



CONFERENCE

LEFT BEHIND

Education Partner



in Collaboration with



The impact of economic migration on children left behind and their families

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Biographical notes of speakers
Abstracts of presentations

PATRIZIO PAOLETTI

Biographical note

Patrizio Paoletti, President of "L'Albero della Vita Foundation" and "Patrizio Paoletti Foundation for communication and development", Professor of relational communication, teaching and experimental education in Italy and abroad. Since 1997, he has been engaged in social issues. He is the creator of the "Pedagogy for the Third Millennium", a new educational system based on ideas and techniques developed on the concepts of mediation, translation and normalization. Every year, through his educational programs, he reaches more than one hundred thousand people.

In Italy, he has published a series of texts on the new horizons of education and teaching: "*Crescere nell'Eccellenza*" (Growing towards Excellence) - Armando Editore, "*Quando imparare è facile*" (when Learning is Easy) - Infinito Editore; "*Alla scoperta delle emozioni*" (Discovering Emotions) – Infinito Editore; "*La vita nelle tue mani*" (Life in your Hands) – Infinito Editore.

Abstract of presentation

Children Left Behind: the Social Misunderstanding

This historical time offers us a representation of the condition in which the individual and the whole societal organisation are in: "the social misunderstanding": to delegate to others responsibilities of our own life and choices. The individual seems to be more and more disoriented, not able to assume fundamental responsibilities that life requires: decide about the future in an oriented way.

However, one of the main duties that the society, European and national and local institutions, has is providing with orientation new generations. Moreover, present days call us to collaboration and cooperation, in order to increase social cohesion and be able to give correct answers to life, through socially sustainable actions.

This seems to be a responsibility we cannot deny, but to give new answers to old questions, focusing on priorities and reaffirming that children are our future.

Five main points are at the core of our intervention in favor of children left behind: to protect employment for their families, to start education to development programmes, to promote children's rights, to support the idea of family, to affirm the need of growing in an environment which is healthy, emotionally sustainable, full of inputs and opportunities.

Key element for the realisation of real progress in the third millennium is interrogating ourselves on the value of the "relationships". This is what enlightens our future: everything has to be considered from the point of view of relationships, with others, inside ourselves and with the external world.

To overcome the social misunderstanding and be open to the renewed culture of responsibilities – economic, social, political and ethical – it is necessary to intervene supporting families and childhood with actions which must be deeply connected with the local context, society and individuals.

MARCO BENINI

Biographical note

MARCO BENINI graduated in Education, is an expert of school and out-of-school educational processes and particularly on relational communication and education in emergency situations. From 2000 to 2007 he has been in charge of the educational programmes in residential centers for children and psycho-social support centers for teenager. He also supervised pilot projects of human rights education in schools. Since 2008, he has designs and supervises implementation of education and literacy projects in developing countries and of Lifelong Learning projects in Italy and Europe. He is a professor at the Foundation Paoletti's High School for Education.

Abstract of presentation

Social failure and parenting

Why is separation a trauma for a child? 'Child trauma generally refers to an experience of horror, fear or overwhelming pain, accompanied by a sense of helplessness' (Krystal 1978). Krystal's definition describes well the experience of children left behind and their parents', forced to leave their children in search of a better future.

A child who faces, for any reason, the forced separation from his/her parents, certainly lives a traumatic experience. This might seriously affects his-her psychological, emotional and cognitive growth, determining a relational dynamic which often influences his/her future.

And what about the parents, forced by their economic conditions in their home country to leave their children to other people's care? How can their pain be described?

Such a situation represents a double failure: the failure of a society unable to nourish and provide with conditions for its own citizens to develop and grow; and the failure of a family forced to move abroad in order to find what is needed for children.

It is a double abandonment. Society, often too busy with too many problems, do not care enough about adults in need; as a consequence, parents have to move, leaving their children behind. This creates a deep pain, related to a weak hope of reunification, that can be strengthened by a "long thinking" able to respond to new forms of poverty and to old, but always present social issues.

A Pedagogy for the Third Millennium can only take into account environmental factors and the context in which children grow up, as only a proper educational system, set by institutions and "care givers" can provide tools to face the phenomenon of children left behind, wherever it occurs.

JANA HAINSWORTH

Biographical note

She joined Eurochild as Secretary General in January 2006. She is responsible for the day-to-day running of the network, which brings together over 90 member organisations from across Europe to promote the rights and welfare of children. Eurochild is one of the key networks funded through the EU's PROGRESS Programme for employment and social solidarity (2007-2013). It plays a key role in monitoring and influencing the EU's social inclusion strategy and ensuring child poverty remains high on the agenda.

