



Biographies and Abstracts PLENARY SPEAKERS

Thursday 18 January

CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION (9.20-9.30)

Prof. Karl Hanson



Karl Hanson is Professor in Public Law and the Deputy Director of the Centre for Children's Rights Studies at the University of Geneva. He is the Chair of the Steering Committee of the Children's Rights European Academic Network (CREAN).

His publications and main research interests are in the emerging field of interdisciplinary children's rights studies and include theorizations on children's rights and childhood studies, child labour and working children, juvenile justice and the role of independent national children's rights institutions. He is an editor of the journal *Childhood*. He teaches at the University of Geneva in the "Master interdisciplinaire en droits de l'enfant" (MIDE) and is the Programme Director of the Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights (MCR).

PLENARY SESSION (9.00-10.30)

Sociology of science and knowledge use

Prof. David Gough



David Gough is Professor of Evidence Informed Policy and Practice, and Director of its EPPI-Centre, University College London.

His early research focused on child protection services including roles in the international, British and Japanese societies for the prevention of child abuse and being Co-Editor of *Child Abuse Review*. His first systematic approach to reviewing research was on the child abuse intervention literature for the UK Department of Health in the late 1980's. His research synthesis projects have since included an ESRC National Centre for Research Methods node, a methods unit for NICE, and topic based work ranging including education, social care, health, crime and sport. Since 2010 he has also undertaken 'research on research use' including the European EIPPEE network, the Science of Using Science project, the experimental evaluation of the RISE project to encourage evidence use in schools, and a comparative study of the UK what works centres. He was Co-Managing Editor of the journal *Evidence and Policy* from 2009-2017.

Abstract: The use of social sciences research evidence in decision-making and policy development

This presentation considers three main issues. Firstly, that research evidence is only of the many factors that potentially inform multiple forms of policy decision making. The starting point is the decisions being made and the perspectives of those involved. Second, the nature of research evidence and how it varies, the role of systematic reviews and their dimensions of difference. Third, the many issues involved in evidence use including: contexts in which evidence is used; the potential for those involved in decisions to engage with and use evidence; evidence use as a democratic issue; and systems and structures that may enable evidence use. Finally, some observations are made about the relevance of all these issues to children's rights (including the ecosystem within which evidence may be produced and used and power, agency and participation in such contexts).

Dr. Roberta Ruggiero



Roberta Ruggiero is senior research and teaching associate at the University of Geneva's Centre for Children's Rights Studies. She is the Academic Coordinator of the Children's Rights European Academic Network (CREAN).

She holds an MA in law, an MA in human rights and democratization from the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratization (EIUC), and a Ph.D. in children's rights promotion and protection awarded by the University of Molise. She was formerly scientific coordinator of the European Network of National Observatories on Childhood (ChildONEurope) based at the Istituto degli Innocenti (2008-2013). She was senior lecturer at the University of Padua, and external professor of children's rights at the University of Molise. Dr. Ruggiero was also researcher at the International Organization on Migration (Europe Office) and at the UNICEF-Innocenti Research Office. Her publications and research interests include independent human rights institutions for children, children's rights implementation, comparative childhood governmental policies, the status of parenthood in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and children's rights approaches to evidence-based policy. She is member of the Committee of Experts and scientific advisor of the Cantonal Observatory of Youth of Canton Valais, Switzerland, and of the Working Group on National Child Maltreatment Data Collection of the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN).

Dr. John Fluke



Dr. Fluke is Associate Director for Systems Research and Evaluation at the Kempe Center with joint appointments as a Research Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Colorado School Of Medicine and the Department of Epidemiology at the Colorado School of Public Health.

Dr. Fluke's research is focused on the behavioral economics of child protection decision-making and child maltreatment epidemiology. A key emphasis has been on developing and testing theoretical frameworks in child welfare decision making. He played a major role in developing some of the earliest child maltreatment epidemiological studies in the US. By extending this work to other countries he contributes to the development of the epidemiological

infrastructure and the emergence of epidemiological research on a global basis. He has served as PI on a number of large federal and state research and evaluation initiatives including research funded by several US government agencies. Other work has included child welfare program evaluation contracts for states such as Colorado, New York City, Utah, and Texas, as well as, research for the Public Health Agency of Canada, UNICEF, and research grants from private foundations such as the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Abstract: Is what works right? Children's rights and the evidence for well-being

Our paper discusses the role of evidence in the development of policies accountable to children's rights and how evidence relates to these rights.

