

Eurochips

The European Network for Children of Imprisoned Parents



Annual Report

2012



Eurochips

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Foreword

This was an exciting year for Eurochips (The European Network for Children of Imprisoned Parents). 2012 brought with it the end of the 3-year EU-funded Children of Prisoners: Interventions and Mitigations to Strengthen Mental Health (COPING) Project, a study which kept the ECH team on their toes in their role as Dissemination Leader.

The COPING project collected data and information on children of prisoners - including the mapping of available services and support to these children during the various stages they face in their parent's judicial process - arrest, trial and sentencing, imprisonment and finally, release.

Research for the COPING Project was conducted in Germany, the UK, Sweden and Romania. The partners in each country were represented by both an NGO and a university, in a unique method of combining academia with practice.

In May, members of the Eurochips team traveled to Dresden, Germany to participate in a COPING consortium meeting and present strategies and approaches for the end-of-project conference - organised by Eurochips.

Strategies presented in Dresden included approaches towards inviting policy-makers and individuals to the high-profile conference. The intention from the early stages of planning the conference was to create a stage for the research findings that would do justice to the groundbreaking research and spark the interest of individuals best suited to create a real difference in the judicial system for the lives of children of prisoners - policy-makers at the EU level.



In September the ECH team traveled to Prague to meet again with the consortium and present the final plans for the end-of-project conference, entitled *Coping with a Parent in Prison: An Agenda for Policy Reform* - to be held in Brussels on 6 November.

Over 300 European-based policy makers were eventually invited and in the end the conference had over 120 delegates in attendance. The conference was opened by The Right Hon Baroness Hale of Richmond from the UK and the keynote speech was delivered by Ms Jean Lambert, MEP London. Both women committed themselves to the cause for children of prisoners and protecting their right to maintain contact with their imprisoned parent in their own fields of expertise.

The conference was a huge success for the cause for children of prisoners in that it provided a springboard for action - specifically with policy-makers - on ensuring the rights of these children are universally recognised. The action would not be possible without the incredible amount of research undertaken by the COPING consortium members - each of whom contributed to the research findings and policy recommendations presented at the conference. This is a huge step for the topic of children of prisoners as we now have data recognising the various elements to which these children are vulnerable.

The ECH team looks forward to taking the cause and findings into future research proj-

Foreword

Coping with a Parent in Prison: An Agenda for Policy Reform

6 November 2012 / Musée du Cinquantenaire / Brussels

Keynote Speech by: MEP Jean Lambert

Opening by: The Right Hon the Baroness Hale of Richmond

*Co-chaired by: Children's Commissioner Cyprus Leda Koursoumba
& Deputy Ombudsman for Children Croatia Maja Gabelica Supljika*



ects, awareness-raising events (such as our annual European Prisoners' Children Week) and training programmes in coming years.

We thank you for taking the time to read about our activities - and for helping us help them through all of your continued support.

*Warm Regards,
Ryan Christen
Chair of the Conference Planning Committee*

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About us

Each year, over 800,000 children within the EU are affected by the imprisonment of a parent.

These children frequently experience trauma stemming from the separation from their parent, social stigmas and prejudices associated with prisons and violations of their international rights (as stipulated by Article 9 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child). Despite the great number of children impacted by a parent's incarceration, Eurochips is the only network in Europe working exclusively on behalf of these children.

Who we are:

The European Network for Children of Imprisoned Parents (Eurochips), funded by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation, is a European-wide initiative on behalf of European children with imprisoned parents.

With our network of European partners active within prison-related, child's rights and welfare fields, we seek to boost awareness and achieve new ways of thinking, acting and interacting on issues concerning children with imprisoned parents.



**Bernard
van Leer**
FOUNDATION

Our mission:

At Eurochips, our mission is to safeguard the social, political and judicial inclusion of children with an imprisoned parent, while fostering the pursuit and exchange of knowledge which enhances good practices, and contributes to a better understanding of the psychological, emotional and social development of these children.

What we do:

Acting as a voice for children with imprisoned parents, we boost public awareness by educating judges, schools, childcare professionals, prison staff and relevant organisations and administrations on the plight of children with imprisoned parents. In 2012 we completed a three year project entitled Children of Prisoners, Interventions and Mitigations to Strengthen Mental Health (COPING). The study spanned six European nations and research findings have international application for prison-policy reform.

Where we work:

Acting as a voice for children with imprisoned parents, we boost public awareness by educating judges, schools, childcare professionals, prison staff and relevant organisations and administrations on the plight of these children.

Our network spans over 16 European nations with partner organisations working towards maintaining the rights of children with imprisoned parents throughout the EU. Our primary office is based out of Paris, France where we share offices with our French partners, Relais Enfants Parents.

Together, it is our objective that the needs and rights of this vulnerable group of children are met at a unified, international level.

