



Bambini in Europa
Barn i Europa
Børn i Europa
Children in Europe
Copii în Europa
Dzieci w Europie
Enfants d'Europe
Infância a Europa
Infância en Europa
Infância na Europa
Kinder in Europa
Kinderen in Europa
Παιδιά στην Ευρώπη

Children in Scotland
every child - every childhood

Media Release

Embargoed: 14 September 2009

Good progress, but could do better: putting children's rights into practice

Children's rights are more than window dressing – they are the key to a good childhood and a good life, according to the latest issue of Children in Europe magazine.

As the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child approaches there has been clear progress in how children's rights are working for children: but 'could do better' is the verdict where countries, organisations and individuals have treated children's rights as marginal, and in the continued impact of child poverty and inequality.

Children in Europe Issue 17, ***Twenty years of children's rights***, reviews the development of children's rights from national government level to individual practice in the nursery or kindergarten. Progress has been made, with most UN member states now having a Commissioner for Children and Young People or an equivalent position: Maalfrid Grude Flekkoy, the first person to hold such a role as Norway's Ombudsman for Children, reflects on changes in the field. Looking ahead children's rights are set to become a priority issue for the European Union with the development of a European child rights strategy, while a preschool programme in Croatia forms a central part of the national education strategy in human rights.

However poverty and inequality remain barriers to participation and being heard, and accounts of work with children living in poverty in Belgium and Greece point to different ways to tackle these.

Convenor of Children in Scotland The Right Honourable Lord Robert Reed, a judge for many years and a member of the Scottish Court of Appeal, said: "The UNCRC has had a major impact on Scots law and its influence is steadily growing. It is not of course only certain marginalised groups for whom it is important, but for all children. It is important in ensuring children's voices are

heard in proceedings that affect them, and throws down a strong challenge for the future.”

Children in Europe Editor Peter Moss said:

“The UNCRC has brought substantial progress on children’s rights across Europe, including an active EU involvement: children’s rights are now firmly on the European agenda. But much still remains to be done. Rights need to be firmly embedded in politics, policy and everyday practice. There is a constant need to argue, campaign, educate, experiment and disseminate.”

To order a copy of Children in Europe telephone 0131 222 2400 or visit www.childreninScotland.org.uk/publications

For further information contact Tracey Francis

Email tfrancis@childreninScotland.org.uk / tel 0131 222 2419

Notes for Editors

1. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in November 1989. It was the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social. The Convention is a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations. By December 2008 it had been ratified by 193 countries including every member of the United Nations except the US and Somalia. It was ratified by the UK in 1991.

2. **Children in Europe:** Children in Europe is a magazine for everyone working with and for children from 0 to 10 and those interested in children’s issues. It is published simultaneously in 15 languages and 17 countries by a network of national magazines across Europe. It aims to provide a forum for ideas, practice and information and to contribute to the development of policy and practice at European and national levels. It is published in the UK by Children in Scotland. Children in Europe Issue 17, ***Twenty years of children’s rights***, is published on **14 September 2009**. For more information visit www.childrenineurope.org

3. **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 provision are of the best possible quality and able to meet the demands of a diverse society. For further information visit www.childreninScotland.org.uk