

Newsletter

ENOC News & Announcements

ENOC 17th Annual Conference Report (Brussels): online now

The 17th ENOC Annual Conference Report is now published on the ENOC website. The report contains highlights from the workshops, summaries of speakers' presentations, feedback from the General Assembly, pictures etc. The report can be downloaded here:

http://crin.org/docs/FileManager/enoc/Annual_Conference_Report_Brussels_2013_final.pdf

ENOC Chair, Mr. Bernard De Vos participated in a hearing organized by PICUM in co-operation with ALDE

The ENOC Chair, Mr. Bernard De Vos participated in a hearing on "A child is a child. How can the EU promote the rights of undocumented children and families" hosted by Nathalie Griesbeck, member of the European Parliament, and organized by the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) on 14th November 2013 at the EP in Brussels. The ENOC Chair took part in Panel I related to 'Ensuring access to services, protection and justice for undocumented children and families', where he presented relevant parts of the ENOC Position Statement on 'Children on the move: children first!', and distributed documents containing links to the teaser and to the ENOC documentary on "Children on the Move: Children First!". For more information: <http://picum.org/en/news/picum-news/42120/>

EUROCHILD Annual Conference 2013

The EUROCHILD Annual Conference on "Building an inclusive Europe-the contribution of children's participation" took place in Milan on 13-15 November 2013. The ENOC Chair--Mr. Bernard De Vos, the ENOC Secretary--Mr. Vincenzo Spadafora-co-host of the Conference, ENOC members from Croatia and Sweden participated in the event and made contributions to the different thematic panels. The ENOC Chair participated in the opening session where the teaser for the ENOC documentary "Children on the move: children first!" was introduced and screened. The Office of the ENOC Secretary (Italy) made available to all Conference participants DVD copies (300) of the ENOC documentary, contributing to the promotion of children and young people's views expressed in a film format made by them for the attention of competent authorities. For further information on the Conference: <http://eurochildannualconference2013.org/en/conference/>

ENOC Chair at a high level Colloquium on the Rights of the Child to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Monaco's accession to the CRC

The Principality of Monaco, to mark its 20th anniversary of accession to the CRC, organized a high level Colloquium "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" on 21st November 2013 in Monaco. The ENOC Chair, Mr. Bernard De Vos, delivered a keynote speech on the subject of 'The Ombudsperson for Children: useful institution? Mandate, influence and authority.'

EU Forum on Children's Rights

The 8th EU Forum on Children's Rights on "Towards integrated child protection systems through the implementation of the EU Agenda on the Rights of the Child" took place on 17-18 December in Brussels, Belgium. The Forum focused on the exchange of good practice in specific areas and contributed to work on



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Activities linked to the ENOC documentary film "Children on the move: children first!"

- ❖ DVD copies of the documentary are available upon request at the ENOC Secretariat.
- ❖ The ENOC documentary has been introduced by the ENOC Chair and the teaser screened at the Eurochild annual conference last November in Milan. More than 300 DVD copies of the documentary were distributed to Conference participants and invitees.
- ❖ The Flemish Commissioner for Children's Rights organized on 11 December 2013 at the Flemish Parliament a special study day on migrant children where participants from different organizations, journalists and academics watched the teaser of the documentary.
- ❖ DVD copies of the documentary and the ENOC statement on children on the move have been sent by the ENOC Presidency to the highest authorities of the EU, UN and Council of Europe.

More countries joining UNCRC OP on a communications procedure

Slovakia and Spain are the latest countries (ratifications deposited on 3 December 2013) becoming parties to the Optional Protocol to the CRC on a communications procedure. The Protocol currently counts 44 signatories and 9 State Parties.

CPT's announcement of 10 country periodic visits in 2014

At the beginning of December, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman and Degrading Treatment announced it intends to examine the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty in the following ten countries: Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Romania, and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

ENOC members in possession of information concerning deprivation of liberty in any of these countries which they believe could assist the CPT are invited to bring this to the Committee's attention.

Millions of children reaching out to helplines, a report reveals

10 years of data from telephone records, emails, text messages and chats compiled by Child Helpline International (CHI) show that children and young people around the world contact helplines for support with violence and abuse, peer relationships, psycho-social and mental health, and family conflicts.

"*The Voices of Children and Young People*", a report released on 20th November 2013 to mark the 10th anniversary of the CHI, a network of 172 child helpline members operating in 142 countries, provides data and analysis drawn from a series of regional studies.

<http://www.childhelplineinternational.org/>

EU Guidelines supporting integrated child protection systems, taking into account the protection needs of all children. Fourteen ENOC members from EU countries participated in the event while Lithuania's Children's Rights Ombudsman, Ms. Edita Ziobiene, made a keynote speech at the first panel: 'Towards EU Guidelines on child protection systems'. Luxembourg's Ombudsperson for the Rights of the Child participated in a panel related to the role of child protections systems in protecting children from violence-bullying and cyber-bullying. For further information on the EU Forum: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/events/child-forum-2013/index_en.htm

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

EU study on missing children: mapping, data collection and statistics on missing children in the European Union (EU27), published