About us

Initiatives we promote:

- Special child-friendly visiting areas in prisons as well as extended visits for children.
- Accompaniment of children by specially trained volunteers when prison visits are hindered by geographical distances, family conflicts, logistical problems, etc.
- Initiatives that facilitate communication between children and detainee parents, such as increased telephone access.
- Parenting programs such as discussion groups and crafts workshops in prisons where parents can create objects for the child.
- Measures that give parents the means to exercise their parental responsibilities from the time of arrest, and during any subsequent proceedings, by promoting disciplinary measures and custodial alternatives to prison whenever possible, particularly for mothers with very young children.

We believe that:

- Children have a right to maintain contact with an imprisoned parent when it is in his or her best interest, a right enshrined in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- Supporting prisoners' children is a long-term vision crucial to society.

Our practices:

- All of our action is guided by the best interests of the child.
- We take a holistic approach, not only working with the child, but with all those involved in the child's life to produce healthier family dynamics.
- We strive to build partnerships that help us fulfill our mission.
- We preserve our credibility by remaining independent and objective.

Our board & network

The ECH board members consist of expert individuals who have a proven record of working on behalf of children of prisoners in their respective fields. As of 2012, the board is as follows:

President - Alain Bouregba
Vice President - Lucy Gampell
Treasurer - Elias Kastner
Secretary - Larry DeCleur
Member - Kate Philbrick
Member - Henriette Heimgaertner
Member - Kjersti Holden
Member - Lia Sacerdote

The ECH office is based in Paris, France - yet we are an umbrella organisation consisting of network member organisations and individuals working on behalf of children of prisoners throughout Europe.

Our network acts to bring these children to the fore of social and judicial policy, protect their rights and help safeguard their psychological, emotional and social development.

As of 2012, the network member organisations reach across the following countries in Europe:

- Belgium
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- France
- Finland
- Germany
- Greece
- Ireland
- Italy
- Luxembourg
- Norway
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- UK

The ECH network consists of members at varying levels, with the top tier including full voting rights at the General Assembly held each year, during which time major network decisions are presented. Membership categories as of 2012 include:

- Full Members
- Associate Members
- Affiliate Members
- Individual Members

Full Membership is offered only to organisations - specifically those who have served a minimum of 2 years as Associate Members. The voting in of Full Membership occurs at the General Assembly where potential organisations are presented.

What membership brings an organisation:

- Promotion of their work
- Access to a European network of expertise and exchange of experiences
- Sharing in research and development
- Information on events related to children with imprisoned parents as well as on new developments at the European level
- The opportunity to take part in European projects and events and to lobby together for change
- Advice on searching for partners for European projects

What an organisation brings ECH:

- A commitment/sharing of the ECH mission
- Helping to “think network”
- A commitment to consolidate and strengthen Eurochips and raise awareness on a national and European level on children with imprisoned parents

Further information on becoming a member is available on the [ECH site](#).

COPING conference

The main event for the ECH team in 2012 was the conference marking the end of the Children of Prisoners, Mitigations and Interventions to Strengthen Mental Health (COPING) Project.

The EU-funded project spanned 4 countries and 3 years and focused on collecting data on children of prisoners in Sweden, Germany, Romania and the UK.

Led by the University of Huddersfield, the COPING Project was unique in that it partnered an NGO with a university in each of the countries conducting research.

"I don't think that the children whose parents are in prison are taken into consideration in terms of resources, attitudes and awareness at the EU level."

-Jean Lambert, MEP London

ECH served as the Dissemination Leader throughout the course of the project, working on the pan-European level and in collaboration with the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) who focused on dissemination at the international level.

2012 saw the project come to a close, with ECH organising the end of project conference in Brussels. Early in the year, the Conference Planning Committee, chaired by ECH set

about defining the objectives, target audience and structure of the day.

The COPING Project findings led to the creation of policy recommendations and the conference day served as a platform of presenting both the data collected over the 3-year period as well as showcasing the policy recommendations to an audience of policymakers and practitioners.

The conference, entitled COPING with a Parent in Prison: An Agenda for Policy Reform, was held at the Cinquantenaire Museum in Brussels on 6 November. Over 120 delegates were in attendance.

The morning session of the day was chaired by ECH Member Maja Gabelica Supljika, Deputy Ombudsman for Children Croatia and opened with an opening speech by The Right Hon Baroness Hale of Richmond, with a keynote speech by Jean Lambert, MEP London. Both women spoke on the importance of recognising the rights of children of prisoners in judicial systems throughout the EU. A full report of the conference is [available to download](#) on the ECH site.

"All in the criminal justice, social welfare and education fields should recognise the needs of this group of children and make proper provision for them."

