News from Eurochild

Upcoming events

Eurochild – Euronet Event on “Mainstreaming Children’s Rights”
9 October 2007, EP, Brussels

Eurochild together with Euronet – the European Children’s Network – are jointly organising an event in the European Parliament on 9 October on “Mainstreaming Children’s Rights”. It will be hosted by Inger Segelström, an MEP from Sweden.


Eurochild Annual Conference
REGISTER NOW!

Eurochild’s Annual Conference on “Preventing social exclusion of children and young people in Europe: Participation & early intervention” takes place on 21-23 November 2007 in Malta. The registration form is now available on: www.eurochild.org/malta2007/registration.

On the occasion of its third annual conference, Eurochild will focus attention on three core themes that are considered crucial to preventing social exclusion and poverty among children and young people in Europe:
1. Child & youth participation
2. Family & parenting support
3. Early years education & care

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Each of these themes will be explored through in-depth workshops running over the two days of the conference. The principles of participation and early intervention underpin each of these themes.

You can find the draft programme and more information on: [www.eurochild.org/malta2007](http://www.eurochild.org/malta2007).

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**News from the European Institutions**

### Modernising school education

The European Commission is seeking stakeholders’ input on how to modernise school education. On 11 July 2007, DG Education and Culture launched a public consultation on how to modernise school education in member states. The results will feed into a future Communication on the subject. The objective is to identify areas where joint actions at European level could add-value to member states’ efforts.

The Consultation seeks input from teachers, parents and pupils on, for example, modernisation of the school curriculum, promotion of lifelong learning and the role of teachers in a rapidly changing teaching environment. Stakeholders have until 15 October to express their opinions.

As education and training are the competence of member states, the Commission’s role is limited to supporting, via different EU programmes, national education development efforts and best-practice exchange.

For more information: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/school21/index_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/school21/index_en.html)

### Cooperating in the field of youth policy

In September, the European Commission will adopt a Communication to promote young people’s participation in education, employment and society as a whole, looking at how Europe can better coordinate policies on youth.

There is growing concern that many young people continue to face difficult challenges, hindering their development and ability to succeed. Education systems are not equipping them with the skills needed for a smooth transition into employment. Nearly one in six young people in the EU still leaves school early and the vast majority of the 4.6 million young unemployed do not find a new job within 6 months, despite member states’ reiterated commitment to this target.

The Communication is complemented by a comprehensive report on youth employment prepared by DG Employment as well as the results of the analysis of national reports on volunteering prepared by DG Education and Culture.

More information will be posted on: [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/whitepaper/index_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/whitepaper/index_en.html)

### Erasmus Mundus II - for international cooperation in higher education

On 12 July the Commission launched a new generation of the Erasmus Mundus programme for the period 2009-13. Erasmus Mundus started in 2004 to promote European higher education as a centre of excellence in the world. In the first three academic years (2004-2006), more than 2,300 students have participated in the programme and over 1,800 have just been selected to start their studies in Europe in September this year. The new Erasmus Mundus II programme builds on this by aiming to become the EU reference programme for cooperation with third countries in this area. Over a period of five years, European and third-country universities will be supported to join forces in common programmes or collaborative partnerships and to grant scholarships to European and third-country students for an international study experience.


The Erasmus Mundus External Co-operation Window is an initiative launched by the Europe Aid Co-operation Office (AIDCO): [http://ec.europa.eu/europaaid/index_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europaaid/index_en.htm)


### The contribution of multilingualism to Intercultural Dialogue

A Group of experts on multilingualism set up by the European Commission, is to make proposals and
recommendations on how languages can foster intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. The Group should advise on a contribution to the forthcoming “European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008” (EYID). It is composed of 10 individuals with a multicultural and/or literary background or with academic work in a multilingual and multicultural context.

The Group will meet three times in 2007. Its conclusions will be communicated during an event in 2008.

For more information:

Adoption of White Paper on Sport

On 11 July, the European Commission adopted its first comprehensive initiative on sport. The White Paper aims at providing strategic orientation on the role of sport in the EU. It recognises the important social and economic role of sport, while respecting the requirements of EU law. The White Paper is the result of extensive consultations over the past two years with sport organisations such as the Olympic Committees and sport federations, as well as with member states and other stakeholders, including an online consultation launched in February this year to which 777 replies were received.

The White Paper on Sport will now be transmitted to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions and its findings will be presented to EU Sport Ministers. In October, the Commission will organise a conference to discuss the White Paper with sport stakeholders.

The White Paper is available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/sport/index_en.html

For the Press Release by the Commission:

Frequently Asked Questions:

Launch of public consultation on anti-discrimination

On 5 July, the European Commission launched an on-line public consultation on anti-discrimination measures at EU and member state level. It comes as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All – which aims to raise people’s awareness of their rights to equal treatment and promote a broad debate on the benefits of diversity to society – enters full swing.

A recent Eurobarometer survey (January 2007) showed that 64% of Europeans believe discrimination is widespread in their country and 51% think that not enough is being done to combat the problem. A 2006 ‘mapping study’ found that all member states have legal rules on discrimination that go beyond the minimum requirements of EC law. However the study also found differences in the detail of the laws and in their application. There seem to be variations in the level of protection granted to the different grounds for discrimination, particularly outside the field of employment.

