

# Separated Children in Europe Programme

## Annual Report 2009

### **The Separated Children in Europe Programme**

The Separated Children in Europe Programme (SCEP) was established in 1997.

A commitment to the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is fundamental to the work of SCEP.

SCEP seeks to realise the rights of all separated children entering or travelling across Europe: that they will be protected; that their well-being and development will be promoted; that they will have opportunities to develop their full potential and that they will participate in a meaningful way in the development of policies and practices that impact upon their lives.

### **Separated children**

Separated children are under 18 years of age who are outside their country of origin and separated from both parents, or their previous legal, or customary primary caregiver. Some children are all alone while others, who are also the concern of the SCEP, may be living with extended family members.

All such children are considered separated children and entitled to international protection under a broad range of international and regional instruments. According to UNHCR, an estimated 15,000 separated children claimed asylum in Europe in 2009.

### **Staff**

Lise Bruun is the Programme Coordinator assisted by Student Anne Sofie Swane Lund. Terry Smith is the Programme Adviser.

### **Steering Committee**

The SCEP is led by a Steering Committee and was in 2009 formed by:

- Chair: Janne Raanes replaced by Thale Skybak, Save the Children Norway
- Bente Ingvarsen replaced by Vibeke Lubanski, Save the Children Denmark
- Magda Faltova, Association for Integration and Migration, Czech Republic
- Christoph Braunschweig, Fondation Suisse du Service Social, Switzerland
- Taina Martiskainen, Central Union for Child Welfare, Finland

- Jyothi Kanics, Irish Refugee Council, Ireland, until June 2009

The Steering Committee held 3 meetings and one phone conference during 2009.

### **SCEP NGO network**

The SCEP programme aims to realise the rights and best interests of separated children by establishing a shared policy and commitment to best practice at national and European levels.

The programme has set up a network of NGOs across Europe working for and with separated children in the form of service delivery, counselling, monitoring and/or advocacy activities. The NGOs are democratic, stable and not-for-profit organisations. The NGOs have committed to the SCEP programme with two levels of memberships known as "member" or "associate member". In 2009 the network consisted of:

### **SCEP NGO network**

- Albania: Save the Children Albania
- Austria: Asylkoordination Österreich
- Belgium: Plate-forme Mineurs en exil/ Service droit des Jeunes, DCI Belgium
- Czech Republic: Association for Integration and Migration
- Cyprus: HFC "Hope for Children"
- Denmark: Save the Children Denmark
- Estonia: Estonian Union of Child Welfare
- Finland: Central Union for Child Welfare
- Germany: Bundesfachverband UMF
- Hungary: Menedék Hungarian Association for Migrants
- Ireland: Irish Refugee Council
- Italy: Save the Children Italy
- Lithuania: Lithuanian Red Cross
- Malta: Organisation for the Integration and welfare of Asylum Seekers, OIWAS
- Netherlands: Defence for Children International, DCI Netherlands
- Norway: Save the Children Norway
- Poland: Nobody's Children Foundation
- Portugal: Portuguese Refugee Council
- Romania: Save the Children Romania

- Slovak Republic: Slovak Humanitarian Council
- Slovenia: Slovene Philanthropy
- Spain: Save the Children Spain
- Sweden: Save the Children Sweden
- Switzerland: Fondation Suisse du Service Social, ISS Switzerland
- United Kingdom: British Refugee Council

### **SCEP Youth Network**

The SCEP Youth Network consists of young people who arrived as former separated children in European countries. The Youth Network was established with the 2-year project 'Networking with Youth to Combat Violence against Separated Children', supported by a grant from the EC Daphne II Programme.

With the Youth Network SCEP aims to give separated children and youth a voice in matters that affect them. SCEP also aims to raise awareness about the importance and value of youth participation through which the SCEP NGO network, the general public, policymakers and decision makers are better informed and aware of children and young people's perspectives.