-The Right Hon the Baroness Hale of Richmond



The Right Hon Baroness Hale of Richmond



Jean Lambert, MEP London

COPING conference

The morning session continued with presentations from within the COPING research consortium. Research was presented from the study during the morning session by the following academics:

- Adele Jones, University of Huddersfield
- Matthias Schützwohl, Universität Dresden
- Martin Manby, University of Huddersfield
- Anne H. Berman, Karolinska Institutet

The presentation of research findings on this scale marks the first time such data has been conducted and showcased at the EU level regarding children of prisoners. The conference stage served as a springboard for taking the issue into an EU agenda.

Following the presentations of findings was a series of presentations from the NGO members of the COPING consortium, focusing on the practical impact the research had in their own work. The afternoon session began with a presentation of policy recommendations that were based on research findings. Alex Hirschfield, of the University of Huddersfield presented these recommendations, which included:

- Children have the right to get information that is important to their health and well-being
- Child's right to privacy/police raids
- Children have the right to not be discriminated against
- Children have the right to information and support and the right for their parents to receive support
- Children have the right to information and support and the right for their parents to receive support

Following the policy recommendations, a panel of young people who participated in the COPING research gave a presentation of their own experiences. Spearheaded by ECH member Bryggan, this, for many was the highlight of the day as the young people were given the opportunity to speak directly to the policy makers. In a world where they so frequently feel invisible, this presentation was incredibly moving as the young people explained their personal experiences to a captivated audience of individuals who can begin to make a real difference at the EU level.

Following the young people presentation was a panel session of experts, including:

- Verena Knaus, Senior Policy Advisor, UNICEF Brussels
- Margaret Tuite, Children's Commissioner Coordinator for Children's Rights
- Rachel Brett, QUNO Representative for Human Rights & Refugees
- Stefan Enggist, World Health Organization (WHO), Prison & Policy Officer

The panel took a series of questions and engaged with the audience on a variety of issues relating to the research findings and taking the issue further in their own fields. Margaret Tuite committed herself to including children of prisoners in her remit and Stefan Enggist commented on the importance of recognising male prisoners as fathers and including this in the WHO prison - focused programmes.

Liz Ayre, Director of Eurochips, gave the concluding remarks to the conference, highlighting how the network and its member associations across Europe would take COPING findings, results and recommendations forward.

Lobbying



Council of Europe:

2012 marked the first year that Eurochips requested participatory status with the Council of Europe (COE).

The COE's Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) is made up of some 400 NGOs holding participatory status in 47 COE member states, covering a wide range of sectors (humanitarian, human rights, social action, health, education, etc...).

Both public and private NGOs make up the group, including (amongst others) The European Network for Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC), the European Anti-Poverty Network, Defence for Children International, and the Open Society Institute.



Roberta Angelilli, EP Vice-President

Status with the COE would provide Eurochips with a large pan-European platform to further raise awareness on the issue of children of prisoners.

At the time of writing, the Eurochips application is pending.

7th European Forum on Children's Rights:

For the second consecutive year, ECH was invited to the European Forum on the Rights of the Child, an annual conference organised by the European Commission which gathers 180 key actors from European Institutions, EU Member States, Children's Ombudspersons, international organisations and NGOs to exchange ideas and best practices on topical issues related to children's rights.

Highlights of this year's conference include:

Children of prisoners mentioned by Paul Nemitz, Director of Fundamental Rights and Union Citizenship DG Justice during the high level speeches session on the first day, with presence of high profile personalities such as EP Vice-President Roberta Angelilli, Commissioner Viviane Reding, Children's Ombudsperson Emily Logan, Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs and Inclusion Laszlo Andor and Justice Ernest Ryder, UK Presiding Judge in charge of modernisation of Family Justice Systems in England and Wales. Justice Ryder also mentioned children of prisoners in his speech.

Presentation of new COE Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice. ECH had the opportunity to speak on behalf of children of prisoners, pointing out the lack of consideration for this group and that only children offenders are currently being considered within the remit of child-friendly justice. COE Children's Rights

Lobbying



ENOC image

Division suggested that ECH present studies about children of prisoners and pledged to take the subject further within the COE.

New contacts established with Dr. Agnes Lux, Ombudsman Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights in Hungary; new Children's Ombudsmen in Rome; the Ministry of Justice in Greece, the Greek Children's Ombudsman Office as well as Eurochild, the International Juvenile Justice Observatory (OIJJ) and Defence for Children International (DCI).

EU Fundamental Rights Agency:

In 2012, ECH liaised with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) with respect to the current research: "Treatment of Children in Justice Systems", which aims to identify forms of child participation in justice proceedings and to inventory good practice in 10 EU Member States. Franet (FRA's network of national focal points across the EU) is carrying out the fieldwork for qualitative research in Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Poland, Romania, Spain, the UK and the EU acceding country Croatia.

Interviews are being carried out with judges, prosecutors, court staff, legal counsellors, lawyers, guardians or other legal representatives, mediators, law enforcement officials, social workers, NGOs, as well as professionals in the fields of psychology and practitioners.

In addition, ECH participated in the FRA's annual conference in Brussels at the European Parliament in December.

