barbara Prammer, organized a conference dedicated to the "20 years of the CRC" which brought together about 130 politicians and experts and several prominent people talking about "Children's rights: Foolproof or Hard job doing". The main topic of the Conference concerned the importance of the CRC and ombudspersons' for children vision for the next 20 years...

ENOC has been represented by Mr George Moschos, Ombudsman for Children in Greece whose intervention concerned "the importance of Children's Ombudsoffices and the standards of ENOC for the improvement of the rights of the child". While addressing the question of the most important elements to secure effective action of Children's ombudsoffices to defend & promote children's rights, he highlighted *accessibility to children, visibility in society and credibility among decision makers* as most important.

The establishment of institutions fulfilling these characteristics is the responsibility of states, which signed the CRC.



Inside this issue

Update on International & European Activities	1-2
Euro barometer survey	1
EC Communication	1
Conference "20 years" Vienna	1
The Ljubljana Conference	1-2
UNCRC celebrations	2
Update on member institutions' Activities	2-3
Upcoming events	3

ENOC Paris Conference: follow-up

In the aftermath of the 13th ENOC Annual Conference, we would like to let you know that country updates and contributions made in plenary sessions and in the workshops, will be made available (upon agreement) on the ENOC website. Therefore, those member institutions that have not sent yet their updates are invited to email them to the ENOC Secretariat as soon as possible. Member institutions that have made presentations are invited to let us know whether they do agree for their contributions to be posted on the ENOC website.

We hope you all received the draft ENOC statements on "children and armed conflicts" and on "the 20th anniversary of the CRC". Please send us your comments and suggestions on the content **as soon as possible**. The finalized versions of the statements will be published and disseminated in November.

CoE Recommendation on children & internet

On 28 September 2009, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a recommendation on the promotion of internet & online services appropriate for minors. For the full text of the recommendation, click <http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta09/EREC1882.htm>

2nd meeting of the CoE Group of Experts on Child Friendly Justice (CJ-S-CH)

Ms Leda Koursoumba, Children's Commissioner for Cyprus and the Secretariat of ENOC, participated at the meeting on behalf of ENOC. While the Group went through the first draft of the Guidelines article by article, ENOC has been quoted as a first potential partner of the Group when carrying out the consultation with children and youth project at the beginning of 2010.

"I have rights" Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the CRC

To celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 60th Anniversary of the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe has developed new materials which enable children to discover their rights in an understandable and enjoyable way. The materials are designed to be used in awareness raising activities in schools and any other places visited by children and/or parents (health centres, social services, sports and cultural centres, etc).

The full set of the materials can be downloaded on http://www.coe.int/T/TransversalProjects/Children/default_EN.asp

International Conference on "children's rights and protection against violence" organized on 6-7 October in Ljubljana, Slovenia in the framework of the Slovenian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministries

The purpose of the high level Conference was to stress the importance of protecting and implementing children's rights. At the same time, examples of good practices could contribute to raising awareness among the political, expert and general public. Two main topics on the agenda: education on the rights of the child with the presentation of good practices on the promotion of the education on the rights of the child; and the right to protection against violence.

Furthermore, in September 2009 Slovenia began implementing the « Our rights » project for 50,000 children in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo and North Ossetia in the Russian Federation. At his address, the President of Slovenia, Mr Danilo Türk, expressed satisfaction that the ban on corporal punishment was included in the new Family Code. On the other hand, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, underlined that children must be actors of their rights and that governments should invest more in ensuring an equal opportunity to access good quality education for all, including children with disabilities and Roma children.

As a symbolic gesture at the closing session pupils from elementary schools handed over to distinguished participants hats with messages on our common future that they had made in a children's workshop.

For more information on the Conference, click <http://www.varuh-rs.si/projekti-in-promocija/projekti/mednarodna-konferenca-o-otrokovih-pravicah-in-zasciti-pred-nasiljem/?L=6>

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child launched a two day celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of the adoption of the CRC, 8-9 October 2009, Geneva

Organized by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the OHCHR, the theme of the conference has been designated "Dignity, Development and Dialogue" or "the three Ds". Committee's Chair, Ms Yanghee Lee stated that a crucial element of the CRC was furthering a view of children as "*beings rather than becoming*". She underlined that the existence of a complaints procedure to the CRC is fundamental. Ms Navanethem Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, also supported the campaign to establish a complaints procedure by which "*the monitoring of the Convention and the furtherance of children's rights could significantly be strengthen*".

The working group established to consider the drafting of such a procedure is scheduled to meet from 14 to 18 December 2009.

