Dear Readers,

Since our last newsletter the European Children’s Network has been busy to finalize and launch our new report “What about us? Children’s Rights in the European Union: next steps”. A pre-launch took place at the end of November during the UK EU Presidency and an official launch in March in the European Parliament in Brussels, hosted by Karin Riis-Jorgensen MEP. The report has already received many positive reactions from representatives from the Commission, the European Parliament, the EU independent experts group on fundamental right, representatives of permanent representatives to the EU and civil society.

Our new report has also given valuable input to the draft European Commission on children’s rights. EURONET has been involved in consultations of the European Commission, together with other children’s organisations, on the Communication.

EURONET had to say goodbye to three very valuable members of the management committee. Diana Sutton left Save the Children Brussels in September. Tara Hopkins left NSPCC in January and Marie-Christine Ashby left BICE in January. A big thank you to the three of them for their active support and work to develop EURONET. Diana is replaced by Olivia Lind-Haldorsson, who already worked in the Save the Children office in Brussels and is not new to the Euronet work. Tara will be replaced by Kathleen Spencer, who used to work with the Social Platform in Brussels, in May.

Finally I would like to welcome our new Polish members to the European Children’s Network. We look forward to working together for children’s rights in the EU!

Mieke Schuurman
Secretary-General
European Children’s Network
NEWS FROM EURONET

17-18 October, Glasgow, UK - Round Table on Social Inclusion
On 17-18 October 2005, the 4th European Round Table on Poverty and Social Inclusion took place in Glasgow under the UK Presidency of the EU coinciding with the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October). The conference was attended by 283 delegates from the EU, Bulgaria, Romania, Norway. Participants included also representatives from European and national NGOs, national, regional and local authorities and the European Commission. EURONET was represented by its President Tara Hopkins, who made a speech to the plenary session on children's poverty and social exclusion and did a presentation in one of the working groups on child poverty.

9-10 November, Brussels, Belgium- Conference “Future Europeans: the right start in life for children and young people in Europe”
The conference aimed to bring together children, young people and senior child care professionals from across the EU. The discussion mainly focused on how Europe can support children and young people becoming active and engaged citizens, and celebrate the contribution they make to European society. Tara Hopkins, President of EURONET presented the new report “What about us? Children’s Rights in the European Union”.

18-19 November, Ankara, Turkey – Symposium on Child Rights Advocacy in Europe
The International Children’s Center (ICC) organised an event commemorating the 20 November World Child Rights day. The Conference objective was to introduce good practices and ideas on child rights advocacy to NGOs working in Turkey to help children and to raise awareness amongst the child rights NGOs and other relevant governmental actors regarding child protection mechanisms in Europe. Zuzana Baudysova, Member of the EURONET management Council, participated in the meeting by doing a presentation on European child rights networking experience.

29 November, London, UK - L’Europe de l’Enfance
Tara Hopkins, President of the European Children Network represented the organisation at the last Meeting of L Europe de l’Enfance Group, organised by the UK Presidency. During the event she had the occasion to present the report What about us? Children’s rights in the European Union – Next steps. Participants welcomed the report and congratulated the organisation for the work done.

28 November, London UK
On the 28th November 2005, EURONET launched the new report What about us? Children’s rights in the European Union – Next steps at a launch event in London, UK. The document is the follow up to the 1999 report A children's policy for the 21st Century Europe and explores the key challenges facing children in the EU today. It also describes the EU's current approach to children, and identifies a number of weaknesses, including limited legal bases in the EU treaties, relative invisibility of children’s interests, lack of overall policy leadership and co-ordination, minimal resources from the EU budget, and the lack of information on children at EU level. The second part of the report examines in detail specific policy areas affecting children in the EU, such as tackling violence against children, eradicating child poverty, institutional care as a last resort, developing children’s participation, to mention a few of the areas covered by the report.

