

# Newsletter



## The Network

Welcome to European Cities Against Child Poverty, a new EU-wide network led by GLE (Greater London Enterprise), working together with the London Development Agency, London Councils and the cities of Amsterdam, Budapest, Helsinki, and Milan as well as several associate partners.



Supported by the EU PROGRESS fund, this two-year project addresses the root causes of child poverty in our cities through sharing practical experience. We take a holistic approach when analysing the factors affecting child poverty, looking at the most effective ways of tackling worklessness through four themes. Network partners will analyse and share successful approaches to tackling child poverty, developing a practical guide to help shape future policy and interventions. You can keep in touch with our work by receiving thematic policy bulletins, newsletters, logging onto our interactive website and attending seminars and conferences and it is still possible to join the network as an associate partner: please complete the form at the end of this newsletter to join our mailing lists.

## The focus

The network will focus on four factors impacting on child poverty, each of which will be led by one of the core partners.

- Promoting access to employment and training for parents.
- The role of education in improving children's life chances and breaking cycles of deprivation
- The role of health and social care in improving children's life chances and breaking cycles of deprivation
- The impact of homelessness and poor housing conditions on children.

Each theme will be debated by the partners, associate partners and experts in policy workshops and public conferences that will help define common issues and successful solutions.

Analysis and discussion will be backed up with study visits to successful local projects hosted by each of the partners.

## In this issue

- Exploring the European Cities Against Child Poverty network's four themes
- Future European Cities Against Child Poverty network' events
- Upcoming events in the EU on the theme of child poverty
- A brief directory of European networks addressing themes relating to the four themes

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Mutual Learning on Social Protection and Social Inclusion



This newsletter is supported by the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013).

## The four themes

### ○ Promoting access to employment and training for parents

Children whose parents are out of work are most likely to experience poverty: unemployment is a major risk factor for poverty and for social exclusion in the broader sense. Partners will analyse policies and projects that have successfully promoted access to training and employment. A particular emphasis will be on successful policies those facing additional barriers to entering the labour market, such as disabled parents and lone parents.

### ○ The role of education in improving children's life chances and breaking cycles of deprivation

Poverty and social exclusion have a major impact on the cognitive development and educational attainment of children. Early childhood poverty affects schools achievement and children in poverty are at greater risk of being excluded from school and experiencing bullying. They are also more likely to drop out of education early. ECACP partners will identify effective strategies and projects for improving children's life chances and reducing school drop out. Debate will focus particularly on children from disadvantaged groups, such as children with disabilities, ethnic minority or immigrant children, and children in care.

### ○ The role of health and social care in improving children's life chances and breaking cycles of deprivation

Children in poverty have greater risk of health problems, with poor nutrition, inadequate housing conditions and insufficient medical care increasing children's risk of illness and disabilities. The costs of medical treatment can be a particular barrier to healthcare, while lack of information and poor accessibility can also impact negatively on the health of poor children. ECACP partners will consider which policies, operating at regional or local level, are working most successfully to improve the life chances of children and particularly those from disadvantaged groups.

### ○ The impact of homelessness and poor housing conditions on children

The well-being of children is closely related to the housing conditions in which they live: poor living conditions can result in ill-health, lower educational attainment, insecurity and unhappiness. Lack of affordable housing is a significant problem in several ECACP partner cities and ECACP partners will consider the most effective policy solutions, operating at local and regional level, for reducing homelessness and tackling the issue of poor housing conditions.

## Launching the Network

**Network partners and policy experts will meet for the first time in London on 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> April 2008 to kick off the ECACP project. A policy workshop for partners and experts on 10<sup>th</sup> April will define and analyse successful strategies for promoting access to employment and training for parents.**

Partners will visit two London projects that are successfully promoting employment for parents and in particular single mothers. Delegates will visit the project '[Childcare for work](#)' (aimed at facilitating employment among lone parents) and the Faith Regen Foundation,

an organisation managing several projects supporting the employment of disabled parents.

The network will be officially launched in London's Living Room in City Hall. Keynote speakers will include Ms Marie-Anne Paraskevas of the European Commission and [Claude Moraes](#) MEP, UK Labour spokesperson on Employment and Social Affairs at the European Parliament. Presentations and speeches will be available at [www.againstchildpoverty.com](http://www.againstchildpoverty.com) and in the June 2008 newsletter.

## Future events

### September 2008: Helsinki

Partners will meet in Helsinki in September 2008 to analyse and debate issues faced in improving life chances for children and breaking cycles of deprivation, with a focus on education. Again, partners will also have the opportunity to visit successful projects currently ongoing in Helsinki and take part in a local ECACP event.

