



Athens, April 17, 2014

Press Release

Consultation Meeting on “Investing in Children: A challenge and task for Europe of the 21st century”

The financial crisis is increasingly threatening children and their rights, as the Greek Ombudsman has repeatedly pointed out. According to the European Union's statistics, child poverty and the risk of social exclusion in Greece have increased from 28, 5% in 2010 to 35, 4% in 2012. For this reason and within the context of children's rights protection and promotion, the Greek Ombudsman with the collaboration and contribution of the European Commission and the European network Eurochild, is organising on **Friday 9th, May 2014 in Athens (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I. Kranidiotis Hall)** a meeting entitled “Investing in Children: A challenge and a task for Europe of the 21st century”.

The meeting, which takes place under the auspices of the E.U. Greek Presidency, will focus on the implementation of the Recommendation [‘Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage’](#), adopted by the European Commission in February 2013. The Recommendation recognizes the connection between the children's living conditions, access to adequate resources and provision of quality services on one hand, and parents' participation in the labour market, the need for further training and the fight against poverty on the other. It also recognizes the children's right to participate in the decision making process. It is the first time that the Recommendation is debated in Greece in anticipation of the first European Report on the Recommendation's implementation.

Participants in the meeting:

- European Commission officials (DG Employment, DG Justice), the European network Eurochild, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Coordinator of the Independent Network of Experts on Social Inclusion, Ombudspersons for Children (from Scotland, Ireland, Netherlands, Greece);
- the (Greek) General Secretaries for Welfare and for the Management of the European Funds, the President of the National Commission for Human Rights, a representative of the National Anti-Poverty Network, researchers – experts on child poverty, representatives of Greek relevant institutions and NGOs;
- Children - members of the Greek Ombudsman's Youth Advisory Panel.

During the meeting there will be presentations and roundtables working on:

- the role of different European institutions and organisations in supporting the implementation of the Recommendation;
- the protection and promotion of children's rights at European level;
- the observations and recommendations of Ombudspersons for Children, regarding the current situation and the needs in their own countries (Scotland, Ireland, Netherlands, Greece);
- the promotion of the Recommendation in Greece, especially in the context of the European Structural Funds;
- the contribution of the Greek institutions and NGOs in forming a national alliance for investing in children in Greece;
- how young advisors of the Greek Ombudsman for Children's Rights can contribute to the establishment of the right of children to participate.

English-Greek interpretation will be provided.

For more information, you can explore Greek Ombudsman's special website www.0-18.gr/investing.

Representatives of organisations and experts on children's rights wishing to attend the meeting can submit a participation form through the website.