

Newsletter

ENOC News & Announcements

ENOC Spring Seminar on Equal Opportunities for All Children and Young People in Education

ENOC's working theme for 2016 is dedicated to the issue of providing equal opportunities for all groups of children and young people in education. In this context and in parallel with other activities, ENOC is organizing a working seminar to take place on **7-8 June 2016** in **Dublin, Ireland**. This is in advance of ENOC's 20th Annual Conference on this topic. The seminar's host is the Irish Ombudsman for Children's Office. The purpose of the seminar is to serve as a forum for participating ENOC members to meet and provide input to the draft ENOC statement to be agreed during the ENOC autumn conference. Work on the statement will progress on the basis of a first draft provided by Prof. Xavier Bonal, advisor to ENOC and Professor of Sociology and Education, University of Barcelona. A more detailed seminar program will be available at end of April. ENOC members who wish to register for the seminar are invited to email the ENOC Secretariat.

Update on ENYA 2016 activities

The 1st stage of the ENYA project has already been completed for most of the 6 participating ENOC members (Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Malta and Scotland). During the last two months ENYA country coordinators have organized a series of preparatory meetings with participating children and young people and have already collaborated with the professional filming company on its country visits plan. [Media Education](#), an independent training and engagement provider from Scotland, has been nominated to implement the 2nd phase of the ENYA project running from Mid-April to Mid-June 2016. During this period, two representatives of Media Education will carry out three day long visits to each participating country. These visits will assist the young participants in the creation of a video or other creative material to reflect their views and proposals on the theme of equal opportunities for all children and young people in education. The country visits will be featured on the [website](#) of Media Education as they happen through their vlog.

ENOC at the Council of Europe High-Level Conference launching the new Council of Europe Strategy for the rights of the child

The Council of Europe High-Level Conference "[Reaching the heights for the rights of the child](#)" that took place on 5-6 April 2016 in Sofia, Bulgaria, launched the freshly adopted [Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2016-2021](#). The Conference brought together over 350 participants, 17 high-level government representatives, ombudspersons for children, experts, NGOs, and involved 10 young delegates from across Europe who reported back from each of the 9 thematic sessions. The Conference addressed a large number of issues such as child participation, child-friendly justice, child poverty and inequality, children's rights in the digital environment, non-discrimination of LGBTI young people, child budgeting, etc. Among the highlights: a thematic session on upholding the rights of children on the move in the context of the current refugee crisis in Europe, led by Mr. George Moschos, Deputy Ombudsman for Children's Rights, Greece and supported by Mr. Fredrik Malmberg, Ombudsman for Children, Sweden; and a session on the radicalization of children-finding the rights-based approach, led by

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ENOC 20th Annual Conference & General Assembly

The 20th ENOC Annual Conference on the theme of "*Equal Opportunities for all Children and Young People in Education*" and the 20th ENOC General Assembly meeting will take place on **20-22 September 2016** in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Further information will follow in May 2016.

Current ENOC Bureau

Following the end of term of the ENOC Chair, Mr. Marc Dullaert as Dutch Ombudsman for Children, Ms. Edita Ziobiene, ENOC Chair-elect, took over the ENOC Chairmanship prematurely.

Mr. Bernard De Vos, former member of the Bureau, has been invited to fill in the vacant position in the Bureau until the next elections in September 2016.

UN Human Rights Council Annual Day on the Rights of the Child

The theme of this year's annual day (7.03.2016) on the rights of the child was "Information and communication technology and child sexual exploitation". The annual day explored: the relationship between ICTs and the rights of the child; good practice and lessons learned aimed at promoting regional and international cooperation on the issue; strategies to empower children to make better use of the internet, and to contribute to their online protection; recommendations to guarantee safe and equal access for children to ICTs and to ensure the criminalization of online child abuse and exploitation.

PACE resolution on preventing the radicalization of children and young people by fighting the root causes

On April 19, 2016, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a [resolution](#) based on a report by Sevinj Fataliyeva (Azerbaijan). The parliamentarians said prevention was key to stopping young people being drawn to violent extremism, and should begin "at an early age when values and beliefs are formed". "Prevention, de-radicalisation and rehabilitation strategies must target the individual in his or her specific context, be comprehensive and based on multi-agency local partnership", the parliamentarians said in the adopted text.

Launch of CRIN access to justice report

[Rights, Remedies and Representation: A global report on access to justice for Children](#), analyses the ways that the countries of the world have grappled with this issue. The report also ranks the countries of the world on how they provide access to justice for children and provides a "[Eutopean report](#)" showing how their legal system have realized this right. CRIN has also published a [report for every country on earth](#), setting out the status of the UNCRC in national law; how the law treats children involved in legal proceedings; the legal means available to challenge violation of children's rights; and the practical considerations when challenging violations using the legal system.

Mr. Bernard De Vos, Ombudsperson for Children's Rights, Belgium (French community). Sixteen ENOC members participated in the Conference and made contributions in the different thematic sessions.

[ENOC activities during the Sofia Conference](#): ENOC released a [letter](#) addressed to EU high authorities expressing concern regarding **the safety and protection of the rights of children on the move in Europe**, following the recent EU-Turkey agreement. The [ENOC Task Force on Children on the Move](#) (TFCM) met informally in Sofia and agreed to update the information contained in the 1st report of the TFCM every 6 months, using a simplified questionnaire to be prepared jointly by the Dutch and Swedish Ombudspersons for Children's Offices. The French Ombudsperson for Children proposed to host a one-day meeting in Paris on 28 June 2016 to discuss the latest situation of children on the move in Europe and of unaccompanied minors in Calais (France) and in Greece.

