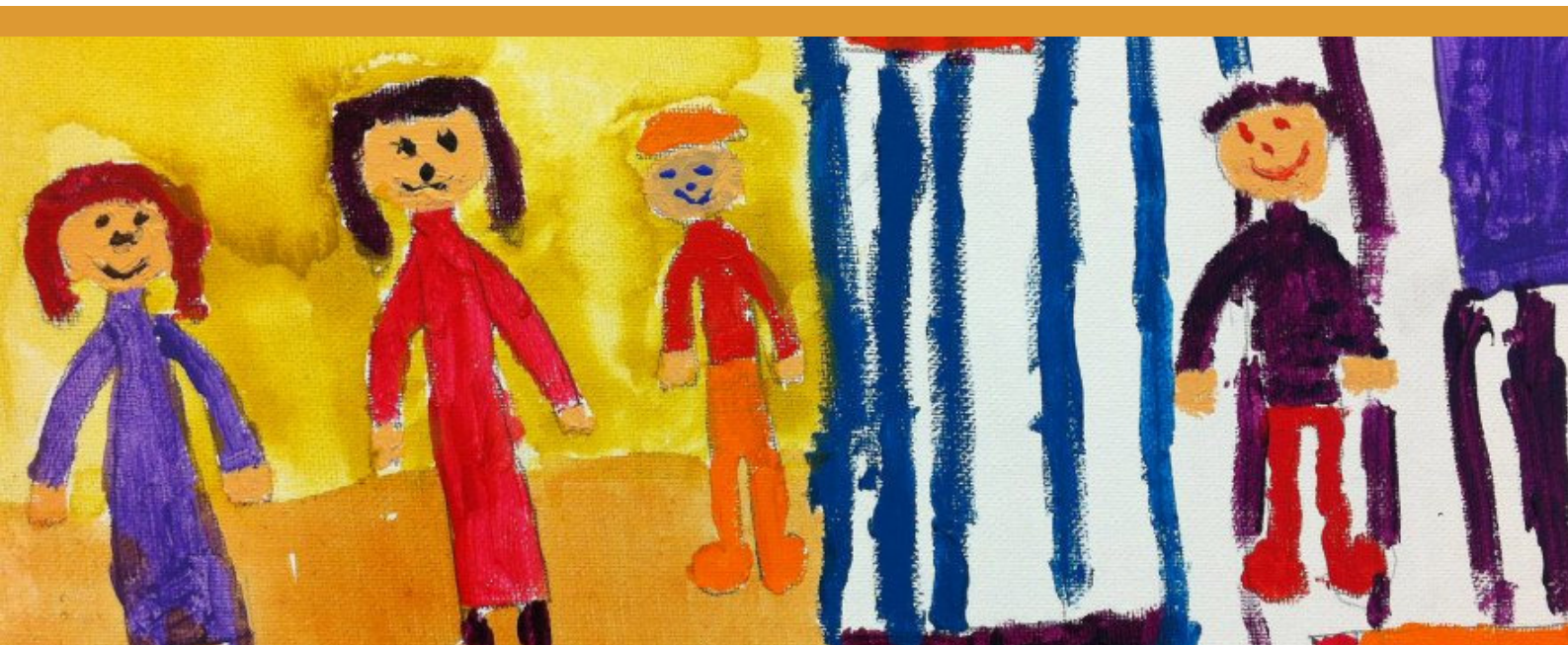


Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE network)
Annual Report
2016



COPE 2016

highlights of its achievements in four strategic areas:

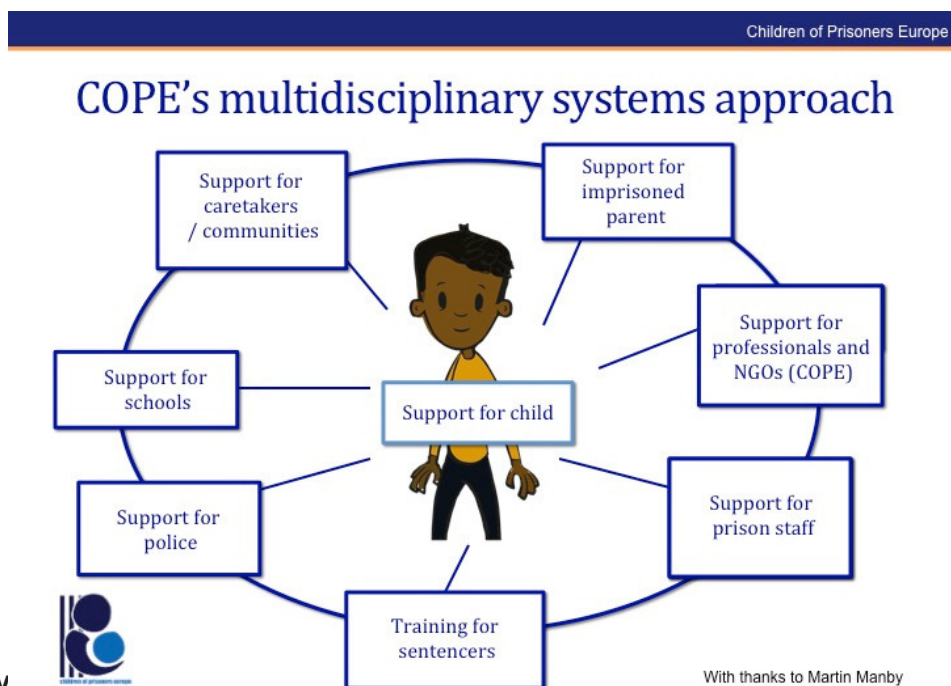
- *Cross-sectoral advocacy: putting the child at the heart of policy making*
- *Communicating with children and young people: international debate on CIPs*
- *Enhancing network expertise (framing, schools, parent support)*
- *Consolidating COPE network: financially, geographically, professionally*

In 2016, COPE joined forces with the Council of Europe's Council for Penological Co-operation (PC-CP) to begin work on a draft recommendation on children of imprisoned parents; participated in the launch of the Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of the Child 2016-2021 in Sofia, which includes children of prisoners as a group of vulnerable, marginalised children, expanding the frame for these children, previously considered solely from a criminal justice perspective; consolidated its strong working relationship with the European Union, through closer work with MEPs on Written Declaration (WD) P8_DCL(2016)0084, participating in an Expert Group on Family Ties with EU Member State prison services, and securing an EU-funded operating grant that strengthens EU policies on child rights and child protection; and co-organised an international briefing session for Member States at the UN in Geneva (1 February 2017) during the 74th session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), with CRC Chair Benyam Mezmur participating. And it co-hosted an international conference on prisoners' children with the Children's Ombudsman's Office Croatia, with participation by the European Commission, the European Parliament, UNICEF, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and young people representing the Croatian national debating team.

Introduction: Putting the child at the heart of policy making

Children of Prisoners Europe and its network of organisations working with and for children across Europe have been influencing policies and fostering the exchange of good practice for over fifteen years—identifying the problems; highlighting children's rights and needs; articulating positive solutions; and spearheading further collective action across Europe and beyond. In 2016 alone, COPE and its 85 members, experts and affiliates organised/participated in 200+ events in 17 countries Europe/worldwide—seminars, workshops, policy groups, conferences—promoting prisoners' children's rights, building network capacity to better support these children, disseminating support solutions and raising awareness. The 2016 network activity log provides highlights of these achievements—merely a glimpse of the work that COPE and its members are doing on international, European, national, regional and local levels. As a result of these long-term collective efforts, awareness of the existence of children of prisoners as a group in its own right, and the rights of these children has grown. A next step in this process has been to sustain this awareness and action in treaties, conventions, resolutions, strategies and organisations; important developments have taken place, and COPE has played a role in bringing them about. A significant step in 2016 was COPE's joining forces with the Council of Europe's Council for Penological Co-operation (PC-CP) to begin work on a draft recommendation related to

children of imprisoned parents; which is expected to be finalised at the end of 2017, and adopted by the Council of Ministers at the beginning of 2018, in line with the European Prison Rules, other Council of Ministers recommendations and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT). As part of this collaboration, a questionnaire on the child-friendliness of prison policies and prison facilities for children and families developed by COPE and disseminated by the Council of Europe to all 47 Member States represented a step forward in establishing various indicators on child-friendliness and in collecting information on the child-friendliness of EU Member State prison services. This will allow for further exchanges with prison services across Europe and for examination, analyses and suggestions on improving policies and facilities for children. As a reflective network, COPE is now setting its sights on moving beyond sector-specific support initiatives, laying the groundwork for developing integrated multidisciplinary support systems that work to protect children and respect their rights across the spectrum of relevant organisations and agencies. COPE is developing tools and solutions for schools and for parent support, respectively through its Connect-ED and Papa Plus projects, while promoting the development of cross-sectoral working groups for children of prisoners on the national level. This is in line with the Italian model Memorandum of Understanding, and dovetails with current cross-sectoral partnerships established by COPE members across Europe.