The study, carried out from August 2012 to June 2013 on behalf of the European Commission with the support of the European Parliament, mapped the situation of and responses to children going missing during the period 2009-2012 in EU-27. It revealed a variety of definitions and procedures used by Member States as well as the greatly varying degrees of data available. The data illustrates the magnitude of the problem, with just under a quarter of a million cases of missing children reported in 2012. The study concludes that there is a strong case for improving data collection, including using common definitions, reporting of cases and coordinating the actions taken by the different actors in the national child-protection systems. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/missing_children_study_2013_en.pdf

"Championing Children's Rights: a global study of independent human rights institutions for children", by UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre

The study, globally the first comprehensive review of independent human rights institutions for children (IHRIC), takes stock of more than 20 years of experience. The report provides practitioners with an extensive discussion of the issues as well as a series of regional analyses from around the world. The aim is to help readers understand the purpose and potential of IHRIC, what it is they do and how they operate. This review includes institutions performing activities related to children's rights operating at national or local level. The report is organized into two major parts: a series of thematic chapters, drawing out lessons from practice on the distinctive principles and features underlying the function of child rights institutions; and an overview of their international development, looking at the work of institutions by region. The report can be downloaded here: <http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/701>

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights' issue paper on austerity measures and human rights

In a recently published research paper (4 Dec. 2013), CoE Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Nils Muižnieks, raised the alarm about the dramatic consequences of austerity measures imposed by many governments in Europe, on the protection of human rights in general and especially as regards vulnerable groups of people--children and young people included. The Commissioner expressed grave concerns as to the lack of consideration by States and also by international lenders of their human rights obligations, especially the social and economic rights of the most vulnerable, the need to ensure access to justice, and the right to equal treatment. The Commissioner also highlighted the essential role Ombudsmen and other NHRIs play in identifying human rights compliant responses to the crisis and protecting people in need, inviting governments to strengthen the effectiveness of these structures to handle complaints about social and economic rights while seeking independent advice in decision-making about austerity measures.

Full text of the publication: <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2130915>

Council of Europe- conference on preventing child sexual abuse

Organised by the Council of Europe in cooperation with the Spanish Government and "La Caixa" Foundation on 10-11 December 2013 in Madrid, the Conference presented an overview of the various problems and discussed solutions applied in Europe to preventing and tackling child sexual abuse. It also permitted recognition and promotion of the role of the various policies, the national, regional and local authorities, civil society, the private sector, families and children, in developing and implementing actions and policies for prevention. For further information: http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/News/MadridConference_en.asp

“Championing Children’s Rights in Europe: A European Manifesto” launched on 20th of November 2013

On the occasion of Universal Children’s Rights Day (20th of November 2013) 14 European and International organizations launched a joint **Child Rights Manifesto** at the European Parliament (EP) in Strasbourg, in view of the upcoming European Parliament elections in 2014. Hosted by EP Vice-President Roberta Angelili and attended by representatives of the major political parties and UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, attendees debated the EU’s future role in protecting and promoting children’s rights. Many MEPs committed to be Child Rights Champions and to include the Manifesto’s request in their programmes, agreeing to increase attention to children’s rights in the work of the European Parliament. The Manifesto is available here: <http://childrightsmanifesto.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Child-Rights-Manifesto.pdf>

Updates from ENOC members

- ✓ **Ireland’s Ombudsman for Children** has been given additional powers following recent actions of State authorities in taking two children from the Roma community into care for “reasonable grounds to believe there are immediate risks to the safety and welfare of a child”. Following the confirmation that the children in question were the biological children of each respective family, the Minister for Justice has conferred additional temporary powers to the Ombudsman for Children to investigate Garda Síochána actions in which the two children were taken in to state care. The investigation is currently under way and the report will be made public on its completion.
- ✓ On the International Day of the Rights of the Child, on November 20th each year the **Defender of Human Rights and the Children’s Ombudsperson in France** submit a thematic report on the rights of the child to the President of the Republic and the Presidents of the National Assembly and the Senate. This year’s report addresses the issue of the **child’s voice in justice**. The report provides an overview and makes several concrete proposals to ensure that the opinion of child victims, witnesses or perpetrators of criminal acts finds a place in the judicial process, whether civil or criminal. Click here to download the report (only available in French) : <http://www.defenseurdesdroits.fr/sinformer-sur-le-defenseur-des-droits/linstitution/actualites/20-novembre-journee-internationale-d-0>
- ✓ The **Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary** released a special children’s rights report on the issue of child friendly justice from the Commissioner’s perspective in Hungary. Following up on CoE Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice , in 2012 the Commissioner explored the gaps between law and practice by conducting several inquiries into the fulfillment of international obligations concerning child-friendly justice; protection and assistance of child victims; general assessment of the youth justice system; mediation and other forms of restorative justice; adequate training of professionals working in the child protection or in the juvenile justice system; the situation of UAMs; and on-the-spot visits to penitentiary institutions for juvenile offenders. The full report is available in English here : <http://www.ajbh.hu/documents/14315/131278/Child-friendly+justice+from+the+Hungarian+Ombudsman%27s+perspective/53bc5136-3d2a-40d2-b576-2ea6a5b2f979?version=1.0>

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **13 March 2014:** Human Rights Full Day meeting on the rights of the child dedicated to “Access to justice for children”, Geneva, Switzerland
- ❖ **27-28 March 2014:** Council of Europe Mid Term Review Conference “*Growing with Children’s Rights*”, Dubrovnik, Croatia. The ENOC Chair will participate at the Conference on behalf of ENOC

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

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*ENOC is financially supported
 by the
 European Commission*

