Parliaments united in combating sexual violence against children

Council of Europe ONE in FIVE Campaign to stop sexual violence against children

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Although sexual violence against children is one of the most despicable and intolerable crimes, it is also one of the least reported. According to estimates by several agencies, only 1% to 10% of cases are reported, chiefly because the children concerned fear reprisals of all kinds.

This low rate of reporting ultimately hinders preventive action – the most effective kind – and early intervention. This merely increases the children’s suffering, which will mark them for the rest of their lives. That is why the ONE in FIVE Campaign, initiated by the Council of Europe after the adoption of the Lanzarote Convention, is so crucially important. The campaign puts the emphasis on alert systems, awareness raising, legal harmonisation and the combined efforts of all relevant stakeholders to ensure that all countries tackle this tragic problem.

Ratification of the Lanzarote Convention is open to all countries, not just Council of Europe members states, because sexual violence against children is a global crime. Measures to prevent, detect and punish it must therefore be implemented globally and consistently, and also very firmly.

Our children are the most valuable human asset of our societies and our countries, but also the most vulnerable. Each and every one of us has a responsibility to protect them and ensure that they grow up in a suitable, balanced environment where there is no place for violence.
News: 14th network meeting, Strasbourg

Debate on “Child sexual abuse in sport”

The 14th meeting of the Network of contact parliamentarians to stop sexual violence against children will be held jointly with the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media on 25 June 2013 during the third part-session of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly.

The debate will be introduced by Mr George Nikolaidis, psychiatrist (Greece), and Ms Judith Conrad, manager of the Ethics and Education Department of Swiss Olympic. Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, will give an update on the Council of Europe ONE in FIVE Campaign.

Latest: 13th network meeting, Strasbourg

Debate on “Sexual abuse of children by their peers”

The 13th meeting of the Network of contact parliamentarians to stop sexual violence against children took place on 24 April 2013. The discussions were introduced jointly by Ms Franny Parren, advocacy officer at Rutgers WPF, and Ms Ruth Ennis, board member of YouAct and co-ordinating affiliate of the Y-SAV project.

Ms Parren presented Y-SAV, “a European project to address youth sexual aggression and victimisation”. The project targets young people aged 12-25, who are particularly at risk because of the dynamics specific to youth and adolescence and the characteristics of their relationships. Sexual violence between young people has serious consequences: sexual violence at a young age results in both physical and psychological harm, with an increased risk of re-victimisation in adulthood. There is consequently a need, on the one hand, for appropriate responses in legislation, preventive measures and service provision, and on the other, for harmonisation of prevalence data on sexual violence in order to compare the situation in different countries.

Ms Gabrielle Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, gave an update on the ONE in FIVE Campaign and expressed her satisfaction with the progress and success of the campaign in the Council of Europe member states.
Greece

Greece remains committed to combating sexual violence against children

Ms Eleni Rapti, contact parliamentarian for Greece, has carried out several activities in the framework of the ONE in FIVE Campaign.

In particular, Ms Rapti has organised information and awareness-raising stands located in several central spots in Thessaloniki (see picture). Ms Rapti has also launched an awareness-raising campaign for the participants in sports events organised by SEGAS (Greek association of athletics and sports clubs) during which she will make speeches and set up information stands. The campaign began in Kastoria, on 26 May 2013 and will end in Larisa on 20 October 2013. Finally, in the framework of a programme of activities aimed at informing schoolchildren, parents and other interested parties, about the positive and negative aspects and dangers of the Internet, Ms Rapti took part in teleconferences between schools along with the Head of the Cyber Crime Division of the Greek police, Mr Manos Sfakianakis, and is continuing this initiative through workshops in various cities around Greece. The initiative is being carried out by the Cyber Crime Division and involves an innovative, interactive online application on safe Internet surfing.

Andorra

Ms Silvia Eloïsa Bonet Perot, contact parliamentarian for Andorra, and also rapporteur on “Parliaments united in combating violence against children: mid-term review of the ONE in FIVE campaign”, confirms her strong commitment to the campaign: she would like the “Underwear Rule” TV spot to be broadcast on Andorran television channels.

Portugal

A major conference was held at the Portuguese Senate on 24 May to mark the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Instituto de Apoio à Criança, an NGO which has a long history of working on this issue. It was attended by all the bodies that have an important role to play at the highest levels of the state and civil society, and also saw the active participation of Queen Sofia of Spain, who has decided to give her backing to this Portuguese initiative. The conference was widely covered in the media and represents one of the highlights of the ONE in FIVE Campaign.
**Congress of local and regional authorities**

The city of Dammarie-les-Lys is actively contributing to the ONE in FIVE Campaign as a “Partner city”


**Agenda**

The network of contact parliamentarians will continue to meet in 2013:

- **October 2013 part-session**: 15th network meeting, Strasbourg.
- **Extraordinary meeting** of the network on Wednesday, 
  13 November 2013, Geneva (subject to Bureau authorisation).

**Website**

Interviews, handbooks, compendia, newsletters, leaflets… Find all information about the parliamentary dimension of the campaign at the following address:

[www.assembly.coe.int/oneinfive](http://www.assembly.coe.int/oneinfive)

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