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Introduction

Welcome to issue 18 of the Euronet, the European Children's Network, newsletter. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep you informed of Euronet's actions and membership and to brief you on relevant developments in the European Union and member states' policies on children. The newsletter also aims to be a means of communication between NGOs at national level.

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This issue contains news on the EU Convention on the Future of Europe and Euronet's campaign for a legal base for children in the EU Treaty. It also gives a report of the EU experts meeting on children in Madrid at which Euronet was present and the priorities of the EU Danish Presidency. If you have questions, ideas, articles or remarks about the newsletter, please contact Mieke Schuurman at the address above.

We are intending to send the newsletter by e-mail in future. If you do not receive the newsletter by email yet and would like to receive it this way, please send your email address to Carolina Santrich europachildrenetwork@skynet.be. If you still wish to receive the Newsletter by post or no longer wish to receive it, please indicate this in your message.



EU Convention on the Future of Europe:

Update on Euronet's Campaign for Children's Rights in the EU Treaty

The EU Convention on the Future of Europe has so far been in its 'listening phase' and in September/October will produce its first draft proposals for EU Treaty revisions. Euronet has been involved in the 'listening' phase of the Convention in several ways to campaign for a reference to children's rights in the EU Treaty.

Euronet has submitted its position paper '*Children are European Citizens Too: Children in the EU Treaty*' to all Convention members and in several civil society working groups (Social Policy, Citizens and Institutions, Human Rights) to prepare their input for the Convention plenary session. Euronet's position was presented during the plenary Convention meeting with civil society on 24 and 25 June through its member organisation Save the Children who made a presentation on behalf of the European Platform of Social NGOs. Diana Sutton from Save the Children highlighted in her speech the need for a reference on the rights of the child.

The Euronet secretariat and several of its member organisations in the EU member states have met members of the Convention to discuss the need for a legal base for children. This included Presidium member of the Convention Klaus Hänsch MEP and Hanja Maij-Weggen MEP, Dutch member of the Convention, who said that she would support the participation of children in the Convention.

Youth Convention

From 9-12 July the Youth Convention on the Future of Europe took place in Brussels, including more than 200 young people from all over Europe. Euronet has criticised the Youth Convention for only including young people of 18 years and older. No younger children were included, which excluded 90 million European citizens. Glenys Kinnock MEP remarked:

"The Youth Convention should involve young people under 18. I was present in May at the United Nations Special Session on Children and witnessed the active participation of children from all over the world – who effectively lobbied their governments to respect and uphold their rights and their interests. It is time the EU learnt from others, including developing countries, about the importance of promoting the genuine involvement of children. Europe must listen to its youngest and its future citizens."

The young delegates presented the outcome of their discussions to the plenary of the Convention on Friday 12 July.

The main things they requested included a clear European vision on education, the information society, intercultural youth exchange, youth employment, that the EU should tackle the everyday problems of marginalised young people and a stronger reference to youth in the EU Treaty. They also asked for a follow-up Youth Convention.

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European Convention

At the same time, the European Commission presented a Eurobarometer Survey carried out among 15 to 24 year olds. It contained the views of 15 to 24 year olds on the functioning of the EU as well as their vision of Europe. It included the views of a representative sample of 7 558 young people.

The key issues that these young Europeans are concerned about are employment; solidarity, including exclusion and poverty; support for democratic values and human rights. By contrast, enlargement of the EU and the effectiveness of the EU institutions is of less interest

(The full results of this study are available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/index_fr.htm)

Second phase of the Convention

The Convention is now entering its second phase and starts analysing in more depth the challenges facing the EU. To this end it has split itself into ten working groups, dealing with the following issues: subsidiarity; Charter of Fundamental Rights; legal personality; national parliaments; complementary competencies; economic governance; justice and internal security; external policy; defence and simplification of legislative procedure. The working groups are expected to present their conclusions into draft articles for a future constitutional Treaty in October and at the latest early November.

The outline of a fundamental Treaty should be tabled in the autumn. Whether this will be a new Treaty or an amended Treaty will be clear after the conclusions of the working groups. The whole process of discussion, drafting, amending and adoption of texts is expected to last until mid 2003. Several members of the Convention believe that the new Treaty text will consist of two parts, one constitutional part and an executing part. Several members also believe that the Charter of Fundamental Rights should be integrated into the EU Treaty without amending it, since amending it risks opening up a discussion and could result in a deterioration of the contents instead of an improvement. The next two plenary sessions of the Convention in September and beginning of October will deal respectively with the simplification of legislative procedures and subsidiarity. ❖



What can you do to Support a Legal Base for Children?

