

Newsletter

ENOC News & Announcements

Feedback from ENOC's 22nd Annual Conference on Child Mental Health

ENOC held its [22nd Annual Conference](#) and General Assembly on **19-21 September 2018 in Paris, France**. Hosted by the office of the [French Children's Defender](#), the Conference addressed "*Children's rights and wellbeing, promoting mental health*". The event brought together some 130 participants such as representatives of ENOC member institutions, high officials from the UN, UNICEF, European Commission, Council of Europe, participants from the non-governmental sector, but also international and France based academics, experts and professionals operating in the child mental health field. Combating child mental health stigma, the rights of children affected by mental health issues, preventive measures for the improvement of child mental health, were among others the main issues under the general theme addressed during the Conference. The Conference also provided space for the voice of young people from nine different ENOC countries/regions who have participated in the [ENYA 2018 project](#) and ENYA Barcelona Forum (June 2018). The young people animated an interactive half day working session to present the ENYA project and the results of their collective work in the form of [common recommendations on child mental health](#). Conference participants also had the chance to pay field visits to different reception settings for children such as a centre for early medico-social intervention, a teenagers' house, a reception centre for unaccompanied minors, and an autism resource centre.

ENOC held its 22nd annual General Assembly meeting on Day 3 of the Conference where ENOC members elected the new Bureau, discussed ENOC business and adopted three [new position statements](#) on *Child Mental Health*, *Intercountry adoption*, and on *the right to education of Children on the Move*. Under the lead of the French Children's Defender, ENOC also released a [synthesis report](#) on *Child and Adolescent Mental Health in Europe* based on contributions provided by 25 ENOC members. After the elections, **Ms. Geneviève Avenard**, Children's Defender, France, took over the chairmanship of ENOC for the coming year while **Ms. Koulla Yasiouma**, Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, has been elected Chair-elect. The other members of the Bureau for the period September 2018-September 2019 are Mr. Tuomas Kurttila (Finland), Mr. Niall Muldoon (Ireland) and Ms. Edita Ziobiene (Lithuania).

ENOC Chair at the CRC Day of General Discussion on "Protecting & Empowering Children as Human Rights Defenders"

On 28 September 2018 in Geneva, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) held its [2018 Day of General Discussion](#) (DGD) devoted to the issue of *protecting and empowering children as human rights defenders*. The purpose of a Day of General Discussion is to foster a deeper understanding of the contents and implications of the Convention as they relate to specific articles or topics. The 2018 DGD was the first ever global discussion focusing on children as human rights defenders. Ms. Geneviève Avenard, ENOC Chair and Children's Defender France, participated in a working group "[State actors II](#)" where she engaged in a dialogue with Foysal, 15, a Human Rights Defender from Bangladesh on the role of Ombudspersons for Children in general and more specifically how ICRI's work to promote the active participation of children in upholding their human rights. A few ENOC members participated in the event together with young people, Human Rights Defenders (HRD), from their countries.

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Last call for participation in ENOC Working Groups 2019

Those ENOC members who would be interested in participating in the activities of either of the ENOC working groups (**1-WG on Children's Digital Rights; 2-WG on ENOC Statutes; 3-WG on detention of migrant families with children**) that will be operating in 2019 are kindly invited to express their interest by mid-November at latest. Those interested in chairing either of the WGs should notify their interest by email to the ENOC Secretariat.

Page not found, neither is Hannah

On 25 September, Missing Children Europe launched the first annual #NotFoundDay. But what is Notfound? The Notfound.org web app converts useless 404 website error pages into posters of missing children. The aim of #NotFoundDay is to encourage website owners and companies to download this smart piece of technology to help find missing children in a very simple way. In Europe, a child is reported missing every 2 minutes. To help find these children and give hope to their families, NotFound lets website owners automatically display the picture/details of missing children on the '404 - not found' pages of their websites. This offers a much wider exposure by reaching out to internet users around the world, who may have useful information that could help find missing children. So far, more than 92 million photos of missing children have been displayed at a rate of more than 42 thousand photos per day. The Notfound web app incorporates geo-localized technology, whereby internet users would only see the details of local missing children cases relevant to their location. [Watch Hannah's video](#) to understand how it works.

