

Newsletter



ENOC News & Announcements

ENYA Forum “Let’s Talk Young, Let’s Talk About Violence!”

Young representatives from Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, and Malta, and their coordinators met at the ENYA Forum on 29-30 June in Athens, Greece. The meeting provided a forum for young participants to exchange their experience of the child participation video project. They addressed the issue of violence against children and shared the outcomes of their country activities. The forum was followed by a creative work on different aspects of violence against children expressed through music and arts. Assisted by a musician and a graffiti artist, young people created a piece of music and drew a graffiti slogan on ending violence against children. They used different facial expressions to illustrate the devastating effects of violence on children and young people. At the final part of the forum, each young participant recorded a short video message to share views on his/her experience of participating in the forum and to propose solutions on reducing violence against children. You can read more on the ENYA event [here](#)

ENOC Seminar on “Violence against Children”

In parallel with ENYA activities, ENOC held a working seminar on ‘*Violence against children*’ on 29-30 June 2015 in Athens, Greece. ENOC members from Belgium, Cyprus, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Serbia, Scotland and Sweden participated in the two day meeting. The purpose of the seminar was to serve as a forum for participating institutions to meet and provide input to the draft statement on violence against children to be agreed at the upcoming ENOC Annual Conference. The drafting committee was supported by an external advisor, Ms. Marielle Dekker, a leading expert on violence against children and director of the Augeo Foundation. After this first round of discussions, work is still in progress on the scope and terms of the future ENOC statement on the theme of violence. An updated version of the statement will be circulated to the ENOC membership well in advance of the ENOC Annual conference. More information on the seminar is available [here](#)

ENOC at the EU Forum on the Rights of the Child

The 9th EU Forum on the Rights of the Child took place on 3-4 June 2015 in Brussels. The forum focused on integrated child protection systems. The aim of the meeting was to provide a forum for the exchange of good practices, to facilitate connections at inter-sectoral and inter-agency level, and to promote more effective cooperation and coordination in integrated child protection systems. Discussions at the forum were organized into four thematic sessions on the prevention of violence against children; identification, reporting and referral; child friendly justice, and effective procedures. A large number of ENOC members participated in the forum and the ENOC Chair, Tam Baillie, spoke in Session Two dedicated to child protection systems in the different EU countries. You can read full information on the 9th edition of the forum [here](#).

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ENOC 19th Annual Conference registration NOW OPEN!!!

All ENOC members & invited observers are kindly reminded to register for the Annual Conference by no later than August 30th, 2015.

Registrations forms should be emailed to the ENOC Secretariat.

Practical arrangements such as hotel booking should be completed online following the instructions.

MDAC report on Access to Justice for Children with Mental Disabilities

The Mental Disability Advocacy Centre (MDAC) has recently completed a two year European research project on *Access to Justice for Children with Mental Disabilities*. The aim of the project was to strengthen access to justice and legal remedies for children with intellectual or psycho-social disabilities who have been victims of human rights violations. Research was conducted on the relevant existing international and European legal standards and the extent to which these are implemented in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain and the UK. The study also addresses key national-level barriers that children with mental disabilities face in these countries in accessing justice systems and participating effectively and safely in proceedings affecting them. All the materials can be found [here](#). These include a summary report of the project; guidance and synthesis reports on the collection and dissemination of data; a report on international standards in the field and findings on access to justice for children with mental disabilities in 10 EU countries; and a training guide for practitioners on the rights of children with disabilities in the administration of justice.

UN Human Rights Council adopts resolution to end child marriage

On July 2nd, the UN Human Rights Council adopted its 1st resolution on ending child, early, and forced marriage and supporting girls who are already married. This builds on a recent UN General Assembly resolution by giving governments concrete guidance on how to end child, early, and forced marriage but goes even further. The UN Council resolution recognizes girls' right to control all aspects of their sexuality and their sexual and reproductive health. It also recognizes the burden of child marriage in humanitarian and fragile settings and reinforces the call for a target to end this practice in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

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

EC report evaluating legislation, policy and practice of child participation in the European Union

The study provides an overview of the legal and policy framework, structures and approaches, barriers, impacts and benefits of child participation at Member State and EU levels. It also identifies good practices in child participation which could be used to improve participation of children in actions, policies and decisions affecting them. The study includes a research summary, a child-friendly summary and a specific fact sheet for each Member State, analysing its particular situation and pointing to best practices. You can download the full report [here](#)

