



Separated Children in Europe Programme

Networking with Youth to
Combat Violence against
Separated Children



**SCEP Youth Network
Meeting and exhibition
Report & Lessons Learned**

**30 November - 3 December 2008
Brussels, Belgium**

Introduction

This report describes the process and outcomes of the Separated Children in Europe Youth Network meeting and exhibition in Brussels, Belgium, 30 November - 3 December 2008. We summarized the "lessons learned" and start with a general overview of the meeting, describing participants, overall goals, practical arrangements and general experiences. After the general overview there are more in depth descriptions of the used methods, the most important outcomes and experiences with different parts of the workshop. The PowerPoint presentations and hand-outs of this meeting are available in separate attachments.

Participants

Youngsters:

We got in contact with the youngsters through the NGO's (and their partner organizations) that are involved in the SCEP programme. We asked them to link us up with separated children, between 15 and 25 years of age, who were able to understand and express themselves in basic English. From November 2007 – December 2008 25 youngsters joined the network, 16 youngsters from this group participated in the meeting. 20 participants were male, 5 female. The age-range of the youngsters was from 15-25.

Youngsters 14 countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Austria (1)○ Denmark (2)○ Finland (2)○ Germany (2)○ Greece (1)○ Hungary (2)○ Ireland (2)○ Malta (1)○ Netherlands (1)○ Norway (2)○ Poland (1)○ Slovenia (2)○ Sweden (1)○ UK (England 2, Scotland 2)	10 countries of origin: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Afghanistan (9)○ Angola (1)○ Burundi (1)○ Cameroon (2)○ Ethiopia (1)○ Iraq (1)○ Nigeria (3)○ Rwanda (1)○ Somalia (5)○ Togo (1)	Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lise Bruun, project coordinator - Save the Children○ Simone Bommeljé, project consultant - Yohri○ Yvonne van 't Oever, project consultant - Ympuls○ Zaina Karekezi, Advisory board SAMAH/hands-on expert
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Goals of the meeting

- Fun for the involved youngsters
- Empowerment of participating youth
 - SCEP topics
 - Introduction on EU institutions
 - Media training
- How to build / keep a sustainable network
 - ideas/plans for the youth network & website
 - network skills and future communication
 - funding
- Exhibition part
 - Preparation of Exhibition
 - Roles & tasks (feeling responsible for own activity and exhibition as a whole)
 - Actual Exhibition

Practical arrangements and general experiences

Hotel

We arranged the meeting in a hotel close to the European Parliament and Goethe Institute (place of the exhibition) and had our own meeting facilities in the hotel. We made a schedule for the rooms, having shared rooms for males and separate shared rooms for females. We made our decision based on advice of organizations in Brussels and own experience.

Since the aim of the meeting was different from the Aalsmeer meeting you cannot compare both locations. The small hotel Aalsmeer created a group atmosphere since there we could use the restaurant privately. The Brussels hotel was more a business hotel where the youngsters found this privacy in their rooms.

Activities

During the day we had breaks where the participants had some time off. They used it to lunch, or take some rest in their rooms. The 3 evenings in the programme were used to have a dinner in different restaurants.

Rules

During the whole meeting we had a non-alcohol and non-drugs policy. Smoking was only allowed outside and mobile phones were supposed to be switched off during the meeting. Our group had a good sense of responsibility and we had no problems or incidents concerning this policy.

Airport

To guarantee the safety of the participants and make sure that they would all arrive comfortably we arranged for an airport pick up and drop off. We instructed them on where and how to meet us and had 2 people covering the gate. We took lists with contact information of the youngsters and their contact persons to make sure that we could contact them where necessary (and vice versa). At the end of our meeting some youngsters travelled to the airport with a NGO professional, others were personally dropped off by us.

Sunday 30 November: Introduction

Dinner	
Main aim	Meet and greet
Method	Group dinner at an Indian restaurant
Experiences	It was good to have an informal evening programme after an intensive day of travelling: a good group building activity and a lot of fun.

Monday 1 December: Introduction

Introduction game and name contest	
Main aim	Introduction, especially for the 3 new participants.
Method	Zaina asked participants to introduce their neighbor
Experiences	It was good to introduce everybody since 3 youngsters were new in the group. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 people couldn't make it to Brussels, Jean, Hadi, Abdi Aziz, Kia• We welcomed 3 new youngsters in the network: Ajmal, Kai and Nasim.• 2 youngsters from Scotland, Kia and Jean all contributed to the exhibition even though they couldn't be in Brussels person.• The NGO's from most of the participating countries arrived in the evening.