To support the campaign to include children's rights in the EU Treaty, Euronet is asking its member organisations to actively campaign at the national level. It is also asking other organisations to demonstrate their support for the legal base on children's rights.

What can you do?

- **Send letters** to your national Convention members and national Ministers of European and Foreign Affairs and those Ministers responsible for children. (an example letter is available from Mieke Schuurman)
- **Arrange meetings** with Convention members and relevant people in the national Ministries. Euronet can help you with preparation for these meetings.

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What Can You Do?

- **Support Euronet's position** if you are not a member of Euronet. So far UNICEF, COFACE (European Family Organisation), the International Federation Terre des Hommes, Human Rights Watch as well as the Children's Alliance in the European Parliament are supporting Euronet's campaign for a legal base for children.
- **Publish articles** in national newspapers or in specialised magazines (an example article and press releases are available from Carolina Santrich).
- **Get involved** in national debates on the Future of Europe and raise the issue of children's rights, for information on your national debate check the website http://europa.eu.int/futurum/debate_en.htm ❖

More information on the Convention in all EU languages on: <http://european-convention.eu.int>. Euronet paper *Children are European Citizens too: Children in the EU Treaty*; example letters; articles and a contact details of the members of the Convention can be obtained from Carolina Santrich or Mieke Schuurman, email: europeanchildrennetwork@skynet.be or mieke.schuurman@tiscali.nl

The European Platform of Social NGOs has produced a 'toolkit' to assist NGOs to understand and get involved in the Convention process; this is available from Mieke Schuurman.

EU PRESIDENCIES AND CHILDREN

Spanish Presidency Experts Meeting on Children creates new European Network of Observatories

On 11 April the Spanish Presidency organised an experts meeting of Government representatives on children. The meeting discussed the United Nations Special Session on Children, the fight against poverty of children, sexual exploitation of children and a European Network of Observatories on Children.



Euronet was invited to participate at this experts meeting and spoke about the conclusions of its report on the social exclusion of children and the need for a legal base for children. Euronet's Spanish member organisation the 'Plataforma de Organizaciones de Infancia' was also present as observer.

Concerning the United Nations Special Session on children the meeting concluded that the Convention on the Rights of the Child should be ratified and implemented in the legislation of all countries participating. They also stressed the importance of education, the participation of children and young people and the need to eradicate poverty. There should be a firm commitment to carry out the Plan of Action to be adopted at the Special Session.

On the subject of the fight against poverty, the meeting concluded that there was a need of investing in children and families in order to reduce the difficulties of poverty and promote equality, especially with regard to health and education.

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Spanish Presidency

The meeting also said that children's participation should be taken into consideration in the next National Action Plans on social exclusion, as promoted by Euronet and UNICEF. The lack of data and the need to achieve common indicators, including indicators on children at European level needs to be overcome. The meeting agreed that the next experts meeting in Denmark would follow up on this subject.

Concerning the sexual exploitation of children the meeting underlined the commitments made at the second World Congress against sexual commercial exploitation of children at Yokohama and the action plan adopted in November 2001 in Budapest, where the bases for the European commitment was established for Yokohama.

On the creation of a European Network of Observatories, Centres and Places of Observation of Children eight (Belgium, France, Portugal, Italy, Luxembourg, Denmark, Ireland and Spain) of the EU countries at the meeting agreed to commit themselves to setting up such an Observatory. Other countries undertook to decide later or were not in favour. Practical matters and issues for the Observatory to study were discussed at a follow-up meeting on 26 June in Madrid. Euronet submitted a paper to this meeting on subjects to be studied by the European Network of Observatories. This was distributed at the meeting and was welcomed by the participants. The meeting decided to set up the Secretariat of the Network at the Instituto Innocenti in Florence. The eight countries mentioned above will take part as members and The Netherlands, Greece and Germany will stay as observers. The Danish Presidency and the Instituto Innocenti will both organise follow-up meetings. ❖



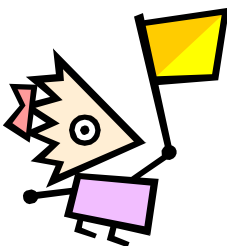
Danish Presidency Priorities

The Danish EU Presidency will make enlargement as its main priority and will seek to conclude the first round of enlargement negotiations by finalising negotiations with as many as ten candidate countries at the Copenhagen Summit in December. But other issues are also addressed in its programme 'One Europe'.