Early in the year, ECH was officially accepted into the Fundamental Rights Platform - meaning the ECH name and site now public as participants of the FRA.

Child Rights Action Group (CRAG):

This year, ECH joined the Child Rights Action Group (CRAG). CRAG is an informal group of international and European NGOs who share a common commitment to mainstreaming child rights across EU policy and action. The CRAG also closely follows the preparation of the European Forum on Children's Rights.

Members of the group include Save the Children, Terre des Hommes, Plan International and Human Rights Watch. At the time of writing, the Eurochips application is pending.



Flags of the countries where the FRA fieldwork research is being carried out. From top left: Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Poland, Romania, Spanish, UK, and the EU

Events

ExoCop Policy Forum:

ECH, represented by Sarah Salmon, Deputy Director of Action for Prisoners Families, attended The Reintegration of Ex-Offenders Community of Practice (ExoCop) Policy Forum in Berlin between 18 and 19 June.

The ExoCop Project has brought together 40 European partners with the goal of reducing re-offending in Europe by developing a clear education, training and employment pathway for prisoners and ex-offenders, which will allow them to access the resettlement services they need. Throughout the two-day conference, discussion was focused on the employment and education strategies across Europe that could contribute to resettlement.

On the 2nd day of the forum a session with speakers was held, which included a variety of European NGO networks in which Eurochips is currently represented. The key points made at this session were that in the same way that prisoners face the same problems wherever they live in Europe (e.g. drug and alcohol misuse, lack of employment and poor education), the families of prisoners also face the same



issues (e.g. difficulty staying in touch with the prisoner, anxiety, poverty and social isolation).

Across the EU, children of prisoners are also in a similar situation. They have a similar set of needs across the board. They need prisons to run good quality children's visits, child-friendly information and there is an overall need for their views and rights to be considered.

Final "Escape" Project Conference:

The European Federation for Street Children organised a final conference for its two-year Daphne III Action Grant project titled ESCAPE (European Street Children Anti-Violence Program and Exchange) at the European Economic and Social Committee, which ECH attended in order to explore potential angles for cooperation with other child rights organisations and raise further awareness on the cause for children of prisoners.

Board Skype Meetings:

Following the 2011 Board Member Strategy Meeting in Paris, the members asked for a more participatory role in network decisions. As a result, several Skype strategy sessions continued through 2012 to help formulate goals and network objectives for the future.



Annual network meeting

Each year, a ECH member hosts the Annual Network Meeting (ANM) in their local city. Traditionally, the meeting lasts 3 days, with a public awareness-raising event on a Friday, the General Assembly for the full and voting members on a Saturday, and a prison-visit on Sunday.

In 2012, the ANM was hosted by Carrefour Prison in Geneva.

The three-day event involved a conferenced organised by Carrefour Prison entitled: “Parent-hood and Detention: Issues Revolving around Secrets and Lies”, followed by the General Assembly and a prison visit to Champ-Dollon Prison just outside of Geneva, where participants met with the prison governor and staff. The day also included a visit to Carrefour Prison’s family visit centre, the “Chalet”.

The Chalet is set up as a small cabin just outside the prison where children and families can wait for the prison visiting hours to open (particularly helpful when they have come long



Inside the chalet

distances). The space has toys for children, a small kitchenette, couches and chairs. Viviane Schekter, of Carrefour Prison worked with her team to design the setting in as comfortable a manner as possible. Children and families are also encouraged to spend some time in the Chalet after the visits in order to unwind and process their emotions.

The United Nations Day of General Discussion (DGD) in 2011, which represented a great opportunity for the cause and provided a “common path of action”, demonstrated the need for the network to further harmonize common messages amongst member organisations to further harmonize the key messages, action and dissemination efforts to affect change. To work towards this harmonized approach, ECH organised a Key Messages Workshop as part of its Annual Network Meeting to launch the process of truly speaking from a united platform. Breakout groups brainstormed key ideas and messages surrounding the various work of ECH and it’s members. The messages, as defined during the workshop, are on the following page.