The consultation is available in all EU languages and will remain open until 15 October 2007:

For the 2006 mapping study:

For the European Year of Equal Opportunities for all:

EAPN response to Communication on Flexicurity

In its response to the Commission Communication on flexicurity released in late June, the European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN) suggests ways to ensure that the security dimension of flexicurity is more developed. EAPN calls on EU member states to give the objective of social inclusion a higher priority in the flexicurity debate.

For the full EAPN response to the Commission Communication on flexicurity “The security we need cannot be summarised by secured transitions between jobs! It requires high levels of social protection, quality employment and respect of fundamental rights”:

For the Commission Communication “Towards common principles of Flexicurity: more and better jobs through flexibility & security”:

European Parliament

MEPs favour employment security over job guarantees

An own-initiative report on flexicurity and labour law adopted on 11 July by the European Parliament is mildly critical of the Commission’s Communication on flexicurity published last June.

The Parliament’s report defines flexicurity as “combining flexibility and security in the job market in
a way that helps increase both productivity and the quality of jobs by guaranteeing security, while at the same time allowing firms the flexibility needed to create jobs in response to the changing needs of the market”.

It goes on to say: “If labour law is to meet the challenges of the 21st century, it must focus to a large extent on employment security throughout a worker's life rather than protecting particular jobs.”


Presidency of the EU

The Presidency, i.e. the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, is held by each EU member state in turn for a period of six months. During this time, the Presidency is the "face and voice" of the EU, speaking on behalf of all member states. The order of rotation for the Presidency has been established for the period 2005 to 2020.

After Germany held the Presidency for the 12th time during the first half of 2007, it has been taken over by Portugal on 1 July 2007. The next EU Council Presidency will be held by Slovenia, from 1 January 2008.

Reconciling professional, personal and family life

The Conference “Reconciling Professional, Personal and Family Life: New Challenges for the Social Partners and for Public Policy” took place on 12-13 July. Several Social Platform members participated in the event in Lisbon. On this occasion social NGOs reiterated the need to proactively include NGOs in the negotiations at European level on such an important issue.

This conference was all the more important as on 30 May 2007 the European Commission launched a second stage consultation of European Social Partners on the same topic. A consultation paper from the Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA) represents the Commission’s first step in responding to the June 2006 Council’s request to launch a debate on Europe’s social reality with a particular emphasis on questions of “access and opportunities” and on strengthening Europe’s response to Globalisation.

On the same day as the conference, social partners answered the Commission consultation by proposing a staged approach: an analysis of the current situation first and a proposal by March 2008.

The Social Platform will not respond to this specific consultation but will use it to contribute to its annual theme on “Demographic and social changes”. The aim of the Platform is not only to identify the key trends in demographic and social changes but certainly to propose solutions in relation to this social reality.


European Council

Social Affairs Council Conclusions

The conclusions of the Informal Meeting of Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs (5-6 July 2007), highlighted 12 key points to face the challenges on the coordination of employment and social policies. Most notably, Ministers recognise that future steps in active inclusion will support a solid framework in the field of inclusion. They particularly list promoting labour market integration, adequate minimum schemes and access to quality social services. The meeting was also attended by a delegation of the Platform of Social NGOs.


Fundamental Rights Agency

New Management Board and Chair

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) came into being on 1 March 2007 and builds on the former EUMC. The new Management Board of FRA held its first meeting on 12-13 July in Vienna. It elected Anastasia Crickley as its Chairperson and Hannes Tretter as Vice-Chairperson. FRA’s Management Board is composed of one independent person appointed by each member state, one independent person appointed by the Council of Europe, and two representatives of the European Commission.

To this first Management Board meeting, FRA invited a number of selected civil society organisations from across the EU, which cover a wide range of human rights concerns. This included also Eurochild’s partner organisation Euronet – the European Children’s Network. These civil society representatives exchanged views on the Agency’s future priorities with the members of the Management Board.

For more information: http://fra.europa.eu
Social Platform reacts strongly on the composition of the newly appointed Management Board of the Agency

Following a meeting on 13 July 2007 between civil society organisations and the newly appointed Management Board of the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the Platform of European Social NGOs has sent a message to the Director General of the European Commission's DG Employment and Social Affairs, Mr Van der Pas.

For the text of the message which underlines the Social Platform's concerns as regards the composition of the FRA's Management Board:

European Ombudsman

Facilitate integration of the disabled

The European Ombudsman, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, has welcomed the Commission's efforts to facilitate the integration of people with disabilities. Among the positive measures he identified in a recently completed investigation are those to provide easier access to information via the Commission's website and to improve recruitment and promotion conditions. Mr Diamandouros underlined, however, that more should be done to sensitise the Commission's staff to the needs of people with disabilities.

The Ombudsman, however, shares the view of many stakeholders that further action is still needed in other areas. He therefore called on the Commission to make its measures to promote the recruitment of persons with disabilities more transparent. Mr Diamandouros also called for more financial support for disabled persons.