The Danish EU Presidency programme does refer to children in relation to cross-border enforcement of rights and smoother cross-border co-operation. The Danish Presidency intends to continue to work on "making child custody and access orders enforceable across borders within the EU

On 11 October the Danish Presidency will also organise another experts meeting on children to follow-up the meeting of Madrid. Euronet and its Danish member organisation Save the Children Denmark have written to the Danish Minister of Social Affairs to ask for a meeting at ministerial level again, as was done in France and Belgium. Euronet believes a meeting at a higher political level is important because of the follow-up to the United Nations Special Session on Children and other important issues on the European agenda affecting children, in particular the debates in the Convention on the Future of Europe. ❖

ECOSOC Hearing "Children First"



On 25 June the European Economic and Social Committee organised a hearing on "Children First: Children and Youth Policies in Europe". The meeting was initiated by Georgios Sklavounos, ECOSOC Rapporteur for "Children first", and supported by several children's organisations, including Euronet, the European Network of Child Friendly Cities, NACRO, and European Network of Street Children World-wide

The objectives of the hearing "Children First" were

- ♪ To examine priorities for children and youth policies in the EU for the next decade.
- ♪ To identify new approaches needed and effective strategies and partnerships among the stakeholders.
- ♪ To examine the use and feasibility of a Permanent European Child-Friendly Forum representing civil society organisations and other socio-professional actors involved in the field of children and youth policies.

The meeting was divided into 3 Discussion Panels. The first one was on 'Child-Friendly Justice: the legal and judicial systems as regards children and youth', with contributions by Anna Karamanou MEP; Christoph Sajonz from the Commission DG Justice and Home Affairs and Helen Davies, expert from NACRO (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders).

The second panel focused on 'Children in the City', including the child-friendly school, neighbourhood, cultural interaction, civic and social activity. Contributions were made by Arlene McCarthy MEP; Hans-Joachim Schild from the Youth Unit in the Commission DG Education and Culture; Frank Warburton, Head of Crime and Social Policy at NACRO; Jan van Gils from Kind en Samenleving; Ernesto Caffo from Telefono Azzurro and Adelheid Byttebier, responsible for youth and urban policies within the Brussels City Council.

The last Panel concentrated on 'Welfare and Social Policies for Children and Youth: towards a strategy of investment and development of social and human capital - social policy as development policy'. Participants were Lissy Gröner MEP; Diana Sutton from Save the Children, Walter Speecht on behalf of ENSCW and Hugh Frazer from the Commission DG Employment.

At the end of the meeting the Permanent European Child-Friendly Forum was established.











EURONET'S "AGENDA 2000" SHARED WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

**From 29-31 May a conference took place in Rome on “Youth in southeast Europe: Policy for Participation, Empowerment and Social Exclusion”.
The conference was organised by the World Bank and UNICEF.**

James Anderson of the England Young Peoples Rights Network and John Errington of Save the Children-UK represented **Euronet** at this conference. Their workshop was a presentation of the experience of the England group in the **Euronet Agenda 2000** project and focussed upon strengthening young people's rights to information and their participation in decision making as a means of contributing to more democratic societies. The methods used by the group were explained and the strengths and weakness of peer research were explored in order to assist workers from south-east Europe wishing to adopt this approach.

The overall objective of the conference was to reach a consensus on the key elements for effective youth policies among decision-makers, donors, youth and civil society representatives and the private sector. The intention is that these youth policies will guide investments in youth in south-east Europe to ensure the realisation of their fullest potential as agents of social change, healthy behaviour and inter-ethnic cohesion in their respective communities. The participating countries were Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Federal republic of Yugoslavia including the UN administered province of Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova and Romania. The final stage of the conference involved each country delegation agreeing a strategy to be pursued to develop a youth policy in each country.

Key features identified during the conference of any effective national youth policy (also advocated by the European Youth Forum) were:

-  The inclusion of non-formal and formal education
-  A youth training policy
-  Youth legislation
-  A youth budget
-  A youth information policy
-  A policy covering all levels of government
-  Youth-focussed research
-  Participation
-  Inter-ministerial co-operation
-  Innovation and youth advisory bodies.

Contribution by John Errington, Save the Children-UK

Call for EU Legislation to Protect Children from 'Exploiting' Advertising



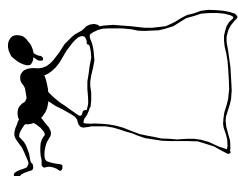
An independent Commission-funded Consumers Committee calls for tougher laws to protect children from the influence of advertising. The Consumers Committee recently published its report on commercial practices aimed at children.

The commercial communications industry functions under the approach to children as an increasingly important target market. European rules and regulatory regimes have not kept pace with this development. There are very few if any rules in European legislation to protect children from undue pressure and exploitation and to achieve a proper balance between the rights of children and the rights of commercial communications to market products and services. The Consumers Committee calls for a pan-EU law, which could be 'fleshed out' by self-regulatory initiatives such as codes of conduct, which carry enforcement instruments. Areas that should be covered by such a law are merchandising which 'exploits' children and parents, advertising in schools, internet marketing, collection and processing of children's personal data, sponsorship and public health requirements in the food sector.


