Dear Readers,

Welcome to our summer Newsletter 2008. In this newsletter we are happy to share with you a brief update of the work that EURONET has carried out to advocate for children’s rights within the European Union.

Since the last EU Forum on Children’s Rights (March 2008), EURONET, as part of the NGO Child Rights Action Group (CRAG), has been very much involved in speeding up the process towards the development of a children’s rights strategy. A first set of recommendations have been sent to the Commission to feed into a first draft of the EU Strategy on Children’s Rights. We achieved to get a chapter on children’s rights violations included in the European Parliament own initiative report on Fundamental Rights, contributed to the EU Budget reform process and to the draft of impact assess guidelines for the European Commission. Thank you to all of our members which have been actively sharing their national expertises for this.

I am pleased to report that EURONET is adding a strong European NGO voice to the tireless campaigning going on across Europe to end all forms of corporal punishment of children. EURONET is working with the Council of Europe to this end and will push for European Union decision-makers to make a public commitment to the elimination of corporal punishment of children.

EURONET is delighted to welcome the Family Child Youth Association from Hungary as its newest member with whom we are looking forward to a strong and fruitful cooperation.

Wishing you all a great summer!

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

EU Strategy on Children’s Rights: European Commission Moves Ahead

The European Commission is moving forward on a European Strategy on Children’s Rights. It announced a consultative process, inclusive of children’s voices and views, leading to a new Communication by mid 2009. EURONET has submitted some initial recommendations to the Commission as an input to the first draft for the EU Strategy on Children’s Rights (more…)

EURONET Gives NGO Voice to Council of Europe Campaign “Raise your hand against Smacking”

On 15 June 2008 EURONET participated in the launch of the Council of Europe-wide campaign to abolish corporal punishment of children in all settings in Europe which was hosted by the Croatian Government in Zagreb. Giving an NGO voice to the Council of Europe campaign, EURONET in its statement urged European Union decision-makers to publicly commit to the elimination of corporal punishment of children. To achieve this, EURONET will later this year ask decision-makers to sign a Statement of Support for the eradication of corporal punishment of children. (more…)


EURONET cooperated with Kathy Sinnott MEP, to submit amendments on the relationship between child poverty and child maltreatment to the draft Zimmer report on “Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty, including child poverty, in the EU” (INI-COM (2007) 0620). For EURONET contribution, click here

EURONET Contribution to the EP Report on the Situation of Fundamental Rights in the EU

This year the European Parliament will adopt a report on the situation of fundamental rights in the EU covering the years 2004-2007. The Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) Committee is in charge of preparing this report and MEP Giusto Catania has been appointed as Rapporteur. EURONET has informed Mr Catania MEP on the main violations of children’s rights in Europe and has put forward recommendations to arise in the report. Please click here
Children’s Rights in the EU Budget: EURONET recommendations to the Commission
The European Commission is preparing a proposal for an EU budget reform. EURONET has called on the Commision to take children’s rights into consideration in all EU policy priorities and expenditures that affect them directly or indirectly, based on the UN CRC. To read EURONET contribution, click here.

Children's Rights in the European Commission's Impact Assessment Guidelines
The European Commission is issuing guidelines to assess the impact of proposals on specific areas. EURONET and EUROCHILD jointly called on the Commission to measure the impact of EU actions on the rights of children and on fundamental rights. They also called on the Commission to ensure the quality and effectiveness of impact assessment through stakeholder involvement. (more...)

The Irish Referendum: What Next for the Treaty of Lisbon and Children’s Rights?
On 12 June 2008 Ireland rejected the Lisbon Treaty by referendum. EU leaders are now looking for solutions to overcome the setback. EURONET regrets that this will delay the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon which would have given children’s rights a legal base in the EU Treaty for the first time in the history of the EU. The legal base would ensure that children’s rights are mainstreamed in all EU actions, legislations and programmes. (more...)

New Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security will consider Children’s Rights as Priority
In May 2008 Jacques Barrot, former European Commissioner for transport, was allocated the portfolio for justice, freedom and security. In a European Parliament’s hearing, Mr Barrot said that children’s rights are “among his priorities” and he announced that new legislation would be put forward to fight sexual exploitation of children. (more...)

Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) updates

Children’s Rights discussed with recently appointed FRA Director
On 24 June 2008, in a meeting organized by the Social Platform, EURONET met with the recently appointed Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency, Mr. Morten Kjaerum. EURONET welcomes Mr Kjaerum in his new mandate and wishes to further strengthen the cooperation with the Agency in the area of children’s rights. (more...)