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

Council of Europe Secretary General's communication on protecting children affected by the refugee crisis—a shared responsibility

The Council of Europe's Secretary General (SG) addressed a [document](#) together with a [letter](#) to the 47 Heads of Government suggesting immediate actions to ensure the safety and proper treatment of migrant and asylum-seeking children. Preventing these children from falling victim to violence, abuse exploitation and trafficking; ending their detention and improving age assessment procedures, are among the proposals for priority actions. The SG's Special Representative on Migration and Refugees, Mr. Tomas Boček, will ensure a special focus on migrant and asylum-seeking children, and will be leading fact finding missions to specific areas to provide a better understanding and overview of the current situation. See [here](#) for the Journal video short.

Missing Children Europe's "The fate of missing unaccompanied children" report

At the beginning of March 2016, Missing Children Europe released its [latest report](#) demonstrating that improved training on the prevention and response to child disappearance is needed for those working with the thousands of children arriving in Europe alone. More than 89,000 unaccompanied children arrived in the EU in 2015 which represents a dramatic increase compared to the 23,000 in 2014. According to Europol, 10,000 of these children have disappeared within hours of being registered and only a handful have been found since. However, national reports seem to suggest that the number of missing UAM is much higher, with children going missing even before being registered by authorities. Further information on the report is available [here](#)

European Commission's communication on migration—the protection of children in migration

In February 2016 the EC adopted a [communication](#) (page 15 & 16 references to protecting children) on the state of play of implementation of the priority actions under the European Agenda on Migration. The European Agenda for Migration put a particular emphasis on the need to protect children and to follow up on the Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010-2014). This work is now under way, to employ a comprehensive approach for the protection of children throughout the migration chain. Priority for the vulnerable, and in particular UAM, is also built into the relocation process. Child protection and child safeguarding are planned to be fully integrated into the hotspots. A state of play of short-term and on-going work can be found in [Annex 6](#).

New UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 13

On April 14, 2016 the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre released Card 13, [Fairness for Children: A league table of inequality in child well-being in rich countries](#). The report offers analysis of inequality in 41 high-income countries. It looks at how far children are falling behind in the dimensions of income, education, health, and life satisfaction. Key findings of Report Card 13 include: some of the richest countries in the ranking fall in the bottom third of overall inequality; incomes in households below the median have grown more slowly than those above it, fueling increases in poverty among children; inequality gaps in educational achievement have narrowed, yet inequality in health among children has widened. See [here](#) previous editions of UNICEF Innocenti Report Cards.

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Updates from ENOC members

- ✓The **Children's Commissioner for England**, Ms. Anne Longfield, and the **French Children's Defender**, Ms. Geneviève Avenard, carried out a joint visit to provisional reception centres for refugees in Calais (France) managed by different local NGOs, and met with UNHCR and the French Office for Immigration and Integration on April 1st, 2016. The purpose of the joint visit was to discuss with the different actors operating in the field the situation of lone asylum seeking children stuck at the refugee camp in Calais while potentially eligible for family reunification in the UK. The two Commissioners also expressed serious concerns regarding the large number of unaccompanied children who went missing from the Calais refugee camp since parts of the camp has been dismantled in early March. The two Commissioners urged the French authorities to urgently determine which of the children in the Calais refugee camp are eligible for family reunification in the UK, and for those who are to speed up and simplify the procedure for the reunification with their families in the UK. Some of these children have been waiting for up to nine months before they learn whether they can go to the UK or not, which is considered by the two Children's Commissioners as an extremely unacceptable long wait. See the latest (20.04) [recommendations](#) by the French Children's Defender on the situation of UAM in Calais, and the [hearing](#) (20.04) of the Children's Commissioner for England by the House of Lords EU Home Affairs Sub-Committee on UAM in Calais.
- ✓The **Chancellor of Justice's Office of Estonia** published an [annual summary report for 2014](#) and the [annual summary report for 2015](#) covering the period 1 January-31 August 2015. The two summary reports, available in English, present an overview of the Chancellor of Justice's activities for the prevention of ill-treatment (OPCAT), the protection and promotion of the rights of the child, the Chancellor acting as Ombudsman for Children, and the promotion of equity, equal treatment and general proceeding statistics. In the children's rights field, the Chancellor reported (in 2014) on the situation of children out of family care (separated from parents), on those in alternative care, and on repeated restrictions of the rights of parents in a custodial institution; the report contains conclusions on inspection visits to child care institutions and provides extensive information on child rights promotional activities such as 'Bullying-free school and education'. The 2015 report addresses the issues of restrictions without a legal basis of the liberty of children in rehabilitation and some new recommendations and/or follow-up of previous ones in the organisation of substitute home and shelter services. In the child rights promotion field, the Chancellor reported on the establishment of the 1st [Young Advisory Committee to the Ombudsman for Children](#)
- ✓**Prof. Margrite Kalverboer** was appointed as the new **Dutch Ombudsman for Children** in early April 2016. Ms. Kalverboer will take office on 15 May 2016.
- ✓On March 3rd 2016, **Mr. Juris Jansons**, **Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia**, was re-elected for a second five-year term.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **1-2 June 2016:** High-Level Global Conference "*Towards Childhoods free from Corporal Punishment*", Vienna, Austria
- ❖ **7-8 June 2016:** ENOC working Seminar on "*Equal Opportunities for all children and young people in Education*", Dublin, Ireland
- ❖ **20-23 June 2016:** FRA Fundamental Rights Forum 2016 "*Rights, Respect, Reality: the Europe of Values in Today's World*", Vienna, Austria
- ❖ **28 June 2016:** Thematic Meeting on the current situation of children on the move in Europe, organised by the French Children's Defender's Office, Paris, France
- ❖ **26 July-1 August 2016:** International Conference in the spirit of Janusz Korczak, *CATS-Children as Actors For Transforming Society*, Caux, Switzerland

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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