To read the full inquiry, please go to:

Minimum EU rules for transparency

Member states are escaping public scrutiny over decisions they make in Brussels due to a lack of transparency, according to the EU Ombudsman. He called for greater access to EU documents and cutting the time it takes for EU institutions to reply to citizens' complaints.

The Ombudsman's findings have come to light in a survey conducted by the European Commission as part of its “green paper” on possibilities to boost public scrutiny of EU documents.

According to the Ombudsman, citizens face a number of difficulties when looking into EU-related activities of the member states. These difficulties stem from limited access to such information, with member states being allowed to veto public access to documents at EU level without giving reason.

As a minimum standard, the Ombudsman insists the EU should change this rule to ensure that a national government vetoing public access to particular information should be obliged to state its reasons. Mr Diamandouros also calls on the EU's institutions to cut down the current time limit for a reply to ombudsman inquiries, based on the complaints of citizens.

The Ombudsman re-stated his commitment to improve the transparency of the EU institutions during an EPC (European Policy Centre) breakfast meeting, on 28 June 2007. For the EPC report:

For more information:
http://euobserver.com/9/24528/?rk=1

The European Ombudsman investigates complaints about maladministration in the EU institutions and bodies. Any EU citizen, resident, or an enterprise or association in a member state, can lodge a complaint with the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is completely independent and impartial, and offers a fast, flexible and free means of solving problems with the EU administration. The current Ombudsman is Mr Paraskevas Nikiforos Diamandouros who took office on 1 April 2003. For more information:
http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu

General European News

Awards for eco-tech measures that can save children's lives

Fifteen top contestants demonstrated on 13 June 2007 in Vienna what a combination of simple technologies and community organisation can do to protect the environment for the sake of children's health. The prizes were presented during the first morning of the inter-governmental meeting in Vienna to assess progress in Children's Environment and Health Plans for Europe, known as CEHAPE. The five categories for the awards were based on CEHAPE's four regional priority goals plus a fifth category of "youth participation".

Award winners have helped provide many ideas for implementing solutions to children's environmental health. Several groups took advantage of a simple "ecosan" technology that can be used in areas without a centralized water supply or municipal sewerage facilities. The top 15 contestants included a group of school children that have produced a
video on waste in the Danube River. The video shows how they tested river water and soil samples, discussed them with the local medical and community leaders and suggested what other clean-up action was needed. Another project featured an association in Georgia that is “bio-monitoring” blood for its lead content. The local authorities are currently stalling on the introduction of lead-free petrol.

For more information: [http://www.epha.org/a/2675](http://www.epha.org/a/2675)

### Advocating for a Roma-specific EU education strategy

**Caritas Europa** and the **European Roma Information Office (ERIO)** have joined forces to produce a common position paper calling on the European Commission to take the initiative in defining a separate EU Strategy for Roma and Education. Entitled “Recommendations on the Integration of Roma Youngsters into Education”, this position paper presents a series of proposals on practical and policy levels. These are firmly grounded in experience and research including studies on the impact of EU initiatives and practical lessons from the trans-national project STEP IN.

Appalled by the abject poverty and social exclusion of many of the EU’s 13 million Roma, Caritas Europa and ERIO firmly believe that a clear strategy is needed in order to lay down the foundation for real improvement to the quality of life of Roma children and their families. Their position paper suggest that the European Commission should take the lead in developing such a strategy, considering that efforts of EU Member States to implement anti-discrimination legislation have not provided satisfactory results in this area.

Caritas Europa and ERIO are planning a stakeholder’s conference bringing together MEPs, EU Commission officials, NGOs and academics in the European Parliament at the end of September.

For the common position paper: [http://www.caritas-europa.org/module/FileLib/CE-ERIO-RECOMMENDATIONS.pdf](http://www.caritas-europa.org/module/FileLib/CE-ERIO-RECOMMENDATIONS.pdf)

### Obesity platform to promote healthy lifestyle at workplace

Members of the EU obesity platform have decided to launch an initiative to motivate staff in their own organisations and member companies to take more exercise and eat healthier food. The EU Platform on diet, physical activity and health, launched in March 2005, started an initiative to improve health at the workplace on 3 July 2007. This initiative, launched at a conference entitled ‘Diet, physical activity and health @ workplace’, aims in particular to promote physical activity as well as healthy and balanced food choices for employees.

Asked whether schools can, in this context be considered as children’s workplace and what more could be done there, Robert Madelin said that “schools are more important than workplace”, but that “it is never too late and never too early. Our big target is those under 12 years of age and workplace”. He also reminded that introducing more physical activity or education on nutrition in the school curricula is up to member states and pledged for media support for raising awareness and convincing parents to ask for curricula changes.


### Sport associations under-represented in EU obesity platform

The so-called Obesity Platform, launched in March 2005, is set to present its recommendations. But sports NGOs are critical of the food industry's dominance in the EU platform. It still lacks representatives of the physical-activity side of the obesity problem. The members of the platform have recognised this problem and are inviting more experts from sport institutions and federations to join. However, as a response to the request from the EU Sports Ministers, experts from 10 different countries are currently developing recommendations on physical activity. They are expected to finish their work under the Portuguese EU Presidency and present the results before the end of 2007.