Carrefour Prison Staff at le Chalet

ECH key messages

For Children	For Parents	Prison-Based	Policy	Universal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You deserve the freedom to be a child Your life is defined by nurture and loving experiences You deserve a great future Your opinion matters Your well-being is very important to us All children need to be offered the opportunity of support How to ensure that children of prisoners have a safe, supportive childhood To preserve contacts between a child and their parents is to preserve the ability to individuate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help the parent outside to understand the importance of maintaining the link with the prisoner-parent To say the truth and how to say it in order to 'liberate the child from the secret' Support both parents in their interactions with children, help them fulfill their emotional responsibilities Provide psychological support Be the change you desire The farther away you walk, the longer your shadow grows A bond that isn't nourished by a relationship stops in its tracks and transforms into a chain. Prison & imprisonment are a temporary phenomena in your life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The well-being of prisoners' children is everyone's responsibility Alternative measures in the interest of the child Flexibility: "I need to speak to my dad when I have something to say" Everything must be construed in terms of the child's wellbeing Provide contact opportunity in respectful, child-friendly setting Visiting space in prisons should be adequate for children Promoting child welfare increases job satisfaction of prison officers Maintaining the parenting role during imprisonment is crucial Improve visiting conditions and extend quotas for contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The topic of children of prisoners is a public health issue Enhance political awareness of existence of these children and their needs Policymakers and prison staff should listen to children Prisoners need support to accept responsibility for their actions Children need to have contact with their families Collect and analyse data on prisoners' children Reduce incidence of crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children of prisoners need a safe, supportive childhood where they can grow & experience fun & explore the world with curiosity The child's right to family life must be factored into all relevant decisions throughout the criminal justice system The best interests of the child takes centre stage Recognising the inmate's dignity Listening to children & respecting children's rights Prisoners' families are citizens Reducing use of prison Serving the silent sentence Promote understanding of the needs & rights of children of prisoners

Campaign & social media

2012 saw the 3rd annual European Prisoners' Children Campaign. The campaign, focused around European Prisoners' Children Week ran from 1 June through 30 June.

The awareness-raising campaign was started by ECH in 2010 and has been growing in success each consecutive year. In 2011 the campaign focused around the theme "Invisible Children". This year, the campaign centred around the theme "Not my Crime, Still my Sentence".

ECH members take the month of June to host a variety of events and awareness raising activities at the national level in order to help the ECH team raise awareness on a pan-European level.

During the month of June, ECH members were encouraged to help raise awareness of the campaign by taking e-buttons and imagery to link back to a microsite set up by the ECH team. The site included statistics and information regarding this group of children and the stigma to which they are vulnerable.

The site also featured a link to an online petition, with the target aim of gathering 8,000 signatures on a letter addressed to Ms. Roberta Angelilli, MEP.

The letter asked Ms. Angelilli to take the cause for prisoners' children forward in European Parliament within her role as Vice-President of the Parliament as well as Founder of the Alliance for Children - an informal group of MEPs focused on protecting child's rights.

This year, Italian partners Bambinisenzasbarre heavily promoted the online petition in Italian

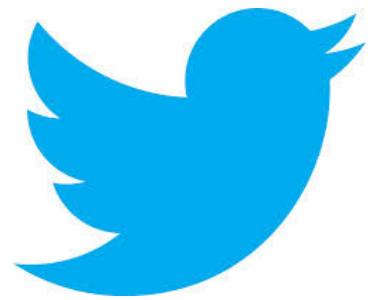
and set up several awareness-raising events to encourage individuals in Italy to sign the petition.

In total, 3,439 signatures were collected for the cause.

Individuals signed from across the globe, with the majority coming from Italy and the UK.

ECH heavily promotes the campaign via social media - in particular Twitter - which contains a database of around 1300 individuals.

Also of note were the number of organisations outside the ECH network who supported the campaign by taking e-buttons, writing blogs and spreading through their own social media channels to raise awareness on the cause for children with imprisoned parents.



Not my Crime, Still my Sentence
It doesn't have to be this way

[Click Here to Sign the Petition](#)
[& Help us help them](#)

 1 out of every 100 kids in the EU has a parent in prison

European Prisoners' Children Week
1-8 June 2012

Presented by
The European Network for Children of Imprisoned Parents
(EUROCHIPS)

New research projects

Wells of Hope Research:

In 2012 ECH was invited by the University of Huddersfield to participate in an inter-disciplinary, multi-country, cross-cultural study of the role of grandparents in supporting children of prisoners and the intersections of needs for both children and caregivers.

The study will involve the UK, Romania, Turkey, Uganda and Trinidad - representing diversity of many levels (culture, religion, economic development, criminal justice systems, and the status of children). Each country will involve a partnership between a research institution and an NGO. The Centre for Applied Studies (CACS) at the University of Huddersfield, which is spearheading the search for funding has proposed a workshop to explore logistical matters, develop the partnership and craft the proposal. This workshop will take place in Uganda in September 2013.



The Wells of Hope ministry in Uganda

If ECH participates in the project, it will be in the role of dissemination, the same role the organisation played during the Children of Prisoners: Interventions and Mitigations to Strengthen Mental Health (COPING) Project.

The project is being led by Dr Sharon Wray, a so-

ciologist at the University of Huddersfield and Eurochips' member QUNO (the Quaker United Nations Office) have signed on as partners.

At the time of writing ECH has not yet committed to the project.

Maastricht University Research:



ECH research entitled "Children affected by parental incarceration: Why the transposition of their rights to family life and wellbeing into concrete legal entitlements and policy is lagging in EU Member States", began in Autumn 2012.