Since the mid1990s, countries have experienced an evolution in their child welfare systems and related policies. While policy emphasis varies from country to country and types of child welfare systems, this evolution is characterized by two factors (1) the broadening of the definition of children's' need/risk and (2) the parallel endeavor to support the evidence-based practice and policy. Overlaying these two aspects of evolution is sensitivity to concerns regarding children's rights within welfare systems and the achievement of well-being.

Starting with the premise that child well-being is a human rights inspired concept, our paper addresses the context for children's rights in developing evidence-based practice and policy. This paper presents a framework for examining the role of scientific evidence of effectiveness and children's rights within child welfare based on the articulation of the assumptions underlying both approaches.

The framework is drawn from the child welfare literature and related sources to explore assumptions, contradictions, overlaps, and gaps in the perspectives. We will consider some key issues including benefits to children from research findings; how evidence regarding children's voices contributes to our understanding of their needs in the development of policies, critical thinking about rights and evidence and how contradictions might be resolved.

Notwithstanding the nature of the process to develop evidence-based interventions, blending the evidence-based practice with the human rights approach represents an instrument of good governance and social accountability. We expect that the nascent framework presented will provide a basis for the analysis of solutions to integrate the approaches.

PLENARY SESSION (11.00-12.30)

Policy and Advocacy

Prof. Natália Fernandes



Natália Fernandes is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Education, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal, since 1994. She is a member of the Steering Committee of the Children's Rights European Academic Network (CREAN).

She is a researcher at the Research Centre on Child Studies; her research interests deal with children's rights, researching with children and ethics in research with children. She is a Founding Member of the European Network of Masters in Children's Rights (ENMCR), now CREAN. She participated in recent research projects, namely CREAN – Children's Rights Erasmus Academic Network – (2013-2015), Lifelong Learning Programme Funded Research Project, as a Member of the Steering Committee and in

the Project Evaluation on legislation, policy and practice on child participation in the EU. She took part to the DG Justice of the European Commission (December 2012-November 2013), as the Portuguese Expert.

Dr. Howard White



Howard White is Chief Executive Officer of the Campbell Collaboration. Previously, he was the founding Executive Director of the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) and before that led the impact evaluation programme of the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group. He started his career as an academic researcher at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague, and the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. As an academic, he leans toward work with policy relevance, and working in the policy field leans toward academic rigour as a basis for policy and practice.

Abstract: The role of systemic reviews and other evidence syntheses for evidence-based policy: international perspectives

Evidence-based policy is becoming the norm for policy makers and practitioners across a range of sectors. There are a growing number of studies of the effectiveness of different programmes to promote child welfare. But policymakers do not read academic papers. So how has the evidence ecosystem emerged in different settings to help policy-makers access and use high quality evidence?

Dr. Susan Bissel



Susan Bissel's career has focused on the rights of children. Having spent over twenty-five years working in various capacities for UNICEF, as of January 2016 she is leading an emerging [Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children](#). The primary purpose of the partnership is to "end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children." From 2009 to 2015, Dr. Bissel served as Chief of Child Protection in UNICEF's Program Division. Author of a number of research studies, she has worked with UNICEF in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India, Italy (at the Innocenti Research Centre), and New York City, and earned a PhD in public health and medical anthropology from the University of Melbourne in Australia. While completing her doctorate, she joined Trudie Styler and the Bangladeshi film team Catherine and Tareque Masud to produce the documentary "A Kind of Childhood," which has won awards and been screened widely. She holds a BA and

MA from the University of Toronto. On behalf of her UNICEF Child Protection colleagues, Susan Bissel has accepted awards including an honorary professorship at Barnard College/Columbia University, the Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship award from Tufts University, the Flambeau D'or from Panathlon International, and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Abstract: Evidence to action – ending violence against children

An estimated 1 billion to 1.7 billion children, worldwide, experienced violence in the past year. This is despite the strengthened advocacy efforts with respect to addressing violence against children that followed from the 2006 study of the UN Secretary General. While a Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence Against Children was appointed after publication of the study, a pronounced shift from advocacy alone to evidence based policy and practice is more recent.

This shift accompanies the established on the new Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2030, and the concurrent establishment of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children (End Violence), and its associated trust fund. Launched in July 2016, End Violence has a focus on the prevention of and response to violence against children in all parts of the world. The narrative of End Violence is simple and positive: we know what works when it comes to keeping children safe, we simply need to sustain the political will needed to accelerate action, and we need to bring sectors together in these efforts.