The European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation's (ENGSO) is one of the few physical-activity stakeholders that are also a member of the EU platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. To read an interview with Dr Gernot Wainig, chairman of ENGSO’s working group on EU affairs: [http://www.euractiv.com/en/sports/sport-associations-represented-eu-obesity-platform/article-164928](http://www.euractiv.com/en/sports/sport-associations-represented-eu-obesity-platform/article-164928)

## News from European States

### Czech Republic

**Many children end up in institutional care**

Czech social authorities often place children from low-income, often Romany families, in institutional care in unnecessary cases instead of providing material and social aid to their parents, says the political weekly Respekt. In some cases, even small babies have been sent to homes directly from a maternity hospital, although their mothers could care for them given the right social aid.

The weekly refers to rough estimates provided by NGOs monitoring such cases as exact official figures.
about the children taken from their biological families for poverty reasons are not available. According to them, 8,000 children were sent to institutional care in the 10-million Czech Republic last year, which is hundreds of cases more than last year and the year before. This is the second highest figure in the EU, after Bulgaria, Respekt points out.

Targeted social aid is the best solution where the parents, though often unemployed, with a low education level and not well-versed in legislative and administrative issues, want to care for their children and improve their social situation.

It seems the Czech Labour and Social Affairs Ministry has now woken up to the problem. Labour and Social Affairs Minister Petr Necas plans to establish a National Office for Employment and Social Affairs. However, problems facing its Roma population. The Ministry has now woken up to the problem. Labour and Social Affairs Minister Petr Necas plans to establish a National Office for Employment and Social Affairs to coordinate the work of social workers.

The full text of the reports in English and its translations are available at: [http://www.eumap.org](http://www.eumap.org)

**Hungary**

**Segregation in schools**

As one of the Governments leading the 'Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015', Hungary has achieved a high profile for its efforts to address the many problems facing its Roma population. The Government has adopted a series of initiatives aimed at giving Roma children better access to education as a step towards improving their inclusion and opportunities for the future. According to a recent report, however, critical elements included in these Governmental policies have been overlooked in practice so far, hindering the possibility of any true progress.

The monitoring report "Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma in Hungary" released on 13 June, was produced by the EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program of the Open Society Institute in cooperation with the Change for Children Foundation. It is a comprehensive analysis of basic educational indicators, as well as of the major barriers and constraints that prevent Roma in Hungary from enjoying equal access to quality education. In 2007, the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, the report shows that many Roma children in Hungary continue to face discrimination, isolation or exclusion from education.

The Schoolmate project run by Focus Ireland and funded by Allied Irish Bank Ireland (AIB) aims to help children experiencing homelessness stay in school. According to an independent review most of these children are from families with a history of drug or alcohol problems (52%) or violence in the home (30%), and where there has been an increase in neglect and abuse. The project has been successful with 81% of the children seeing better record of school attendance and higher self esteem. It also focuses on extra-curricular activities that are vital for children’s development. Such projects, however, can only be fully effective if the next government ensures better access to housing and support services. It must be noted that the official statistics regarding homeless children only include those not being cared for by a family member.

[Source: FEANTSA News Flash June 2007]

**Romania**

**ERTF alerts at misuse of FRA report in campaign against Roma**

The European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) has reacted to Italian media reports according to

which there are currently 50,000 child beggars in Italy, most of them Roma. The Italian news agency ANSA, which first brought up the issue, further stated that child begging is a very lucrative business, and quoted as a reference the issue of a new report by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). The news agency also said that the Fundamental Rights Agency was just launching a European campaign against the exploitation of child beggars. The European Roma and Travellers’ Forum enquired with the Fundamental Rights Agency and was told that FRA never issued such a report. The Agency made its own investigations into the issue and found out that the source of the media campaign was a report issued by an Italian MEP Roberta Angelilli from Alleanza Nazionale presented a few days earlier in Rome.

The far-right politician who is also the coordinator of the National Office for the Problems of Minors of the Alleanza Nazionale has indeed used statistical material provided by the Fundamental Rights Agency in order to point out at the alarming situation of Romani women and children which makes them the natural victims of criminal networks. The report which is peppered with pictures of begging women and children is part of a campaign against street begging which is ultimately targeting Roma.


Slovakia

Youth policy in the Slovak Republic

The Youth Directorate of the Council of Europe embarked on its international review of national youth policies in 1997. The international review process was established to fulfil three distinct objectives: to advise on national youth policy; to identify components which might combine to form a harmonised approach to youth policy across Europe; and to contribute to a learning process in relation to the development and implementation of youth policy. The Slovak Republic, at its own request, is the 12th country to be the focus of an international review.

This report includes information gathered by the international review team as well as its analyses and recommendations concerning the development, perspectives and challenges for the future of youth policy in the Slovak Republic.