In its annex, the report refers to Article 17 of the UN CRC, i.e. the right of the child to have access to appropriate information which is consistent with their moral well-being and knowledge and understanding among peoples, and respects the child's cultural background. There is also a reference to the recommendations in the Euronet report 'A children's policy for 21st century Europe' concerning the education of children on consumer issues.

This report shows again the need for a legal base for children in the EU Treaty, which would enable that EU-legislation would be made to protect children from exploiting advertising.


The full text of the report can be found on: http://europa.eu.int/comm/consumers/policy/committee/cc25_en.pdf



Call for Proposals

 **Culture 2000 Programme.** The Culture Programme has been established for a period of five years from 1 January 2000. The objectives of this programme include the promotion of creativity, transnational dissemination of culture and movement of artists, creators and other cultural operators and professionals and their works, with a **strong emphasis on young and socially disadvantaged people**. The main sector that will be addressed for 2003 will be 'performing arts', e.g. theatre, dance, music, opera, the lyric arts, street theatre and circus. Application forms are available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/index_en.html or from the European Commission, Policy development in the cultural sphere – Culture 2000 framework programme, B-100 – Bureau 6/41, B-1049 Brussels.

Deadline for applications is 15 or 31 October 2002, depending on the type of project.

 **Tacis seminars/conferences 2002.** The purpose of Tacis seminars and conferences programme is to support and finance meetings and conferences between the EU and the partner States in eastern and central Europe and central Asia. International organisations, NGOs, universities, local and regional authorities may apply. Detailed information on this call is available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index_en.htm. You can also send an email to Adriano.longoni@cec.eu.int or Antoinette.nicolo@cec.eu.int.

Deadline for applications is 31 October 2002.

Forthcoming Events

- 22-24 September — Bruges, Belgium: Congress Child in the City**, First European Congress & Trade Show organised by Child in the City Foundation. For more information contact: Ms Sietske Oord, P.O. Box 822, 3700 AV Zeist, the Netherlands, Tel: +31 30 6933 489; Fax: +31 30 6917394; E-mail: soord@europoint-bv.com
- 26-27 September — Copenhagen, Denmark: Conference Gender and Social Exclusion**, including a child's perspective, organised by the Danish EU Presidency. The conference is open to representatives of governments, experts, parliamentarians and NGOs. For more information contact: Aase Rieck Sorensen; Department of Gender Equality, Skindergade 38,2; DK-1159 Copenhagen K; Tel: 45 33 92 39 86; E-mail: ars@lige.dk
- 17-18 October — Aarhus, Denmark: Round Table on the Programme for Social Exclusion**, organised by the European Commission and the Danish EU Presidency. The round table aims to discuss the main lessons learnt from the first National Action Plans on poverty and social exclusion. More information follows in the next newsletter.
- 30-31 October — Vilnius, Lithuania: Third Regional Meeting of NGO Forums in Europe**, hosted by the Lithuanian Network of NGOs for the Rights of the Child. For more information contact: Gelbekit Vaikus/Save the Children Lithuania, Tel: 370 2 61 08 15; Fax: 370 2 496 214; E-mail: euro@Inb.lt
- 15 November — Colon, Germany: Kindertag**, organised by the German National Coalition of Children's organisations. On this day results will be presented of a big study carried out in Germany to what extent Article 3 of the UNCRC is included in German legislation, such as family law, foreign affairs law and asylum law. For more information contact: Beate Schmidt-Behlau; Mühlendamm 3; 10178 Berlin; Germany; Tel: +49 2241 205759; E-mail: Beate.Schmidt-Behlau@web.de
- November — Lyon, France: Round Table on children in severe difficulties**, organised by Société Lyonnaise pour l'Enfance et l'Adolescence (SLEA). This Round Table will discuss the situation and solutions for children which are in severe difficulties, for example those children who are due to their behaviour expelled from school or in psychiatric institutions or those children who are delinquents. For more information contact: Barbara Walter, SLEA; 14, quai Général Sarraill; 69006 Lyon; France; Tel: +33 4 78240311; Fax: +33 4 72 74 12 32; E-mail: slea@slea.asso.fr

Other news



Flemish Children's Rights Coalition launches new website at <http://www.kinderrechtencoalitie.be>

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This newsletter is available in English and French, on e-mail and on the website. Euronet partners are encouraged to translate the newsletter in their own language or highlights of it. The Spanish member organisation has done this for a number of existing Euronet publications. If you are translating the newsletter please let the Euronet coordinator know. Could you also inform her about any national initiatives which are planned. These can be included in the newsletter