



LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS

SOCIALINĖS APSAUGOS IR DARBO MINISTERIJA



Invitation

Minister Rimantas Jonas Dagys
Lithuanian Minister of Social Security and Labour,
on behalf of
The Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk
within the Council of the Baltic Sea States

and in cooperation with the Council of Europe, UNICEF and
SOS Children's Villages International

has the honour of inviting you to a European conference:

Keeping the Door Open
- Support to Young People Leaving Care -

October 7th – 8th 2009
Radisson SAS Astorija Hotel, Vilnius

Across the Baltic Sea region and across Europe, children are placed – and often spend considerable parts of their lives – in institutions and in other forms of alternative care. Transition from care into independent life is an issue that demands careful planning and support in order for the young person to fully be able to exercise her/his rights. Even though some European countries increasingly turn to the issue of aftercare, the support available for young care leavers is still far from sufficient. A number of reports over the recent years clearly point to the fact that young people leaving care are more vulnerable and face greater challenges than their peers that grow up in their biological family do. By sharing best practices and by identifying important areas that need to be developed, this conference is expected to provide countries in Europe with tools and methods necessary to increase the quality and efficiency of support to young care leavers. The participation in this conference of NGOs, international organisations and senior officials from governmental level will create opportunities for establishing new partnerships. Young peoples' participation will ensure that issues discussed will be of relevance and will be founded in young peoples' own experiences.



The conference will provide the participants with concrete examples and methodological steps on how support for transition into independence should start while the young person is in care and also how such support can be designed in order for it to include also the more vulnerable groups of young care leavers.

The Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk (EGCC) has as one of its priority areas the Rights of Children in Institutional Care and the report "Keeping the Door Open"¹ published by the EGCC in February 2009 points to the fact that after care support seems often not designed so as to reach groups of young care leavers that face the most difficult circumstances.

The Council of Europe Recommendation (2005:5) on the rights of children living in residential institutions was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 March 2005. The Committee of Experts on Children and Family Policy has recently followed up on how member states have been able to implement the recommendation and has found that sharing of practices across Europe is one way of increasing young people's ability to exercise their rights and to access after care services.

SOS Children's Villages, IFCO (International Foster Care Organisation) and FICE (Fédération Internationale des Communautés Educatives) have developed quality standards for out-of-home care in Europe.² As a follow-up to this, the three organisations continue to cooperate to exchange good practices and advocate for an increased quality of alternative care system in Europe.

Main Themes of the Conference

The conference will consist of plenary presentations, seminars and workshops focusing on the four themes:

- Emotional stability and social wellbeing
- Education
- Employment
- Housing

All themes of the conference are cross cutting and aspects such as gender, ability, age and reason for leaving care will be a natural part of the presentations and discussions at the conference.

Participation

The conference invites senior officials from European ministries responsible for institutions, residential care and child protection, senior officials from relevant authorities and agencies as well as researchers, individual experts from state agencies, international organisations, NGOs and young people with care experiences.

Warm welcome to Vilnius, the Cultural Capital of Europe 2009

Vilnius on the 18 of June 2009

Rimantas Jonas Dagys
Minister of Social Security and Labour
Lithuania



¹ <http://www.childcentre.info/keepingthedoor>

² <http://www.quality4children.info>

Call for papers and Practical Information

The conference will in the Workshop sessions provide a possibility for researchers experts and policy makers to contribute. The conference organisers welcome abstracts of a maximum of 400 words. The abstracts should clearly indicate which of the above themes they cover and who will do the presentation should the abstract be accepted. Abstracts should be submitted to the conference organisers c/o lars.loof@cbss.org at the latest by September 4th 2009. Mark the subject field with: "Abstract Vilnius". The conference organisers, see below, will select papers for the conference.

The conference is free of charge for all accepted participants but delegates are expected to make their own travel arrangements and to pay for their hotel accommodation. Accommodation may be booked at the conference venue or at other hotels in Vilnius. The cost of a single room at Radisson SAS Astorija Hotel is EUR 122 per night and for a double room EUR 135. All prices include breakfast. A Other hotels in Vilnius can easily be found at www.hotels.com by typing Vilnius city centre in the search field or by consulting the list of hotels close to the conference venue that is attached to this invitation..

The conference will be in English and Russian with simultaneous translation between the two languages. Lunches on both conference days, as well as coffees are complimentary of the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

The conference venue, Radisson SAS Astorija Hotel is situated some 15 minutes ride by taxi from Vilnius Airport. The taxi ride from Vilnius airport to the hotel costs around LTL 40 (Approximately EUR 15). Most taxis only accept cash. ATMs can be found in the arrivals hall of the terminal building..

The Hotel and Conference Centre facilities can be viewed at www.radissonsas.com/g_en_sk_brand_vnozh

In special cases contributions might be granted for the costs of air tickets and/or hotel accommodation for delegates. Details on how such support may be arranged can be obtained from the conference organisers. See contact details below.

Draft programme and additional information together with other documentation will be available by the middle of July.

