

Newsletter

ENOC News & Announcements

ENOC 17th Annual Conference (Brussels): follow-up

The 17th ENOC Annual Conference on “*Children on the move: children first!*”, hosted by the Ombudsman for Children of the French Community in Belgium and ENOC Chair, Mr. Bernard De Vos, took place on 25-27 September 2013 in “*Les Ateliers des Tanneurs*”, Brussels, Belgium.

Bringing together over 100 participants, including ENOC member institutions, observer non-member Ombudsman institutions from within and outside Europe, International and European organizations, NGOs and recognized experts in the children’s rights field, the ENOC Annual Conference provided a forum for the exchange of concerns and experience in the protection and promotion of children’s rights in general and more specifically on the situation of “*children on the move*” at national and European level.

On the first day of the conference an exchange of views was organized with European Parliamentarians campaigning for better respect for children’s rights in Europe and beyond. On this occasion, the ‘10 min. teaser (<http://crin.org/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=31828&flag=news>) of the ENOC documentary film on ‘*children on the move*’ was screened for the first time at the European Parliament.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, the UNHCR, the International Play Association, academics, researchers and international experts all had the chance to take part and address participants.

The Conference resulted in the adoption of:

- A common position statement on ‘*Children on the move: children first!*’ (<http://crin.org/enoc/papers/index.asp>, available in English, French, Greek and Serbian);
- A position paper on the situation of Syrian children in refugee camps (<http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=31837&flag=news>), available in English, French and Serbian; and
- The official public release of the ENOC documentary film on “*Children on the move: children first!*” (<http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=31870&flag=news>)

The full Conference pack, i.e. plenary and workshops’ presentations, list of participants etc., is available at: <http://crin.org/enoc/meetings/index.asp>

ENOC Chair-elect at the Chisinau Conference on the observance of children’s rights in family type care

Represented by the Chair-elect and Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People, Mr. Tam Baillie, ENOC participated at the International Conference held on 3-4 October 2013 in Chisinau, Moldova on the observance of the rights of children in institutional or other alternative care, assessing the situation in Moldova through the presentation of best practices from other European and neighbouring countries. For further information on the event: <http://ombudsman.md/en/stiri/international-conference-observance-childrens-rights-family-habitation-analysis-existing>

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Activities linked to the ENOC documentary film “*Children on the move: children first!*”

- ❖ The French version of the documentary film is screened from 23 to 29 October 2013 in the “*Aventure*” cinema in Brussels. A debate was organized for the evening of the 23rd of October, when the French version of the film was screened in avant-première, with the participation of Mr. Bernard De Vos, ENOC Chair and Belgium’s French speaking Ombudsman for Children.
- ❖ The ‘10 minute teaser of the ENOC documentary film will be screened at the Eurochild 2013 Annual Conference on the 13-15th November 2013 in Milan, Italy. The teaser will be presented by the ENOC Chair, Mr. Bernard De Vos. The full ‘52 minute version will be screened at the stand of Italy’s Ombudsman for Children & Adolescents, and ENOC Secretary.

SRSG launched a Child-Friendly Version of the 3rd Optional Protocol to the CRC on a Communications Procedure (OCP)

Raising understanding among Children and Young People on the OCP, a child-friendly publication launched by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, was developed with the support and advice of children and young people from different regions of the world. It aims to support wide dissemination of the Protocol, raise children's awareness about their rights and enhance their confidence to speak up and seek support. Access to information can ensure that children are aware of their rights and empowered to become advocates and agents of change in their own lives and communities. The publication is available at: http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/sites/default/files/cropped_images/RaisingUnderstanding_OCP.pdf

The annual report of the SRSG as presented before the UN General Assembly is also available at: http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/document/a-68-274_902

WHEN YOU HEAR MY VOICE

When You Hear My Voice is a documentary film that celebrates the restorative effect of Shakespeare and Literacy. It features a multinational collection of young offenders from a prison in Malta on a personal journey of discovery, as they develop their talents, improve their self-esteem and find new connections with each other. Shakespeare and performance provides the key for these young men to unlock their thoughts and feelings, giving them the confidence to share their stories. The teaser of the documentary is available at: <http://thebespokefilmcompany.com/broadcast.html>

Please contact Natasha Serlin for more information: Natasha@thebespokefilmcompany.com

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

European Parliament report on Member States' Policies on Children with Disabilities

The comparative report looks at policies promoting the rights of children with disabilities in 18 EU countries. The study presents an overview of some of the major issues and obstacles faced by children with disabilities and their families as well as a legal analysis of the implementation of the main rights and principles recognized in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The report concludes that whilst there is a broad recognition of the rights of children with disabilities under national legal systems, their practical implementation is revealed to be problematic in most Member States, and the economic crisis is contributing to the removal and reduction of assistance in most Member States. The comparative study and the country reports are available under: <http://www.e-include.eu/news/1357-european-parliament-released-a-study-on-member-states-policies-for-children-with-disabilities>