Brussels, 7 March 2006.
The Brussels launch of the EURONET Report on Children’s Rights at EU level took place at the European parliament on March 7th. The event was hosted by Karen Riis-Jorgensen, member of the European Parliament. Both representatives from the Austrian and the Finnish EU Presidencies presented their respective programmes concerning children’s rights. The Austrian representative in particular focused on the Fundamental Rights agency and underlined the importance of giving competence on children’s rights to the agency. Participants included a wide range of children’s rights NGOs, member of the European Parliament and representatives from the European Commission.

The report can be downloaded from Euronet’s website www.europeanchildrennetwork.org or be ordered from our office.
Children’s Rights in the Commission Work Program for 2006?
On October 25th the European Commission presented its work program for 2006. Family reunification, Parental responsibilities and Human trafficking are the three areas where the Commission will address children’s rights specifically.
In the annex on the priority items for adoption during 2006 the following items concerning children’s rights are mentioned;
• Revision of Directive 88/378/EC on the safety of toys
• Communication on the implementation of the rights of the child
• Communication on a European Cyber-security and Cyber-crime policy

The European Parliaments political groups EPP, ALDE and UEN have highlighted children’s rights in their joint motion for a resolution on the Commission work programme:
34. Welcomes the plans for a Commission Communication on the rights of the child which would offer an important opportunity for the Commission to address the ‘invisibility’ of children’s rights at EU level;
The resolution was adopted by the Parliament on 15 December.
More information on the Commissions’ work program :

Written Declaration on Child Helplines in Europe signed!!!
The Written Declaration presented last October by Lissy Gröner, to the European Parliament, in support of children’s rights and of the European child helplines, has been signed by no less than 394 Members of the European Parliament. The Written Declaration recommends the EU to support child helplines, including toll-free numbers and the EU assistance to Child Helplines International (CHI) as a platform for EU child helplines to network and liaises on regional issues. More generally the declaration encourages the involvement of children’s rights networks and NGOs working on behalf of children in the development of EU policy regarding children.
More information on CHI visit the web-site: www.childhelplineinternational.org

Adoption of Asylum Procedures Directive
The Council adopted on 1 December 2005 a directive on minimum standards on procedures in member states for granting and withdrawing refugee status. Member States can however introduce or maintain more favourable provisions for asylum seekers.
The directive has been criticized by UNHCR, who see the risk of downgrading of asylum standards in the European Union. UNHCR sees serious deficiencies in the Councils directive, especially on allowing states to designate «safe third countries» outside the EU, where asylum seekers can be sent to, without having the possibility to have had their asylum claims being heard in an EU member state. UNHCR calls for EU member states not to search for the lowest level as permitted by the directive, but to strive for high standards of protection.
More information on the directive can be found at:

Implementation of the European Youth Pact
On November 2005, the Council of Youth Ministers, adopted a Resolution on “Implementing the European pact for Youth and Promoting active citizenship”, recalling the main tools of co-operation in the area of youth policy for the implementation of the European pact for youth. The points presented in the resolution are the key elements for co-operation in the area of youth policy in the EU for the next 3 years. An evaluation of this framework of Co-operation is going to take place in 2009. The Austrian presidency of the EU will hold an informal youth council meeting, where non formal learning will be the main item on the agenda.

European Parliament calls for a Constitution for 2009
On 19 January the European parliament adopted a Resolution on the “period of reflection” on the Constitutional treaty. The report argues that no further enlargement after Romania and Bulgaria is possible on the basis of the Treaty of Nice and calls for a Constitution for 2009 to ensure a democratic and effective EU. It also stresses the need for a broad public debate on the future of European integration guided by common topics and with clear political goals, including a series of parliamentary
forums starting in June 2006. Regarding the specific contribution of civil society, the resolution calls on citizens petition that contribute to shaping the debate, invites member states to organise “citizens forums” at national, regional and local level. It also urges civil society organisations to include the entry into force of the constitution as one of their priorities for discussion and debate.