Jana previously worked in a Brussels-based communications consultancy where she was project manager for a communications contract under the EU's Community Action Programme to combat discrimination. Jana also managed a network of organisations promoting long-term voluntary service in the youth field and has worked for several years in a research and consultancy firm on different technical assistance contracts for the European Commission. She has a Masters degree in environment, development and policy from Sussex University and an Honours degree in Natural Sciences from Durham University in the UK.

Abstract of presentation

Setting the EU context

Eurochild is a European umbrella network representing almost 100 organisations across Europe promoting the rights and welfare of children and young people. The presentation will give an overview of the situation of children in the EU, particularly focusing on levels of poverty and exclusion and the impact of the current economic crisis. It will explore the EU political context, the opportunities and threats presented by the recently adopted Europe 2020 strategy and the direction the EU is taking with respect to its support to member states to exit the crisis. In particular it will look at contradictions in broad policy lines, notably the emphasis on inclusive growth and achievement of a poverty reduction target and other dominant discourses regarding fiscal consolidation and the single market. In exploring how this policy framework impacts on the phenomena on children left behind, the presentation will particularly look at two flagship initiatives : the platform against poverty and the communication on new skills, new jobs and mobility. Finally it will look at how mainstreaming of children's rights into EU policy and actions could ensure children's best interests are taken into account in future policy making.

ADRIANA OPROMOLLA

Biographical note

Adriana Opromolla holds a LL.M in EU Law and a Master's Degree in Human Rights. She trained and qualified as a lawyer at the Bar of the city of Salerno (Italy) in 2003. She has worked for the Legal Service of the European Commission, the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights and the Human Rights Directorate of the Council of Europe. She has been working in Brussels for eight years as a lobbyist on Human Rights, Justice and Social Policy. She is currently responsible for policy development and advocacy on poverty and social inclusion, with particular focus on child poverty, at Caritas Europa. She has been a member of expert bodies of the Council of Europe for the elaboration of the Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings and for a study project on the Human Rights of People living in Poverty. She has intervened as a speaker and lecturer in numerous international conferences, seminars and symposia. Her publications cover topics such as children's rights, social rights and globalisation.

Abstract of presentation

"Orphans" of migrants: Poverty of the Future

In the Caritas experience, having parents who are labour migrants in another country is detrimental for children's emotional well-being. Some Eastern European countries have experienced massive migration of people to work abroad. Many of these labour migrants leave their children behind – either to live with relatives or alone in their home country. Especially when migration is irregular there is no or little possibility for parents to visit their children back at home. Thus, many children have to live without their parents for a long time.

In 2008, Caritas Moldova reported that about 30% of children in Moldova had their parents working abroad; this issue represents a worrying problem also in Poland and Ukraine.

Even if these children have material security - because their parents send them money - the absence of and separation from their parents often is a cause of traumatism for them. Thus, children whose parents are abroad may feel lonely, emotionally abandoned and lacking protection.

Up to now there are no EU or national policy measures to improve the situation of these children. Clearly, this is a big challenge for the states concerned. The presentation will illustrate examples of how Caritas organisations in Eastern and Western countries are responding to this problem, and what policy measures would be opportune to tackle this form of "hidden poverty".

FLAVIA PIPERNO

Biographical note

Flavia Piperno is researcher at CeSPI-Center of Study on International Policy where she carries out research on the nexus between international migration, development cooperation and social policies. At CeSPI, since 2007, she coordinates the area of research on 'transnational welfare'. The focus of this area of is the analysis of the social impact produced by international migration on the family structures and social systems both in the countries of origin and destination. All the research activities carried out at CeSPI are policy oriented. Flavia Piperno has also carried out projects' evaluation and identification, training and counseling activities addressed to local, national and international organizations. Recent English publications are: 'The impact of female emigration on families and the welfare state in countries of origin. The case of Romania' forthcoming for International Migration and 'The social aspects of migration and development (CeSPI Working Paper, June 2010) and 'From care drain to care gain: migration in Romania and Ukraine and the rise of transnational welfare' (Development, vol. 50, n°4, 2007)

Abstract of presentation

The impact of female emigration on families and the welfare state in countries of origin

The heavy resort to foreign labour in the care sector by western countries (particularly those in southern Europe) is fuelling a growing process of feminization of migration in many emigration countries. This migration has a new impact on the countries of origin: it adds to the "skill drain" problem – which has already been extensively examined in the literature – the less well-known problem of "care drain". During the conference I will highlight how this phenomenon is occurring in Romania and Ukraine. In particular, I will focus on the compensatory strategies put in place by families and local welfare states in order to limit the impact of care drain; furthermore, I will speculate on the persistence of a 'care shortage' problem which strains both individuals and local institutions and requires the setting up of new social and cooperation policies.