Workshop: Welcome

Main aim	Introduction SCEP, explain the programme, clarify expectations and roles and have agreements on the policy during the workshop
Method	Explanation and discussion
Experiences	Lise welcomes everybody and talks about the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief recap of Aalsmeer meeting• Aims for this meeting• Overview of the programme of the next 3 days• Practical rules & arrangements

Session I: Introduction on separated children topics and their rights	
Main aim	The rights of children and separated children in particular are explained
Method	a PowerPoint presentation and discussion
Experiences	<p>Recap of the Aalsmeer presentation on the rights for separated children. Covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Convention on the rights of the child and its monitoring mechanism</i> • <i>Statement of Good Practice of the SCEP programme</i> <p>The main message of the Youth Network in Aalsmeer was: Claim your rights and be Happy: for yourself and all separated children. The 4 focus topics within this message were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asylum procedure (age assessment, qualified employers, support, guardian, information) • No detention • Right to integration, participation, education (no discrimination) • Forced return <p>The Separated Children in Europe Programme was the second topic to talk about . What does the group remember about the programme? <i>"They fight for the rights of separated children!"</i>. A short explanation of the history and focuses of the programme follows.</p>

Session II: Media training	
Main aim	To prepare the youngsters to tell their stories to the press
Method	A PowerPoint presentation and exercise
Experiences	<p>Press preparation, the main message of the workshop session: be prepared! Some general background information is followed by personal experiences in contacting the press. Before the workshop a press contact actual called and this case could be taken into practice directly. This made the workshop really concrete. In an interactive exercise all participants prepared their key message, it turned out that actually putting your key message on paper is really difficult but an eye-opener in preparing. It was a challenge for the youngsters to be brief.</p> <p>Lise and Simone had the role of press officers the following day and explicitly asked the youngsters to involve them in any press contact during the exhibition. Furthermore the group was asked who wanted to talk to the press and who didn't. Two persons didn't want to talk to the media. Jimmy, Didier, Mansour, Adam and Zainab were willing to present during the opening of the exhibition. They worked hard to prepare their speeches in the evening.</p>

Session III: Future of the network	
Main aim	To discuss the way the participants want to develop the network into an independent and sustainable network.
Method	Guided group discussion
Experiences	<p>In preparation for the discussion with the NGO's on Wednesday we talked with the group about their ideas for the future of the youth network.</p> <p>As an inspiration for this discussion Zaina raised questions based on her own experience. Some of their ideas for the future were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Having a SCEP youth network established in Ireland (and in every country).</i> • <i>Meet once or twice a year.</i> • <i>Main topic: regulations in EU</i> <p>Lise introduced what the SCEP network could offer the Youth Network. SCEP focuses on topics that are related to the youth network:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any of the youngsters that are interested in participation in the SCEP network can be consulted. Face to face, once a year and/or communication by e-mail. 2. Some of the youth can join Network meetings (spring meeting 2009), and or workshops on themes (guardianship etc). 3. SCEP can seek funding to arrange some kind of skill building workshop 4. SCEP can approach NGO's in each country to help guiding the youth network

	<p>What went well during the SCEP Youth network project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting our exhibition and products together • We had a mentor to support, channel ideas and make them concrete • Motivation <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation needed to get activities done. We needed a plan. • Communication: Less and shorter mails of Advisory Board. More communication between youth. • Time: "We went home with the idea to get things done but we were caught in the daily things (school, work e.g.)" • The website wasn't working for the Network. Facebook would be easier to use. <p>Main conclusion of this session was that support is necessary for the future of this youth network.</p>
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Session IV: European Institutions

Main aim	Get a feeling with the theory and what was told about the European Institutions
Method	A guided tour through the European Area in Brussels
Experiences	Lise gave a introduction about the European Institutions, afterwards we had a guided tour through the European Area to get a feeling of the European atmosphere.

Session V: preparation of the exhibition

Main aim	Get the exhibition in place before the following day and prepare messages
Method	Help each other, Yvonne coordinated
Experiences	Everybody was very excited when everything came together. It was fun to help out each other and see the other presentations.