The European Commission has launched on 27 March an internet discussion forum on the future of Europe, in 20 languages. This discussion, which all citizens are invited to join, is part of the Commission’s “Plan D” for Dialogue, Debate and Democracy in response to a call by the European Council for a period of reflection following the negative votes in France and The Netherlands on the proposed Constitutional Treaty.

The address of the Discussion Forum is: http://europa.eu.int/debateeurope

European Commission published a White paper on Communication
On 1st February, the European Commission published its White Paper on communication. The White Paper forms the third part of the Commission’s global strategy to restore citizens’ trust in the EU, including also Plan D and a Communication action Plan published in July 2005. The document is based on an interactive approach, which includes to better listen to citizens’ concerns. Children are not mentioned at all in the text.

A consultation has been launched, which will last until July 2006. Comments can be posted on the Commission’s website. Besides, five specific conferences will be held in Brussels between February and June 2006, involving a wide range of stakeholders and if possible other institutions.

The white paper can be found on the following website: http://europa.eu.int/comm./communication

Child-resistant lighters
On 8 - 9 February 2006 the European Commission presented a proposal for a Decision requiring producers and importers of lighters to make their products child-resistant. An estimated 34 to 40 people, often children, die annually in the EU due to children playing with unsafe lighters. Many more people suffer serious and permanent injuries. Simple devices can be added to lighters to make them child-resistant, at an average cost of just 4 Euro-cents per lighter. Safety standards were agreed on a voluntary basis within the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) in 2002, but they are not applied. However, producers abide to similar safety requirements in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. A US study showed a 60% decrease in fires started by children after a law on child resistant lighters was passed in the United States – proving the benefits of such legislation.

Promoting business spirit in Schools and Universities
On Monday 13 February 2006 the European Commission has outlined a set of recommendations aimed to enhance the role of education in creating a more entrepreneurial culture in European societies. Starting from an early age, school education should stimulate young people’s awareness of entrepreneurship as options for their future, give them the means to develop basic entrepreneurial skills and help them to be more creative and self-confident in whatever they undertake. At a later stage, universities and technical institutes should integrate entrepreneurship as an important part of the curriculum, spread across different subjects, and require or encourage students to take entrepreneurship courses. This initiative forms part of the EU’s Lisbon partnership for Growth and Jobs.

Commission launches a probe into the treatment of child and teenage asylum-seekers
The Commission is examining how a 2003 EU directive on minimum standards for the reception of asylum-seekers is being implemented by member state governments.

The deadline for placing the 2003 directive on national statute books was February 2005.

A 2005 EU directive on minimum standards for granting and withdrawing refugee status says that nobody should be detained for the sole reason that he or she is seeking asylum. This directive has to be transposed in member states by December 2007. The Commission also recommended last year that harmonised EU rules should be set for procedures used during deportations, including the permissible circumstances for coercive measures. The Council of Ministers has yet to begin debating that proposal in earnest.

Austria’s EU presidency has set up a discussion on this proposal for a meeting of EU justice and interior ministers scheduled for June 2006.
Prime Ministers of seven EU countries meet European students to discuss Future of Europe
As part of the “reflection phase” on the future of Europe, launched by the European Council in June 2005, the Prime Ministers of the seven countries of the European Union (Italy, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Austria, Finland and Germany) met on 5 February in Dresden to debate the EU’s problems and challenges and hold discussions with around one hundred students who had just presented their vision of Europe.
During discussions with the Prime Ministers, the students put forward concrete proposals to improve European competitiveness (for example: reserving 5% of the EU’s GDP for research and development) or creating and developing the European identity of young people (for example: introducing compulsory courses on Europe in schools; strengthening exchange programmes, not only for students but for all sections of the European population; electing a president of the EU; launching a European television chain).

