

“CHILDREN’S RIGHTS IN ALTERNATIVE CARE: WALK THE TALK!”¹

8-9 November 2016
Paris

Ministère de la Famille, de l'Enfance et des Droits des Femmes

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – 8th NOVEMBER

SOS Children’s Villages invites interested parties to the first day of the two-day **Conference “Children’s Rights in Alternative Care: Walk the Talk!”** taking place in Paris on 8-9th November 2016, organised under the patronage of Ms Laurence Rossignol, Minister for the Family, Children and Women’s Rights. Access to discussions of the second day of the Conference is restricted to participants who participate in the [Training Professionals Working with Children in Care](#) project.

The Conference is open to everyone who is actively engaged in the topic of building the capacity of the child care service workforce. In particular, the debates of the Conference will be directed at how professionals working directly or indirectly with children in alternative care can be supported in applying a child-rights approach to their daily practice, thereby achieving that children can develop to their fullest potential. For more information on the conference, please see the concept note and the programme draft or visit our [website](#) (it is being continuously updated).

This Conference is organized by SOS Children’s Villages in the frame of the EU funded project [“Training Professionals Working with Children in Care”](#) that is being implemented in 8 EU countries with more than 40 national partners (see below for a brief overview of the project and its partners). Our partners at international level are the Council of Europe and Eurochild.

The Conference aims at raising awareness on the importance of the topic, using the experiences made throughout the project as a starting point for discussions. In addition, the event shall encourage key stakeholders in the field of child protection to exchange, while feeling inspired to create partnerships for setting new benchmarks for training care professionals throughout Europe, which will ultimately improve the quality of alternative care! All participants can attend the conference for free (including lunch) and we can assist you in booking your accommodation. Conference languages are English and French.

Please get in touch with Ms Aleksandra Grassl aleksandra.grassl@sos-kd.org by no later than **5th of August** if you are interested in attending the Conference. When expressing your interest, please include a description of your current engagement in the topic (max. 100 words in English). Selected participants will be informed by 17th of August.

¹ Conference title in French is «Les droits de l'enfant accueilli en protection de l'enfance : de la parole aux actes !».

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

TUESDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER 2016 – PROGRAMME OVERVIEW (draft version 31.05.2016)

8.45 Registration & welcome café

9.30 Opening and contextualisation

PLENARY SESSION

Keynote speakers

- Ms Rossignol, French Minister for the Family, Children and Women's Rights (*confirmed*)
- Mr Paillard, Managing Director, SOS Villages d'Enfants France (*confirmed*)
- Ms Tuite, European Commission coordinator for the rights of the child (*confirmed*)

10.15 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 (*confirmed*)
- 2 young experts from project countries (*confirmed*)

11.15 Break

11.45 PANEL DISCUSSION followed by Q&A

- Ms Avenard, French Ombudsperson for children (*confirmed*)
- 2 young experts from project countries (*confirmed*)
- Ms Schuurman, Senior Policy & Advocacy Coordinator, Children's Rights and Child Participation, Eurochild (*confirmed*)
- 1 representative of SOS Children's Villages Estonia (*confirmed*)
- 1 representative of the heads of French departments for children and family (*confirmed*)

13.15 Lunch at the Ministry

14.30 Capacity Building of the child care service workforce

PLENARY SESSION

Keynote speaker

Not confirmed yet

PANEL DISCUSSION followed by Q&A

- Ms Agnes von Maravic, Administrator Children's Rights Policies Coordination, Council of Europe (*confirmed*)
- Mr Cantwell, International Child Protection Consultant (*confirmed*)
- Ms Tuite, European Commission coordinator for the rights of the child (*confirmed*)
- UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (*to be confirmed*)
- 1 representative from the CNFPT (*confirmed*)
- 1 trainer from SOS Villages d'Enfants France (*confirmed*)