Price: 8€/12$ + 10% postage, Council of Europe Publishing. To place an order directly: http://book.coe.int/sysmodules/RBS_page/admin/re direct.php?id=36&lang=EN&produit_aliasid=2208

Spain

Cheques for children born after July 2007

On 3 July the Spanish government announced that children born after 3 July 2007 will receive a one-time check for the amount of 2,500€. Ministers, parties and MPs have first reacted with surprise, since it is not clearly established who will foot the bill. Neither the Parliament nor the Congress have yet ratified the measure, although application forms to cash the cheque are already available at the social security offices. This new grant should be given universally to all mothers giving birth after 3 July 2007. Some family associations have criticised it, alleging that social coverage on other issues is more urgent, i.e. day-care centres, school grants, dentist health coverage, etc.


Parents sued for not sending their children to school

The district attorney of Córdoba requested that two parents be incarcerated for 6 months because their children did not attend school. Of their 4 children, the elder daughter, 17 years old, skipped classes for 353 days between 2003 and 2006. The second and fourth siblings did not go to school for 111 and 110 days respectively between 2004 and 2006. The third one, a 12 year old girl, missed classes for 76 days over 2 years. Several measures have been taken before arriving at this situation. However, neither the school, nor the social services department of the city, the police department or the mediator for the Roma community have been able to urge the parents to take their children to school. Therefore, suing them was the last and final recourse undertaken. According to the district attorney, the legal obligations of parents go beyond feeding their children, who, in this case, are all within the legal age for compulsory schooling.

For more information (in Spanish): http://www.elpais.com/articulo/andalucia/fiscal/pide/meses/carcel/pareja/llevar/hijos/clase/elpepuespand/20070703elpande_14/tes

Protecting the Rights of unaccompanied migrant children in the Canary Islands

Hundreds of unaccompanied migrant children from Africa held in government facilities in the Canary Islands are at risk of violence and ill-treatment, Human Rights Watch has said in a new report. In the past year, more than 900 unaccompanied migrant children have arrived in the Canary Islands after dangerous and often traumatic journeys in makeshift boats. In response to this unprecedented number of migrant children arriving on its shores, the Canary Islands regional authorities one year ago opened four emergency centres to house 400-500 migrant children, who are mainly boys from Senegal and Morocco.

The 115-page report, “Unwelcome Responsibilities: Spain’s Failure to Protect the Rights of Unaccompanied Migrant Children in the Canary Islands,” documents how children stay in these centres for indefinite periods, in often overcrowded and poor conditions. The children told Human Rights
Watch that they have been subjected to beatings by staff, and left unprotected from violence by their peers. They do not enjoy access to public education, they have limited opportunity for recreation and leisure, and they are unduly restricted in their freedom of movement.

For the report: http://hrw.org/reports/2007/spain0707/

UK

NSPCC '100 Day Challenge' for Gordon Brown to tackle violence

The NSPCC is urging Gordon Brown to use his first 100 days as Prime Minister to help tackle violence against children. An urgent action plan is needed to combat bullying and provide counselling and therapy for all abused children. One hundred days for children - an action plan to tackle violence against children: http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/PolicyAndPublicAffairs/Westminster/100DaysForChildren_gf46210.pdf

Council of Europe News

Commissioner for Human Rights on Child poverty in Europe

In a copyright-free opinion article, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights Thomas Hammarberg argues that beyond providing direct subsidies to the most socially disadvantaged groups, governments should provide access to free education and basic medical services in schools.

"An action plan against child poverty should seek to define vulnerable groups and risk situations. Single parent families and children with special needs may belong to this category. Children in rural areas, children of migrants and Roma communities have also been deeply affected by poverty", Mr Hammarberg writes.

The full text of the copyright-free article can be downloaded in English, French and Russian from http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/viewpoints/default_EN.asp

Convention to protect children against sexual exploitation and abuse

The Committee of Ministers of the Strasbourg-based Council of Europe has adopted a Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, which represents a major advance in this field. This new Convention is the first instrument to establish the various forms of sexual abuse of children as criminal offences, including such abuse committed in the home or family, with the use of force, coercion or threats. In addition to the offences traditionally committed in this field - sexual abuse, child prostitution, child pornography, children's forced participation in pornographic performances - the text also addresses the issue of "grooming" of children for sexual purposes and "sex tourism". The Convention will be opened for signature at the Conference of European Ministers of Justice in Lanzarote on 25 and 26 October this year. Its adoption is to be seen also in the context of the three-year Programme run for a year by the Council of Europe "Building a Europe for and with children".

For the full text of the Convention and the explanatory report:


Commissioner for Human Rights on human rights violations

In a copyright-free opinion article, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights argues that victims of human rights violations should be granted full rights to reparation, which can take more forms than just financial compensation.

“Compensation can never fully undo the damage that has been done”, Thomas Hammarberg writes. “And this should not stop us from fighting to achieve just redress for victims”.

The full text of this article can be downloaded in English, French and Russian from http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/viewpoints/Default_en.asp

Note the difference:

Council of Europe: An international organisation created in 1949, based in Strasbourg. It is composed of 47 democratic countries in Europe and its main goals are to protect human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law (www.coe.int)

European Council: regular meeting (at least twice a year) of the heads of state or government from the 27 member states of the European Union and the President of the European Commission for the purpose of planning EU policy. It defines the general political guidelines of the EU.