Brussels European Council called for measures to rapidly reduce child poverty in the EU
On 23/24 March the European Council reaffirmed the objective of the Partnership for growth and jobs that steps have to be taken to make a decisive impact on the reduction of poverty and social exclusion by 2010. The Presidency conclusions state ‘Social inclusion policies should be pursued by the Union and the Member States, ... focusing on target groups such as children in poverty’. The European Council asks the Member States to take necessary measures to rapidly and significantly reduce child poverty, giving all children equal opportunities, regardless of their social background.
The European Council also stressed that the reconciliation of work and family life has to be promoted in view of the demographic challenges. Affordable care for children needs to be improved policies that make it possible to combine working life with children and family life need to be supported.

The European Union and the Rights of the Child": the Commission launches a competition aimed at all young people in the EU
The young people who will decide to partake in the competition are asked to develop a poster comprising a logo and illustrating the idea of protecting, respecting and promoting children's rights within the European Union. Participants will be divided into two age groups (10-14 years and 15-18 years) and will have to form teams of at least four youngsters. The works will be first selected at the national level and the first three teams will be invited to a prize-giving ceremony organised in each EU country in early May. The winners of the first national prizes will then be invited to participate in a day-long guided tour in Brussels during the month on the 18th of May, focusing on the themes of the European Union and justice, freedom and security, as well as a lunch debate with Vice-President Frattini and an awards ceremony chaired by him. The best posters will be presented on the web sites of Commission Representation Offices in the EU countries and on Europa. They will be also employed in future European campaigns for promoting children's rights.

Further information is available at the following Internet addresses:
DE and AU : www.eurojugend.net , UK and IE : www.euroyoung.com
DK and SE : www.euroungdom.com , ES : www.europajovenes.com
ET : www.euronoor.com , FI : www.euronuori.com
HU : www.euroifjusag.com , IT : www.eurogiovane.com
LV : www.eirojauniesi.com , LT : www.eurojaunimas.com
MT : www.eurozghazagh.com , NL : www.eurojongern.com
CZ and SK : www.euromladez.com , SL : www.evromladina.com
AUSTRIAN PRESIDENCY

On 1st January, Austria took over the presidency of the European Union. The work programme of the Austrian EU Presidency includes measures to stimulate the European economy and labour market, to promote small and medium sized businesses and to devote greater attention to research and development. Growth and employment are clearly prioritised as well as education and training, in order to boost the Lisbon strategy.

The Permanent intergovernmental group L’Europe pour l’enfance, will take place on 2 May in Vienna.

Priorities for the Austrian Presidency of the EU 2006
The Federal Ministry of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection (BMSG) has set objectives in three key areas for the first six months of 2006:

- Social Affairs
- Youth
- Consumer protection

In these three policy areas the BMSG is committed to achieve progress and to pave the way for Europe’s social future together with its European partners. For more details on concrete projects of the BMSG and current developments in these areas, click on the respective links on this webpage.

Specific priorities on Youth:
BMSG defined three key areas of work for the Presidency, in which significant progress is to be made:

- Implementation of the European Youth Pact:
  Focusing its attention on young people who constitute Europe’s future, the BMSG wishes to give impetus to the implementation of the objectives of the European Youth Pact. A social future for all of Europe cannot be attained without the young people of today being optimally prepared for their future role as active citizens integrated into the European society. Therefore the informal meeting of youth ministers in Bad Ischl – with the active participation of young people from all over Europe – will be the centrepiece of the events hosted by the BMSG during the Presidency. At the same time the European Youth Convention will be held to intensively involve the young generation into the decision-making processes in the European Union. For the social future of Europe will be shaped decisively by the generations to come.

- Conclusion of the work on the new EU programme YOUTH IN ACTION:
  During the Austrian Presidency the YOUTH IN ACTION programme is to be adopted for the period 2007 to 2013. The programme and the funds allocated to it will make it possible to conduct campaigns to increase mobility, promote active citizenship and develop young people’s solidarity and thus to establish a fundamental pillar of cross-border youth policy.

