

Newsletter



ENOC News & Announcements

ENOC reacts strongly to repeated human tragedies in the Mediterranean

ENOC has released an open letter calling on all responsible National, European and International authorities to take immediate action to stop repeated human tragedies in the Mediterranean. The letter was released on 23 April - the day when the European Council held a special meeting on the issue - at the initiative of Malta's Commissioner for Children. ENOC remains particularly concerned by the situation of migrant children and their families who continue to perish in mass tragedies unfolding in the Mediterranean. In the letter, ENOC reminds authorities that all children - including "children on the move" - are entitled to the right to life, survival, development and to protection from any form of harm. This is not a passive right, and National Governments, the EU and the International Community have the legal and moral obligation to guarantee that all children, in all circumstances, enjoy it. The full text of the open letter is available [here](#).

Council of Europe/ENOC exhibition "Austerity Bites: Children's Voices"

The Council of Europe Children's Rights Division is launching the ENOC "Austerity Bites: Children's Voices" exhibition on 12 May. The exhibition is made up of 32 videos creatively representing the impact austerity measures have had on the lives of children and the realisation of their rights in countries across Europe. The launch will take place in the Council of Europe "Agora" Building before the exhibition is moved to the Council of Europe "Palais de l'Europe" main building, where it will run until end of June 2015. The ENOC Chair, Tam Baillie, will be participating at the launch event. The exhibition will be opened by Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe. A special page dedicated to the exhibition has been created on the Council of Europe website, and is available [here](#).

ENOC Chair-elect at the UN annual meeting on the Rights of the Child

ENOC Chair-elect Marc Dullaert participated in the Human Rights Council 2015 Annual Day on the rights of the child on 12 March 2015. This year's focus of the one day session was "Towards Better Investment in the Rights of the Child. The need for a child based approach". In his address to the Human Rights Council, Mr. Dullaert reminded the Council of the recent ENOC statement on '[Children and Austerity](#)'. He regretted that the competent European Institutions and the International Monetary Fund failed to conduct impact assessments on their economic policies, despite the fact that one in five children in Europe are now at risk of poverty, which impacts their access to food, education, health and other areas. The Human Rights Council closed the session with the adoption of a resolution on investment in children, "Towards Better Investment in the Rights of the Child", available [here](#).

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ENOC 19th Annual Conference and General Assembly

The 19th ENOC Annual Conference and General Assembly meeting will take place on **22-24 September 2015** in Amsterdam (in De Rode Hoed) and The Hague. The conference theme is "Violence against Children". Registration for the conference will start in June when the full information pack will be circulated.

ENOC website information

All ENOC members are kindly invited to update their website pages with the new ENOC website: www.enoc.eu.

Council of Europe calls for good practices on positive and non-violent parenting

In the context of Council of Europe's (CoE) continuous "zero tolerance of violence towards children" campaign, and in a joint effort to support the elimination of corporal punishment and all forms of violence against children, the CoE and the European Commission aim to develop a set of educational and awareness raising tools promoting non-violent parenting. The objective is to develop a set of existing tools that educate the public, including parents and carers, on: the benefits of positive, non-violent child-rearing and caring; the dangers of violent punishment; and children's rights to legal and other protection from all violent punishment. If you wish to report on inspiring good practices from your country, please read the instructions [here](#) and respond no later than **22 May 2015**.

UNICEF Innocenti Family and Parenting Support: Policy and Provision in a Global Context

Families, parents and caregivers play a central role in child wellbeing and development. They offer identity, love, care, provision and protection to children and adolescents, as well as economic security and stability. In keeping with the spirit of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, family and parenting support is increasingly recognised as an important part of national social policies and social investment packages aimed at reducing poverty, decreasing inequality and promoting positive parental and child wellbeing. This report seeks to develop a research agenda on family support and parenting support globally. Read the full report [here](#).

Children and Research at Innocenti: 25 Years of UNICEF Commitment

To mark 25 years of the Innocenti Research Centre, this [publication](#) offers a brief history of the Florentine Ospedale, where the UNICEF Office of Research is based. With contributions from former directors and staff members, the publication gives an overview of successes and opportunities and looks towards the future.

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

Training material on implementing the European Commission's Investing in Children Recommendation

Material delivered during training sessions organised by the European Commission and designed for national administrators who are working on developing implementation strategies for the Investing in Children Recommendation has recently been made available online. The training material pulls together information provided during country seminars in the language of the host country and/or in English. A special document related to available EU funding and tools for investing in children can also be found online, together with seminar reports and position papers. Full information is available [here](#).

European Parliament adopts a resolution on child sexual abuse on the internet

On 11 March the European Parliament adopted a resolution calling on the European Commission and Member States for further efforts to investigate online child sexual abuse, prosecute offenders, protect child victims and remove illegal online content. The resolution calls for the full implementation by all EU Member States of the 2011 Directive on combating the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children and child pornography, which less than half of EU Member States have already implemented. Read Parliament's resolution [here](#).