FRA published its annual 2014 report

On 25 June 2015, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published an analytical version of its latest Annual report on fundamental rights challenges and achievements over the course of 2014. Each chapter focuses on three key issues and contains conclusions. As in past years, the Annual report provides concrete and comparative data in fundamental rights on the ground in the 28 EU Member States. It identifies key developments, promising practices, and challenges in many areas of fundamental rights. For example in 2014, 'child protection continues to be under-resourced in many Member States, hindering efforts to better protect child rights in practice. Data show that child poverty and social exclusion rates remains high. However, some Member States are improving the legal protection for child victims and children without parental care. Member States should therefore improve coordination mechanisms and develop quality standards, as well as effective inspection and monitoring mechanisms to ensure services comply with the obligation to respect child rights'. You can read relevant parts of the FRA annual report [here](#)

PACE adopts a resolution on the inclusion of children's rights in national constitutions

On 22 May, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted a Resolution 2056 (2015) on *'The inclusion of children's rights in national constitutions as an essential component of effective national child policies'*.

The Assembly expressed concerns that Council of Europe Member States (47) have not yet exploited all constitutional, legal and administrative means at their disposal to protect children and promote their development and life chances to the greatest extent possible. The Assembly ruled out that "the incorporation of children's rights into national constitutions can be considered as an essential component of national children's rights policies." Among a number of recommendations, the Assembly also calls upon Member States to provide strong procedural guarantees for the enforcement of children's rights, including setting up an independent human rights institution for children. You can read the full text of the resolution [here](#)

PACE hearing on preventing islamophobia while combating radicalization of young people

The No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the PACE Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development organized a [joint hearing](#) on 23 June 2015 in Strasbourg. "How to prevent young people from turning to extremism and violence without stigmatizing an entire community?" Bernard De Vos, Ombudsperson for Children of French community, Belgium, recommended avoiding presenting Islam as a source of terrorism, combating segregation in schools and ensuring access to work and education for young people from a migrant background. Bernard De Vos was participating in the hearing along with other recognized experts on the phenomenon.

The Council of Europe Audiovisual Observatory's report on "The protection of minors in a converged media environment" IRIS plus

On June 5th the European Audiovisual Observatory (CoE) released the IRIS plus report on *'The protection of minors in a converged media environment'*. The report looks at the protection mechanisms in place across the various content delivery channels. A recent EU Kids Online survey found that children from 9 to 16 spend an average of 88 minutes surfing the internet every day. Even the new YouTube Kids application has recently been found guilty of serious errors as content including swear words and references to drugs, violence and suicide was made available to children through this channel. The full report of the Observatory is available [here](#)

[continues](#)

Updates from ENOC members

- ✓ **Ireland's Ombudsman for Children, Dr. Niall Muldoon** published his report to UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on 22nd May. Among the issues raised in the Ombudsman for Children's report are education, mainstreaming the best interests principle, a child's right to be heard in relevant legislation, homelessness among children, child protection, mental health services for children and direct provision. The report reflects the trend emerging from the complaints made to the office by, or on behalf of, children. It also refers to the advice given by OCO to Government on legislative changes affecting children and the office's direct engagement with children and young people. You can read the full report [here](#)
- ✓ **The Ombudsman's Office of Latvia** recently published the English translation of its annual 2014 report (full version). While the report explores a variety of human rights area in Latvia, the first part of the report is dedicated to children's rights. The report focuses on the right of children in Latvia to grow up in a family environment; ensuring the rights of children to comprehensive development in the conditions of municipal institutional care; on providing municipal support to guardians and foster families; on the rights of children of imprisoned persons to access their parents; and on preventing violence in educational settings. The full report is available [here](#)
- ✓ **The Ombudsman's Office of the Republic of Latvia** received the highest "A" status accreditation by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions Sub-Committee on Accreditation. Compliance with "A" status confers rights to vote, to participate in the work and decision making of the International Coordination Committee, as well as to participate in the work of the UN Human Rights Council and other UN mechanisms. Accreditation by the International Coordination Committee is required to get the highest internationally recognized evaluation of compliance with standards of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). Accreditation also confirms international recognition and protection as a human rights institution that complies with the Paris Principles. In his congratulatory letter the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights strongly underlined that national human rights institutions should be provided with adequate levels of funding in order to guarantee their independence in setting priorities and choosing activities.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **27 July 2015-2 August 2015:** "Children & Adults, Partners for Change?" (CATS 2015), organised by Eurochild and partners, Caux, Switzerland
- ❖ **22-23 September 2015:** ENOC 19th Annual Conference "Violence against Children", Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- ❖ **24 September 2015:** ENOC19th General Assembly meeting, The Hague, Netherlands
- ❖ **27-30 September 2015:** 14th ISPCAN European Regional Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, Bucharest, Romania

If you have any suggestions, or 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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