

# Newsletter



## ENOC News & Announcements

### ENOC working Spring Seminar on “Relationship and sexuality education: implementing the right of children to be informed”

The ENOC working Seminar on *Relationship and Sexuality Education* took place on 15 May 2017 in Sofia, Bulgaria. The Seminar was kindly hosted by the Bulgarian Ombudsman’s Office. Twenty-two participants from twelve ENOC member institutions took part and provided an important input to the seminar theme. A representative of the Finnish Ombudsman for Children’s Office led the discussions and provided extensive background information on the subject. Following up on the Seminar, the Finnish Ombudsman for Children’s Office supported by the ENOC Bureau agreed to make a tentative first draft of the future ENOC statement on the same theme. If ENOC members other than those who participated in the Sofia Seminar are interested to contribute and support the drafting committee, they are kindly invited to notify their interest to the [ENOC Secretariat](#).

### ENOC Capacity-Building Seminar for Independent Children’s Rights Institutions

A joint ENOC-UNICEF one day capacity-building Seminar for Independent Children’s (ICRIs) and Human Rights Institutions in Europe and Central Asia took place on 16 May 2017 in Sofia, Bulgaria. The joint Seminar aimed at providing assistance to newly established or newly appointed Ombudspersons for Children or similar institutions through an exchange of information and experience by ENOC members to new ENOC members or external organisations to ENOC. The Seminar was moderated by Ms. Vanessa Sedletzki, independent children’s rights expert, who also introduced the main criteria and challenges for the establishment of ICRIs in Europe and beyond. Forty participants, including representatives of Ombudsman Institutions from Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, etc.) but also from Kosovo and Turkey, took part in the Seminar. The event was supported by UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia and UNICEF Bulgaria, and kindly hosted by the Bulgarian Ombudsman’s Office. You can find more information [here](#).

### ENYA 2017 Forum

The ENYA (European Network of Young Advisors) 2017 Forum, concluding event of ENOC’s 2017 “*The Road to RIO-RESPECT, INFORMATION, OPINION: Exploring and empowering youth identity and relationships*” children and young people participation project will take place on 29-30 June 2017 in Paris, France. Twenty-two young people from eleven ENOC member countries, accompanied by ENYA Coordinators and supported by Ombudspersons for Children from Catalonia, Greece, France, Finland and Scotland will participate in the two days forum. Participating young people will have a chance to discuss the implementation and share their experience of participating in the project in their own country. An interactive session between young people and Ombudspersons for Children will take place on Day 2 of the Forum before young people work on collective recommendations on relationship and sexuality education. This will then be presented by two young delegates selected by their peers at ENOC’s 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference, September 2017 in Helsinki, Finland. The ENYA Forum is organised with the kind support of the Office of the French Children’s Rights Defender.

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### ENOC 2017 Annual Conference & General Assembly

All ENOC members and invited observers are kindly invited to register for the ENOC 2017 Annual Conference by **30 July 2017**.

Registration is made online via the link sent by email to all invitees.

If you have any questions on the draft Conference programme or on practical issues, please contact the ENOC Secretariat or the Conference host (the Finnish Ombudsman for Children’s Office).

## **A Child is a Child: Protecting children on the move from violence, abuse and exploitation (#ChildrenUprooted)**

Ahead of the G7 Summit held in Sicily last May, UNICEF released a new [report](#) providing a global snapshot of refugee and migrant children, the motivations behind their journeys and the risks they face along the way. Key findings of the report include: 170,000 unaccompanied children applied for asylum in Europe in 2015-2016; UAM and separated children accounted for 92 percent of all children arriving to Italy by sea in 2016 and the first months of 2017; the share of children among asylum seekers in Europe increased from one in five in 2008 to one in three in 2016; children account for approximately 28 percent of trafficking victims globally; 90,000 UAM and separated children were displaced internally and across borders in the horn of Africa in 2015; as much as 20 per cent of smugglers have links to human trafficking networks. UNICEF has called on G7 world leaders to adopt a [six-point agenda](#) to keep children on the move safe from exploitation, abuse and death.

