

EDITORIAL BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL, MIEKE SCHUIJRMAN

Dear Readers,

Happy Children's Rights Day! Today the world celebrates children's rights day, the 19th birthday of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Across Europe EURONET's member organisations are involved in many different activities to celebrate this day.

At European Union level EURONET is in full preparation for the launch of its campaign to stop corporal punishment against children in the home. The launch will take place in the European Parliament on 10 December. Members of the European Parliament, representatives of other EU institutions, civil society representatives and celebrities will be asked to sign a statement of support to ban corporal punishment of children in the home in the legislation of all EU Member States. We encourage you to join us in this campaign and sign up to our statement of support via our website or postcards. Read more about our campaign in this newsletter.

Other activities that EURONET has been involved in are submitting our views for the EU Strategy on Children's Rights to the European Commission. EURONET has contributed information on the situation of children's rights in the EU to the European Parliament report on fundamental rights, which we hope gets the support of the full Parliament. As EURONET has campaigned extensively for the inclusion of children's rights in the EU Lisbon Treaty, this newsletter gives you updates on the ratification processes for this Treaty. The Lisbon Treaty is very important for the implementation of children's rights in the EU and EURONET therefore hopes that there will be a solution for the Irish no-vote and that Sweden and the Czech Republic will ratify the Lisbon Treaty within the next months.

Mieke Schuurman
Secretary-General
European Children's Network (EURONET)

**New online newsletter—
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Welcome to the European Children's Network quarterly newsletter.

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EURONET Activities



Join EURONET's Campaign to Ban Corporal Punishment against Children in the Home!

EURONET is continuing its work in combating corporal punishment against children in the home, and will organise a launch event in the European Parliament on **December 10th** under the patronage of MEP Lissy GRÖNER. Guest speakers at the event include Elda Moreno from the Council of Europe, Peter Newell from the Global Initiative to end all corporal punishment of children, and children from the UK and Romania speaking on the topic.

A position paper has now been drafted and will be presented at the event, putting forward a number of recommendations to the EU, urging Member States to support the call to end all forms of corporal punishment against children, raise awareness and resource positive parenting programmes. The Statement of Support to Make Europe a Corporal Punishment Free Zone for Children will also be presented and will receive its first official signing at the launch. A member survey has also been completed, giving an overview of the status of corporal punishment in Member States.

You can sign the statement of support online from the 5th December onwards by visiting our webpage. There you will also be able to download all documents related to our work on this issue.

We encourage our members to support the campaign by actively approaching MEPs from their constituencies and asking them to sign up to the statement and to attend our launch event.

If you are interested in attending the launch event, please email info@europeanchildrensnetwork.org

EURONET contributes to Issue Paper in preparation for the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child

On October 9th 2008 the Steering Group of the EU Forum on Children's Rights discussed a first (non-) paper of the European Commission as preparation for the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child. Steering Group members, including EURONET, submitted their comments on the document. A wide consultation on the Issue Paper, including children, will be launched in the forthcoming meeting of the European Forum on the Rights of the Child on December 9th 2008.

Click [here](#) to view EURONET's contribution to the issue paper.

Successful Fifth Regional Meeting of NGO Children's Rights Coalitions in Europe

From 28-30 October the fifth regional meeting of NGO Children's Rights Coalitions in Europe took place in Bucharest, Romania. The event was hosted by the Romanian NGO Save the Children. EURONET was one of the supporters of the event, which was attended by more than 50 participants from 24 different countries across Europe. The opening session was addressed by several key note speakers. The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Thomas Hammerberg set out the concrete areas of reform that are needed to implement children's rights in Europe. Lothar Krappmann, member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, stressed the importance of NGO involvement in the state reporting process on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). He invited NGOs to a conference organised by the UN Committee to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the UN CRC in October 2009. Mieke Schuurman, from EURONET, presented the role of the EU and its work in relation to children's rights. A full report of the meeting will be made available on EURONET's website by mid December.