Recognition of the right to family life and wellbeing of children separated from an imprisoned parent in Europe has evolved significantly since the 1989 UNCRC. Yet the transposition by EU Member States of the principles enshrined in this and other relevant treaties into concrete legal entitlements and policies has failed to keep pace. Levels of legal entitlement and policy provision for children of prisoners vary throughout Europe.

With a view to explaining these differences, the study will look at policy processes and interactions among agents and structures in case studies to explore country-specific dynamics. The crucial role of issue framing in policymaking has been well documented; the way issues are framed has impact. Why are dominant frames in some countries successful in making this problem a public issue that captures the attention of policy elites? The "level of fit" between country-specific frames used by policy entre-

New research projects

preneurs, and the discourse of policy elites (frame resonance) would appear to be a key mechanism in determining levels of benefits for children. What other factors, either structural (e.g., judicial/ legal culture, political culture, social trust and solidarity) or issue-related (e.g., focus event, champion actor) have a bearing on the establishment of these legal entitlements, either promoting or impeding action?

Language and communication mould and forge the social world. Discourse analysis is concerned with both the meaning of language and concrete aspects of action, which is steered and embedded and delimited by this discourse. Using this frame-analytical lens to examine processes of social interaction within public policy discourse can provide insight into the cross-sectoral spheres involved in policymaking processes for children affected by parental incarceration, and enhance understanding of how the issue as a social phenomenon has developed— how cognitive shifts come about, what led to children of prisoners being placed on a policy agenda, and how policy-making has evolved (or not). This research can inject new meaning into policy processes, furthering the development of social policy for affected children. It will enhance understanding of the role which policy framing dynamics play in the intricate policymaking environment of EU Member State institutions, providing keys to civil society for accessing these institutions. Is there a need to recombine current policy frame dimensions, or align individual and non-state actor interpretive frames for more effective lobbying? The research could help civil society and non-state actors (national/pan-European) align frames, bridge with others, maximize frame resonance, galvanize momentum and build more harmonious coalitions to effect change—for prisoners' children and for other groups of marginalized/ invisible children. In addition, the research framework has wide applicability for comparative analyses across Europe.

Exploring Joint Action with DG Health and Consumers:

In 2012, ECH has scouted out a new angle to explore in terms of joining forces: The EU Joint Action on Mental Health and Wellbeing (DG Health and Consumers) will be launched in early 2013 and will continue for over three years. It will include a work package on mental health and schools. The objective will be to develop policy recommendations on the cooperation between the health sector and schools, drawing on COPING findings, which highlight the role that schools can play in supporting children affected by parental incarceration.

The aim of the overall project is to provide a comprehensive overview of the legal and policy framework for child participation at the national and EU levels. Information and call for partners has been sent out to ECH members in Spain, Italy, Croatia and Sweden - as these are the preferred countries for the study.



Above: the logos from Eurochips' Members Bambinisenzasbarre, Bryggan, The Croatian Ombudsoffice of Croatia and Niños sin Barreras. These members have each received a call for participation.

Network expansion

This year saw an expansion of the Eurochips network in both geography as well as membership.

The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) - based in Switzerland became a member this year, which will help boost awareness of the network and cause for children of prisoners on the international stage. QUNO has forged many strategic alliances with major European and international bodies through its work on human rights issues such as the issue of child soldiers and women's rights. The ECH team has worked in collaboration with the QUNO team over the past 3 years on the COPING Project.

In addition to QUNO, ECH has laid the groundwork for a stronger working relationship with Alternative Sociale Romania (ASA), a professional association that was also an integral part of the COPING Project.

ASA was invited to partner with the seven ECH members in the DG Justice Daphne "Think Kids" bid (see funding section), strengthening our ties to them in the process. In turn, ASA reached to ECH to partner with them as part of a funding bid sponsored by the French Embassy in Romania.

Two new countries were officially added to the ECH network this year, Finland and Greece. The former is represented by KRITS, a contact made as part of the COPING mapping of services and interventions in various European countries; the latter by the organisation Freedom Gate Greece. Freedom Gate became aware of ECH by attending the "Raising a Child Behind Prison Bars" conference in Athens and later stayed in touch via social media, at which point they decided that membership in the network would be of benefit to their budding organisation.

In addition, the organisation Storybook Dads in the UK joined the ECH network this year. The or-

ganisation runs a program in which they record the voices of fathers in prison reading children's books. These recordings are then given to their children so that in the evenings before bedtime, they can hear the sound of their fathers' voices reading to them. This process helps the children to maintain an emotional connection with their father, even in his absence.

The ECH team looks forward to further expansion across Europe in 2013 in order to facilitate dialogue between practitioners, policymakers and individuals. Continued expansion will help to raise awareness on the cause for children of prisoners at the international and pan-European level.



QUNO
Quaker United Nations Office
Geneva • New York



Funding

In 2012, the ECH team put together several funding proposals in order to be involved in upcoming research projects as well as receive grants. The ECH office staff worked in collaboration with a variety of the network members to compile proposals covering different angles and topics relating to the issue of children of prisoners on the international stage.