Representatives from the Youth Network have participated in the two SCEP NGO network meetings during 2009. Youth representatives also participated in the European Youth Forum's information and networking days on youth and migration that took place in Brussels in June. Representatives also participated in a Study Session organized by the network Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE) in cooperation with the Council of Europe that took place in Strasbourg in June.

A restricted facebook group is established for communication with and between the SCEP Youth Network.

### **Evaluation of the project 'Networking with Youth to Combat Violence against Separated Children'**

An external evaluation of the project was undertaken in 2009. Some of the findings were that the participation has given the youth knowledge about Children Rights and the knowledge of the actual situation of separated children and youth in other European countries as well as it has created a ground for them to help other separated children and youth around Europe.

The project has disseminated information to relevant external actors and it has inspired a number of SCEP NGOs to initiate activities related to the participation of separated children and youth at a national level.

*"We will use the network to be able to help others. It is important to bring together the NGOs and the youngsters, as the NGOs do have influence. One young person can do very little alone, but together with other young people and with NGOs we can make a difference."*

(Youth representative)

The evaluation report is available on the SCEP website.

### **SCEP youth network receive Child Rights Award 2009**

On the Universal Children's Day on 20 November, Save the Children Denmark gave the annual Child Rights Award to the SCEP youth Network. The award is given to a person or group of persons who have made a special effort to realise the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The award was given to the SCEP Youth Network for their committed and creative ways to inform other children, youth and decision makers about the rights of separated children.



*Photo by Louise Dyring/Save the Children Denmark*

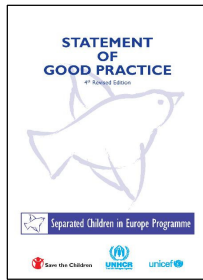
### **SCEP programme activities in 2009**

#### **New SCEP Logo**

A new SCEP logo has been designed in line with views expressed by the NGO network.



## Statement of Good Practice 4<sup>th</sup> revised edition



The Statement of Good Practice (SGP) sets out the policy and practices that SCEP believes should be applied to all separated children in Europe. It provides a comprehensive set of principles giving a common standard for work across all countries,

on the basis of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

To ensure that the Statement of Good Practice continues to be updated, a revision was finalized in 2009 providing the 4<sup>th</sup> revised edition. The new edition was endorsed by UNHCR and UNICEF.

SCEP still aims the SGP to be a straightforward account of good practice and both a tool for practitioners in the field as well as a standard bearer from which SCEP will advocate for change at a European and national level. The Statement of Good Practice is available at the SCEP website.

### SGP in a child/youth friendly version: Good Practice for Separated Children

As a new development, SCEP has elaborated a leaflet version of the Statement of Good Practice targeted at separated children and youth themselves. The child/youth friendly version of the Statement of Good Practice informs separated children on their rights and tells what SCEP believes is the best care and treatment for separated children.



Three representatives from the SCEP Youth Network took part in a task group to ensure a child friendly language and relevant information. The leaflet is printed in 22 language versions. The child/youth friendly version of the Statement of Good Practice presents a new development that supports SCEP and other actors to better inform the separated children themselves about their

rights and the standards of protection and treatment that they are entitled to.

The child/youth friendly version is available in all 22 languages at the SCEP website.

### NGO Network meetings

SCEP aims to have biannual NGO network meetings. The first meeting in 2009 was held in Prague on 27-29 April. The second meeting in 2009 was held in Rome on 11-13 November and was also facilitating a capacity building workshop on Child Rights Programming.



### Conference in relation to the Stockholm Programme

The conference, "Addressing the Protection Gap for Unaccompanied and Separated Children in the EU: Role of the Stockholm Programme", was held in Brussels on 15 September. The conference was specifically targeted at the role of the Stockholm Programme. At the conference, joint recommendations were presented from SCEP, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF and Human Rights Watch. Areas identified as requiring particular attention included: the exchange of information and good practice; cooperation with countries of origin; the question of age assessment techniques; family tracing; and the need to pay particular attention to unaccompanied minors in the context of the fight against human trafficking. SCEP recommendations for the EU Action Plan can be found at the website.