Report includes EURONET amendments linking violence against and poverty

MEP Kathy Sinnott tabled amendments based on input from EURONET on the relationship between child poverty and child maltreatment to the EP report on "[Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty, including child poverty, in the EU](#)" (INI-COM (2007) 0620). Most of EURONET's amendments were incorporated in the adopted text of the [report](#). To see which amendments were included, click [here](#).

Fundamental Rights Report recognizes Children's Rights in the EU

On October 6th, Secretary General Mieke Schuurman was invited to talk about EURONET's concerns on children's rights at the hearing for the European Parliament report on Fundamental Rights. EURONET arose concerns regarding the prevalence of corporal punishment against children within the home, children in conflict with the law, and children's participation. Furthermore, EURONET discussed the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, and mentioned the need to focus on children's rights as a distinct category of human rights. A number of MEPs supported EURONET's position in the hearing, including Giusto Catania, Michael Cashman, and Sophie in 't Veld. To read more about the hearing and EURONET's position, click [here](#).

Need for EU approach to children's rights presented at European seminar on Fundamental Rights

On September 19th the Commission for Constitutional Affairs, European Governance and the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (CONST) in co-operation with the Province of Reggio Emilia and the EU Fundamental Rights Agency in Vienna, held a seminar on Multi-level protection of fundamental rights in the EU in Reggio Emilia.

The seminar was organized with the aim of identifying good practice with regards to the promotion and protection of fundamental rights at local and regional level, as well as discussing the most and least successful and negative experiences of various actors.

The seminar was divided into three sessions, of which the final one was concerned with promoting and protecting the rights of children, and identifying the best practices at local and regional level. In relation to this, Arianna Saulini, of Save the Children Italy, EURONET member, presented the aims and activities of the network. She specifically underlined the importance of an EU approach to children's rights, as well as the holistic approach of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

It is noteworthy that during the morning sessions, concerning the European Charter on Fundamental Rights as an instrument for implementing citizen's rights, and the role of local and regional authorities in ensuring and promoting fundamental rights, speakers all referred to children's rights in their presentations.

Further developments on the Treaty of Lisbon

According to a new poll by the Irish Times, Irish voters are reacting more positively to the Lisbon treaty since the June referendum. Currently 43% of respondents claim they would vote for the Treaty, as compared to the 39% who would vote No and 18% who have no opinion on the issue. This vote would assume a modified document, allowing Dublin to keep a national commissioner in the EU executive, as well as a confirmation of Ireland's neutrality and their right to rule on certain issues ([more](#)).

At the Brussels EU summit of October 15th, Irish Prime Minister Brian Cowen had already alluded to the possibility of his country changing its mind regarding the Reform Treaty. Cowen promised his colleagues that he would present an action plan at the 11-12 December summit on how to solve the stalemate following the Irish 'no' in June's referendum. European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering told journalists that he still hoped the Lisbon Treaty could be enforced before the June 2009 European elections ([more](#)).

Ratification of the Lisbon Treaty would be an important development for children's rights, as it would be the first Treaty to recognize children's rights in all EU member states.

New Staff at the EURONET Secretariat, Brussels

The EURONET Secretariat has appointed a Senior Policy Officer who has joined us this month. Elizabeth Niland will be working on EURONET's campaign to ban corporal punishment against children in the home in the European Union. Contact: policy@europeanchildrensnetwork.org.

A new intern, Elke Holderbeke, also joined the Secretariat team this past September, and will be with us for a 6 month period.

PLEASE NOTE that EURONET can now also be contacted at the following email address: info@europeanchildrensnetwork.org. The former email address, europeanchildrennetwork@skynet.be, will remain valid.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Committee on the Rights of the Child considers reports from UK, Lithuania and Austria

The Committee on the Rights of the Child held its 49th session considering State reports from September 15th to October 3rd. This session considered, amongst others, the combined third and fourth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the initial reports of Lithuania and Austria on the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography, as well as UK's initial report on the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

Concerns raised to the UK's third and fourth consolidated report included the fact that previous recommendations concerning corporal punishment had not yet been fully implemented. **The Committee recommended that the UK prohibit, as a matter of priority, all corporal punishment in the family**; that positive forms of discipline be actively promoted, for which parental education and professional training should be provided. In reference to violence, abuse and neglect of children, the Committee was alarmed at the high prevalence of such occurrences, and as such recommended that the UK establish mechanisms for monitoring the number of cases, train professionals on their obligation to report occurrences, and strengthen support for victims.