How we hav

Underpinning the advocacy efforts described above, COPE has been building strategic alliances, expanding and grounding the network, and deepening cohesion among network members since its founding in 2000, thanks to the support of the Bernard van Leer Foundation and the European Union. COPE has achieved this progress through the increasing support and involvement of the Board, for which we are truly grateful; through its dedicated staff; and through the involvement and commitment of its members across Europe, with a greater number of member-initiated activities now being launched. COPE membership has tripled since 2011, and we have seen a 42 per cent increase in the number of countries represented in the network since 2011. Strategic outreach in 2016 expanded the network from COPE EU-15 to EU-18, welcoming Malta, Portugal and Poland to partner with us on behalf of children of prisoners.

Progress in the year 2016

MA#ME conference: Motivating and Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers

As a primer to COPE's upcoming conference in Zagreb next May, representatives of the COPE network contributed to a conference on February 2 marking the close of the Croatian two-year EU-funded MAME project, piloted and implemented by the NGO RODA for imprisoned mothers separated from their children at Pozega Prison ([read more here](#)). One of the findings of the MAME project was that 50 to 60 per cent of children do not visit their mothers in prison regularly, with some living over 200 kilometers away. The project was instrumental in bringing these children into contact with their parents. RODA's outreach on a national level in implementing the MAME project was impressive, reaching a variety of sectors—occupational, health, social welfare, probation services and prison services, with training for prison staff on prisoners' children's issues a main activity.

Given the recent parliamentary elections and uncertainty over the new government's direction, RODA's conference provided a good opportunity to highlight to decision-makers the importance of the issues which children affected by parental imprisonment frequently face. Liz Ayre, COPE director, underscored the importance of the issue and emphasised the rights of prisoners' children, providing an EU perspective by highlighting measures and initiatives supporting these children at EU level. COPE board member Kate Philbrick OBE presented on the Playstation support scheme for children at Barlinnie Prison in Glasgow, while highlighting other support initiatives for children affected by parental incarceration across Europe. COPE member Maja Gabelica, Deputy Children's Ombudswoman Croatia, spoke about the needs of prisoners' children. The Croatian media reported widely on the conference and the issue, highlighting COPE's presence.

Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2016-2021

On 5 and 6 April 2016, the Committee of Ministers adopted the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021). Launched at the Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, the strategy is based on four main objectives of the Monaco Strategy (2011-2015), which focused on incorporating child-friendly amenities in the areas of justice, health, and social services, guaranteeing the rights of children in vulnerable situations and abolishing all forms of violence that exist against them.

In November 2015, the Council of Europe met in Strasbourg to prepare the draft strategy. Thanks to advocacy by network member the Children's Ombudsman's Office Croatia, supported by COPE, children affected by parental incarceration were included, for the first time, as a group of vulnerable, marginalised children, expanding the criminal justice frame previously used. Under "Protecting Children in the Context of Deprivation of Liberty", the Council of Europe stated it "will consider addressing the situation of children whose parents are detained".

The work on the development of this new 2016-2021 Strategy for the Rights of the Child has been led by the Committee of Experts on the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child. During the conference in April, the intended priority areas included equal opportunities for all children, participation of all children, a life free from violence for all children, child-friendly justice for all children, rights of the child in the digital environment.

COPE annual conference - Zagreb, May 2016

Children with a parent in conflict with the law:

What are their best interests? How can they be met?

Friday 20 May 2016

Stara gradska vijećnica, Zagreb, Croatia

Ombudsman for Children, Croatia and Children of Prisoners Europe

On Friday 20 May 2016, Children of Prisoners Europe and the Ombudsman for Children, Croatia, jointly organised an International Conference on children whose parents are in conflict with the law, held at the Stara gradska vijećnica, Zagreb, Croatia. The Conference, attended by 200 delegates from 22 different countries, was organised as a high-level forum of international and European policymakers, European Parliament members, judges, police and prison personnel, child welfare agencies, child psychologists and civil society organisations with the purpose of better defining children's best interests when a parent is in conflict with the law, whether imprisoned, arrested or on trial, and seeking to ensure that these interests are met through the development of integrated support initiatives for children based on good practice. The outcome report for the conference "Children with a parent in conflict with the law: What are their best interests? How can they be met?" can be viewed or downloaded online.