Tuesday 2 December: The Exhibition

Session V: preparation of the exhibition

Main aim	Get the exhibition in place before the following day and prepare messages
Method	Help each other, Yvonne coordinated
Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparations of youth by Yvonne. They introduced their activities to each other - Update NGO's by Simone and Lise (see attached PDF) - Lunch with Ms Renate Weber; Youth were able to ask her lots of questions and she talked with them about her own experiences. <p>Everybody was very excited when everything came together. It was fun to help out each other and see the other presentations.</p>

NGO programme

Main aim	Update NGO's on activities of youth, prepare them for session how to continue with the network
Method	Introduction (introduce your neighbour), presentation and discussion
Experiences	This briefing to the NGO's was good to have them really understand what the project was about. It made it easier for them to help the youth during the exhibition and already gave them food for thought for the session about the Future of the Youth Network on Wednesday.

The Exhibition	
Main aim	Make sure voices of youth on topics related to asylum issues are heard by relevant actors
Method	Exhibition; photo's, song, presentations etc.
Experiences	<p>Programme:</p> <p>12.30-13.00 Official opening by youth themselves and European Parliamentarian Mrs Renate Weber</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction network; Adam and Mansour - Introduction exhibition; Didier (Rap) - Speech of MEP Mrs. Renate Weber - Symbolic opening of the exhibition by MEP Mrs. Renate Weber; Toast on children's rights <p>13.00-15.30 and 16.30-18.00 Exhibition open for visitors</p> <p>The exhibition was open for public and aimed at influencing European actors. The official programme takes about 1 hour. During the tour it's possible to ask questions to the youngsters and talk with them about their ideas. However most visitors took more than 2 hours to talk with the youth.</p> <p>Everybody helped with the cleaning of the exhibition room after. We got a compliment for that by the staff of the Goethe Institute. We closed the day with a shared meal in the city centre. Everybody was very tired, but happy and proud of the result.</p>

Wednesday 3 December: closure

Evaluation of the Exhibition	
Main aim	Evaluation of the exhibition
Method	Youth and NGO's brainstormed together (in small groups) and formulated their 5 most important statements.
Experiences	<p>The Youth and the NGO's described the exhibition as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success • Inspiration • Experience to speak in front of public • Stop detention strong message • Positive shock • Hope • Serious • Motivation • Honest • Various messages • Youth participation • Interested guests • Experience • Hope to have exhibition in every country • Chance to have message heard • Fun • Diverse • Shared emotions / sad • Informative • You find a new strength in yourselves

Session I: The future of the network	
Main aim	Make concrete plans together (youth and NGO's) about the future of Youth Network
Method	A PowerPoint presentation and discussion
Experiences	<p>From here to where? Simone facilitated the session with help of Zaina and Simon.</p> <p>What will we do in the future? We now have a network of 24 very active youngsters from all over Europe and we had an exhibition. How to continue? We conclude quite fast that continuing with the exhibition is the way to go.</p> <p>There was a discussion whether it would be stronger to focus on one specific message, like detention. We conclude: "Maybe you should not focus on one topic, it is also good that everyone brings his own experience. The idea of being happy and claim your rights is very strong so you can focus on the rights of children." You can use important topics in host country (of exhibition) as a hook. Once a year we have an event to come together. Like 2009 what country do you want to go to? (Greece!) what does Nasim think? I think that the message is the same in every European country. But the situation in Greece is really difficult. You could focus on detention and make that topic really big.</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivation, but it would be good to have support - Taking responsibilities - Communication (simple website, no too much but keep in touch) - Money - Time - Keep it simple <p>Simon explained about the different website/communication possibilities. He showed the Save the Children Sweden web group: www.effekt.rb.se.</p> <p>Main conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have NGOs (esp. Save the Children Denmark) that are willing to help and will find out how much they can do - Both NGO's and youth expressed their wish to continue with this important Youth Network. Because we can change something if we are together. - NGO's found it very good to work with youth. You learn and are motivated. We can use the Youth Network to influence our work. - Also the youngsters learned a lot from each other and from doing the exhibition. - Communication from now on will go through facebook - Keep it simple and use the already existing strength of the exhibition and improve it. - Main goal network: We don't want other separated children to experience what we did. We want to inform separated children and politicians about their rights: Detention, asylum procedure, return and integration are topics that were important in Aalsmeer and they came back in the exhibition <p>Near future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face book - Find funding!!! - Other organizations might want to use the Exhibition (Picum) - Link the exhibition up to Swedish EU presidency. <p>To keep the network active. In between the activities youth can be invited to join SCEP activities, training etc. as introduced by Lise.</p>

Closure of the workshop, Evaluation:	
Main aim	To learn how the participants have experienced this meeting
Method	Evaluation form