At the heart of End Violence is a set of strategies culled by WHO, together with the Centres for Disease Control (CDC), UNICEF and other partners. This is a package of approaches to protecting children, called INSPIRE, that are drawn from RCTS, systematic reviews and other 'robust' data sets. That this kind of rigor infuses efforts of all partners in the coming years will be crucial not only to the rights and well-being of children, but also to the very essence of the End Violence partnership. As with other public health interventions, those that safeguard children need to be sound and scientific if results are to be sustainable and measurable, on which investment cases can be made.

Zsuzsanna Rutai



Zsuzsanna Rutai JD LLM works as a policy adviser at the Secretariat of the Lanzarote Committee, Children's Rights Division of the Council of Europe, seconded from the Secretariat of the Deputy-Commissioner responsible for the protection of national minorities, Office of the Hungarian Commissioner for Fundamental Rights.

She is currently enrolled at the individual PhD Programme of the University of Pecs (Pecs, Hungary) focusing on the role of other stakeholders (including non-governmental organizations and children) in international human rights monitoring mechanisms.

Abstract: The role of academia in the child rights-related standard-setting and monitoring work of the Council of Europe

The Council of Europe protects and promotes the human rights of everyone, including children. Based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse and other legal standards, the Council of Europe promotes and protects the rights of over 150 million children in Europe. Academia has an important role to play in the child rights-related standard-setting and monitoring work of the Council of Europe.

Friday 19 January

Round table (11.00-12.40)

Knowledge brokering and policy development

Prof. Kay Tisdall



Kay Tisdall is Professor of Childhood Policy, Programme Director MSc Childhood Studies and Co-director of the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of Edinburgh. She is a member of the Steering Committee of the Children's Rights European Academic Network (CREAN).

Her current and recent research projects include theorising children's participation, investigating school councils, early education and learning across European countries and contested contact in situations of domestic abuse. From 1999-2003, she held a joint post between the University and Director of Policy & Research at Children in Scotland (the national umbrella agency for organisations working with children and their families). Prof. Kay Tisdall also held a joint post as Director of Policy & Research, Children in Scotland (1999-2003), as lecturer Department of Social Policy & Social Work (1997-1999) Centre for the Child & Society (1995-1997), University of Glasgow, and Policy and Research Manager Children in Scotland, Edinburgh (1993-1995).

Prof. Jo Boyden



Jo Boyden is a social anthropologist and authority on the development and rights of young people growing up in contexts of adversity. She has focused on various aspects of research and policy with young people, particularly children's work, the experiences and resilience of children and adolescents exposed to forced migration and political conflict, and the relationship between child poverty, school education and social mobility.

Jo has worked in a wide range of countries, including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Myanmar, Peru, Somaliland and Sri Lanka. She has advised many of the large INGOs as well as UN and other multilateral agencies, governments and donors. As Director of Young Lives, Jo leads a unique international mixed-methods longitudinal study into the changing nature of childhood poverty. Young Lives is following the lives of 12,000 children in Ethiopia, India (in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana), Peru and Vietnam over 15 years.

Abstract: The research-to-policy process: practical examples and challenges in translating research evidence into policy and practice

This presentation highlights the challenges and opportunities involved in conducting comparative longitudinal research with children that aims to shape policies to reduce childhood poverty nationally, regionally and globally. It outlines the research communications and policy-influencing strategy used by Young Lives, providing examples of how the study negotiates the complex relationship between evidence-based and normative child rights frameworks.

Prof. Wouter Vandenhole



Wouter Vandenhole teaches human rights law and holds the UNICEF Chair in Children's Rights at the University of Antwerp. He chairs the Law and Development research group at the Faculty of Law.

Wouter Vandenhole graduated in law at the University of Leuven (Belgium), received an LL.M. in Law in Development from the University of Warwick (United Kingdom) and holds a PhD. of the University of Leuven. Before joining the University of Antwerp in 2007, he held positions at the University of Leuven (Belgium), Tilburg University (the Netherlands) and the European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation (Venice, Italy).

His research interests include children's rights, human rights, in particular economic, social and cultural rights, and the relationship between human rights law and development. For some years now, he has focused on transnational human rights obligations, i.e. the human rights obligations of new duty-bearers, and in particular on companies. More recently, he started to explore the conceptual implications of sustainable development for human rights law.

