

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN ALTERNATIVE CARE: "WALK THE TALK!"

TUESDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER 2016 – PROGRAMME OVERVIEW (as of 02.11.2016)

8.30 Registration & welcome café

9.30 Opening and contextualisation

PLENARY SESSION

Keynote speakers

- Mr Barroy, President, SOS Villages d'Enfants France
- Ms Tuite, European Commission coordinator for the rights of the child
- Ms Horne, Norwegian Minister of Children and Equality
- Ms Rossignol, French Minister for Families, Children and Women's Rights

10.30 The child protection system and the rights of children in alternative care - special focus on youth participation

PLENARY SESSION

Keynote speakers

- Ms Avenard, French Ombudsperson for children
- Young experts from project countries: Fabio (Italy) and Gabrielle (France)

11.15 Break

11.45 PANEL DISCUSSION followed by Q&A

- Ms Avenard, French Ombudsperson for children
- 2 young experts from project countries
- Ms Schuurman, Senior Policy & Advocacy Coordinator, Children's Rights and Child Participation, Eurochild
- Ms Kovalenko, National Advocacy Advisor, SOS Children's Villages Estonia
- Ms Robin, Researcher, Université Paris Est Créteil

13.15 Lunch at the Ministry

14.30 Capacity Building of the child care service workforce

PLENARY SESSION

Keynote speakers

- Mr Dimitrakopoulos, Head of Equality and Citizens' Rights Department, Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)
- Ms Tedesco, Advocacy and Program Director, and Ms Saglietti, National trainer, SOS Children's Villages Italy

PANEL DISCUSSION followed by Q&A

- Mr Dimitrakopoulos, FRA
- Ms von Maravic, Programme Officer, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe
- Mr Cantwell, International Child Protection Consultant
- Ms Tuite, European Commission coordinator for the rights of the child
- Ms Robichon, Responsable du service des Pôles solidarité, cohésion sociale, enfance du CNFPT (Centre national de la fonction publique territoriale)
- Ms Sedletzki, Trainer and International Consultant, Rights On

16.15 Break

16.45 Closing - Rapporteurs of the Day

Rapporteurs

- Ms Quiriau, Directrice générale CNAPE
- Young experts from project countries: Anita (Croatia) and Fouzy (France)
- Mr Pichler, Special Representative on External Affairs and Resources, SOS Children's Villages International
- Ms Žiobienė, Chairperson, ENOC
- Ms Bissell, Director, Global Partnership and Fund to End Violence Against Children

17.45 Cocktail – reception - networking



10.30 – 13.00:

The child protection system and the rights of children in alternative care – special focus on child and youth participation

This session will provide insight into the national child protection situation and how child rights form a central part of an integrated child protection system. Furthermore, the session will demonstrate the importance of child participation as a prerequisite in integrated child protection systems and in determining the best interest of the child.


“Children in alternative care have a weaker position in society, and children’s rights offer them some protection. But they only offer protection if they know about these rights and can have somebody to support them when they are violated.”

Young person from alternative care

Like their peers, children in alternative care have the right to protection. They have the right to survive, to be safe, to belong, to be heard, to receive adequate care and to grow up in a protective environment, all of which is set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Guidelines on the Alternative Care of Children. Child Protection systems exist to protect the child’s physical and emotional integrity and wellbeing and to ensure that their rights are upheld and respected. However, evidence shows that traditional child protection services are delivered in a disjointed and fragmented manner, which does not always respect the rights of the child, particularly, their right to privacy equality and non-discrimination as well as their right to participate in decision making processes affecting their lives.

“Just because things are always done one way does not mean they are right for me. The care system is not perfect and needs to change continually; we might be the ones to make it better.”

Young person from alternative care



“It is a great feeling when someone asks you: ‘What do you want? What is better? What do you think is best for you? We will do it together, just tell us.’”

From ‘Young People’s Voices’

How can child protection systems be improved and better integrated to ensure that the rights of children in alternative care are met and that child and young people in care are empowered to participate in processes that impact upon their lives?

How can child participation go beyond acceptance as a principle and be meaningfully implemented in practice, particularly in decision making processes?

What challenges negatively impact on child participation within child protection systems?

14.30-16.15:

Capacity building of the child care service workforce

This session will highlight the importance, at international and national level, placed upon child care service workforce development as a key component in reforming child care and child protection systems. Furthermore the session will demonstrate what care professionals themselves think about implementing children's rights in their practice.

"The best part of my job is the sense of achievement when I have helped a child or young person overcome a problem"

Child care social worker

Quality care depends upon the ongoing investment and development of the child care service workforce and continuing to invest in the care professionals who carry a responsibility to care for and work with children and to protect their rights. According to the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, quality care is essentially empowering and supportive, placing the individual child's best interest at the centre of every action¹. Child care workers must therefore be given training and support to ensure that they have the knowledge and practical know how to provide the best possible quality care.

The UN Guidelines implementation handbook, *Moving Forward*, identifies as a core issue in quality care provision *"the low status of care staff and often their inadequate training"*². Furthermore, in a 2013 consultation, held in four countries, national stakeholders identified the lack of practical and ongoing trainings for care professionals as a reason for poor outcomes for young people leaving care. In many cases the stakeholders identified the lack of child centred / child rights training as one of the core issues which impacts negatively on the young people³.

How can the capacity building of care professional on child rights contribute to ensuring quality care?

What European instruments exist to support national governments to seriously invest in their child care service workforce?

How can children and young people in alternative care contribute to the development of care professionals?

What would be the outcomes and expected returns of this social investment for children and young people and care professionals?

¹ Cantwell, N et al (2012) *Moving Forward: Implementing the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children*. UK Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland

² Cantwell, N et al (2012) *Moving Forward: Implementing the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children*. UK Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland

³ Council of Europe and SOS Children's Villages International (2014) *Securing Children Rights – A Guide for Care professionals working with Children in Alternative Care*, Strasbourg Council of Europe Publishing