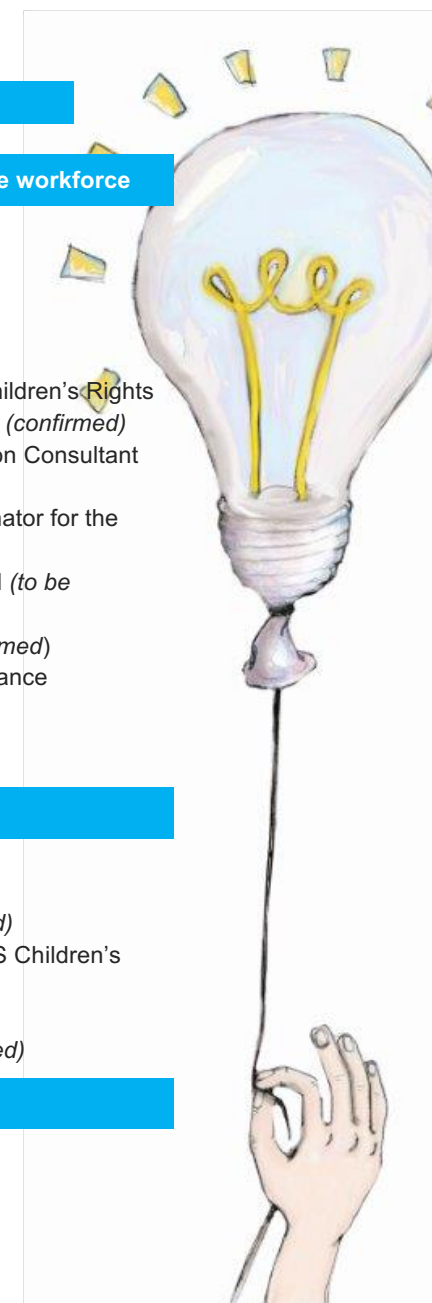
16.00 Break

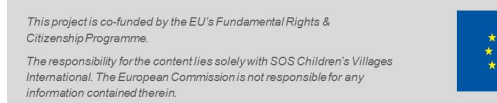
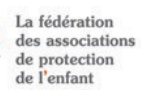
16.30 Closing – Rapporteurs of the Day

Rapporteurs

- Ms Quiriau, CNAPE (*confirmed*)
- Young expert from the project (*confirmed*)
- Mr. Pichler, Special Representative, SOS Children's Villages International (*confirmed*)
- ENOC President (*to be confirmed*)
- 1 UNICEF representative (*to be confirmed*)

17.15 Social Event





CONCEPT NOTE

“CHILDREN’S RIGHTS IN ALTERNATIVE CARE: WALK THE TALK!”²

8-9 November 2016
Paris

Ministère de la Famille, de l'Enfance et des Droits des Femmes

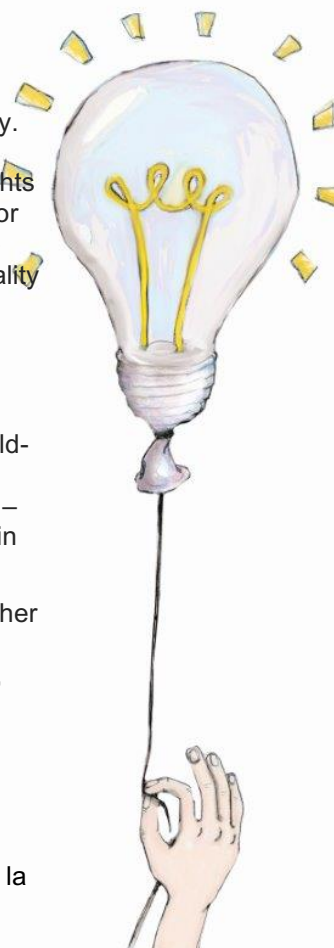
A. BACKGROUND

Care professionals work directly with children in various responsibilities, as social workers, youth workers, educators and psychologists, child therapists, child care co-workers, foster parents and others. They are part of the child care service workforce, which also includes other professionals having an impact on the lives of children in alternative care, be it at policy level or in direct interaction with them. If equipped appropriately, care professionals have the means to instil effective and meaningful change for children and young people in care. This means that they can help children to develop to their full potential and, ultimately, empower them to participate in processes that impact upon their lives. Recent participatory research of child's views conducted by SOS Children's Villages in Europe (see *When Care Ends*³) has signalled that while young people value highly the role of care professionals in protecting their rights, there is still a worrying gap in the awareness of care professionals about these rights, especially in applying a child rights-based approach to their work.

Clearly it is impossible to build effective child protection systems without strengthening and investing in the child care service workforce, in particular in care professionals, who carry a responsibility to protect, respect and fulfil the rights of children in alternative care. The importance of training care professionals as part of the deinstitutionalisation process is well highlighted in various international and European policy documents and recommendations calling for a paradigm shift, viewing children as rights holders instead of “objects of care” only. SOS Children's Villages have worked tirelessly to ensure a holistic approach to the development of quality care alternatives for children and young people which places their rights at the centre of all service delivery. Through the use of the UNCRC and the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, SOS Children's Villages together with partners, such as the Council of Europe and Eurochild, have made efforts towards rendering children's rights a reality for all children who have lost parental care or are at risk of losing it.