DG Justice, Daphne Proposal:

Piloted by ECH Member NIACRO, in coordination with the ECH office staff, the Daphne “Think-Kids” Project aimed to develop a comprehensive training program for professionals in the statutory and NGO criminal justice sector where their work has an impact on children, assisting and encouraging NGOs to develop and implement targeted awareness-raising actions.

The training program content, which was to be produced by a consortium of 8 partners in 7 countries, sought to focus on the impact on children of the following 4 key areas:

- witnessing a parent’s arrest
- the trial and sentencing of a parent
- the imprisonment of a parent
- the return of a parent after imprisonment

A training package for schools and child professionals was to be developed to sensitize and assist them in supporting children holistically from arrest to resettlement and promoting their wellbeing and social inclusion. Partners were chosen for their expertise, experience and geographical spread; the project will also draw on expertise of associate partners from a further 5 countries.

The project aimed to bring together stakeholders via specialist, multidisciplinary networks to draw out from them how - given that they are “Thinking Kids” - they will work more ef-

fectively to understand, take into account and ameliorate the negative impacts for these children, creating more positive environments and attitudes.

“Think-Kids” highlights that children are unintended victims of the process - particularly if the arrest has been violent - and will promote the significance of a child-sensitive approach to arrest. This grows in significance when the child is the actual victim of the parent’s offence and therefore needs additional support.

The objective of “Think-Kids” is, via consultations with stakeholders nationally on a training needs, refined project-wide, to produce and pilot a 4-part training programme through delivery to police officers, court services, prison officers and resettlement workers, supported by a training portfolio and DVD.

EU call from Fundamental Justice:

Our team submitted a proposal this year to the Youth Forum call Action 4.1 “Support for bodies active at a European level in the field of youth”, issued by the Education Audiovisual & Cultural Executive Agency - a smaller grant application with a total amount of approximately €350,000 aiming to actively involve youth aged 13-18 with a parent in prison and providing support tools for this age group by fostering group discussions, web forums and face-to-face meetings between the young people. The proposal was a joint action of the Children’s Ombudsman Office Croatia, the Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT); and ECH as applicant and coordinating organisation. The concept behind the proposal targets an important age group among affected children, so we also are scouting out alternative funding sources.

Funding

DG Justice: Action Grant

The DG Justice call for the Action Grant provided a special section for children's rights. The project was spearheaded by PACT together with 3 other ECH members (Treffpunkt e.V Germany, the Czech Helsinki Committee and Bryggan; and was endorsed and supported by UK-based Institute of Education (IOE). The project design included the development and delivery of awareness-raising training for education professionals, a "train the trainer" module and its e-learning version to enable teachers to deliver child-focused awareness-raising workshops to reduce stigma; the development of a "working with children of prisoners tool-kit", providing schools with advice and best practice on how to support children of imprisoned parents; and the creation of a platform at the European level to promote a culture of shared understanding, cooperation and good practice.

Oak Foundation:

In addition to the other proposals, the ECH team submitted a letter of inquiry to the Geneva-based Oak Foundation.

The letter specifically targeted the Special Grant Section, highlighting the fact that children with imprisoned parents is a public health issue, particularly in relation to mental health. The proposal revolved around the ECH goal to improve our own expertise and professionalize our methods in awareness-raising; to impact public policy and to strengthen our function as a lobbying and political actor.



Bernard van Leer Foundation:

ECH is currently in year two of a three-year grant supplied by long-term funder, the Bernard van Leer Foundation. Deliverables for the foundation in 2012 included an updated work-plan targeting future goals, audited accounts and the annual progress report to secure the 3rd installment.

The Bernard van Leer Foundation was the initial founding partner and continues to support the ECH team, network and mission as the organisation continues to grow.

Additional Fundraising Activities:

In addition to the aforementioned proposals, ECH explored additional fundraising platforms, including the possibility of creating an online auction. At the time of writing, the online auction is in discussions for 2014.

Other fundraising activities in 2012 included:

- Participation in the London "Fundraising for Unpopular Causes Conference"
- Concept for smaller France-based fundraiser/awareness raising project to send information packs to the 191 prisons in France
- Invitation to the Sigrid Rausing Trust new Programme Director to learn more about the cause and potential partnership in future projects
- Training grant application to the French ACIFE / Idées-Futurs Opérateurs Convention de Revitalisation

ECH member highlights

2 012 was an exciting year for the ECH member organisations. We'd like to take the opportunity here to highlight some of the main events of our members. We are, as always, incredibly proud of the work each continues to do on behalf of children with imprisoned parents.

Action for Prisoners' Families (APF) - UK:



In 2012, APF held 2 national conferences in the UK. The first, entitled "Family Focus - Young People, Their Families & the Criminal Justice System" had a total of 120 delegates and was addressed by the Shadow Justice Secretary Sadiq Khan and a presentation from the Partners of Prisoners (POPS) organisation as well as the University of Huddersfield on the COPING Project. The presentation included a speech given by one of the young people involved in the project.

