



REPORT OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN 2018

Meeting board members

15 June : Michiel Matthes, Ruud Bakhuizen and Christopher Clouder held a skype meeting to approve the financial statements of the year 2017 and to approve the Report of Activities of 2017.

Council of the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group

Two meetings were held respectively on 5 March and on 3 December 2018 at Troonstraat 194, 1050 Brussels. Both meetings were held in the morning.

General Meetings of the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group

General Meetings were held on 5 and 6 March and on 3 and 4 December 2018 at the above mentioned location. In the General Meetings all partners of the Alliance for Childhood are invited. In these meetings the Council presents its plans for the coming period and submits it for discussion and approval.

The Alliance for Childhood group has some 30 partner organisations and is itself member of various organizations that share the same vision and goals as the AFC-ENG such as Eurochild, the EU Alliance for Investing in Children, the Child's Rights Action Group of NGOs in Brussels (CRAG) and the European Policy Centre (EPC), and a partner in the International Council of the Alliance for Childhood and of the Learning for Well-being Community.

In the context of the Alliance for Childhood Community group Michiel Matthes has regular contact with the above mentioned organisations, and occasionally participates in conferences of those organisations. Examples:

Learning for Well-being Community Meeting in Brussel on 24 April 2018. The theme was: "Competent Systems": exploring civil society's contribution to support competent systems serving children and families. Many partners from the AFC-ENG group attended this event.

On 6 June a conference with Eurochild that was linked to the Quality of Childhood (QoC) Talk on 5 June, where Nancy Mannix presented the main points of her work to the audience of Eurochild.

On 8 June Michiel Matthes had a meeting with the European Policy Centre (EPC). The AFC-ENG became a member of this organization because it is the most influential policy think tank in Brussels and Herman van Rompuy is the chairman of it.

On 19 June Michiel Matthes attended the conference organized by EPC on “Bridging the investment gap in social care and infrastructure. What role for the post-2020 EU budget?” in Brussels.

On 21 June Michiel Matthes attended a seminar organized by GroenLinks in Utrecht, hosted by MEP Bas Eickhout and Professor Frank Vandenbroucke as key-note speaker. The theme: the European Economic Policy.

On 24 September Michiel attended an EFC FutureLab conference in Brussels.

On 3 October Michiel Matthes attended the NIVOZ-conference in Driebergen entitled “Spel als leermachine” (Play as learning tool).

Michiel Matthes participated in the workshop organized by ELIANT on 5 November 2018. The subject was: Freedom of choice regarding media education settings and methods.

On 8 November Michiel Matthes attended a conference of the EPC in Brussels.

Michiel Matthes also participated in a conference organized by a EU funded project called UPPER (Systemic Upscaling of Peace Education Practices). The theme of the conference, which took place on 23 November 2018 in San Remo, Italy was “Education inspiring peace, from fragments and silos to a systemic approach”.

Working Group on the Quality of Childhood at the European Parliament

The Alliance for Childhood European Network Group functions as the secretariat of the (informal) Working Group on the Quality of Childhood and it holds its meetings in the European Parliament building(QoC). In this context the following QoC Talks were organised in 2018.

6 March 2018	68. 'Well-being and involvement as key indicators for quality. Implications for educational policy' with Professor Ferre Laevers. Host: MEP Evelyn Regner.
5 June 2018	69. 'New discoveries in the field of brain science can contribute significantly to a healthy childhood and the well-being of children. Presentation of an initiative in Alberta, Canada' with Nancy Mannix. Host: MEP Henna Virkkunen.
4 September 2018	70. 'The Importance of Art in Childhood, Case Studies from the UK and Finland' with Ruth Churchill Dower and Iina Berden. Host: MEP Julie Ward.
4 December 2018	71. 'Janusz Korczak and his Lessons for the Quality of Childhood' with Theo Cappon and Helma Brouwers from the Dutch Janusz Korczak Association. Host: MEP József Nagy.

Liaising with the European Parliament and the European Commission

On 23 January Michiel Matthes participated in the conference entitled “LGBTI Inclusive Education: European Index & Report” that the Intergroup on Children’s Rights in the

European Parliament organised together with IGLYO and UNESCO. The conference was hosted by MEP Anna Maria Corazza-Bild, the Chairwoman of the Intergroup.

On 31 January Michiel Matthes and Daniel Kropf received an invitation for the consultation meeting on early childhood education and care organized by the European Commission. In this meeting the draft report “Proposal for key principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care” was discussed. The Alliance for Childhood drafted subsequently a paper with comments (authors Professor Lea Pulkkinen and Helma Brouwers) that was sent to the coordinator of the project. The comments were incorporated in the Council Conclusions and the Alliance for Childhood was later invited to draft an application to participate in the Working Group on Early Childhood and Care. This application was sent in in November and approved. The Working Group will work from 2018 until 2022. On behalf of the AFC-ENG Professor Mathias Urban and Helma Brouwers participate in this Working Group.