Campaign: Not My Crime, Still My Sentence 2016

Throughout the month of June, COPE runs an annual pan-European campaign entitled "Not my crime, still my sentence". The objectives of the campaign include:

- Awareness-raising about the rights and needs of children affected by the imprisonment of a parent
- Effecting policy change for these children on the local, national and European level

The campaign started in 2010, without a budget, and now takes place every year carried by COPE's members across Europe and as far away as the US, Brazil and New Zealand.

This year, the campaign used the Italian Memorandum of Understanding on children with imprisoned parents as a model text to be replicated in other countries across Europe and further afield. Using this example, “Not my crime, still my sentence” 2016 targeted national policymakers such as Ministries of Justice, Children’s Ombudspersons and law enforcement authorities.



Italy renews MOU on children with imprisoned parents

On 6 September 2016, the Italian Minister for Justice, Andrea Orlando, renewed his signature of COPE member Bambinisenzasbarre’s pioneering Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on children with imprisoned parents. The third signatory, Filomena Albano, Italian Ombudswoman for Childhood and Adolescence also renewed her signature. This landmark document, a first in Europe, represents an agreement between the Ministry for Justice, the Ombudsman for Childhood and Adolescence and the NGO, regarding the fulfilment and protection of the rights of children of imprisoned parents. The Charter was signed for the first time on 21 March 2014, and since then improvements have been seen across the Italian prison system, including

new green spaces created for children to play with their parents; visiting times outside school hours; and, importantly, data collection with regard to the children who visit their parents in prison on any given day. The updated text, signed on 6 September 2016, can be viewed on Bambinisenzasbarre's website: www.bambinisenzasbarre.org



COPE meets with new FRA Director Michael O'Flaherty

New Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union (FRA) Michael O'Flaherty's meeting with civil society representatives, including COPE, left those present motivated and hopeful, but not without a feeling of having been warned as to the difficulties facing rights organisations currently and in the upcoming months. The intimate meeting between the new Director and seven civil society organisations took place during the former's visit to France in early September 2016. Michael O'Flaherty showed interest in the various topics presented and not only listened but provided indispensable insight into the workings of the European Union and the most pressing issues it is currently facing. COPE is looking forward to working with Michael O'Flaherty and the Fundamental Rights Agency in the future. The FRA's latest Fundamental Rights Report (2016) can be accessed online: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2016/fundamental-rights-report-2016>

European Parliament Written Declaration on children of imprisoned parents

On 12 September, ten Members of the European Parliament placed a Written Declaration (WD) on the protection of children with imprisoned parents before the Parliament under Rule 136 of the body's Rules of Procedure. The sponsoring MEPs, members of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Children's Rights, included Patrizia Toia (Italy), Sergio Gaetano Cofferati (Italy), Caterina Chinnici (Italy), Silvia Costa (Italy), Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (Sweden), Luigi Morgano (Italy), Elisabeth Morin-Chartier (France), Nathalie Griesbeck (France), Marian Harkin (Ireland), Jean Lambert (UK).

The WD [P8_DCL(2016)0084], a statement of policy, calls upon the Commission to consider the possibility of establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for children of prisoners at EU level, drawing on the landmark MoU signed by Italy in March 2014 and renewed on 6 September 2016, the first of its kind for this group of children. The MOU protects the child-parent relationship and allows parents to be present at key moments in their children's education, thus safeguarding the best interests of children. The WD also calls on the Commission to promote the development of policies that help combat discrimination and build a more cohesive society. Although not enough MEPs signed the Written Declaration for it to be adopted as the official position of the Parliament (276 out of 366), COPE remains highly encouraged by this show of support at the European level.

Conference: Separated Children in Judicial Proceedings

On 27 and 28 October 2016, COPE member Rachel Brett spoke at the Separated Children in Judicial Proceedings conference in Brussels, which was hosted by the Committee of Regions. Rachel's plenary presentation focused on trans-European perspectives on cross-border justice for children and COPE's previous collaboration with the AIRE Centre on a joint third party intervention with Action for Prisoners' Families for H.S. and others v. the UK (2009). She also co-moderated a subsequent workshop looking at how actors can work together to support children

in judicial processes. Rachel outlined both the substantive and procedural issues in working together on applications before the international mechanisms, and focussed people's attention on the practical issues which are vital to consider before embarking on any submissions.