FRA invites NGOs to the first meeting of the Fundamental Rights Platform
The first Fundamental Rights Platform meeting will be held on 7-8 October 2008 in Vienna. FRA is now inviting non-governmental organisations and other institutions of civil society, active in the field of fundamental rights at national, European or international level, to participate in the Fundamental Rights Platform. The deadline for this first call for applications is 20 August. For information on the application procedure and selection criteria for the Fundamental Rights Platform, click here.

FRA consultation on Agency’s Annual Report and Work Programme 2009
The FRA is asking civil society to give feedback regarding the Agency’s Annual Report 2008 and suggestions on the Agency’s work programme 2009. EURONET is currently preparing a contribution for the FRA in which it stresses out the importance of children’s rights issues in the work programme for 2009. To participate in the consultation, click here.

News across the EU

Bulgaria and Serbia examined by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child examined Bulgaria’s second state periodic report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Right of the Child (UNCRC). The main subject of concern was raised in respect to the protection of children from violence, particularly corporal punishment, regardless of the existence of laws prohibiting corporal punishment in all settings. Similarly the Committee recommended to the Serbian State to take the legislative measures to ban corporal punishment. Serbia is a “potential candidate country” of the EU. (more...)

UK examined by the UN Committee on the Right of the Child; what do the Children think?
In the next 49th Session (15 September – 3 October 2008), the Committee on the Right of the Child will examine the third and consolidated forth report of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. Children had their say on the implementation of the UNCRC in the UK by participating in a project which allowed them to communicate their concerns and wishes to the Committee (more...)

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Recruitment

JOB VACANCY at the European Children’s Network: We are seeking an experienced and motivated policy and advocacy officer to coordinate an exciting new NGO campaign to combat violence against children in Europe. Deadline for applications 1 September 2008. For further information, click here.
advocacy officer to coordinate an exciting new NGO campaign to combat violence against children in Europe. Deadline for application: 27 August 2008 For more info, click here

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Publications

**Children in Europe**, a magazine for everyone working with and for children from 0-10, and those interested in children's issues. For more info, click here

European Commission, Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security and Directorate-General Communication, February 2008, EuroBarometre. The EuroBarometre is a tool used by the Commission to monitor the evolution of public opinion in Member States. For the first time this year it focuses on children’s rights and on the extent to which young people (15-18 years old) know about the Rights of the Child.

The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, January 2008, Prohibiting Corporal Punishment, A guide to legal reform and other measures, This handbook describes the legal and other measures necessary for effective prohibition and elimination of all corporeal punishment of children, in the home and all other settings.

Priscilla Alderson, Professor of Childhood Studies, 2008, Young Children's Rights: Exploring Beliefs, Principles and Practice, second edition. This book examines the issue of young children's rights, starting with the question of how the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child applies to the youngest children, from birth to eight years of age. For more info, click here.

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Events 2008

18 – 20 August 2008 : Sydney (Australia), Association of Children Welfare Agencies Conference (ACWA 2008), Association of Children Welfare Agencies,


19 September 2008: Reggio-Emilia (Italy), Multi-level protection of fundamental rights, Constitutional Affairs (CONST), Committee of the Regions and EU Fundamental Rights Agency,


30 September 2008: Brussels, Belgium, General Assembly and Day of Discussion on Combating Corporal Punishment, EURONET, Please contact EURONET for further information.


2 October 2008: Cardiff, Wales (United Kingdom), Members’ Exchange Seminar on Child and Youth Participation, EUROCHILD.

7-8 October 2008: Vienna (Austria), First meeting Platform on Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Rights Agency.


9-12 October 2008 : Budapest (Hungary), Active Citizenship: Democratic Practices in Education, the International Step by Step Association - ISSA. For more information on the conference, please contact Eva Izsak: eizsak@issa.hu


28-30 October 2008: Bucharest (Romania), Fifth regional meeting of NGO children’s rights coalitions in Europe, NGO Forum for children’s rights. For more information and registration contact Andreea Rusu, Save the Children Romania, at: +40213166176 or fax: +40213124486 or e-mail rocs@salvaticopiii.ro, web-site: www.salvaticopiii.ro

3-5 November 2008:Rotterdam (the Netherlands), Child in the City, European Network of Child Friendly Cities, .