- Passing of a resolution to recognise Non-formal and Informal learning:
  With the economic, political and social challenges facing Europe, the importance of alternative learning methods providing the young people with essential skills, experience and independence, is growing from day to day. Therefore the BMSG has set the goal of promoting the Europe-wide recognition of these types of education – which are absolutely indispensable in the globalised and dynamic world of today – to increase their attractiveness and general acceptance.


Presidency’s work programme:
FOCUS ON

Update on the European Commission Communication on the implementation of the rights of the child

At the initiative of Mr Franco Frattini, European Commissioner in charge of Justice, Freedom and Vicepresident of the European Comission, the Commission and its Directorate General for Freedom, Security and Justice is in the process of drafting a Communication on the implementation of the rights of the child. «The communication intends to set a framework where concrete actions will allow the implementation of the rights of the child within the European Union. Also, the defence of children’s rights in the external Policy of the Union will be included. The action plan included in the Communication should help the Union and the Member States to fulfil their obligations vis-à-vis the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.»

EURONET welcomes the drafting of this Communication, as this will be the European Commission’s first ever strategic document on children’s rights and it is closely following the developments of the planned Communication. It has been involved in several meetings with Commission officials on this strategy and a meeting with cabinet members of Vice president Frattini and with Frattini himself. EURONET, Save the Children – Europe Group and UNICEF sent out a joint letter and a press release on this issue stressing the need for such a communication to be based on the UN CRC. Since May EURONET is part of a large coalition of Brussels-based children’s rights NGOs, which is supporting this action. Together, they have developed a series of key messages regarding crucial elements that should be incorporated into the communication to ensure that it is an effective strategy for a coherent EU policy. The document calls for a joint communication providing a coherent strategy for both internal and external EU policy, which effectively serves the promotion of children’s rights within the EU, its Member States and third countries. A consultation meeting with all stakeholders involved, including representatives from the European commission, UNICEF and Children’s NGOs took place in June 2005. At the meeting EURONET repeated its call for this action plan to be firmly based on the UNCRC. NGOs called for the action strategy to focus, not only on the important issue of the protection of the rights of the child, but to put children’s rights at the centre of all EU policies and programmes. The need for a focal point for child rights in every Directorate was addressed by the Commission. An informal consultation with the concerned Directorates General on the content of the communication is currently taking place; the feedback received will lead to the consolidation and finalisation of the text, which is planned to be adopted by the college of Commissioners in Spring 2006, thereafter to be presented to the European Parliament and the Council in June 2006. The Commission has foreseen an experts meeting before the adoption of the Communication. In March 2006 the NGO core group was consulted by the Commission on the official draft. The Children’s Rights NGO group is continuing to follow the drafting of the Communication and will give concrete input to possible new drafts of the Communication.

For more information on the texts of the Communication and the responses of the Children’s Rights NGO group contact Mieke Schuurman at EURONET.

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERS

In September 2006 Euronet welcomed two new Polish member organisations : The Nobody's Children Foundation and Our Home Association. Both organisations are strongly active at national level to achieve tangible improvements for children in Poland.

The Nobody's Children Foundation is a nonprofit non-governmental organization, which provides a broad scope of assistance to abused children, their parents, and caregivers. The Foundation's activities are addressed to physically, psychologically, and sexually abused and neglected children, their parents and caregivers, as well as professionals dealing with cases of child abuse. The main goal is to develop an efficient aid system for abused children, a system that would integrate activities of state institutions, local authorities and nongovernmental organizations working for the benefit of children in the particular region. We provide short- and long-term assistance to victims of abuse and to
their caregivers. Moreover, it offers psychological, educational, and legal consultation to people who have contact with cases of child abuse. We organize specialist training programs on problems related to child abuse for various professional groups and interdisciplinary teams.