Child labour in Europe: a persisting challenge

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Nils Muižnieks recently released a human rights comment on child labour, which remains a serious problem in Europe and may be growing in the wake of economic crisis. While the subject remains taboo and data and statistics are very often missing, the Commissioner provided figures that show that in many Council of Europe countries children, even at a young age, are working. The Commissioner insisted that many countries are underestimating the problem and called on Governments to investigate, collect data about and monitor the situation. The full text of the comment is available here: <http://humanrightscomment.org/2013/08/20/child-labour-in-europe/#more-305>

Decisions concerning migrant children must always be based on their best interests

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Nils Muižnieks, remains extremely concerned regarding the situation of migrant children, especially those unaccompanied, separated or trafficked. Insisting on the unconditional primary consideration of the best interests of migrant children in all decisions affecting them, the Commissioner questioned the ongoing returns, voluntary or forced, in countries where some European countries run high risk projects--the so called "welcoming centre" in Afghanistan-- or to countries where the child no longer has any ties. The full text of the comment is available at: <http://humanrightscomment.org/2013/09/19/decisions-concerning-migrant-children-must-always-be-based-on-their-best-interests/>

Austerity measures weaken human rights protection in Spain, said CoE Commissioner for Human Rights

In a recent country visit report on Spain, CoE Commissioner for Human Rights pointed out the worrying growth of family poverty and serious deficiencies in the enjoyment of human rights by children as a result of important cuts in social, health and education budgets. The main findings and the full country report are available at: http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/News/2013/131009Spain_en.asp

Council of Europe One in Five campaign: new video clip to raise awareness of sexual violence against children

A two minute video-clip (<http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/News/News-View-EN.asp?newsid=4700&lang=2&cat=133>) passes the message to adolescents who are victims of sexual abuse about how important it is to talk about their experience if the situation is to improve. The clip shows the secret pact between the abuser and the minor; a pact which the latter needs to break. Talking about it to someone else is difficult, but is vitally important. This video clip is part of the CoE One in Five campaign: "About ONE in FIVE children falls victim to sexual violence. This child is weighed down by a terrible secret. YOU could be the one who listens and helps." A pilot project aiming at strengthening national policies to stop sexual violence against children has been launched in Cyprus as part of the One in Five campaign. For further information on the campaign: <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/News/News-View-EN.asp?newsid=4690&lang=2&cat=133>

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Updates from ENOC members

- ✓ **The Italian Authority for Children and Adolescents** released its 2012 activity report covering two months of Authority activities as the institution only became operational as of October 2012. The first findings and the main challenges and perspectives for the Authority can be read here: <http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infodetail.asp?id=31705>
- ✓ **The Ombudsman of Latvia** released its 2012 annual activity report, the first part of which addresses different children's rights areas. The full report is also available in English here: http://www.tiesibsargs.lv/files/content/english/Tiesibsarga%20gada%20zinojums_2012_ENG.pdf
- ✓ **Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People** published its 2012-2013 annual report. The report aims to give readers an insight into the Commissioner's activities over the past year, a flavour of the varied work undertaken by his staff on behalf of Scotland's children and young people - and a sense of the agenda for the coming year. A children and young people's version of the annual report will be available soon. The full report can be read here : <http://www.sccyp.org.uk/about/annual>
- ✓ **Children's Commissioner for England** published its 2012-2013 Annual Report and Financial Statements. The report details the Commissioner's work to promote and protect children's rights, and also how the Office allocated resources in the year to 31 March 2013. The full report can be read here : http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_699
A children and young people's version of the annual report is available here: http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_702
- ✓ **Children's Commissioner for Wales** published its annual report 2012-2013. Pointing out that the voices of children are often completely ignored, the Commissioner and his team are urging all those who have a duty to protect children and young people to ensure they don't lose sight of the common sense approach of listening and hearing what children and young people have to say and acting upon their concerns. The full report is available at: <http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infodetail.asp?id=31898>
The Commissioner has also recently released two other reports: **Lost After Care Monitoring Report** (<http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infodetail.asp?id=31899>) and **Child Poverty Strategy Progress Report** (<http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infodetail.asp?id=31920>)
- ✓ Dr. László SZÉKELY is Hungary's new Commissioner for Fundamental Rights succeeding to Prof. Dr. Máté Szabó whose six year term expired in September 2013.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **5 November 2013:** CRONSEE thematic meeting on "children on the move", Zagreb, Croatia. ENOC will be represented by Ms. Tamara Luksic-Orlandic, ENOC Treasurer
- ❖ **13-15 November 2013:** Eurochild Annual Conference 2013 on "*Building an inclusive Europe-the contribution of children's participation*", Milan, Italy. ENOC will be represented by the ENOC Chair and the ENOC Secretary
- ❖ **21 November 2013:** Conference on "*Comparative views on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child after two decades of experience in the North and the South of the Mediterranean*", Principality of Monaco
- ❖ **21-22 November 2013:** CoE & Belgium Conference on "*Full inclusion in the society of children & young people with disabilities*", Brussels, Belgium
- ❖ **17-18 December 2013:** 8th European Forum on the Rights of the Child "*Towards integrated child protection systems through the implementation of the EU Agenda for the rights of the child*", Brussels, Belgium

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).

OCTOBER 2013

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European Network of Ombudspersons for Children

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