

Newsletter

Update on ENOC activities

Launching among ENOC members of the ENOC questionnaire on the respect of the rights of children/young people in institutional care

The respect of the rights of children and young people living in institutional care is on the 2011 agenda of ENOC. In this sense, a detailed questionnaire covering a large range of rights and situations has been prepared and circulated to all ENOC members. The survey pursues the following objective: to develop an overall picture of existing legal frameworks/reglementations and their shortcomings; existing and/or suggested good practices; main difficulties and challenges to make sure the rights of children/young people living in institutional care are fully respected; practical (critical/positive) assessment of adopted practices/measures; and different initiatives and projects carried out by ENOC member institutions in their respective countries/regions.

ENOC members are expected to provide as detailed as possible feedback on the questionnaire before the ENOC expert compiles the answers in a report that will be presented during the upcoming ENOC Annual meeting in Warsaw, Poland.

Those ENOC members that have a particularly relevant experience or interest on the topic may form a working group to support the ENOC expert in order to produce more tangible results.

Migration of the ENYA e-forum

The electronic forum of the European Network of Youth Advisors has been moved end of February from the website of the French Ombudsperson for children office to the ENOC website and all registered participants (restricted access) can log in using the following web link: www.crin.org/enya

It is expected that the four series of the common draft recommendations that resulted from the work done throughout the previous year are posted on the e-forum for further discussion by and among the young people.

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

EC Communication on "An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child" adopted

On February 15, the European Commission adopted a Communication setting an EU agenda for reinforcing the rights of the child by putting the principles of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights into practice. It includes a series of concrete actions where EU can provide added value to policies for children's well-being and safety, including promotion of child-friendly justice, better informing children about their rights, and making the internet safer for them. Thus, the EU agenda lists 11 actions that the Commission will take over the coming years to achieve the above objectives.

The full text of the Communication is available under: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52011DC0060:EN:NOT>



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ENOC Annual 2011 Conference (Dates & location)

The 15th ENOC Annual Conference and General Assembly meeting will take place on 14-15-16 September 2011 in Warsaw, Poland. While the exact title of the Conference is still to be determined, the Conference will mainly address the issue of the respect of the rights of children in institutions.

The 1st day of the conference will be entirely dedicated to internal to ENOC issues (General Assembly) and therefore closed for external to the network participants/invitees. ENOC members are invited not to make any hotel arrangements yet. Useful and practical information (including hotel arrangement possibilities, draft agenda, etc.) will be sent in a short notice.

Update on the draft OP to the CRC

The third drafting meeting for the complaints mechanism took place on **10-16 February 2011**, in Geneva. After tense discussions and debates, the Chairperson (of the OEWG) made a surprising announcement and proposed a *take-it-or-leave-it* package. Among others, the Chair suggested that the draft Optional Protocol allow States to "opt-out" of applying the complaints mechanism to existing Optional Protocols, remove the collective communications mechanism, allow States to "opt-out" of participating in the inquiry procedure, and allow for reservations. This proposal generated a very strong reaction by all the stakeholders but especially by the Committee of the Rights of the Child and its President and Vice-President. A detailed summary of the meeting and the latest draft OP CRC are available under: <http://www.crin.org/resources/infordetail.asp?id=24180>

Resolution of the European Parliament on international adoption in the EU

Adoption, and where necessary international adoption, should be encouraged, so as to give children who are abandoned or at risk of becoming institutionalized in orphanages a family life, said the EP in a resolution adopted on January 19, 2010. The resolution, stresses the need to protect a child's right to a family life and preclude the need for long stays in orphanages or other institutions. Adoption or an alternative family care solution, such as foster and residential care, should preferably take place in the child's country of origin. Failing this, an adoptive family should be found in another EU Member State, says the text. Placing a child in institutional care should be the very last option and also a temporary one it adds. Full text of the resolution: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0013+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

During the summer of 2010, the European Commission organized a public consultation on the EC's Communication on the Rights of the Child (2011-2020) to collect information and reliable data on the situation of children's rights from the ground. Contributions to the public consultation are available under: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/news/consulting_public/news_consulting_0009_en.htm

EC Communication on "Early Childhood Education and Care: Providing all our children with the best start for the world of tomorrow" adopted