Three main challenges to the implementation of the CRC outlined by Council of Europe Commissioner Hammarberg: participation of children particularly at school; violence against children and the ban of corporal punishment; need for a special attention on particularly vulnerable children, those with disabilities or Roma children.

Ms Leda Koursoumba, Children's Commissioner, Cyprus, represented ENOC at a meeting related to the adoption of an Optional Protocol to the CRC while last

Update on member institutions' activities

Children's Commissioner for Wales published reports on child trafficking and on young carers

Conducted by ECPAT UK on behalf of the Children's Commissioner, the study - *Bordering on Concern* - focused on finding an evidence base for child trafficking in Wales. It also examined the levels of awareness of child trafficking issues among social services and selected voluntary sector organizations, explored how identified cases of child trafficking had been dealt with by social services and the extent to which local authorities promote cooperation between statutory and other agencies.

Evidence was found of confirmed and suspected cases of child trafficking encountered by social services, the voluntary sector and the police. Practitioners described 32 cases that caused them concerns; these cases involve children aged three and a half years and upwards, from a variety of countries of origin. Notably, more boys than girls were identified during the study.

The report concludes with six recommendations from the Children's Commissioner for Wales, ranging from the need for the Welsh Assembly Government to undertake an audit of relevant training currently available to practitioners, to tasking the Government to convene an all-Wales group on trafficking whose remit shall include collecting and disseminating relevant data and information and monitoring trends.

It goes on to recommend that all Local Safeguarding Children's Boards to implement the Safeguarding Children Who May Have Been Trafficked Guidance 2008 within one year of the publication of the report.

The Commissioner's second report was about and written by young carers from Wales. The project team, led by young carers, gathered the views and opinions from nineteen of Wales' 22 young carers projects to identify the main barriers young carers face when it comes to realizing their rights set out in the UNCRC, including their right to education, to relax and play and to have their views respected.

You can find the full text of the two reports under:
<http://www.childcomwales.org.uk/en/publications-list/>

Children's Commissioner for Malta published its 2008 annual report

For the full text of the report, please click:
<http://www.crin.org/docs/Report%20ENG.pdf>

France: 40 000 sign petition to stop closure of Ombudsperson for children's office

A petition established to challenge the decision by the French government to close down the independent institution that is mandated to safeguard the Convention has attracted **39360** signatures. View them
<http://forum.defenseurdesenfants.fr/soutiens.php>

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **11-13 November 2009**, Limassol, Cyprus: Eurochild 6th Annual Conference "Monitoring child well-being: better policy and practice"
[CHILDREN IN EUROPE-ISSUE 17- TWENTY YEARS OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS](#)
- ❖ **13 November 2009**, Brussels: "Annual Dialogue on Multilevel Protection and Promotion of Fundamental Rights", organized by the EU Committee of Regions and the EU Fundamental Rights Agency; Ms Dominique Versini will represent ENOC
- ❖ **18 November 2009**, Brussels: International symposium on "[New Approaches Towards Human Trafficking in the EU: Raising Awareness and Developing Integrated Action](#)", organized by the Centre for Parliamentary studies
- ❖ **24-26 November 2009**, Chisinau, Moldova: Regional Conference on "Child care system reform", organized by the Government of Moldova, with the support of UNICEF
- ❖ **1 December 2009**, Helsinki, Finland: 1st meeting of the CoE Ad hoc Advisory Group on Child & Youth Participation; Ms Emily Logan has been appointed ENOC representative
- ❖ **2 December 2009**, Helsinki, Finland: Round Table discussion on child & youth participation organized by the Council of Europe; ENOC will be represented by the ENOC Chair and Bureau members
- ❖ **10-11 December 2009**, Stockholm, Sweden: EU Conference on "Making rights a reality for all", organized by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency and the Swedish Presidency of EU; ENOC will be represented by Ms Rimante Salaseviciute, Vice-Chair of ENOC

On the occasion of the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the CRC, all member institutions are invited to share their celebrations' program with Network colleagues

The ENOC website needs your input to continue to grow. Send us information about new web resources, research or data related to Children's Rights.

If you have any suggestions or if you would like to include any information or upcoming events in our newsletter please send the details to secretariat@ombudsnet.org (Re: ENOC Newsletter).

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European Network of Ombudspersons for Children

Council of Europe D Building
Office 208-210
67075 Strasbourg Cedex
Tel. +33 3 90 21 54 88
E-mail: secretariat@ombudsnet.org

Find us on the Web:
www.ombudsnet.org

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