Most recently, as part of a project financially supported by the European Commission DG Justice, SOS Children's Villages, together with the Council of Europe, Eurochild and with 40 national and international partners, has developed the practice-oriented manual “Realising Children's Rights”. This manual is a tool for training care professionals on how to apply a child-rights based approach in their daily work with children and young people in alternative care. Until the second half of 2016, more than 900 care professionals in eight European countries – Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Croatia, France, Italy, Hungary – will have been trained in this approach using this manual.

The **conference “Children's Rights in Alternative Care: Walk the Talk!”** shall bring together a range of stakeholders from the child protection area including representatives from the European Commission, Council of Europe, national Ministries, child ombudspersons, NGOs, universities, as well as care professionals and young people themselves. The conference is



² Conference title in French is «Les droits de l'enfant accueilli en protection de l'enfance : de la parole aux actes !».

³ <http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/publications/publications/research>

meant as a platform for starting a discussion on how the child care service workforce and in particular care professionals on embedding child rights in their work, ensuring that they acquire the practical child care skills and capabilities to support and enable the development of each individual child to his/her fullest potential. The training module produced by SOS Children's Villages together with national and international partners, as well as the experience gathered while implementing the project in 8 European countries, will serve as starting point of the discussion.

More specifically the goals of the conference are to:

- ✓ **Sensitise actors** in the field of child protection on the necessity of making children's rights an integral part of care, and therefore, something that professionals working in this field should be concerned with.
- ✓ **Show decision-makers** that this will only be possible if children's rights are integrated in the initial and continuing training of professionals, and present the European module developed by SOS Children's Villages and its partners as one solution.
- ✓ **Reinforce the legitimacy of SOS Children's Villages and its partners** in engaging in the improvement of the quality of care and in the training of care professionals.
- ✓ **Promote exchange between European stakeholders** around the results of the project and similar initiatives.
- ✓ **Present the impact** an effective child-rights training together with youth participation can have in raising the capacity of professionals and thereby the quality of care.
- ✓ **Create a nurturing environment** to launch a partnership around the recommendations based on the evaluation of trainings conducted with more than 900 care professionals and develop follow-up initiatives (e.g. advocacy messages, roadmap).

The event is co-organised by SOS Children's Villages International and SOS Children's Villages France with support of the Defender of Rights and the French Ministry of Family, Childhood and Women's Rights and with financial support from the European Commission DG Justice.

B. TARGET GROUP

Day 1: 280 participants (maximum room capacity):

- Delegations of 8 countries (SOS Children's Villages, national partners and young people) and of the European partners
- Decision-makers who develop policies and strategies at national and international level (Members of the network ENOC, representatives of Ministries and local authorities, departmental councils, Council of Europe, European Commission, EUROCHILD, Terre des hommes, etc.)
- Representatives of French associations and facilities which are members of the Child-rights Ombudsmen Committee, other associations
- French professionals from departmental councils and from the relating child-protection sector as well as actors from the field of social work education
- Representatives of the headquarters and other establishments of SOS Children's Villages France

C. YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Some of the young people who participated actively in different activities of the European project will be invited to take part in the presentations of the national delegations.



TRAINING PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH CHILDREN IN CARE



Project coordinator:

SOS Children's Villages International

Implementing international partners:

Council of Europe and Eurochild

Implementing partners in 8 EU countries:

SOS Children's Villages national associations in Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, France, Hungary, Italy, Latvia and Romania together with more than 40 national partners (see back of page).

Funding:

The project benefits from substantial funding from the European Commission

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

Ensure that the rights of children and young people in alternative care are protected, fulfilled and respected while entering care, being in care and during their transition to an independent life. This will empower children and young people and enable them to develop to their fullest potential.

HOW WE ACHIEVE THIS

Capacity Building

Train care professionals on how to embed child rights in their daily work with children and young people.

Awareness raising & Advocacy

Raise awareness about the need to sustain such trainings in the long run together with key stakeholders in the field of child protection at national and international level.