On February 17, the EC adopted a communication on early childhood education and care which proposes important measures aimed at providing all children with "*the best start for the world of tomorrow*". Most importantly, it acknowledges the contribution of early childhood services to children's emotional, social and cognitive development. The Communication recognises the valuable contribution that early childhood education and care services can bring to achieve the Europe 2020 Strategy headline targets to reduce the share of **early school leavers to under 10%** and to lift at least **20 million people out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion**. It furthermore proposes a number of issues for policy cooperation between member states with a particular focus on inclusion and professionalization of staff. Crucially the Commission proposes to encourage member states to make use of Structural Funds to increase the accessibility and quality of early childhood services. The full text of the Communication is available under: http://ec.europa.eu/education/school-education/doc/childhoodcom_en.pdf

"Migrant children should not be detained", a Human Rights Comment published by CoE Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg

While detention of migrant children, even very small children, accompanied or not, remain a widespread practice within Europe despite the CoE, UN' and EU's clear prohibition of detention of minors in the migration context, the psychological harm and the fear and uncertainty detained migrant children are facing, the lack of access to education and to health services violate children's most basic rights, said the Commissioner. He also expressed concerns as to the lack of data and available statistics as to the exact number of detained migrant minors in Europe. The Commissioner thus invited states' governments to find alternative solutions without having recourse to detention, thus quoting a few positive steps that go in this direction, initiated by Belgium and the UK. The HR Comment is made available under: http://commissioner.cws.coe.int/tiki-view_blog_post.php?postId=116

In the same series, the Commissioner published on February 2, a Human Rights Comment addressing the issue of "Restrictive laws prevent families from reuniting", available under: http://commissioner.cws.coe.int/tiki-view_blog_post.php?postId=113

The Commissioner and the Turkish Chairmanship of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers organized a Seminar on "*Human rights dimensions of migration in Europe*", held on 17-18 February 2011, in Istanbul, Turkey.

Ms. Emily Logan, Ombudsman for Children of Ireland, has been invited by the Commissioner to speak at the seminar and to share the experience of her Office in driving change in how the Irish State cares for separated children that arrive in Ireland without parents or guardians. For further information: <http://www.oco.ie/>

Council of Europe "One in Five" campaign to stop sexual violence against children

In order to achieve further signature, ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse but also to equip children, their families/careers and societies at large with the knowledge and tools to prevent and report sexual violence against children, a "*One to Five*" campaign is operating in reference to one in five children in Europe being victim of some form of sexual violence.

In this context, a number of materials including campaign posters & postcards, a publication on many aspects of sexual violence, a handbook, a children's book, TV spots but also the "Underwear Rule" has been developed as a support for the campaign. Moreover, the Council of Europe joined forces with the UN and its Special Representative on violence against children to combat sexual violence against children through international standards.

For further information on the One in Five campaign: http://www.coe.int/t/DG3/children/1in5/default_en.asp

continues

Update on member institutions' activities

Commissioner for Human Rights of Azerbaijan: 1st specialized report on children's rights

The 1st entirely dedicated to children's rights report was prepared during the "Child Year" in Azerbaijan and aimed to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child and the 20th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It provides state policy on children's rights, international and national legislation in this field, proposals and recommendations aimed at better protection of children's rights. The report is available under: <http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infodetail.asp?id=24063>

"Young people in St. Patrick's institution", a report published by Ireland's Ombudsman for Children Office (OCO)

On 9th February 2011, Ireland's Ombudsman for Children, Emily Logan, launched her report on the OCO's consultation with young people detained in St. Patrick's Institution, a closed medium security prison in Dublin for 16-21 year olds.

The report as well as the executive summary is available under: <http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infodetail.asp?id=24099>

Children's Commissioner for Wales published a new Planner for young people leaving care

"Leaving care isn't just the single step of moving from a residential unit or foster carer's house to live on your own. It's a gradual process".

A new planner for young people leaving care has been recently published by the Commissioner for children's Office of Wales. The planner contains a large variety of useful information about things like education, housing and health plus details of what young people are entitled to and who should be helping them. The full version of the planner is available under: <http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infodetail.asp?id=24328>

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **4-6 April 2011:** SOS Children's Villages, with the support of various partners, is organising the international conference "Quality in alternative Care", Prague, Czech Republic
- ❖ **6-7 April 2011:** Seminar on "Rights of children in care" organized by the Council of Europe with the support of the Legal Chancellor of Estonia, Tallinn, Estonia
- ❖ **26-27 May 2011:** International Conference on "*Combating violence against children: from isolated actions to integrated strategies*" organized by the Council of Europe and the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the CoE Committee of Ministers, Kyiv, Ukraine
- ❖ **30-31 May 2011:** 3rd meeting/forum on public policy issues related to Internet Governance (IG) organized by EuroDIG, the Pan-European dialogue on internet governance, Belgrade, Serbia

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).

MARCH 2011

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