European Custody and Detention Summit

14-15 November 2016, Tower of London

Complete with workshops, roundtables and technology demonstrations, the European Custody & Detention Summit brought together custody providers and policymakers to share perspectives, best practice and innovations in the UK prison sector. Sessions included: Transforming global custody; Mental health and police detention; Restorative justice in intercultural settings; Supporting women in custody and beyond; and the importance of family relationships, for which COPE President Lucy Gampell was keynote speaker. Lucy spoke alongside COPE partners Andy Keen-Downs, CEO of Pact (Prison Advice and Care Trust) and Corin Morgan-Armstrong (Head of Family Interventions, HMP Parc).

Poland: COPE advocacy and research mission

October 2016

"I use Skype to speak to my 11 year old son" – the effective use of this telecommunications tool in Poland was one of the first things COPE learnt when speaking to a female inmate from the Śledczy Grochów prison in Warsaw. A fifteen-minute weekly Skype session is granted in addition to the one hour face-to-face visit on Sundays. While in Warsaw, COPE met with representatives from the General Prison and Probation Administration Headquarters, which will open the door for us for future direct contact and potential collaboration. In order to address the issue from a wider, child rights focus, COPE also met with UNICEF Poland, who were interested and open to the topic. During this meeting, Bambinisenzasbarre's Italian model Memorandum of

Understanding on children with imprisoned parents was met with great interest, and UNICEF is currently exploring if and how it might be possible to promote this document on the national level in Poland.

In Krakow, the Regional Inspectorate of the Prison Service and the NGO Malopolskie Stowarzyszenie Probacja organised a special meeting devoted to the integration of children and families. COPE shared experiences, expertise and good practice examples from across Europe vis-à-vis maintaining parental ties between prisoners and their children, reaching an audience of approximately 60 prison managers, penitentiary experts, probation officers, representatives of city councils and aid institutions, academia and other NGOs. The panel discussion provided an excellent opportunity to exchange on practical solutions and possibilities in Poland and was followed by a visit to the historic Montelupich remand prison.

As a result of this successful advocacy trip to Poland, COPE is pleased to have acquired a new Applicant member: the organisation Malopolskie Stowarzyszenie Probacja (Probacja Foundation).

European Parliament debate on children of prisoners and the MOU

Both COPE and Bambinisenzasbarre were invited to present at a European Parliament debate on children of prisoners and the Italian model Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 30 November 2016. The debate was entitled “Can the Italian example become European?” Nine Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) were present, including Caterina Chinnici, Patrizia Toia, Paola Costa and Jean Lambert. All nine showed great interest in and support of the Italian MOU and in exploring ways to work together to promote it. The debate also presented the Written Declaration (see above) and Ms Toia expressed her wish to take it forward to the Commissioner Vera Jourova should it not reach the required number of signatures.

This did indeed happen, as previously explained, and Ms Toia and the other MEPs did directly send the Written Declaration to both Vera Jourova and Jean-Claude Juncker.

COPE launches in-school initiative as crowdfunding campaign

In late November, COPE launched a new schools-based awareness-raising initiative through its first crowdfunding campaign, raising money through an international platform called GlobalGiving. Thanks to generous donations from across the globe, totally close to \$7,500, COPE was able to design and launch an in-school awareness-raising campaign as part of Not My Crime, Still My Sentence 2017. The idea behind this campaign is to reach those children separated from a parent in prison who are not yet in contact with our members on the ground, via their communities, with a particular focus on schools. Often, the first people outside the family to learn about the child's situation are teachers and other school staff. Our goal is to provide school staff with vital resources and tools to support children affected by parental imprisonment. This will allow school staff to lend a helping hand, reduce discrimination and increase children's school performance.



COPE members (2016)

Action for Prisoners' and Offenders'
Families (APF)
15-17 The Broadway Hatfield
Hertfordshire AL9 5HZ, UK
<http://www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk>

ASBL Relais Enfants Parents
Rue de Bordeaux, 62A
1060 Brussels, Belgium
<http://www.relaisenfantsparents.be>

Associazione Bambinisenzasbarre
O.N.L.U.S
Via Antonio Baldissera 1
20129 Milan, Italy
<http://www.bambinisenzasbarre.org>

Bedford Row Family Project
Lower Bedford Row
Limerick, Ireland
<http://www.bedfordrow.ie>

