



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Scotland hosts meeting of European agencies on protecting children's services**

Scotland is hosting a special meeting of 12 European children's agencies to discuss how to better protect services for children.

The meeting, organised by Children in Europe and being held in Alloa from 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> of October, will examine how the UK could protect services for children by adopting a coordinated European approach.

The children's agencies will discuss a consultation paper to be launched at Children in Scotland's forthcoming annual conference. The paper, *Towards a European Approach to Services for Young Children*, considers the essential building blocks for a European approach.

The consultation states: "Children as citizens of Europe should expect certain common entitlements and shared benefits: these entitlements and benefits should not depend on where a child happens to have been born."

"The search for a 'European approach' can be of mutual benefit to all member states, providing a means for all to gain from the varied and rich traditions and experiences across Europe."

The consultation will put forward a set of values and principles that could form the basis for a common European approach, based on respect for diversity but recognition of shared values, objectives and targets.

The meeting will also address agencies' concerns over whether children's services will be made more vulnerable by the recent introduction of the European Services Directive.

The consultation will be launched at Children in Scotland's annual conference, *A Gift for Life? Building better childhoods for Scotland's children*, held in Cumbernauld on 3 November. For more information see <http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/gfi>

Notes for editors:

- The European Services Directive aims to create a free market for the services sector. Its purpose is to remove the legal and administrative barriers that can hinder businesses from offering their services in another country, and to encourage cross-border competition.
- Children in Scotland is the national agency for voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland. It exists to identify and promote the interests of children and their families and to ensure that relevant policies, services and provisions are of the best possible quality and able to meet the needs of a diverse society.
- Children in Europe is a magazine for everyone working with and for children from 0-10 and those interested in children's issues. It is published simultaneously in 10 languages by a network of national magazines. It aims to provide a forum for ideas, practice and information and contribute to the development of policy and practice and European and national levels. It is published in the UK by Children in Scotland, with the support of the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

**For more information, contact Chris Small,  
tel 0131 222 2419 / email [csmall@childreninscotland.org.uk](mailto:csmall@childreninscotland.org.uk)**