"OUR HOME" ASSOCIATION is a Polish non-governmental organisation (NGO) which aims at the reformation of the child welfare system in Poland. Since 1991 OUR HOME has assisted over 200 children homes and other facilities and programs for neglected children in professional training, disbursing financial grants, donations in kind or with other, non-material grants. The Association also helps individuals from child welfare institutions with vocational training, or managing the independent living projects. The value of OUR HOMES’ assistance program has already exceeded the equivalent of 5 million US dollars. The Association has become the most important Polish NGO dealing with the problems of orphaned and neglected children.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Exchange of good practice in youth work
The Commission receives proposals until 30th of June 2006 for projects that promotes exchange of experience and good practice in the field of youth between European Union, candidate countries, EFTA/EEA countries and Africa, Caribbean, Pacific, Asia and Latin America. The Commission can fund up to €100 000 per project.

For more information, including application forms, see: http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/call/eac4705/index_en.html

Innovative cooperation, training and information projects
Within the framework of the ‘Action 5’ Call for innovative projects the European Commission aims to support innovative cooperation, training and information projects in the field of non-formal education. The projects must have a clear transnational European dimension and contribute to European cooperation in youth matters. More specifically they must lead to the creation and/or consolidation of strong partnership between youth organisations or partnership between youth organisations and public authorities. The total amount earmarked for the co-financing of projects in the context of this call is € 2 million. The maximum funding amount per project will not exceed € 100,000 per year of activity and the maximum grant will not exceed €300,000. It is expected that this call will allow supporting about 10 to 15 projects.

Applications have to be sent to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive agency by 1 july 2006 at the latest.

The complete text of this call and the application form can be found on the following website: http://europea.eu.int/comm/youth/call/index_en.html.

The European Union and the Rights of the Child": the Commission launches a competition aimed at all young people in the EU
"The European Union and the Rights of the Child". This is the title of a competition launched by Franco Frattini, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Justice, Freedom and Security, inviting European children and teenagers from 10 to 18 years of age to create a poster on children’s rights within the Union. The competition aims at increasing awareness among European younger citizens about EU actions in this field. After a first selection at the national level and a prize-giving ceremony organised in each EU country in early May 2006, winning teams of the first national prizes will be invited in Brussels for a European prize-giving ceremony. The best works will become part of future European campaigns for promoting children's rights. The Commission will launch a strategy of promotion and protection of children's rights in all Commission's internal and external policies in June 2006.

"Rights are effective only when people are aware of them, assert them and defend them" affirmed Vice-President Frattini, adding: "My hope is that young people will enjoy working in teams on this subject, while becoming aware of what their rights are."

PUBLICATIONS

Based on an external evaluation report presented in 2004 analysing and summarising the activities carried out by the Daphne Programme, the Commission has published a brochure which extracts the main findings of this evaluation and also gives the Daphne history, background information on violence and information on the achievements and outputs from Daphne funded projects up to 2003.

The brochure is available on-line in all EU languages at:

New WHO report on child health in Europe
The WHO Euro Region has published its 2005 European Health Report addressing major health issues facing the European region and in particular its children.

See : http://www.eph.org/a/1987

Thematic study on policy measures concerning disadvantaged youth
The aim of the study is to analyse the policy measures concerning the specific situation of disadvantaged youth in the age group 16-25, and the study particularly analyses access to employment. Youth people between 16-25 have a higher than average at risk of poverty rate (21% compared to 15% for all age groups) and this is often connected to difficulties in making the transition from school to work and in accessing employment. This policy study examines successful policy approaches to including those at risk across a number of Member States and candidate countries. It aims to identify the key mix of elements that are necessary to reduce the level of poverty and unemployment amongst this age group.

The EU we want
The latest publication of the European Antipoverty Network (EAPN), on views from those fighting poverty and social exclusion on the future development of the EU.