DGD children's publication

Child Rights Connect released a new Publication [The views, perspectives and recommendations of children across the world](#). Around 2700 children were consulted across all regions and offered their views on the role that children can and do play as human rights defenders (HRDs), what helps children to act as HRDs, what the barriers are and what risks children face and their recommendations on how to protect and empower children acting as HRDs. The report has been developed by Professor Laura Lundy and Michelle Templeton from the Centre for Children's Rights at Queens University Belfast, with the DGD Children's Advisory Team and support from Dr. Gabriela Martínez Sainz, co-founder of the Centre for Human Rights Studies CEDH Mx in México. It was submitted to the CRC Committee to inform the discussions of the DGD and the Child Advisors shared the main findings of the report during the DGD opening plenary on 28 September 2018 in Geneva.

ENOC at the 5th meeting of the Council of Europe (CoE) Ad Hoc Committee on the Rights of the Child (CAHENF)

The [CAHENF](#) held its [5th meeting](#) in Strasbourg on 16-18 October 2018 to discuss progress made under the current CoE Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) in various priority areas and concerning different ongoing activities aimed at setting new standards and implementing those already adopted. Discussions covered the finalization of the draft guidelines on guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children; the ongoing work towards draft guidelines on age assessment; the implementation of guidelines on children's rights in the digital environment, and others. ENOC holds a permanent observer status at the Committee and as such a representative of the ENOC Chair, Ms. Stéphanie Carrère, presented the outcomes of ENOC's thematic work in 2018 and priority area for 2019 on Day 1. On the last day, the CAHENF held a substantial thematic exchange on children's rights, mental health and child-friendly healthcare. In this context, the ENOC expert advisor for 2018, Mr. Paul Gilligan, and the ENOC Coordinator, Ms. Polina Atanasova, addressed the Committee to present respectively the ENOC position statement and the ENOC report on Child Mental Health in Europe, along with experts from the WHO and the non-governmental sector.

ENOC Chair at Eurochild 2018 Conference

[Eurochild 2018 Conference](#) "*Building a better Europe with children: All aboard!*" held on 29-31 October 2018 in Opatija, Croatia brought positive examples of how public decision-makers at local, national and European levels are respecting the right of children to participate in decisions affecting them. One third of the Conference participants were under 18 years of age. The Conference was co-designed and co-delivered with children who brought their ideas and perspectives to support their engagement in public decision-making. The ENOC Chair, Ms. Geneviève Avenard, participated on behalf of ENOC at the final round of a panel debate where after delivering a short speech she spoke about the commitment she will make with regard to the recommendations of the conference and take them back to relevant country authorities and/or organisations thus addressing the young people's question "How can we make sure that people who are responsible for public-decision making actually reach out to children and can be held to account if they do not take their views seriously?"

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

New Council of Europe (CoE) recommendation on children's rights in the digital environment

Last July, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted a new [Recommendation](#) on how to better respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment. Building on international and European legal instruments, the text provides comprehensive guidelines for action by European governments. Among others, the CoE recommends to its member states to review relevant legislation, policies and practices making them fully compliant with children's rights but also to ensure that the business sector and other key partners meet their human rights responsibilities and are held accountable in case of abuses; to guarantee that children have adequate, affordable and secure access to devices & connectivity but also to adopt specific measures to protect infants from premature exposure to the digital environment; to support children to hold & freely express their views in the digital environment but without hurting the rights and dignity of other users; to adopt specific measures on privacy & data protection; to strengthen digital literacy; to adopt measures to address risks for children in the digital environment; to make available accessible, affordable and child-friendly avenues to submit complaints and seek remedies for children and/or their legal representatives. Read the [full press release](#) and the CoE dedicated page on [children's rights and the digital environment](#).