(www.consilium.europa.eu)

Call for healthy, clean and ethical sport

"I hope that the deplorable events surrounding the Tour de France will encourage everyone to step up their efforts to prevent cheating and to promote healthy, clean and ethical competition", said the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Terry Davis. "I should also like to send a message of encouragement and support to the vast majority of athletes who compete honestly, to the sporting..."
Attachment Relationships: quality of care for young children

This is the first publication in a new series, Early Childhood in Focus, a collaboration between the Bernard van Leer Foundation and The Open University. Early Childhood in Focus will develop into a toolkit for child rights advocates, by setting out clear messages emerging from academic research. Each issue is underpinned by the child rights perspective of General Comment 7 of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child: Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood.

This first issue, “Attachment Relationships: quality of care for young children”, deals with attachment theory and research. It looks at how care giving, social and economic conditions, and cultural contexts influence the development of attachment relationships, which are crucial for the social, emotional and cognitive development of young children.

Two further issues will follow in 2007, entitled “Early Childhood and Primary Education” and “Developing Positive Identities”. It is hoped the Early Childhood in Focus series will serve to inform, encourage, and provide leverage for successful rights-based policy advocacy on behalf of an all too often overlooked constituency: young children.

For the publication:

Hard-copy orders at:
http://www.bernardvanleer.org/publications_results?

Committee on CRC - General Comments:
http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/comments.htm

Views on positive parenting and non-violent upbringing

This book presents the results a two-day consultation with children and parents from 19 countries. “How would you define positive parenting? What characterises negative parenting? How does smacking make children feel? What does it teach them? What are the alternatives to smacking?” Exercises and questions that children and parents addressed on this occasion are presented in this publication and could be used in other similar consultations in the member states.

Price: 10€/15$ + 10% postage, Council of Europe Publishing. To place an order directly:

Fact sheet for children on air pollution

A Fact sheet specifically designed for children has been produced and published by the European Lung Foundation (ELF) and the Health & Environment Alliance (HEAL) in May 2007. The Fact sheet is part of the project “The Environment and Lung Disease” carried out jointly by the Health and Environment Alliance (www.env-health.org), the European Lung Foundation (www.european-lung-foundation.org) and the European Respiratory Society (http://dev.ersnet.org) with the aim to inform children aged between 5 and 11 about outdoor air pollution, and in particular how outdoor air pollution can affect your lungs. The eventual objective of the project is to encourage young people to play an active role in trying to reduce their impact on air pollution. “Dirty air and your lungs – a Fact sheet for children” is available in English, German, Spanish, French, Italian, Greek, Polish Russian on: http://www.env-health.org/a/2566.

Further information on this topic:
Identifying the threats to children’s health in Europe:
http://www.epha.org/a/490

EPHA’s articles on children and environmental health: http://www.epha.org/r/45

Social inclusion for young people: breaking down the barriers

This book presents key findings from a research seminar organised by the European Youth Partnership on the theme of “Social inclusion and Young People”. The articles included give a picture of the forms of social exclusion affecting young people nowadays and provide evidence of the progress of strategies to promote social inclusion. As part of the framework partnership agreement on youth between the Council of Europe and the European Commission, the research seminar and
this publication support efforts in the fields of youth policy, education and training to build a more inclusive society for all. Price: 25€/38$ + 10% postage, Council of Europe Publishing. To place an order directly: http://book.coe.int/sysmodules/RBS_page/admin/red

text of the Recommendation, “Keys for parents” and “Guidelines for professionals”.

Price: 19€/29$ + 10% postage. Council of Europe Publishing. To place an order directly:

Publication by International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media


This issue includes articles about media literacy/media education efforts in Japan, Nigeria and Finland, reports from the 5th World Summit on Media for Children in Johannesburg and more. The Clearinghouse looks forward to receive contributions to coming issues - brief notices and articles (about 700-800 words), tips and reports about conferences and literature etc regarding children, youth and media. For issue N°2-2007, they particularly encourage contributions on different aspects of Internet use and video/computer game playing among children and youth. For more information contact: clearinghouse@nordicom.gu.se.

Web Portal of the European Alliance for Families

The Web Portal of the European Alliance for Families is now open to all: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/families.

There is still a lot of work to be done, though. So far, only contributions sent before 27 June have been integrated by the contractor of the German Presidency. From now on, it will be the Commission’s responsibility to update the Portal. The Commission will have to find a contractor for running the Portal. This will take a few months. In the meantime, the process of placing new contributions on the Portal will be somewhat slower, but the staff of unit EMPL E/1 will do their best to get your contributions translated and published as soon as possible. Keeping texts short will help in this regard – keep in mind that we intend to provide links to country specific information in MISSOC and EURES. The links below show you how this will work:


Any correspondence concerning the Portal should be sent to empl-e1-courrier@ec.europa.eu.