Furthermore, the Committee was concerned that there is no systematic awareness raising of the Convention, and hence that there exists a low level of knowledge on its provisions amongst children, parents or professionals working with children. The Committee also showed concern with the fact that there has been little progress regarding including article 12 of the Convention within law and policy. For more information, click [here](#).

50th Session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child

The 50th Session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child will take place from 12 to 30 January 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland. This session will be examining, amongst others, the Netherlands' report on their implementation of the CRC, as well as their implementation of the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography ([more](#)).

New website for NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

The NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child is a network of 81 international and national non-governmental organisations, which work together to facilitate the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was originally formed in 1983 when members of the NGO Group were actively involved in the drafting of the Convention. A new website has been created and can be found at <http://www.childrightsnet.org/>.



In the EU Press

EURONET President discusses combating child sexual abuse in the EU

In the latest issue of The Parliament Magazine, Kathleen Spencer Chapman (European Advisor at NSPCC and EURONET President) contributed an article discussing the situation of child sexual abuse. She highlighted the increasing European and international dimensions of the issue, specifying that it is vital that criminal records information be shared throughout the EU, so as to combat the ease with which sex offenders can move between countries. The progress that the EU has made was emphasized, however it was made clear that much more remained to be done ([more](#)).

EU introducing internet safety plan

The EU aims to introduce a plan to make the internet safer for children, aimed to combat illegal content and promote a safer online-environment. This matter is being considered by the European Parliament in co-decision with the Council of Ministers ([more](#)).

Declaration on combating the trafficking of children adopted by EP

A declaration on combating the trafficking of children was adopted by the President of the European Parliament following the signing by more than half of the MEPs. In the declaration, Member States are called on to make the fight against child trafficking a priority in their national child protection policies ([more](#)).

Poster competition launched by EC

In July, Vice-President of the European Commission launched a competition “The right of the child to protection”. This competition, open to all children and adolescents between 10 and 18, requires them to design a poster on the right of children to protection in the EU. Each Member State will hold ceremonies on November 20th to award prizes to the three best posters in two different age groups, and the winners of the first prize in each country will then go on to compete at European level ([more](#)).

Universal Periodic Review: A new opportunity for holding governments accountable for children’s rights

A new mechanism has been created by the UN to monitor the human rights climate in every country. The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a new reporting mechanism under which the Human Rights Council will examine the human rights situation in every Member State of the UN every four years. This mechanism allows for an opportunity for NGOs to actively participate in a number of ways, and to this aim a toolkit has been designed to encourage such contributions. For more information, please [click here](#).

Opportunity to secure legal protection from age discrimination for children

The cross cutting draft European Directive on anti discrimination and equal treatment sets out proposals to extend legal protection from unfair discrimination beyond the workplace. The Directive, if passed by the Council of Ministers, will extend existing EU protection to the provision of goods, facilities and services, education and healthcare. Crucially the Directive seeks to outlaw discrimination on the basis of age, religion, disability and sexual orientation. EURONET asks European NGOs to urge their national governments and MEPs to support the inclusion of age in the Directive, and to ensure that children are protected against age discrimination as well as adults. For more information, please contact Catherine Billingham at cbillingham@crae.org.uk, or click [here](#).



Publications

Challenging Violence Against Children: A handbook for NGOs working on follow-up to the UN study

Challenging Violence against Children

A handbook for NGOs working on follow-up to the UN Study



All violence against children breaches their right to respect for their human dignity and physical integrity. Following the UN's revelatory study on Violence against Children, Save the Children recognised the essential role NGOs must play in confronting violence. This important handbook offers NGOs practical support and advice for promoting non-violent values, involving children in research and advocacy, and strengthening commitments to protect children in different settings.

“Strong and intense advocacy is urgently required if societies are to move on to condemn, prohibit and ultimately eliminate violence against children.”—Professor Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro

ISBN 9781841871202, 128 pages, RRP £12.99.