Abstract: Back into the ivory tower?

Children's rights law is a small field in academia, with very few academics spending a considerable part of their time on the topic. But these academics get easily involved in, if not overwhelmed by, policy advice and lobbying. Often, policy involvement offers a unique opportunity to be directly socially relevant, to have impact. But does the opportunity to be relevant comes at the price of compromise or of being compromised?

Very few academics ever share their experiences and doubts, and if they do, it is often done informally. In this presentation, I will try and systematize some of my own experiences in policy-related work for non-governmental organisations, government institutions and companies. I have been holding a chair that was funded by a non-governmental organisation, I have been a member of networks that seek to influence policy making, I have done consultancies for government institutions at national, European and international level, and I serve as an expert in a mixed commission of children's rights actors and business representatives.

I will focus in particular on challenges, tensions and trade-offs when engaging in children's rights policy work as an academic, such as the tension between a critical academic approach and policy work; the risks of abuse or instrumentalisation of academic arguments and findings; the risk of being carried away from solid research by the endless requests for policy input, and so on. Drawing on my own experience, I will ground my concerns in short but systematized case illustrations.

The objective of the presentation is to initiate a dialogue among scholars and with policy makers, not to provide answers or solutions, nor to dissuade others from engaging in policy work, but in an attempt to document and expose the challenges, risks and tensions involved.

Jari Matti Riiheläinen



Jari Riiheläinen graduated with a PhD in Political Science from the University of Birmingham in 2008. He has worked at the European Commission's EACEA-agency since 2012, where he is a policy analyst in the Erasmus+ Education and Youth Policy Analysis Unit. He has researched various topics in education policy, including funding of education, entrepreneurship education and social dimension of higher education. He is currently co-authoring the Bologna Process Implementation Report, and a report on integrating migrants into education.

Abstract: Evidence-based policy-making in education

Establishing a solid evidence base for effective policy-making has, for many years, been a key factor in promoting continued improvement in education systems and standards across Europe. This has been developed through, for example, setting up of various benchmarks through EU2020 and Education and Training 2020 targets. Furthermore, data from other international surveys, for example PISA and PIAAC by OECD has been used to highlight the comparative strengths and weaknesses of education systems. The Eurydice-report on evidence-based policy making examined to what extent and in what ways evidence is used in education policy making in European countries covered by the Eurydice Network. Two main findings arose from this initial mapping of support mechanisms for evidence-based policy-making: First, most countries reported official arrangements with a large variety of organizations which could potentially provide evidence. However, these arrangements ranged from strict rules prescribed in legislation to more loose guidelines about who should provide evidence and who should be consulted during the policy-making process. Second, there were both internal and external knowledge brokers who were given the task of interpreting evidence and mediating between research providers and policy-makers. However, only about a third of the countries reported such arrangements.

Jana Hainsworth



Jana Hainsworth joined Eurochild as Secretary General in January 2006. She is responsible for the day-to-day running of the network, which brings together over 150 member organisations from across Europe.

Jana leads the Eurochild team's efforts to keep child poverty and investment in children high on the EU's political agenda, whilst also building the capacity of members to leverage EU policy and funding influence to bring about change at the national level.

She has nurtured the network's growing expertise in the fields of early childhood, family support and children in alternative care. Throughout its work, Eurochild aims to ensure that the voices and experiences of children themselves are heard. In 2017 members adopted an ambitious child participation strategy for the network.

Before joining Eurochild, Jana worked for several years in private research and consultancy and also coordinated a European network of organisations promoting long-term voluntary service for young people. She has a Master's degree in environment, development and policy from Sussex University and an Honours degree in Natural Sciences from Durham University in the UK.

Abstract: Scientific evidence as a device of effective advocacy processes

Eurochild is an advocacy network promoting children's rights at the level of the European Union, and through its membership, at national level. We recognise the EU exerts significant economic and political influence over its Member States in particular, but also accession and neighbourhood countries. We therefore seek to increase visibility of the rights of children in EU policies, in particular in the EU's macro-economic governance framework and in the spending of EU cohesion funding. Successful advocacy requires that we build our recommendations on a strong evidence base. Most of our evidence comes through the NGO membership in Eurochild, which can sometimes be anecdotal or based on intuition rather than research. Therefore the academic community can and does play an important role in the network. Several of our thematic interest groups involve academics. Our [2015 Galway School](#) brought together policy makers, practitioners and academics to focus on 'realising children's rights through empowering parents and families'. Most recently we commissioned research to 'measure the long-term social and economic value of investing in children'. This presentation will reflect on the role of knowledge and research in influencing policy, the challenges and opportunities, and the role of organised civil society therein.