Young people from lower income neighbourhoods - Guide to new policy approaches

The challenges faced by young people from lower-income neighbourhoods are often on the political agenda. Responses vary according to circumstances and the social visibility of the problem, often related to violence or youth crime. This guide proposes food for thought and instruments aimed at bringing to light the stigmatisation and stereotypical ideas that are often the starting point for so-called youth integration initiatives targeting young people from these neighbourhoods.

Price: 30€/45$ + 10% postage, Council of Europe Publishing. To place an order directly: http://book.coe.int/sysmodules/RBS_page/admin/red

Parenting in contemporary Europe: a positive approach

This publication is an important element of the Council of Europe’s recent work in the field of positive parenting leading up to the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation on policy to support positive parenting. The authors review and analyse the major changes affecting parenting in Europe, arising from legal situations, research and practice. This work addresses the core issues related to positive parenting and non-violent upbringing, with particular emphasis on parents’ entitlement to support from the state in carrying out their parental tasks.

Five themes are focused upon: 1. the legal situation and the results of research: what it means to be a parent according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Council of Europe and new scientific knowledge; 2. current thinking on the use of violence and corporal punishment against children; 3. responses to family policy, especially in terms of support programmes and services for parenting and families; 4. the particular problems and needs of parents and children in situations of social exclusion; and 5. the relationship between parenting and drug-related behaviour among children and teenagers. The book also includes the text of the Recommendation, “Keys for parents” and “Guidelines for professionals”.

@ @ Surfing the web @ @
Multilingual consolidated EU legislation now available

The Publications Office of the EU is completing the consolidation of the secondary legislation, also known as the “acquis communautaire”, in 19 of the 20 languages official prior to the 2007 enlargement. Making Community law both transparent and accessible is part of the European Commission's "Better Regulation" action plan. With this aim in mind the laws applicable in the EU have now been consolidated into fewer than 3000 acts. They are not legally binding, but give a continually updated picture of the EU legislation in force.


Calendar of Upcoming Events

Final programme Peer Review Seminars

- 13-14th September: Stockholm, Sweden: Freedom of choice and dignity for the elderly (Peer Countries: CZ, ES, IE, IT, NL, AT, PT)
- 25-26 October: Madrid, Spain: Multi-regional Operative Programme to Combat Discrimination (BG, DE, EL, CY, MT, SI, FI, UK)
- 22-23 November: Finland: Active Ageing strategies to strengthen social inclusion (DE, EE, HU, NL, RO, SI, NO)
- 3-4 December: Denmark: Social Aspects of Human Trafficking (EL, LV, PL, SK, SI, NO)

For more information on the Peer Reviews: http://www.peer-review-social-inclusion.net/peer-reviews/2007

Day of General Discussion 2007: Resources for the Rights of the Child - responsibility of States
21 September 2007, Geneva, Switzerland

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has decided to devote its next day of general discussion to the theme of "Resources for the rights of the child - responsibility of States", which will focus on investments for the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights of children (Article 4 UNCRC). The meeting will take place in Geneva on 21 September 2007. It is open to representatives of NGOs, children and their organisations/networks, UN programmes and agencies, governments and other interested individuals, experts and organisations. Registration deadline: 15 August 2007. Registration forms are available at: http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/day-register.doc. For more information: http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/discussion.htm.

Eurochild – Euronet Event on “Mainstreaming Children’s Rights”
9 October 2007, EP, Brussels

Eurochild together with Euronet – the European Children’s Network – are jointly organising an event in the European Parliament on 9 October on “Mainstreaming Children’s Rights”. It will be hosted by Inger Segelström, MEP from Sweden.

For more information: http://www.crin.org/euronet/resources/infodetail.asp?id=14011 or http://www.eurochild.org/?id=78

Conference on the migration of unaccompanied minors in Europe
10-11 October 2007, Poitiers, France

The International Conference on ‘The migration of unaccompanied minors in Europe: the contexts of origin, the migration routes and the reception systems’ will take place at Poitiers (France) on 10-11 October 2007. It aims to generate a forum of exchange and discussion on this issue and has two main objectives: establish a dialogue between researchers and specialised practitioners in order to put forward a more coherent social and legal treatment that should make prevail the respect of children’s rights over immigration rules; integrate the research findings on this issue with the purpose of achieving a better understanding of the current migration trends and to develop a methodological thought in order to get a better knowledge of the contexts of origin and the different dimensions of this increasing depart of separated children from numerous countries. For more information: http://www.oijj.org/plantilla.php?pag=100500&idioma=en

Congress on 'Phenomena in Juvenile Delinquency: new penal forms'
6-7 November 2007, Seville, Spain

On 6 - 7 November 2007, the General Direction of Juvenile Reform, Council of Justice and Public Administration of the Assembly of Andalucía has decided to organise with the help of the International Juvenile Justice Observatory, an International Congress entitled ‘Phenomena in Juvenile Delinquency: new penal forms’. This international event will bring together academic experts,
researchers, policy and practice professionals from different countries in order to develop and communicate transversal strategies policy responses to juvenile delinquency according to the following axes: Identification of Recent Patterns in Juvenile Delinquency (origin, analysis and comparative trends) and Policy and Practice Interventions (New initiatives and responses to juvenile delinquency). For more information: http://www.crin.org/bcn/details_news.asp?ID=12939