FRA launched a report on child-friendly justice during live radio debate

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) launched its latest report, "*Child-friendly justice, perspectives and experiences of professionals*", on 5 May in Brussels during two radio debates with members of the European Parliament. Citizens all across the EU were invited to discuss the experiences of children involved in judicial proceedings with MEPs and FRA experts. During the debate, FRA drew on the findings from its research into the participation of child victims or witnesses in criminal and civil judicial proceedings in 10 EU Member States. The report and related information are available [here](#).

PACE adopts a resolution on social services: legislation & practices of removal of children from their families

On 22 April, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted a Resolution 2049 (2015) on "*Social services in Europe: legislation and practices of the removal of children from their families in Council of Europe Member States*". A special [report](#) on the issue has been previously released by a parliamentarian-rapporteur calling on competent Council of Europe bodies to develop policy guidelines for Member States on how to avoid practices deemed abusive in this context. These include severing family ties completely (except in exceptional circumstances), removing children from parental care at birth, basing placement decisions on the effluxion of time and having recourse to adoptions without parental consent. You can read the full text of the resolution [here](#).

PACE launched campaign to end immigration detention of children

On 20 April, PACE President Anne Brasseur launched a parliamentary campaign to end the detention of migrant children. This is part of a global campaign launched during the 19th session of the UN Human Rights Council in 2012. The launch event included a "living library" on the detention of migrant children with the participation of former detainees, parents of children who have been detained and a number of other experts who presented alternatives to detention. Further information is available [here](#).

"2014 was a bad year for human rights in Europe" – CoE Commissioner for Human Rights

The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Nils Muižnieks, presented his annual activity report for 2014 at the spring session of PACE. Stating that 2014 was one of the worst years for human rights in Europe, the Commissioner reported on massive human and children's rights violations in a number of Council of Europe Member States. He also referenced the situation of migrants in the Mediterranean and to the conflict in Ukraine. The report contains a special section related to the protection of children's rights and a section on cooperation with National Human Rights Institutions. The full text of the report is available [here](#).

PICUM published new report on undocumented children

In March 2015, the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) published a report on *“Protecting undocumented children: Promising policies and practices from governments”*. The report provides examples of governments’ promising practices in the areas of education, healthcare, protection from violence and non-detention, and highlights several promising laws, policies, practice and tools at EU level. The report also seeks to disseminate such policies, and to support governments and stakeholders working with them to enact positive reforms to promote the wellbeing and development of every child in the European Union. To read the full report, click [here](#).

Updates from ENOC members

- ✓ **The General Delegate for the Rights of the Child of the French community in Belgium** published his annual 2013-2014 report of activities. Mr. Bernard De Vos presented the report before 170 pupils from primary schools within Wallonia and Brussels. Pupils had the chance to discuss and interact with the General Delegate through an interactive game called *“Guess my rights”*. Inspired by the competition *“Selfie your rights”* launched last year by the General Delegate, children tried to guess a CRC right that has been illustrated by a selfie shown on a screen. The full text of the report is available in French [here](#).
- ✓ **The outgoing Children’s Commissioner for Wales, Keith Towler**, published *“Our progress 2008-2015”* report. The purpose of the report is to highlight some key milestones and achievements of the last seven years. Contained within it are sections on the Children’s Commissioner’s team, structure, visions, goals, work and future. The report gives readers a good insight into the workings of this independent children’s rights institution for children and young people in Wales.
- ✓ In June 2014 the Parliament of Cyprus enacted the Law for the Prevention and Combating of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography, paving the way for the ratification of the Lanzarote Convention in February 2015. The **Cyprus Commissioner for Children’s Rights** published a position paper aimed at promoting the implementation of the new law in December 2014. The position paper evaluates the existing framework in Cyprus on the basis of monitoring the cases the Commissioner had investigated regarding the prevention, reporting, investigation and trial of child sexual abuse cases. The position paper also contains the Commissioner’s recommendations to remedy the shortcomings of the existing system.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **12-13 May 2015:** Committee of Experts on the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2nd meeting, Strasbourg
- ❖ **12 May 2015:** Council of Europe launch of the ENOC exhibition *“Austerity Bites: Children’s Voices”*, Council of Europe “Agora” building
- ❖ **28 May 2015:** International Conference on *“Protection of students, teachers and schools during armed conflicts”*, Oslo, Norway
- ❖ **2-3 June 2015:** European Conference on *“None of Europe’s Children should be stateless”*, organised by the European Network on Statelessness, Budapest, Hungary
- ❖ **3-4 June 2015:** 9th EU Forum on the Rights of the Child, Brussels
- ❖ **11-13 June 2015:** International Congress *“Children and the Law”*, University Fernando Pessoa, Porto, Portugal
- ❖ **18-19 June 2015:** 5th Cross Regional Table for advancing the protection of children from violence, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

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

Council of Europe
 “Agora” Building
 Office n°B5 07V
 67075 Strasbourg Cedex
 Tel. +33 3 90 21 54 88
 E-mail:
secretariat@ombudsnet.org

Find us on the Web:
www.enoc.eu

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