The second conference - entitled "Making a Difference: Work with Diverse Families" discussed a piloted telephone support group for families of sex offenders. Over the course of the pilot project, a total of 6 one hour facilitated sessions occurred between 3 participants - 2 women and 1 man.

APF also worked with the Information Security Group at Royal Holloway College to explore how digitalisation may be excluding prisoners' families.

Bambinisenzasbarre - Italy:



This year the Italian members of ECH received the "Basil Prize", organised by Associazione Italiana Formatori for their work developing training courses for prison staff, school staff and for psychosocial professionals on the topic of children of imprisoned parents. This operational model for all prison institutes of Lombardy promoted by the Lombardy PRAP (the Penitentiary Administrative Superintendence) received an honourable mention for the 2012 Basil Prize assigned by the AIF (Italian Association of Education for the public administration).

The organisation was also involved in a sensitization campaign and workshop entitled: "Open Prison: Let's Talk About It" to further raise awareness on the stigma surrounding prisons and prisoners in Italy.

Finally, the team at Bambinisenzasbarre organised a benefit concert at Teatro alla Scala. The concert was a success and helped raise awareness not only of the organisation but also of the cause for children of prisoners in Italy.

Relais Enfants Parents - France:

The team at Relais Enfants Parents spent the year re-establishing their discussion groups for fathers at French prison MAH Villepinte. The groups focus on discussing various aspects of fatherhood and the importance of maintaining the role of father while in prison. The team helps the fathers to identify key methods for maintaining this role and remaining as active as

ECH member highlights

possible with their children from behind bars.

Fédération des Relais Enfants Parents - France:

This year the team at the Fédération organised a national conference entitled: "Accompagner l'enfant confronté à des parents difficiles" (Official English Translation Here PLZ) The conference was held in (LOCATION PLZ) and had (XXX DELEGATES) - HANNAH PLZ ASK EMMANUEL (or Alain) IF HE HAS ANY FURTHER INFO ON THIS.

Czech Helsinki Committee - Czech Republic:



The main event for the team in the Czech Republic this year was to serve as content advisors on a documentary produced by Czech television, Half-Light broadcast entitled "Children in Prison". The film explored 3 case studies of families dealing with parental incarceration. The final project served as an awareness-raising tool catered towards breaking down the social stigma surrounding children of prisoners.

Children's Ombudsperson Croatia:



The Croatian Ombudsperson Office this year gave a presentation about children of prisoners in a regional con-

ference entitled "Democracy for Children". The presentation, entitled : "Vulnerable Children: From Recognizing to Real Protection" was a success at the event and focused on the various needs and rights of children of prisoners in Croatia.

FFP - Norway:



The team at FFP held a special conference this year entitled "24 Hours for Prisoners' Children", which included presentations given by children. In addition, the team held a four-day vacation in a resort by the sea for families of prisoners that they've worked with throughout the year.

Bryggan - Sweden:



In addition to organising the young people presentation at the Coping with a Parent in Prison: An Agenda for Policy Reform conference, the Bryggan team also held a conference on children of prisoners during which time they presented the wishlist the children and young people created during the COPING Project. The wishlist composes a series of requests the children came up with that would make their lives easier. The team also held a conference on Social Work and Social Development to further raise awareness of children of prisoners.

ECH Member Highlights

Families Outside - Scotland:



The team at Families Outside this year held a Fireside Chat entitled “Inspectors on Families” during the 21st Anniversary event with the current and previous Chief Inspectors of Prisons.

In addition, the team launched a new report about the key role schools can play in supporting families affected by imprisonment, based on findings by Sarah Roberts in Australia and the US.

The team also produced booklets targeting children 5-11 and young people 12-16. The booklets are designed to help children cope with having a parent in prison. They will shortly have another booklet available, which targets teachers working with prisoners’ families.

Bedford Row - Ireland:



The team at Bedford Row created various support groups for children and families of prisoners in 2012 including:

- Ex-Prisoners Support Group
- Young Mothers Drama Group
- Lifeskills Group for Women

Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) - UK:



This year the PACT team held a national conference on children of prisoners and the UK Government’s “Troubled Families Agenda”. In October they held the PACT Annual Conference (including the dissemination of the COPING Project Findings) with an audience of NGOs. PACT also published a cost benefit analysis of working with families called the “Economic Study of Integrated Family Support Program” as well as a study providing links between family relationship courses and reducing re-offending.

QUNO - Switzerland:



In addition to wrapping up the COPING Project and participating in the Coping with a Parent in Prison: An Agenda for Policy Reform conference, QUNO also advocated to include children of prisoners in the UN Human Rights Council Full-Day Discussion on the Rights of the Child as well as the Omnibus Resolution on the Rights of the Child.

ECH Member Directory

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