The Universal Declaration for Human Rights (UDHR) for children and youth

Thirty Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights written in a child-friendly format and illustrated in watercolours are available now in the latest research guide created by the OHCHR Library. [The UDHR for children and youth research guide](#) is a gateway to a multitude of resources on the Declaration. Young audiences can learn about the Declaration's history, read the text adapted for children and a version in plain English language, see illustrations of each Article and refer to a glossary of difficult legal terms. Children learn by playing. There are also suggestions of activities that include games, books, music, and ideas for discussions and reflections. A selection of videos on human rights are also available in English, French, Russian and Chinese, which further facilitate understanding of this important topic among children. The variety of resources may support teachers to prepare lessons on the UDHR, and can help parents to explain human rights to children of different ages. The guide and the available material are to be used for education and awareness raising activities aimed at children and youth.

New UNICEF report “An Everyday Lesson: #ENDviolence in Schools”

Half of students aged 13 to 15 worldwide - around 150 million - have experienced peer-to-peer violence in and around school, according to a [new UNICEF report](#). *An everyday lesson: #ENDviolence in schools* detail the many forms of violence that are a pervasive part of young people’s education around the world. Violence impacts student learning and well-being in rich and poor countries alike. A few facts: globally, slightly more than 1 in 3 students aged 13-15 experience bullying, and roughly the same proportion are involved in physical fights; 3 in 10 students in 39 industrialized countries admit to bullying peers; nearly 720 million school-aged children live in countries where corporal punishment at school is not fully prohibited; while girls and boys are equally at risk of bullying, girls are more likely to become victims of psychological forms of bullying and boys are more at risk of physical violence and threats; victims of cyberbullying are more likely to use alcohol and drugs and skip school than other students.

Updates from ENOC members

- ✓ **Clara Gray**, an ENYA young advisor from Scotland who participated in the ENOC Annual Paris Conference last September, delivered a [personal insight](#) about her experience of participating in [ENYA 2018 edition](#) addressing child mental health, in the ENOC Paris Conference last September and on how she felt about having the extensive space to express her views together with peers from nine other countries/regions from across Europe.
- ✓ The **Children’s Commissioner for Wales** published in early October 2018 her [Annual Report](#) & Accounts 2017/2018 which cover main areas of work undertaken by the Commissioner’s office over the last 12 months to champion and support children and young people across Wales. Among the numerous report highlights, the Commissioner draws attention to how children who have been raped or sexually assaulted face unacceptable waiting times for medical examinations and support. The Commissioner’s main concerns relate to two areas: children who have been raped or sexually assaulted cannot access a forensic medical examination quickly enough after the traumatic event they have experienced, due to shortages of suitably qualified and experienced medical staff, and often have to travel long distances; and access to specialist counselling for children and young people affected by sexual abuse is not available when required in order for those children to begin the road to recovery. Read the [news release](#) accompanying the report.
- ✓ The **Human Rights Defender (HRD) of Armenia** released last June a new ad hoc public report “[Commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its protocols: the state of fulfillment by Armenia](#)”. The assessment [report](#) has been conducted with the close support of UNICEF office in Armenia. The report aims to assess to what extent the Republic of Armenia has implemented and complied with the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and covers the period from 2013 to December 2017, during which the CRC released three concluding observations regarding Armenia. The Human Rights Defender concluded that Armenia failed to fulfil most of the obligations under the UN CRC and its protocols or fulfilled them partially. After summarizing the facts and recommendations presented within the three CRC concluding observations, the HRD provided his assessments and recommendations addressed to relevant public authorities regarding the implementation of each of them.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **18 November 2018:** [End Child Sexual Abuse Day-2018 edition](#) focusing on “*The protection of children against sexual abuse in sport*”, organised by the Council of Europe
- ❖ **26 November 2018:** European Final Conference-Children’s Rights Behind Bars 2.0-“*A participatory path toward reintegration of children in conflict with the law*”, organised by Defence for Children International-Belgium; Venue: European Economic & Social Committee, Brussels
- ❖ **3 December 2018:** ENOC Bureau meeting

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).

NOVEMBER 2018

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European Network of Ombudspersons for Children

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