Available from Save the Children's [online library](#) and on [Amazon](#)

For further information please email Anna Craig a.craig@savethechildren.org.uk

Getting it Right for Children: A practitioner's guide to child rights programming



Getting it Right for Children
A practitioner's guide to child rights programming



"Well structured and clearly written ... a useful resource for other child-focused and child rights NGOs."—Joachim Theis, UNICEF

Adopting a child rights-based approach is the most effective way to bring about positive and lasting change for children, their families and communities.

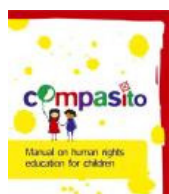
Drawing on Save the Children's experience around the world, this guide introduces ideas and tools that will enable development and humanitarian workers to put children and their rights at the centre of all development programmes.

Accessibly written, the book sets out the steps to be taken, answers frequently asked questions and concerns and is illustrated throughout with case studies. It also includes a CD ROM with further tools and useful materials.

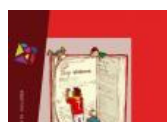
ISBN 978 184187 116 5, 145 pages, RRP £14.95

Available from Save the Children's [online library](#) and on [Amazon](#)

COMPASITO– Manual on human rights education for children (2008), Council of Europe



Eradicating Violence against Children (2008), Council of Europe



Eliminating corporal punishment: a human rights imperative for Europe's children (2nd edition) (2008), Council of Europe





[Global Report 2008– Ending legalized violence against children](#), Global Initiative to End all Corporal Punishment of Children and Save the Children Sweden

[Prohibiting all corporal punishment and other humiliating punishment of children: Achieving legal reform](#), Save the Children

[Viewpoint- Human rights education must be a priority](#), By Thomas Hammarberg, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights.

[Annual Report 2007](#), CRIN



Events 2008

November 20, 2008– London (UK), **Who's afraid of children's rights? Transforming the lives and status of children and young people in England**, CRAE (Child Rights Alliance for England) Annual Conference. Website: www.crae.org.uk

December 2, 2008– Brussels (Belgium), **Exhibition on the Rights of Separated Children in Europe**, Separated Children in Europe Youth Network.

December 4-5, 2008– Verona (Italy), **[Conference: Promoting integration of marginalized children and youth through social inclusion: schooling, vocational training and participation](#)**, European Federation for Street Children

December 5, 2008– Brussels (Belgium), **Seminar: Children in words and images (Studienamiddag: Kinderen in woord en beeld)**, Gent University: Center for the Rights of the Child. For more information and a full programme, please contact Kathleen Vlieghe at Kathleen.Vlieghe@Ugent.be, Tel. 09-264 62 85 – Fax. 09-264 64 93.

December 6-9 2008- Strasbourg (France), **[Children and Young People in Care: What do YOUth think?](#)** SOS Kinderdorf International.

December 9, 2008– Brussels (Belgium), **EU Forum on Children's Rights**

December 10 2008- Brussels (Belgium), **Launch event of campaign to ban corporal punishment against children in the home**. EURONET.

December 10, 2008– Brussels (Belgium), **[Awareness Day: Children in the Streets of Europe](#)**, European Federation for Street Children.

January 16-17, 2009– Berlin (Germany), **[Second Generation Research Dialogues. Comparative Perspectives on children of immigrants](#)**, The Center for Metropolitan Studies Berlin.

19-20 January 2009- Cairo (Egypt), **[International Conference: Child Poverty and Disparities: Public Policies for Social Justice](#)**, UNICEF.

22-23 January 2009– Brussels (Belgium), **[International Conference on Undocumented Children in Europe: Invisible Victims of Immigration Restrictions](#)**, Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)

20-22 April 2009- Liverpool (UK), **[Conference: 'Children and the European Union: Legal, Political and Research Perspectives'](#)**, EURONET and University of Liverpool.



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This newsletter was written by Sara Sighinolfi, Elizabeth Niland, Elke Holderbeke and Mieke Schuurman.

For questions on the newsletter, or removal from the mailing list,
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www.europeanchildrensnetwork.eu