

Newsletter

ENOC Business: news & announcements

Upcoming: ENOC 16th Annual Conference & General Assembly meeting

The 16th ENOC Annual Conference & General Assembly meeting will take place on **10, 11 and 12 October, 2012** in Nicosia, Cyprus. The 2012 ENOC Conference will be dedicated to the theme of **“Juvenile Delinquency- Child Friendly Justice Structures and Processes for Prevention and Intervention”**. While a detailed programme is still under consideration, Day 1 will relate to general issues, including keynote speeches and working groups’ and members’ reports; Day 2 will concentrate to the Conference theme and will include 2 workshops on prevention and intervention, respectively. The General Assembly meeting will take place in the morning of Day 3. The host institution, the Office of Cyprus’ Commissioner for Children’s Rights is keen to set up a social programme, including the afternoon of Day 3. Further details on the Conference programme and practicalities will be circulated in early March. (Please check regularly www.ombudsnet.org “Annual meetings”)

WWW.OMBUDSNET.ORG re-looked

The ENOC website changed look and a new and separate **“ENOC News”** page is now set up for more visibility and easy access to information related to ENOC activities. Another page dedicated to ENYA is under construction. The full pack of the Warsaw Annual 2011 Conference (updates, presentations, list of participants, and conference report) <http://crin.org/enoc/meetings/index.asp> and the ENOC report on the respect of the rights of children in institutional care are now made available under <http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infodetail.asp?id=27290>

Call for expression (reiteration) of interest to participate in ENYA

The ENYA e-forum has now been re-activated and as it has been previously agreed at the last GA, ENOC will continue consulting young people on issues that have been set up as priority subjects by the Network. In 2012, the ENYA young advisors will have the opportunity to exchange via the e-forum on the issues of juvenile delinquency and on the respect of the rights of children in institutional care. In this context, a detailed “Guidelines” paper concerning the process of recruitment, participation, coordination and moderation but also establishing a clear guidance for ENYA Coordinators is under preparation by the ENYA Ombuds Coordinator (Patricia Lewsley) and will be circulated shortly to those ENOC members who reiterate or express their interest to take part in the 2012 ENYA activities.

Update on European & International Activities in the Children’s rights field

UN adopted complaints mechanism for children

On December 19th, 2011 the UN General Assembly adopted a new Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) establishing a complaints procedure for violations of children’s rights. The new treaty would allow children, or their representatives, claiming that their rights have been violated to bring a complaint to an international committee of children’s rights experts if they have not been able to get remedies for these violations in their countries. In order for a complaint to be reviewed, a State must have accepted the procedure. The protocol will be open for signature on 28 February 2012 at a signing ceremony to be held in Geneva, Switzerland



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REMINDERS

Those ENOC members that have not paid yet their membership fee for 2012 are kindly requested to proceed to the payment at their earliest convenience.

- *For the efficient sharing of information through the ENOC website, all ENOC members are kindly reminded that they all have been provided in the past with their own **username/password combination** and can update/upload themselves information related to activities from their home countries. If you need further instructions on how to proceed, please contact Polina.*
- *Concerning participation in ENYA, please do send your interests to Polina asap. Be kindly informed that the ENYA Guidelines will contain new rules for participation of young people but will also make sure to improve coordination and guidance for ENYA Coordinators.*

“An independent voice for children’s rights in Europe? The role of ICRIs in the EU”

In the November edition of the **International Journal of Children’s rights** (Volume 19, n°3), the three university professors *Nigel Thomas, Brian Gran and Karl Hanson* published an article that attempts to understand the distinctive role of IHCRIs (Independent Human Children’s Rights Institutions) in Europe. The article draws on observations of the annual conference of ENOC in 2010, and on interviews with members of ENOC. The article follows this with a discussion of how IHCRIs may be understood as operating at the interface of regional, national, European and global mechanisms, and concludes with a review of current issues & some questions for future research.

CRIN: defending children’s rights defenders and recognizing children as human rights defenders

In its editorial on the Human Rights Day 2011 (10 December 2011) CRIN emphasizes the need to defend children’s rights defenders as well as to recognize the children as human rights defenders themselves: ‘The role of children’s rights defenders depends on the freedom to speak out—a freedom that serves as a litmus test for other freedoms in society. We believe that civil society, grass roots activists and children all have the right to participate and express themselves freely and openly in all matters affecting them.