### Cooperation with Save the Children Brussels Office

SCEP cooperates on a continuing basis with the SCBO Policy and Advocacy Officer on asylum, migration and trafficking. The officer informs the SCEP NGO network about EU policy and legislative developments and is provided with national input and cases by the SCEP NGO Network.

The coordinator participated in a reference group meeting on asylum, migration and trafficking in Brussels on 12-13 March. The coordinator also participated in joint meetings with UNICEF, UNHCR & Human Rights Watch in Brussels in preparation of the September

conference in Brussels on protection gaps for separated children in relation to the Stockholm Programme.

### Cooperation with UNHCR

SCEP has a regular communication, cooperation and exchange with UNHCR. UNHCR Focal Points are represented in 20 countries. UNHCR SCEP Focal Points contributed to the Newsletter no. 31 and no. 32.

### SCEP participation in seminars and conferences

- The coordinator attended PICUM conference in Brussels on undocumented children 22-23 January and gave a short presentation of the Youth Network. Parts of the Youth Network exhibition were presented in the conference lobby.
- The coordinator and advisor were invited by the Fundamental Rights Agency and attended an inception meeting in Vienna on 11 February to discuss the project on asylum seeking separated children's view on reception conditions to be undertaken by IOM.
- The coordinator attended the HURIDOCS conference on the Universal Periodic Review in Geneva on 25-28 February.
- The coordinator attended a Migration Group seminar on the situation of separated children in Europe which was held in Vienna on 8 June.
- On 9 June, the coordinator gave a presentation on the CRC and separated children/SCEP to a delegation from Ukraine visiting Denmark.
- The coordinator participated in a Save the Children meeting on 'Children on the Move', held in London on 2-3 July.
- The adviser participated with a presentation in the seminar "The protection of separated or unaccompanied minors by national human rights structures", held at the Human Rights Centre of the University of Padua on 20-22 October.
- The coordinator participated in an EC consultation meeting on an EU Action plan on unaccompanied minors in Brussels on 17 November.
- The coordinator participated in the Nidos ENGI Conference on Guardianship in Amsterdam on 26-27 November.

### Publications

- Statement of Good Practice 4<sup>th</sup> revised edition, 2009

- Good Practice for Separated Children – leaflet in 22 language versions, 2009
- General Recommendations for EU Action in relation to Unaccompanied and Separated Children of Third Country Origin. Addressing the protection gap for unaccompanied and separated children in the EU: role of the Stockholm Programme, September 2009
- Evaluation of Daphne project: 'Networking with youth to combat violence against separated children', January 2009
- SCEP Annual Report 2008

### SCEP Newsletter

The SCEP Newsletter is published biannually and contains information about the SCEP programme activities, UNHCR, EU policy and legislative developments as well as reporting on developments and changes in the situation of separated children in the European countries covered by SCEP. The information is primarily provided by the NGO partners and the UNHCR SCEP Focal Points. The newsletter also provides statistical data on arrivals of separated children across Europe, and it brings information on events and new publications. The newsletter is available on the website.

### SCEP Website

The SCEP website, [www.separated-children-europe-programme.org](http://www.separated-children-europe-programme.org), is available in four languages. The site provides information on the programme, contact information, the Statement of Good Practice, the Newsletter, and other resources.

The SCEP website has also a restricted forum for the SCEP network for thematic discussions and information exchange.

In 2009 the use of the website was:

Language	Visits	Hits
English	18,208	58,328
German	663	1,763
French	1,216	2,818
Spanish	727	1,947

### Contact

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*This SCEP Annual Report 2009 has been edited by Anne Sofie Swane Lund and Lise Bruun*