Dr. Bruno Vanobbergen



Bruno Vanobbergen got his PhD in Educational Sciences at Ghent University (Belgium) in 2003 with a research on the commodification of childhood. He published several articles in international journals and books on (the history of) childhood and children's rights. He was professor at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (The Netherlands) and visiting scholar at Rutgers University, Camden (USA). He is a member of the editorial board of *Paedagogica Historica* and *Pedagogiek*. In June 2009 the Flemish Parliament appointed him as the Flemish Children's Rights Commissioner. As a Commissioner he is responsible for monitoring children's rights in Flanders by mediating, investigating complaints and giving policy recommendations. He is a member of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC). Bruno Vanobbergen is also professor childhood studies at Ghent University.

Abstract: Scientific evidence: a tool to voice children's needs and fulfil their rights in policy development'

As a children's rights commissioner, I am often asked by the Flemish Parliament to give policy recommendations to new legislation that concerns children and young people. We present these recommendations in advices and reports and we often participate at hearings in the different committees of the parliament. Our policy work is re-active and pro-active. When complaints out of our ombudswork are related to structural problems, we try to put these on the political agenda. In our advisory work we include the voices of children as much as possible. Including the voices of children can have different purposes. It is possible to distinguish at least four:

- Making children visible in policy domains in which they are (nearly) invisible. Even after many years of implementing children's rights in policy, there are still too many policy domains in which children remain visible. We therefore bring in the voices of children to strengthen their visibility. E.g. our research on homeless children and young people in Flanders.
- Making the existing voices of children stronger. Sometimes certain topics are very much debated in the public debate without paying any attention to the voices of children themselves although research about these topics clearly exist. E.g. international adoption.

- Bringing in the child's perspective next to other perspectives in order to enrich policy debates. E.g. the discussion on the relationship between poverty – child poverty.
- Questioning the dominant image of the child. E.g. the discussion on euthanasia and minors.

Dr. h. c. Jean Zermatten



Dr. h. c. Jean Zermatten was President and Dean of the juvenile Court of the Canton of Valais (Switzerland) from 1980 to 2005; he is also the founder of the International Institute for the Rights of the Child (IDE) in Sion/Switzerland (www.childsrights.org) and has been Lecturer at the University of Fribourg (Arts Faculty, Social Work and Law Faculty). He has initiated and launched the Master of Advanced studies in Children's Rights, in collaboration with the University of Fribourg and the Institut Universitaire Kurt Bösch (now Centre for Children's Rights Studies) and various academic continuous education programmes on children's rights issues for professionals. He is used to work in different continents, including in Africa and is Member of the WAN (West Africa Network for children on the move, with the International Social Service). He has been awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Fribourg and by the University of Geneva. He has been a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child from 2005 to 2013 and has been Vice-Chair (2007-2011) and Chairperson (2011-2013) of that Committee.

Abstract: Policy development and the need for child impact assessment and evaluation: monitoring implementation and data collection

In its General Comment No. 5 (2003), the Committee on the Rights of the Child made clear that child impact assessment as well as self-monitoring and evaluation are obligation imposed on all States parties to the Convention. The Committee also stated the importance of having independent monitoring of progress towards the implementation of the CRC, should it be by NGOs, academic institution, independent human rights institutions, etc. Children also need to be involved in the process of evaluation of the implementation of their rights and the States parties must facilitate this process at all levels of policy development and evaluation. In this way, the Committee indicated that data collection and analysis as well as the development of indicators were an important part of the implementation process, which needed to involve research institutes and competent actors to realize these tasks. Again, the Committee insisted on the importance of involving children to the highest possible extent in the process of research.

The publication of annual reports, including qualitative and quantitative data, also needs to be translated in child-friendly versions and in other languages so the information contained in these reports can be widely disseminated and understood.

Plenary Closing Session (12.40-13.00)

Prof. Laura Lundy



Laura Lundy is Professor at the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work of Queen's University, Belfast, UK.

Her expertise regards international children's rights with a particular focus on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, education rights and children's rights to participate in decision-making as well as national security and social security law.

She is Director of the cross-university Centre for Children's Rights (Queen's University Belfast) and has particular expertise in rights-based participatory research with children.