Members of the organising committee are:

For the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour:

Ms Audra Mikalauskaite

Ms Ruta Pabedinskiene

For the Lituanian State Children's Rights Protection and Adoption Agency:

Ms. Odeta Tarvydiene

Ms Jurga Lesnickiene

For Council of the Baltic Sea States Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk:

Mr Bertil Mahs

Ms Agneta Björklund

Ms Anniki Tikerpuu

Mr Lars Lööf

For the Council of Europe programme "Building a Europe for and with children":

Ms Maarit Kuikka,

For UNICEF:

Mr Jean-Claude Legrand

Ms Anna Nordenmark Severinsson

For SOS Children's Villages International:

Ms Veronique Lerch

Ms Sandra Kukic

Please direct any enquires to Mr Lars Lööf, Head of Children's Unit, Council of the Baltic Sea States Secretariat, lars.loof@cbss.org

Register for the event by returning the attached registration form at the latest by **Friday, September 11th 2009** to

Mr Lars Lööf at The Council of the Baltic Sea States, Secretariat, Children's Unit.
fax: +46 8 440 19 44, e-mail: lars.loof@cbss.org or mail: P.O. Box 2010,
SE-103 11 Stockholm, Sweden.

Registration form

Please register before the 11th of September 2009

“Keeping the Door Open – Support to Young People Leaving Care”
Wednesday 7th to Thursday 8th of October 2009.

Name.....

Position.....

Work.....

Work address.....
.....

Telephone nr.....

Fax nr.....

Email.....

Wednesday lunch, courtesy of the Lithuanian hosts.

Dinner on Wednesday evening

I only want name and country displayed in the list of participants
(By ticking this box, your telephone nr and your email address will not be included)

Please note if you have any special dietary requirements.
(Vegetarian, Lactose free or other).....

Please make your own hotel reservation. Booking form for SAS Radisson Astorija Hotel and a list of hotels close to the conference venue can be found below.

Signature

.....

Please fax, e-mail or mail the form to
Mr Lars Lööf
fax: +46 8 440 19 44
lars.loof@cbss.org
P.O. Box 2010, SE-103 11 Stockholm, Sweden

Guests of the Event will be based at the unique Radisson SAS Astorija Hotel in Vilnius.

By good fortune this year marks the Millenium of the foundation of Lithuania and Vilnius is European Capital of Culture for 2009. The Radisson SAS Astorija is located in the heart of the historic Old Town of Vilnius close to the main business and shopping districts and just six kilometres from the airport. It was originally built in 1901 and was completely renovated in 1998; yet it has held on to its turn-of-the-century charm and offers guests a delightful hotel experience.

All 119 rooms have a classic décor and are fully equipped with high-quality amenities expected of a high class hotel.

Free Broadband including high-speed and wireless Internet access is available throughout the hotel.

The *brasserie de Verres en Vers* serves modern French cuisine, while the Astorija Bar is the ideal place to take a break.

The Health Club has a fitness room, indoor swimming pool, sauna, steam bath and whirlpool.

Further information: www.vilnius.radissonsas.com

Lithuania history and Vilnius Capital of Culture:
www.culturelive.lt



Radisson SAS Astorija Hotel Vil-

Didžioji 35/2
01128, Vilnius, Lithuania
Phone (370) 5 212 01 10
Fax (370) 5 212 17 62

GUEST LAST NAME			
GUEST FIRST NAME			
ADDRESS			
PHONE NUMBER			
FAX NUMBER			
E-MAIL			
ARRIVAL date		Time:	
DEPARTURE date			

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM FOR THE PERIOD OF:
07 – 08. 10. 2009

ROOM

Please mark room rate per night

STANDARD SINGLE ROOM		122 EUR (421,24 LT)
STANDARD DOUBLE ROOM		135 EUR (466,12 LT)

Rates include our 'Super buffet' breakfast, all taxes and fees, use of our Fitness Center and wireless internet in the hotel.

The official exchange rate is 1 EUR=3,4528 LT

Reservation is guaranteed with:

Credit card type*	
Credit Card number	
Expiry date	

*American Express, Visa, MasterCard and Diners Club cards accepted

Please note that non-guaranteed reservations will not be accepted.

Guaranteed reservations can be cancelled without charge 14 days before arrival day. In case of a no-show or failed cancellation first night room rate will be charged.

Rates and rooms are available for reservations received by hotel no later than 07.09.09
Rates and rooms for reservations received by hotel later than 07.09.09 are question of availability.

PLEASE FAX OR EMAIL THIS FORM
Radisson SAS Astorija Hotel, Vilnius
Fax: 00 370 5 212 17 62

Email: reservations.vilnius@Radissonsas.com

Confirmation to be sent to:
(fax or email)

List of hotels which are near the Radisson SAS

Hotel name	Address	Price in euro	
		single	double
Conti	Raugyklos g. 7/2, LT-001140, tel +3705351411 www.contihotel.lt	120	159
Mikotel	Pylimo g. 63, Vilnius LT- 01137, Lietuva, Tel.: +370 5 260 96 26, Faksas: +370 5 260 96 27 http://www.mikotelgroup.com/lt/mikotel/	55	70
Panorama	Sodų g. 14, Vilnius LT-03211, Lietuva. Tel.: +370 5 2338822, Faksas: +370 52338832. http://www.mikotelgroup.com/lt/panorama/apie	86	96
Rūdininkų vartai	Rūdninkų str. 15/46, Vilnius Ph. +370 5 2613916 Fax: +370 5 2120507 http://www.cityhotels.lt/en/reservation	52	64
Guest house Domus Maria	Guest house Domus Maria Ausros vartu str.12, Vilnius LT 01129 http://www.domusmaria.lt/main.php?l=en	58	78
A.A.A. Guest House Mano Liza	Ligonines str. 5, LT01134 Vilnius http://www.hotelinvilnius.lt/bookonline/	81	104