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### Child Poverty events in Europe May – July 2008

#### O [Joining the Dots- Connecting the Evidence Base for Homelessness Policy and Practice](#) London, UK, 15 May 2008

This conference will offer policy makers and service providers an opportunity to talk directly to researchers about their findings and understand, through interactive workshops, how academic research could be relevant to their work.

#### O [European Antipoverty Network \(EAPN\): 7th European meeting of people experiencing poverty](#) Brussels, Belgium, 16-17 May 2008

EAPN annual seminar will focus on the four pillars in the fight against poverty: social services, services of general interest, housing and minimum income. 200 experts from across Europe are expected to attend.

#### O [Child and youth research in the 21st Century: A Critical Appraisal](#) Nicosia, Cyprus, 28-29 May 2008

The International Childhood and Youth Research Network, which promotes inter-disciplinary study of children and young people in order to further raise awareness and understanding of issues that affect their well being, is organising this event for academics, researchers, policy makers and practitioners.

#### O [Strategies to end homelessness: Elements of conflict and cooperation at local level](#) Brussels, Belgium 6 June 2008

FEANSTA's annual European seminar on strategies to end homelessness will seek to:

- Raise awareness of the European Commission's strategy for promoting social inclusion
  - Involve stakeholders at EU level on the specific theme of homelessness
  - Extend transnational exchanges on homelessness to non-FEANTSA members.
- The event is organised in collaboration with the Committee of the Regions.

**O Better Future for Children – Today-60 years of International Cooperation for Children in Care**  
Helsinki, Finland, 11-13 June 2008

The conference is organised by FICE-International (Fédération Internationale des Communautés Educatives/International Federation of Educative Communities) and Finland's Central Union for Child Welfare. It seeks to share expertise in the field of residential care and in particular on the following themes:

- Protecting the world's children
- Child, family and close relations
- Child's experiences, right to participate and to be heard, quality of care

**O 13th German Child and Youth Welfare Congress - Growing up justly!**  
Essen, Germany, 18-20 June 2008

As well as a conference and on child and youth welfare the Congress will present an exhibition of new developments, innovative models and current successful practices on child and youth welfare.

This conference is organised by the Arbeitsgemeinschaft fuer Kinder und Jugendhilfe- AGJ (Child and Youth Welfare Association).

**O Children's Rights and Participation: What Preconditions? What Rights? What Outcomes? What Next?**

York, UK, 1 July 2008

York University's Centre for Applied Human Rights and the Social Policy Research Unit are organising this one day event on current achievements and remaining challenges in children's and young people's rights and participation in society.

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## Recent studies on child poverty

### [O Winter 2007 - Employment and Homelessness: An Opportunity and a Challenge](#)

FEANTSA, Belgium, Winter 2007

The Winter 2007 edition of the FEANTSA Magazine summarises discussions in FEANTSA European Conference in October 2007. The magazine in particular illustrates successful strategies and approaches for promoting employment among homeless people.

### [O Information briefing for the Slovenia Permanent Representation to the EU](#)

*Social Policy: tackling child poverty through policy measures in support of families*

CARITAS Europa, Belgium, November 2007

CARITAS Europa's briefing paper sets out recommendations for tackling child poverty during the forthcoming Slovenian Presidency and provides an overview of recent CARITAS projects tackling child poverty in Europe. In particular the publication focuses on:

- Allocation of resources for children and an improved income system for families
- Ensuring coherence between economic and social policies
- Families and flexicurity (in particular referring to setting working hours standards that would ensure sufficient parental care).

### [O Working paper in Early Childhood Development](#)

*Early childhood spaces- Involving young children and practitioners in the design process*

Alison Clark, Bernard van Leer Foundation, Netherlands, December 2007

This publication discusses how children under the age of six can be more involved in society decisions, in particular for what concerns the designing of spaces for early childhood provision.

### [O Why Money Matters](#)

Save the Children, United Kingdom

February 2008

Part of the [Campaign to End Child Poverty](#) this publication offers contributions by leading experts on child poverty. It demonstrates how raising the income of the poorest families on an ongoing basis could impact significantly on the life chances of millions of children in the UK.

### [O Capital Gains- London Child Poverty Commission Final Report](#)

Child Poverty Commission, London, UK, February 2008

The London Child Poverty Commission was set up by London Councils and the Mayor of London in February 2006 to address the challenge of child poverty in the capital - drawing together Commissioners from the statutory, voluntary and private sectors, as well as academics and policy experts. The report is the result of two years of extensive research and consultations. The document calls for action from national and local governments, employers and people working directly with families and children.