The book can be requested directly from the organisation: www.eapn.org

The Impact of Globalisation and Privatisation on Childcare
The Bernard van Leer Foundation has recently released a working paper on "Globalisation and privatisation: the impact on childcare policy and practice". The paper concentrates on the impact of globalisation on childcare since the late 1970s, particularly in the last two decades. It looks at how views about children, parents and public services have changed as a result.

EVENTS

EUROCHIPS Conference, Paris 12-13 May 2006
EUROCHIPS and the Fédération des Relais Enfants-Parents (FREP) are hosting an international conference in Paris on 12-13 May 2006. The conference, "Children of Imprisoned Parents: European Perspectives," will serve to raise awareness on issues concerning prisoners’ children and foster the exchange of ideas and "good" practice through keynote speeches, workshops, Q&As, and discussion. Author and human rights activist Taslima Nasreen will give the keynote speech.

For more program details and registration form www.eurochips.org

Conference: "Children's Welfare in Ageing Europe - Challenges and Opportunities", Roskilde University Centre, Denmark, 16-17 June 2006
The European research network COST Action 19 organises a conference aiming at bringing together researchers in the field of childhood studies.
A Call for Presentations has been launched, and abstracts are being sought on the following themes: Children's Economic Welfare , Time and Space in Children's Everyday Lives , Children's Rights and Discourses. The deadline for submitting an abstract is 24 February 2006.

For more information, please go to http://www.svt.ntnu.no/noseb/costa19/files/costblo.pdf
World Forum on Human Rights, 10-13 July 2006 Nantes (France)
The 2nd World Forum on Human Rights will be held in Nantes in July 10 - 13, 2006, with an official opening on Monday 10th of July, followed three working days: Tuesday 11, Wednesday 12 and Thursday 13. This second edition of Nantes Forum will be organised by the International Convention Center of Nantes, under the leading responsibility and with the financial support of Nantes Métropole, urban area of Nantes.

Congress on Child Abuse, 3-6 September 2006, York, UK
The XVIth ISPCAN International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect will take place from 3 to 6 September 2006 in the City of York in England. This Congress is being organised by the International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) in collaboration with the British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. The title of the Congress "Children in a Changing World: Getting It Right" reflects the need to ensure that research, knowledge, policies, the shape of services and practice skills address the challenges faced by those working to protect children and safeguard their welfare.

Seminar on Children with Disabilities – What about their Rights?, 10-14 October, Sion, Switzerland
The Institut International des Droits de l'Enfant (IDE) is organising its next international Sion seminar on the rights of children with disabilities. The aim of the seminar is to better understand the life of children with disabilities world-wide, to find out the protection potential of the future Convention, and to promote handicap as a real richness. Issues tackled in the seminar include: the WHO definition of disability, the national and international protection tools, as well as specific issues like education and training, family, institutionalisation, participation, environment, positive and negative discrimination. IDE is launching a call for papers to any individual, NGO, State, private or public agency, and/or university, working in the field of children living with disabilities. Papers must focus on one or several of the issues addressed by the conference. Contributions will be presented during the seminar and given out to all the participants.

International Festival of Children’s “We are responsible for the ones we care for”, November 2005 - August 2006.
Organised by all Russian Association for International and Humanitarian Relations – Moscow (Russia), Varna Municipality (Bulgaria), Russia and the CIS Peoples Friendship Society– Varna, Friends of Europe Club - Varna (Bulgaria), International Children's Art Gallery in Moscow, under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture and Mass Media of the Russian Federation. The topic of the festival is the development of environment-friendly consciousness of children and young people from various countries worldwide; drawing the attention to nature protection; bringing up of a considerate attitude towards environment; compassionate and responsible approach to pets and wild animals around; as well as adherence to healthful way of life, against drugs and smoking; strong moral of rising generations.

For more information contact E-mail: vamks_gallery@mail.ru

For more information on the EURONET activities or if you wish to make a contribution to our Newsletter, please contact:

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