To read CRIN’s whole Human Rights Day 2011 editorial http://www.crin.org/email/crin_mail_detail_popup.asp?crinmailID=3999

and then at the UN Headquarters. The Protocol shall be open for signature by any State that has signed, ratified, or acceded to the CRC or either of the two OP (OP on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the involvement of children in armed conflict) <http://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/2011/12/20111219%2003-15%20PM/CTC%204-11d.pdf>

Third Annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children

The 3rd Annual report of the SRS on Violence against Children has been recently made available (January-February 2012). The report reviews key developments and initiatives, and identifies priority areas to which the Special representative will devote special attention to accelerate progress in children’s protection from all forms of violence. The report will be submitted to the Human Rights Council, in its upcoming session in March 2012. For the full text of the report http://srs.violenceagainstchildren.org/story/2012-02-08_428

Council of the EU conclusions on combating sexual exploitation of children and child pornography in the internet

Last December, the Justice and Home Affairs Council adopted conclusions on combating sexual exploitation of children and child pornography in the internet—strengthening the effectiveness of police activities in Member States and third countries. The Council reminded Member States that they have to put in place national measures to comply with the new Directive on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography. Member States should also take measures for signature and ratification of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, and the CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. For Council conclusions click here: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/126872.pdf

European Parliament resolution on tackling early school leaving

One in six young people now leave formal education without the necessary competences and qualifications to enter the labour market successfully. Early School Leaving (ESL) is one of the biggest challenges facing Europe, and the European Union set the ambitious target of reducing early school leaving by 10% by 2020. In this framework, the European Parliament voted on 1st December 2011 on a report to tackle the issue of Early School Leaving. “*Early school leavers have fewer qualifications and therefore, fewer job options. Most are resigned to low-paid, unsecured work. For this reason, ESL has become a notable predictor of poverty,*” stressed MEP Sean Kelly, EPP Shadow Rapporteur of the Tackling Early School Leaving report. For the full text of the resolution <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2011-0531&language=EN&ring=A7-2011-0363>

Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2012-2015 adopted

On February 15th, the CoE Committee of Ministers adopted the new *Council of Europe Strategy for the rights of the child for 2012-2015*. With the key aim of implementing Council of Europe standards, the strategy focuses on four strategic objectives:

1. **promoting child-friendly services and systems** (in the areas of justice, health and social services);
2. **eliminating all forms of violence against children** (including sexual violence, trafficking, corporal punishment and violence in schools);
3. **guaranteeing the rights of children in vulnerable situations** (such as those with disabilities, in detention, in alternative care, migrant or Roma children);
4. **promoting child participation.**

For the full text of the strategy: www.coe.int/children

New Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights elected

On January 24th, 2012, Nils Muižnieks (Latvia) was elected third Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Mr Muižnieks succeeds to Thomas Hammarberg for a non renewable term of six years starting on 1 April 2012. For more information concerning the new Commissioner’s mandate starting on 1 April 2012, his professional background, the election voting results and to view an interview, please consult http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/NewsManager/EMB_NewsManagerView.asp?ID=7343&L=2

CPT periodic visits for 2012 scheduled

In 2012, as part of its programme of periodic visits, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) intends to examine the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty in the following ten countries: [Croatia](#), [Estonia](#), [Iceland](#), [Italy](#), [Lithuania](#), [Monaco](#), [Portugal](#), [Russian Federation](#), [Slovenia](#) and [United Kingdom](#).

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

The CPT will also organise ad hoc visits whenever it considers this is required by the circumstances.

Updates from ENOC members

- ✓ NICCY's (Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People) **submission to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child** for the General Comment on the right of the child to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health (6 January, 2012). To see the document <http://www.niccy.org/article.aspx?menuid=13475>
- ✓ **"Landing in Dover"**, a report issued by the **Children's Commissioner for England** on the treatment of unaccompanied asylum seeking children in the framework of the "Gentleman's agreement" between the UK and France. To see the report: <http://crin.org/enoc/resources/infoDetail.asp?id=27188>
- ✓ A number of ENOC member institutions (Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, etc.) marked through different initiatives and events the **"Safer Internet Day"** (7 February, 2012) with the topic **'connecting generations'** using this year's slogan "discover the digital world together...safely"...
- ✓ **"Giving young people a say. Minors, not properly accompanied."** (Mineurs mal accompagnés. Donner la parole aux jeunes), a report issued by the **Ombudsperson for Children of the French community in Belgium**, based on consultations with young people subject to « accompanying » measures. <http://crin.org/enoc/resources/publications/>

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **28 February 2012:** International symposium organized by the Centre for Parliamentary Studies on "Raising awareness of children as hidden victims of domestic violence and abuse in Europe", Brussels, Belgium
- ❖ **28 February 2012:** signing ceremony of the new OP to the CRC providing a communications procedure, UN Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland
- ❖ **18-21 March 2012:** EU Danish Presidency's Conference on Youth, Soro, Denmark

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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