



Non-Violent Childhoods

Moving on from corporal punishment in the Baltic Sea Region

Fact Sheet

Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat, June 2017

The Baltic Sea Region is fast becoming a no-corporal-punishment zone for children as 10 out of 11 countries have prohibited corporal punishment by law. Sweden was the first country in the world to enact a legal ban in 1979; Finland achieved prohibition in 1983 and Norway in 1987. The other Nordic and Baltic countries followed; Denmark in 1997, Latvia in 1998, Germany in 2000, Iceland in 2003, Poland in 2010, Estonia in 2015 and Lithuania adopted a legal ban in February 2017. While law reform was a milestone achievement in each country, it marked also the starting point of a seminal process to bring the ban from law into practice. The region combines countries with over 30 years of experience with implementing the legal ban and countries just embarking on this route to ensure childhoods free from violence.

The Non-Violent Childhoods initiative draws on the outstanding commitment and leadership of change makers in the Baltic Sea Region. They include public officials, service providers and practitioners, researchers, advocates, independent institutions and citizens, including children and young people as well as parents, guardians and caretakers, faith-based organisations and the media.

The overall objective of the Non-Violent Childhoods initiative is to promote the full implementation of the legal ban of corporal punishment through collaborative, multi-stakeholder planning and action in the Baltic Sea Region. The initiative raises awareness of the harmful impact of corporal punishment and highlights good practices in changing attitudes and behaviours for children to grow up free from violence.. During May and June 2017, the first national consultations were convened in Sweden and Finland. National consultations will

also take place in Latvia (9-11 October 2017), Estonia (15-17 November 2017) and Poland (29 November – 1 December 2017). In addition, a series of thematic expert consultations will be convened in the first half of 2018.

The combined learning from this consultative process informs the development of a set of guidance material for parents, children, practitioners, advocates and policy makers. Each guidance material is focused on a specific theme and target group:

- 1) The communication of the legal prohibition of corporal punishment in the home in order to raise awareness of the legal ban as a preventive and educational measure rather than a law aimed at criminal investigations and proceedings;
- 2) Communication and campaigns related to the legal prohibition of corporal punishment with the aim to sensitise the population, practitioners and political decision makers to non-violent childhoods;
- 3) Parenting programmes and non-violent discipline options for parents; and
- 4) Guidance for service providers in different fields such as health, education and social services.

Based on the experience in the Baltic Sea Region, the guidance will convey key messages and best practices with global relevance. A general guide for the implementation of the legal ban of corporal punishment will be prepared in order to provide more comprehensive guidance on measures for bringing the national laws into practice.

The Non-Violent Childhoods initiative is coordinated by the Children at Risk Unit at the Council of the Baltic Sea States in collaboration with the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children. The project partners are the Ministry of Social Affairs in Estonia, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland, the Ministry of Welfare in Latvia and the Ombudsman for Children's Rights in Poland as well as the Coordination on the Rights of the Child in the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Sweden. The project is implemented with the expertise of a reference group with the participation of the Council of Europe, Save the Children Sweden and the Swedish Institute alongside national experts, Ombudsoffices for Children, Chancellors of Justice and other human rights structures. Representatives and experts from all the countries in the Baltic Sea Region, including children, will be involved in the project. The outcomes of the initiative will be presented at a European conference at the end of 2018.

<http://www.childcentre.info/moving-on-from-corporal-punishment-in-the-baltic-sea-region/>



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