## **UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 14-released**

[Building the Future: Children and Sustainable Development Goals in Rich Countries](#) is the latest in the [Innocenti Report Card series](#), which analyses inequality in 41 high-income countries. It looks at how far children are falling behind in the areas of income, education, health and life satisfaction. Other key findings include: an average of 1 in 8 children in high-income countries face food insecurity, rising to 1 in 5 in the UK and the US; 1 in 4 adolescents report two or more mental health issues more than once a week; 20 per cent of 15-year-olds do not reach minimum proficiency levels in reading, mathematics and science; 14 per cent of adults surveyed in 17 rich countries believe that boys deserve preference for university education.

## **Missing children in Europe: Children running away from difficult home situations on the rise**

On the occasion of International Missing Children's Day, Missing Children Europe has launched its new [Figure and Trends on missing children report](#) for 2016. The report features the evolution and trends on missing children cases in Europe handled by hotlines for missing children and Cross-Borders Family Mediators' Network. In 2016, children running away or thrown out of home made up 57% of the missing children cases reported to hotlines, consistently making up the largest group of missing children. Parental abductions made up the second largest group at 23% of cases.

## **The ENOC Chair at a high-level FRA event on "Improving child participation in justice and beyond"**

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) organised a high-level event on "[Improving child participation in justice and beyond](#)" on 28 April 2017 in Vienna, Austria. The event drew on the agency's [research](#) in this area, highlighting areas of improvement and promising practices. Experts and children took part in the event and the children underlined why change is needed when they recounted their experiences of being scared, frustrated, ignored, or belittled in judicial proceedings. Ms. Edita Žiobienė, ENOC Chair and Ombudsperson for Children's Rights, Lithuania, participated in the meeting on behalf of ENOC, and provided input in the session dedicated to child participation and particularly child participation in events. See [here](#) more information on the event.

## **ENOC at the high level meeting on "Europe's challenge to ensure a rights perspective for children in migration"**

The Ombudsman for Children of Sweden together with the Swedish Parliament and the Children's Welfare Foundation Sweden organised in Stockholm, Sweden [a high-level meeting](#), on 24 April 2017, on "[Europe's challenge to ensure a rights perspective for children in migration](#)". A number of European child rights experts, government agencies, child rights organisations and ENOC members participated in the event. On the same occasion, an ENOC [statement](#) urging the European institutions and the EU member states to ensure a child rights perspective in the development of the new Common European Asylum System (CEAS) was adopted.

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

### **EC Communication on the Protection of children in migration**

On 12 April 2017, the European Commission adopted a [Communication](#) outlining priority actions aimed at protecting all children in migration. The growing number of children in migration, often without families, who have arrived in recent years in the EU have challenged national protection systems and exposed gaps and shortcomings. Drawing on expertise from all relevant policy areas, the EC is proposing a number of priority areas for Member States to focus on, supported by the Commission and EU agencies, to improve the protection of children in migration and ensure a close link between the asylum and child protection services. Those include: swift identification and protection upon arrival; adequate reception conditions for children; swift status determination and effective guardianship; durable solutions and early integration measures; addressing root causes and protecting children along migrant routes outside the EU. More information, [here](#).

### **Council of Europe Action Plan on protecting refugee and migrant children (2017-2019) adopted**

On 19 May 2017, the Committee of Ministers adopted the [Council of Europe Action Plan on protecting refugee and migrant children](#) (2017-2019). Coordinated by the [Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration and Refugees](#), the Action Plan focuses on ensuring access to rights and child-friendly procedures; providing effective protection; and enhancing the integration of children in host societies. The Council of Europe Children's Rights Division will be involved in a number of activities foreseen in the Action Plan such as the development of new guidelines for age assessment and guardianship, a handbook on promoting child-friendly information, and training on child-friendly procedures. The Action Plan takes into account complementarity and co-operation with the European Union and other key partners.