Buff Stockholm
Magnus Ladulåsgatan 6A
118 66 Stockholm, Sweden
<http://buff.nu>

Czech Helsinki Committee
Štefánikova 21
150 00 Praha 5, Czech Republic
<http://www.helcom.cz/cs/co-delame/>

Families Outside
13 Great King St,
Edinburgh EH3 6QW, United Kingdom
<http://www.familiesoutside.org.uk>

La Federation des Relais Enfants
Parents (FREP)
4-6 rue Charles Floquet
92122 Montrouge, France
repidf@club-internet.fr

For Fangers Pårørende (FFP) (The
Organisation for Families and Friends of
Prisoners)
P.B. 6710, St. Olavs plass,
0130 Oslo, Norway
<http://www.ffp.no>

NIACRO
4 Amelia Street
Belfast BT2 7GS, United Kingdom
<http://www.niacro.co.uk>

Office of the Ombudsman for Children
Croatia
Teslina 10
Zagreb 10000, Croatia
<http://www.dijete.hr/en.html>

POPS
1079 Rochdale Road,
Manchester M9 8AJ, United Kingdom
<http://www.partnersofprisoners.org.uk>

Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT)
29 Peckham Road, London SE5 8UA
United Kingdom
<http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk>

Quaker United Nations Office
(QUNO) 13 Avenue du Mervelet
1209 Geneva, Switzerland
<http://www.quno.org>

Relais Enfants Parents
4-6 rue Charles Floquet
92122 Montrouge, France
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Relais Enfants Parents Romands
Rue du Tunnel 1
CH- 1005 Lausanne, Switzerland
<http://repr.ch>

Service Treffpunkt
19 rue Pasteur,
L-3543 Dudelange, Luxembourg
<http://www.etat.lu/annuaire/?idMin=5361>

Solrosen
Andra Lnggatan 29,
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<http://www.raddningsmissionen.se>

St Nicholas Trust 34 Paul Street,
Cork, Ireland
<http://www.stnicholastrust.ie>

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Hoppenbank e.V.
<http://www.hoppenbank.info>

Probacja Foundation
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31 - 111 Kraków, Poland
www.probacja.org

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SAVN
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Belfast, BT7 2FZ, UK
http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/barnardos_today/northernireland.htm

Irish Penal Reform Trust
MACRO, 1 Green Street
Dublin 7, Ireland
<http://www.iprt.ie>

Children Heard and Seen
PO Box 1589,
Oxford OX4 3JJ, United Kingdom
<http://childrenheardandseen.co.uk/>

Kriminaalihuollon tukisäätiö (KRITS)
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00500 Helsinki, Finland
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The Croft (Visitors' Support and
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St. Enoch's, 19 Smithycroft Road
Glasgow G3 3RH, United Kingdom
<http://croftglasgow.org/>

Morning Tears Deutschland e.V.
Paracelsusstraße 35,
70771 Leinfelden-Echterdingen,
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<http://morningtears.de>

Freedom Gate Greece
<http://freedomgategreece.blogspot.fr>

Person Shaped Support (PSS)
18 Seel Street,
Liverpool L1 4BE, United Kingdom
<http://www.psspeople.com>

Heilsarmee Gefängnisdienst
Laupenstrasse 5,
Postfach 6574 3001 Bern,
Switzerland
<http://www.heilsarmee.ch/2012/02/23>

Pillars
PO BOX 21209
Christchurch 8143, New Zealand
<http://www.pillars.org.nz>

Relais Enfants Parents Haute-Normandie (REPHN)
11 rue de la Mare aux Planches
76000 Rouen, France

Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs
21 Elmbank Street,
Glasgow G2 4PB, United Kingdom
<http://www.sfad.org.uk>

Service Network for Children of Inmates
1835 E. Hallandale Beach
Blvd #387 Hallandale Beach
Florida 33009 United States
<http://www.childrenofinmates.org>

SEUM Child Welfare Practice
133, Yanghwa-ro, Mapo-gu, 1605,
Seogyo Tower Officetel, Seoul,
04032, South Korea
www.iseum.or.kr

Storybook Dads
HMP Channings Wood Denury,
Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 6DW,
United Kingdom
<http://www.storybookdads.org.uk>

SOS Telefono Azzurro Onlus
Corso Iodi 47
20139 Milano, Italy
<http://www.azzurro.it>

Youth Re-autonomy Foundation of Turkey (TCYOV)
Rıhtım Cd. Yoğurtçu Şükrü Sk.
No:19, Kadıköy-İstanbul, Turkey
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Za branou
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