The Transparency Register of the European Commission and the European Parliament was updated in April 2018 for the Alliance for Childhood so that Michiel Matthes was given again a permanent access badge for the European Parliament.

On 18 October Michiel Matthes attended the conference in the European Parliament organized by the S&D Group (Socialist Party). The theme: “Education, culture and solidar citizenship. Reshaping Europe from here”.

Child Rights Action Group (CRAG) in Brussels.

The Alliance for Childhood is a member of the CRAG in Brussels. The following meetings were held:

7 February

18 May

5 September

Michiel Matthes participated in the meeting of 5 September. For more information please follow the following link: <http://www.childrightsmanifesto.eu/>. The purpose of this group is to be a platform of all organisations in Brussels that work on the theme of children, childhood and children's rights and to speak with one voice vis-à-vis the Intergroup on Children's Rights of the European Parliament.

Publications by the Alliance for Childhood in 2016

The AFC-ENG published together with the Learning for Well-being Foundation in November 2018 the book “Improving the Quality of Childhood in Europe, Volume 7”. Michiel Matthes, Lea Pulkkinen, Christopher Clouder and Belinda Heys were the editors of the book. The book is based on the talks given in the European Parliament and one invited paper. The book reflects the philosophy of the Alliance for Childhood and contains many policy recommendations in this respect.

In the second half of the year the group worked on an update of the brochure, and this process was finalized in March 2019 and the new brochure was printed in May 2019. On the basis of the new brochure the website was updated.

The Alliance for Childhood European Network Group participates in the International Platform of the Alliance for Childhood.

The partners in this group are:

- the Alliance for Childhood European Network Group in Brussels
- the Alliance for Childhood in the USA
- the Alliance for Childhood in the UK
- the Alliance for Childhood in Brazil

Every three months a skype meeting is held. In 2018 these meetings were on
21 March

4 July

11 September

11 December

Michiel Matthes participated in all meetings except the meeting on 21 March.

The purpose of this platform is to stay connected, to inform each other on the progress we make, to help each other with contacts, inspiration, sometimes financially, and we build and financed together a website <https://www.alliancechildhood.org/>. Another important reason is to remain aligned philosophically.

In 2012 various people from the Alliance for Childhood group in Brussels participated in a conference in Washington, that was co-organised by the Alliance for Childhood group in the USA.

Website:

The Alliance for Childhood received support from Sivi Talvensola in Finland to keep the website up-to-date. The seven QoC Books have been put on the website and the 80 chapters can be downloaded free of charge.

There were in 2018 1639 visitors of the website from 80 countries who had 2146 sessions and who looked at 5623 pages. Visitors from the ten most important countries:

France	281
USA	207
Netherlands	176
Belgium	133
UK	101
Germany	76
Myanmar	53
Finland	47
Austria	46
Ireland	42

Secretariat of the Alliance for Childhood

The secretariat was taken care of in 2018 by Michiel Matthes. The address of the secretariat was Konkelstraat 214 box 7 in Brussels. The office moved to Troonstraat 194, 1050 Brussels in April 2018.

Miscellaneous Meetings

On 11 October Michiel Matthes attended in Rotterdam the conference organized by NRC ‘De toekomst van onderwijs’ (the future of education).

At the end of 2018 the AFC-ENG had the following Partners:

Alliance ELIANT, Brussels
ARGE-Erziehungsberatung (AT)
Beweeg.nl, The Netherlands
Briony Vanden Bussche, Belgium
COPE Children of Prisoners
Dr. René Diekstra, The Netherlands
ECSWE (BE)
EMDR Europe
EPA (European Parents Association)
European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants (EFCNI)
Familienforum Havelhöhe GmbH and Emmi-Pieler Haus e.V. (DE)
Family Lab International (FLI)/ Family Management GmbH
the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (Malta)
Haukkala Foundation, Finland
Higher Institute for Family Sciences, Belgium
IASWECE (SE)
Idee Kids vzw, Belgium
Korczak Foundation (NL)
Learning for Well-being Foundation
Le Furet, France
Legambiente - Italy
NIVOZ (NL)
Saharan & North African Toy and Play Cultures, Belgium
Sistema Europe
Stichting FEMI (NL)
The Experiential Education Project (BE)
Verein mit Kindern Wachsen (DE)