

ENOC NETWORK OF YOUNG ADVISORS

ENYA

Children's right to be heard and to participate has always been on the domestic agenda of each Ombudsperson for children.

In 2008 ENOC issued a comparative study on the state of play of child participation projects carried out by children's ombudsperson institutions within the European Union and beyond.

In September 2009 during the Annual Conference held in Paris, dedicated on the best interests of the child new dynamics occurred between ENOC members thanks to the participation of young people from Northern Ireland, Ireland, and France.

Thus, ENOC set up the...

...**ENOC Network of Young Advisors: ENYA**

The general objective

The purpose of the ENYA project is to actively involve children and young people in ENOC's annual work and to give them an opportunity to be heard at a level that exceeds their national countries, at European level. Children and Young people, as holders of rights and experts of their own lives and the environment they grow up will be enabled to take part in the ENOC activities in order to share their experience, to give Ombudspersons for children a clear idea on what matters concern them and on how concretely ensure the protection and the promotion of their rights as enshrined in the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The specific objective

The specific objective of ENYA is to ensure a meaningful and effective participation of young people, by giving them a say on selected topics. They will have the opportunity to express their concerns and points of views regarding their rights, to make their proposals heard, and to participate in drawing up common recommendations.

The key actors

A majority of ENOC member institutions have created and further developed Youth Advisory Panels, Consultative Committees or other similar structures composed by children/young people. These youth bodies, acting in an advisory capacity to the Ombudsperson for children, are integrated in the general structure of Ombudsperson for children offices and have an overall understanding of their functions, activities, and challenges they face. Therefore, it was widely shared and accepted to get these young people involved in a project aiming to develop child participation in the common activities of Ombudspersons for children.

Participation officers within national offices have accepted to act as "ENYA Coordinators" in order to liaise between ENYA's operational team on one side and their youth panel members on the other. They are also encouraging their youth advisors to take an active part in the topic discussions on the

ENYA Forum. Finally, some of them act as moderators on the electronic forum to keep the debates lively and to help young people build up consistent comments and proposals.

The main steps

Different steps have been followed to get ENYA set up and functioning.

- **Launching of the Electronic forum**

On 7th April 2010 ENOC launched the ENYA electronic forum. This “virtual network” is directly connected to the French Ombudsperson for children website due to technical difficulties encountered to link the ENYA electronic forum with the ENOC website.

ENYA forum is composed of main 3 parts:

- A discussion part exclusively dedicated to young people’s discussions. They can post their comments, share and compare their national and own experience with young people from other European countries within ENOC and make proposals.

For the year 2010, 4 topics related to children’s rights have been selected to be discussed:

- Education
- Privacy and the risks linked to the use of new technologies
- Health
- Violence

Aside from these topics, coordinators suggested the creation of a miscellaneous part. Thus, young people have the opportunity to present themselves in more details and to suggest issues related or not with their rights which are according to them of important concern.

- A discussion part open to the Coordinators. This part provides them with an opportunity to exchange on their practices as national coordinators but also as ENYA moderators. Thus, they have the possibility to share their opinions and to make proposals to improve and innovate ENYA’s functioning.
- A general information rubric concerning the functioning, the competencies and the activities of each existing youth panel or consultative committee within the Ombudspersons for children offices. A regular update of the domestic activities of each panel will be provided by the coordinators.

In order to guarantee to ENYA a continuity and thus to turn this project into a long term collaboration between young people and ombudspersons within the ENOC framework, ENYA guidelines will be drawn up very soon.

- **The ENYA Coordinators’ meetings**

The Coordinators are the pillars of ENYA. They have the relevant experience to identify the main elements participating in the design of children and young people’s participation projects and the difficulties and challenges linked to.

Thus, in the course of 2010, the organization of two preparatory meetings has been planned. The first one, organized on 26 and 27th February in Paris, focused on the terms and details of the electronic forum. The second meeting will be held on 4th and 5th June in Malta and will aim to review ENYA’s functioning since its launching and to define and prepare young people’s involvement in the ENOC Annual Conference.

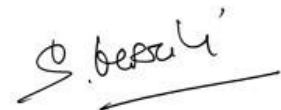
- **ENOC Annual conference**

The theme of the Annual Conference to be held on 7, 8 and 9th October 2010 in Strasbourg, will be dedicated to “*Listening to children and involving them in the promotion and implementation of their rights*”.

The 2010 Annual Conference will provide a unique opportunity to develop the possibility for young people from all across Europe to be involved in ENOC’s activities by being physically present at the ENOC Annual Conference, by organizing their own session and by submitting their proposals on the 4 topics previously discussed on the ENYA electronic forum.

It is expected that at least 30 young people (up to 45), 2-3 from each participating national Youth Panel, and their Coordinators, take part at the Annual Conference in a parallel meeting to this of ENOC members. Similarly to the Youth and Coordinators meeting, ombudspersons’ working groups will be organized on the same proposed topics. To prepare the terms of these thematic workshops, it is expected that in the course of 2010 ENOC member institutions work via electronic tool in working groups while each working group will be led by a ENOC bureau member who will ensure the coordination work. Then, a common meeting will be organized and will aim to build up shared statements on the topics.

I sincerely hope that ENOC and its member institutions will fully take advantage of this opportunity to integrate children and young people in ENOC’s activities as a long term aspiration, to make their voice heard at a higher level and to give adults including stakeholders a chance to improve in the best possible way the implementation and the respect of the International Convention on the rights of the child.



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