### **O Children in severe poverty in Wales: an agenda for action**

Save the Children, UK, March 2008

The report includes a summary of key findings of a project undertaken by Save the Children and the Bevan Foundation, aimed at investigating the situation of children living under most severe child poverty in Wales. In this report the authors list also a set of recommendations to the Welsh Assembly Government for ensuring that effective approaches for tackling specific barriers for families living in poverty are implemented.

### **O Contribution regarding the review of the EU legal framework on parental leave**

COFACE, Belgium, March 2008

The Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union (COFACE) published a position paper on the existing EU legal framework on parental leave. COFACE recommends the European Commission to concentrate its policies in support of family life under three main axes:

- Compensation for direct and indirect costs associated with the family.
- Parental help service in the form of education and care for children.
- Promotion of adequate working and employment conditions (in order to ensure adequate time for parental care) as well as access to services at local level.

### **O Child Poverty and Well-Being in the EU**

EU Task-Force on Child poverty and Child Well-Being, February 2008

This report, adopted by the Social Protection Committee on 17 January 2008, illustrates how one fifth of children in the EU are living below the poverty threshold. The document focuses on:

- An analysis of child poverty and social exclusion in the EU
- Policy monitoring and assessment of child poverty and well-being in EU Member States
- Conclusions and recommendations aimed at better monitoring and assessing child poverty and well-being

The report identifies the predominant factors affecting child poverty in each country, and urges the adoption of a common framework for analysing and monitoring child poverty and social exclusion to facilitate comparative studies among the EU Member States.

## European child poverty networks

**There are several EU networks focusing on the themes of the ECACP project and it will be a priority for us to work collaboratively with these and to ensure that we add value rather than duplicate work already under way. A brief overview of some of the most relevant networks is provided below.**

### Caritas Europa

Caritas Europa is a network of 48 Catholic relief, development and social service organisations. Working in 44 European countries, its activities focus on issues related to poverty and social inequality, as well as asylum and migration. Part funded by the European Commission.

[www.caritas-europa.org](http://www.caritas-europa.org)

### CECODHAS

The European network for the promotion of the right to decent housing (CECODHAS) has 46 regional and national federations representing over 39,000 public, voluntary and cooperative social housing enterprises in 19 countries. This European network is funded by membership fees and works for the promotion of integrated approaches to sustainable urban development and right for quality social services accessible to all. [www.cecodhas.org](http://www.cecodhas.org)

### COFACE

The Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union (COFACE) promotes family policy, solidarity between generations and the interests of children within the EU. COFACE has more than 50 members across the EU. [www.coface-eu.org](http://www.coface-eu.org)

### EAPN

The European Antipoverty Network (EAPN) is an independent network of NGOs involved in the fight against poverty and social exclusion in the EU. 24 national networks of voluntary organisations and grassroots groups are members of EAPN. The network is financed by the European Commission; the organisation has also consultative status with the Council of Europe and is a founding member of the Platform of European Social NGOs.

[www.eapn.org](http://www.eapn.org)

### ESN

The European Social Network (ESN) is a network of social services directors in Europe. Its members are national associations or groups of directors of local authority social services, social protection and social welfare as well as regional and local authorities and research institutes. The network exchanges best practice and acts as a platform for policy engagement at EU level. [www.esn-eu.org](http://www.esn-eu.org)

### Eurochild

Eurochild is a network of organisations and individuals working to improve the quality of life of children and young people in Europe. Eurochild has 52 members in 27 European countries. Part funded by the European Commission. [www.eurochild.org](http://www.eurochild.org)

### EUROCITIES

EUROCITIES is a network of 130 large cities in over 30 EU countries, creating a platform from which to share knowledge and ideas and develop innovative solutions for common problems affecting local authorities in the EU. It successfully promotes dialogue among European Institutions and European cities. Part funded by the European Commission. [www.eurocities.org](http://www.eurocities.org)

### FEANTSA

The European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) has c.100 NGO members from 30 countries. It is the only major European network that focuses on homelessness at EU level, and has consultative status at the Council of Europe and UN. Part funded by the European Commission.

[www.feantsa.org](http://www.feantsa.org)

### RETIS

RETIS is a network of more than 40 European local and regional authorities in 14 countries exchanging best practice and defining successful strategies for combating social exclusion. RETIS activities are aimed at eradicating poverty and exclusion and promoting social emancipation. [retis.ox2.be](http://retis.ox2.be)