### **Children deprived of their liberty as a result of immigration procedures**

The Council of Europe Children's Rights Division, as part of the joint project with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to [end immigration detention of children](#), organised a [pilot training seminar](#) on monitoring places where children are deprived of their liberty as a result of immigration procedures. The seminar took place in Strasbourg on the 11-12 April 2017. Participants (including Ombudspersons for Children) were provided with information regarding the reality of immigration detention of children and the applicable human rights and legal standards, with the key aim of giving participants a child-safe and effective methodology on how to visit a Detention Centre, or other places where a child may have been deprived of their liberty. In the summer of 2017, the pilot training seminar will be followed by the publication of a practical guide for parliamentarians on monitoring places where children are deprived of their liberty, and a training seminar in the second half of the year.

### **Council of Europe Compasito Manual on Human Rights Education for Children undergoing an upgrade**

To honor the 10th anniversary of the launch of the [COMPASITO - Manual on Human Rights Education for Children](#), the Council of Europe has undertaken to update it and make it fit for the next 10 years. As user experience and feedback are particularly valuable in the updating procedure, an [online survey](#) has been created to collect information from the manual users. The survey will be open until 30 June 2017.

## Updates from ENOC members

- ✓The Children's Commissioner for Wales published a guide "[The Right Way: A Children's Rights Approach in Wales](#)" in May 2017. The guide contains advice to public bodies on adopting a Children's Rights Approach. It provides a principled and practical framework for working with children, grounded in the UNCRC, to help public bodies integrate children's rights into every aspect of decision-making, policy and practice. The guide was created with expert advice from the Wales Observatory on Human Rights of Children and Young People to encourage public services across the country to commit to the UNCRC and to improve how they plan and deliver their services. For more information, you can visit the [web page](#) here.
- ✓The Deputy Ombudsman for Children's Rights, Greece released a special report on the situation of refugee and migrant children in Greece, in early April 2017. The report is based on the findings of the Ombudsman's monitoring mechanism, which is supported by UNICEF. It is the first six-monthly actions review of the Independent Authority's mechanism for monitoring the situation of children on the move, supported by UNICEF. Under this mechanism, at the initiative of the Ombudsman, a Network for the Rights of Children on the move has been established, involving three international intergovernmental organisations (UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM) and 15 non-governmental organisations providing services for refugee and migrant children at a PanHellenic level. An English [executive summary](#) of the report and a UNICEF [press release](#) are already available. The full report will be available in English soon.
- ✓Bruce Adamson is the new Children and Young People Commissioner in Scotland. He took up office on 18 May 2017 succeeding Tam Baillie, the previous Commissioner whose six-year term came to an end. Read [here](#) to learn more about Bruce's professional background and role as Commissioner.
- ✓The People's Advocate (Ombudsman) of Moldova which the Ombudsman for Children is part of, has seen its status and independent statutory role enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova by an amendment of the Constitution which entered into force on 19 May 2017. The new provisions of the Constitution provide for specific constitutional guarantees for the election, status, mandate and powers of the People's Advocate giving the Ombudsman's institution a solid legislative foundation and contributes to increasing its independence and autonomy vis-à-vis any public authority.

## Upcoming Events

- ❖ **28 June 2017:** High level Symposium "2007-2017: Is Europe doing enough to protect fundamental rights?-the children perspective-" organised by FRA and the Maltese Presidency of the EU Council, Brussels, Belgium
- ❖ **29-30 June 2017:** ENYA 2017 Forum, concluding event of "The Road to RIO-Respect, Information, Opinion: Exploring and empowering youth identity and relationships" 2017 ENOC child participation project, Paris, France
- ❖ **6-7 July 2017:** Expert meeting on "Advancing the Defence Rights of Children", organised by the International Juvenile Justice Observatory, London, UK
- ❖ **19-20 September 2017:** ENOC 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference "Relationship and sexuality education: implementing the right of children to be informed", Helsinki, Finland
- ❖ **21 September 2017:** ENOC 21<sup>st</sup> General Assembly meeting, Helsinki, Finland

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](mailto:secretariat@ombudsnet.org) (Re: ENOC Newsletter).

### JUNE 2017

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### AUGUST 2017

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