

Newsletter



ENOC Bureau recent activities

The ENOC Bureau met on December 8th in Brussels. The following decisions were agreed at that meeting:

2009 ENOC Annual Conference

While the exact title of the Conference is not finalized yet, it was agreed that the theme of the 2009 Annual Conference will be the "Best Interests of the Child". The deadline for finalizing the programme and the content of the Conference is end of March 2009. Therefore, you are most welcome to express your opinion and/or proposals on that.

2009 EU Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme

In accordance with ENOC's 2009 Application for Funding, ENOC is committed to carry out a study on the "Access for children to National, International and European justice". In this sense, a working group, composed by Wales, Malta, Cyprus, Greece, Russia (Moscow) and Peter Newell, has already been established last September in Dublin.

Regional Conference in Dubrovnik (Croatia)

The Ombuds office in Croatia is planning to hold a CRONSEE (South Eastern European Children's Rights' Ombudspersons' Network) Conference in Dubrovnik (Croatia) in May 2009 on the topic of the "Manipulation of children during and after their parents' divorce". ENOC has been invited to participate and to support the event.

ENOC Seminar on child participation

The ENOC Seminar on Child Participation took place at the afternoon of December 8th at the Flemish Parliament in Brussels. Among the 25 attendants, there were 10 ENOC/EU members, staff members of the EU Commission, NGOs (Euronet, Waggs, IFM, INSAFE etc.) and a representative of Belgium's National Committee for Children's Rights. The Seminar was divided in two parts: during the first half, Peter Newell, ENOC expert adviser, presented the preliminary results of ENOC's participation study on 18 EU/ENOC members. The final results of the complete study (all ENOC members) should be finalized by January 2009.

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ENOC Commitments

As you all know, ENOC has successfully applied for funding through the EU Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme for 2008. In order to meet all our commitments foreseen in the application, we have carried out a mapping exercise on child participation. The preliminary results of the study were presented by Peter Newell during the ENOC Seminar on Child Participation on December 8th in Brussels. In this context, we would like to thank Rachel Hodgkin and Peter Newell, ENOC expert advisers who worked hard on the study. On the same occasion, our warmest thanks also go to our Flemish colleagues (Hilde, Ankie and the others) who helped us to organize the Seminar at the Flemish Parliament in Brussels.

A Thank You from the European Commission

ENOC received a thank you note from **Mr. Francisco Fonseca Morillo** for its active involvement in the 3rd Forum for the Rights of the Child which took place in Brussels on 9 December 2008.

You can all follow the progress on the work of the Forum online: http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/children/forum/fsj_children_forum_en.htm

ENOC Chair met with Mr. Barrot

Emily Logan and Hugues Feltesse spoke briefly with Mr. Barrot. Mr. Barrot thanked ENOC for their active involvement in the European Forum and also expressed his desire for ENOC to work on the work of children's rights with the European Commission into the future.

The second part of the Seminar was dedicated to child participation case studies. The following three different models were successively presented:

1. JADE-Jeunes Acteurs des Droits de l'Enfant (Young Actors of Children's Rights) Stephan Durviaux-Office of the Delegate General of Children's Rights, French Community, Belgium
2. The Big Ballot: Sophie Magennis-Ombudsman for Children's Office, Ireland
3. The Youth Advisory Panel: Xavier Bonal-The Catalan Ombudsman Office, Spain ♦

3RD EU Forum on the Rights of the Child

The 3rd EU Forum on the Rights of the Child took place on December 9th in Brussels. For a first time, ENOC has been largely represented at the Forum by the following 10 Ombuds offices: Belgium (French Community), Catalonia, Cyprus, France, Hungary, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, and Slovakia.

The EU Forum addressed two main topics: violence against children and child participation. While the working session on violence against children was moderated by a representative of the EU Commission, Ms. Emily Logan, ENOC Chairperson, was invited to chair the working session on child participation. Having regard to ENOC's expertise and experience on the field, ENOC is more and more solicited and involved by the EU Commission for the build-up of the future EU Strategy on the Children's Rights.

In its opening speech, Mr. Barrot, Vice-President of the EU Commission, reported on the recent developments in child protection, such as the launch of Missing Child Alert System. During the discussion on violence against children, the main issue which was raised concerned the misconception about the perpetrators of violence. Thus, statistics show that more violence is inflicted on children by people in their "comfort zone" (home, school etc.). However, there is still no clear idea about how the Commission would involve children in the build-up of the Strategy.

During the Forum, Ms Logan met with Ms Maud de Boer Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe. They discussed about the Council of Europe 2009 priorities on children's rights and ENOC's possible involvement in. While the Council of Europe will push for the entry into force of the Convention for the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, the other main topics will be the drafting of guidelines on child friendly justice and the promotion of child participation. ♦

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **22-23 January 2009:** Conference on "Undocumented Children in Europe :Invisible Victims of Immigration Restrictions", PICUM, Brussels
- ❖ **29 January 2009:** Seminar on Child Well-being Indicators organized by the Secretariat of the European Network of National Observatories on Childhood (ChildONEurope), Istituto degli Innocenti, Florence.
- ❖ **5-6 February 2009:** Conference on "Parental Childcare and Employment Policy: collision or complementarity?" organised by the Czech Presidency of the EU, Prague.
- ❖ **12 February 2009:** Meeting of the Steering Group on the Rights of the Child (EU Commission), Brussels.
- ❖ **27-28 February 2009:** Conference "Best Interests of the Child", University of Toronto, Toronto (contact Betty Noaks at bnoakes@unicef.ca).
- ❖ **27 February 2009:** ENOC Bureau meeting, Paris.
- ❖ **6-7 April 2009:** "Child-Friendly Europe", Congress Centre, Prague (in the framework of the Czech Presidency of the EU).
- ❖ **20-22 April 2009:** "Children and the European Union: Legal, Research and Political Perspectives", University of Liverpool, Liverpool.
- ❖ **May 2009:** "Manipulation of Children during and after their parents' divorce", South Eastern European Children's Rights Ombudspersons' network (CRONSEE), Dubrovnik, Croatia.

JANUARY 2009

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