WHY THIS PROJECT

One of the issues raised during the national and international debates around the topic of reforming the child care sector (sometimes referred to as *De-Institutionalisation*) was the need to pay greater attention to how relationships between care professionals and children in care develop. A study⁴, conducted by SOS Children's Villages and partners in four countries, reveals the important role of care professionals in building the resilience, skills, and competencies of children and young people in care, as well as in improving children's and young people's lives during and after leaving care. Equipped appropriately, care professionals have the means to instil effective and meaningful change for children and young people in care and to empower them to participate in processes that impact up on their lives.

LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Each project country has a National Steering Group (NSG) – see back of page - who is responsible for the implementation of the project and for ensuring its sustainable impact at national level after 2016.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Throughout the project, young people are actively involved, be it as members of an NSG or by participating in youth focus groups and some of the trainings.

KEY OUTCOMES

Development of a Handbook for Trainers

A quality handbook for training care professionals, titled "Realising Children's Rights", has been developed and is being tested until mid-2016.

National Trainings

Between January and June 2016, more than 800 care professionals undergo a two-days training in how to embed child rights in their practice.

European Conference "Children's Rights in Alternative Care: Walk the Talk!" Paris, 8th-9th November

The conference will serve as a platform for national and international stakeholders from the child protection area to start a dialogue on how to raise the capacity of the children's social care workforce and in particular care professionals on embedding child rights in their work. The training module produced by SOS Children's Villages together with national and international partners, as well as the experience gathered while implementing the project in eight European countries, will serve as starting point of a discussion which we hope will inspire decision makers in setting new standards for training care professionals, ultimately improving the quality of alternative care.

⁴ SOS Children's Villages International (2012) *When care ends – Lessons from peer research*, <http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/getmedia/80a754d9-8832-4a16-9e7e-11ece55b23e0/PeerResearch-European-Report-WEB.pdf>

OUR PARTNERS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

BULGARIA

- National Network for Children
- State Agency for Child Protection
- Social Assistance Agency
- National Ombudsperson
- Lumos Foundation
- SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria
- SOS Children's Villages International

CROATIA

- Faculty of Social Work
- Office of Ombudsman for Children
- Association "Most"
- Ministry of Social Policy and Youth
- SOS Children's Village Ladimirevci
- SOS Children's Village Croatia

ESTONIA

- Child Ombudsman Office
- Ministry of Social Security
- EATL (Estonian Union of Alternative Care Workers)
- EYN
- Estonian Union for Child Welfare
- Institute of Social Work at the University of Tallinn
- UNICEF
- NGO Oma Pere
- Ida-Viru County Government
- City/Local Government

FRANCE

- Convention Nationale des Associations de Protection de l'Enfant (CNAPE)
- Centre National de la Fonction Publique Territoriale (CNFPT) - INSET Angers
- Défenseur des droits & JADE
- SOS Villages d'Enfants France & Villages d'Enfants Persan
- FNADEPAPE - Fédération nationale des associations départementales d'entraide des personnes accueillies en protection de l'enfance
- Ministère des Affaires Sociales
- Ministère de la Justice
- Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale

- Assemblée des Départements de France (ADF)
- Association Nationale des Directeurs d'Action Sociale et de Santé des Départements et des Métropoles (ANDASS)
- Association nationale des directeurs de l'enfance et de la famille (ANDEF)
- Université Paris Est Créteil (UPEC)
- Sauvegarde de l'Enfance (ADSEA) 44

HUNGARY

- UNICEF Hungarian Committee
- SOS Children's Villages Hungary

ITALY

- Provincia Autonoma di Trento
- Istituto degli Innocenti
- National Ombudsman
- Agevolando
- Coordinamento Nazionale delle Comunità per Minori (CNCM)
- Ufficio Protezione e Pubblica Tutela dei Minori Regione Veneto
- SOS Children's Villages Italy
- Regional Ombudsman Lombardia

LATVIA

- Ministry of Welfare
- Society of Social Workers Latvia
- Inspectorate for Protection of Children Rights
- Children and Youth Center of Riga Municipality
- SOS Children's Villages Latvia

ROMANIA

- General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection
- National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption (NAPCRA)
- FONPC (National Federation of Organizations for Children)
- "Buna ziua, Copiii Romaniei" Association
- Centre for Resources and Information in Social Professions
- SOS Children's Villages Romania



Eurochild
Putting children at
the heart of Europe



This project is co-funded by the EU's Fundamental Rights & Citizenship Programme.

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La fédération
des associations
de protection
de l'enfant