Conference on Emotional Literacy
13 November, Edinburgh, UK

England’s Every Child Matters agenda and Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence agenda share very similar goals: to create happy, healthy and achieving citizens of the future. The third national conference “Implementing and Embedding Emotional Literacy: The Key Agendas” will give a unique opportunity to learn from the practitioners who are already succeeding. Whether you chose workshops within the ‘Behaviour and Attendance’, ‘Teaching and Learning’, ‘Working with Additional Needs’, ‘Mental Health’ or ‘Leadership’ strand, you’ll be sure to leave with solutions and useful resources, so you can easily take things forward. Conference URL: http://www.schooolofemotional-literacy.com/content.asp?ArticleCode=128

International Conference on Foster Care
18-21 November, Malta

This conference, organised by the International Foster Care Organisation, is taking place in Malta, on 18-21 November, 2007. The conference will seek to link together all those involved in the development of family-based care in the countries of the European Union, Central and Eastern Europe (and CIS) and North Africa. For more details and information on how to register: http://www.crin.org/bcn/details_news.asp?ID=12939 &themeID=1002&topicID=1013

XIth ISPCAN European Regional Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect
18-21 November, Lisbon, Portugal

The Conference “Supporting Prevention and Recovery from Child Abuse and Neglect: Role of Professionals, Communities and Families” will serve to challenge existing research and work in the field of child abuse and neglect prevention. It will provide a forum for thematic meetings, allowing participants the opportunity to share knowledge and skills and to build bridges between theory and practice. With this Conference, we will have the opportunity to showcase some of the most prestigious academics and professionals working at the international level for child abuse and neglect prevention. Registration is open to all professionals involved in the field of child abuse and neglect-social workers, psychologists, educators, lawyers, physicians, law enforcement officers, NGOs, civil servants and others. For more information: www.ispcan.org/euroconf2007

Seminar on ethics and childcare
20-21 November 2007, Paris, France

The Association Enfance et Partage fights against all kinds of mistreatments and for the acknowledgement of the Rights of the Child. For the occasion if its 30th birthday, it is organising, in partnership with the International Juvenile Justice Observatory, the International Seminar: ‘Ethics and childcare: a collective engagement’. This event will take place on 20-21 November 2007 at UNESCO in Paris. The 4 following approaches will be developed: Media and Endangered childhood; Interdisciplinary communication and Professional secret; Minor offender yet victim as well and Accompanying the minor when parents fail. For more information: http://www.oijj.org/plantilla.php?pag=100600&idiomа=en

Eurochild Annual Conference
21-23 November, Malta

Eurochild's next Annual Conference will take place from 21 to 23 November 2007 in Malta. This year's title will be "Preventing social exclusion of children and young people in Europe: Participation & yearly intervention". On the occasion of its third annual conference, Eurochild will focus attention on three core themes that are considered crucial to preventing social exclusion and poverty among children and young people in Europe:

1. Child & youth participation
2. Family & parenting support
3. Early years education & care

Each of these themes will be explored through in depth workshops running over the two days of the conference. The principles of participation and early intervention underpin each of these themes.

More information as well as a draft programme can be found on www.eurochild.org/malta2007.

For the on-line registration form, please go to: www.eurochild.org/malta2007/registration.

Children in conflict with the law:
"Phenomena in Juvenile Delinquency"
27 - 28 November 2007, Seville, Spain

An International Congress, “Phenomena in Juvenile Delinquency: new penal forms,” which is organised by the Department for the Reform of Juvenile Justice, the Council of Justice and Public Administration of the Assembly of Andalucía, in cooperation with the International Juvenile Justice Observatory, will be held on 27-28 November 2007 in Seville, Spain. The International Congress aims to reflect on and compare good practices and interventions for all professionals and researchers in the field of juvenile justice.
The topics of the International Congress are:

- Identification of Recent Patterns in Juvenile Delinquency: origin, analysis and comparative trends
- Policy and Practice Interventions: New initiatives and responses to juvenile delinquency


Conference developing European solutions to cross-border child sexual abuse
28th November 2007, UK

The NSPCC and Save the Children Europe Group are pooling their expertise in a joint conference to discuss solutions to two key challenges for child protection in today's Europe. A new piece of NSPCC research will be launched, recommending how EU member states can cooperate more closely to ensure that unsuitable people are not able to gain employment with children by moving between member states. The need for greater political commitment to identifying victims of images of child abuse will also be highlighted. For more information: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Sharing Information

Do you wish to share information, announce something or make a contribution to the e-News Bulletin? Please send it to: [info@eurochild.org](mailto:info@eurochild.org).

Eurochild

Eurochild AISBL is a network of organisations and individuals, who are working in and across Europe to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of children and young people. Our work is based on the principles enshrined in the UN CRC.

If you would like to become a member of Eurochild AISBL, please visit our website [www.eurochild.org](http://www.eurochild.org).

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