The research is based on the main results of research projects carried out between 2006 and 2010 by CeSPI-Center of Studies in International Policies in the framework the area of research on 'Transnational Welfare'.

IVANO ABBRUZZI

Biographical note

Co-Founder of L'Albero della Vita, he has been working since 1997 for the startup of the organization, designing projects and driving the creation of the social interventions in Italy and worldwide. He is head of national and international programmes unit, managing all activities on children's rights protection and promotion in Italy, Europe and developing countries.

He is also head of the team dedicated to research, advocacy and networking. Involved in activities of several networks at national and European level, he is member of the management board of Eurochild.

Abstract of presentation

Romania: a key European phenomenon

Presentation of L'Albero della Vita, founded in 1997 as a regional association, it has grown in Italy and at international level with the aim of generating development and well-being for children in need but also to raise awareness on children welfare worldwide.

L'Albero della Vita has had a special interest in the thematic of Children Left Behind since 2008: starting from a sort of "cultural link" between Romania and Italy (where thousands of Romanian families migrate). It went further on preparing a brief publication and developed **psychosocial and sanitation projects to support children and families in Moldavian Romania** (in Jasi, Liteni and Roman) with local implementing partners. A multi country research project on migrating families and on the specific impact of migration on children, involving Romania, Italy and Spain was financed by the **European Commission through the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship programme** and will formally start just tomorrow.

In 2010 L'Albero della Vita started advocating EU institutions for children left behind, organizing conferences and institutional meetings: the **conference in Milan** (May 2010), the meeting in the **European Parliament in Strasburg** (July 2010) with several Italian MEPs and, today, the **international conference in Brussels**. L'Albero della Vita is giving input to gather several actors involved in the issue at different levels in a **European network**, which aims to promote a comprehensive understanding about the phenomenon and the implementation of effective preventing and supporting actions at EU and national level.

ALEXANDRU GULEI

Biographical note

He is a university graduate social worker with a master's degree in probation and social reintegration. Currently he is also the programs coordinator at Alternative Sociale Association.

In the past 9 years he specialized in working with children and youth victims of various forms of abuse or neglect, designing and coordinating projects for providing direct social services, training professionals (social workers, psychologists, police officers, school counselors etc.), running information and sensitization campaigns in the counties alongside the Eastern Romanian Border of the European Union (the region known as Moldova). He coordinated projects in the field of education aiming to create resources and self-sustainable mechanisms for the reduction of vulnerability and the empowerment of youth through career guidance.

He participated in the USAID/World Learning workgroups for the improvement of the national standards on case management.

He is a trainer accredited by the National Council for the Professional Training of Adults with experience on topics such as career guidance, social work (child welfare and protection - prevention of child labour, child trafficking).

He is co-author of several books destined for professionals active for the welfare and empowerment of children and youth, including the "Working Methodology – social, psychological and juridical assistance of children left home alone as a result of parents' going to work abroad" – the 2008 Winner of the Romanian Civil Society Gala Prize for Education and Research.

Abstract of presentation

Freedom of positive and negative effects

Following the December 1989 Romanian Revolution and the overthrowing of the Ceausescu's restrictive communist regime the Romanians discovered the freedom of deciding how (and where) they could achieve their life goals. The opportunities for a better life were diverse, but migration became for many the most attractive. The Western Europe had jobs available and welcomed millions of Romanian workers - the benefits were significant, while the losses appeared to be ... tolerable.

The negative effects of this new found freedom were harsher than anticipated – more vulnerable than ever before hundreds of thousands of children left at home found themselves facing a wide range of risks: depression, anxiety, isolation, marginalization, overburdening with roles/lack of abilities for coping with adult responsibilities, deterioration of school performance, absenteeism/school abandonment, conflicts with teachers and colleagues, (pre)delinquent behavior (including the consumption of drugs and alcohol), physical and emotional abuse, child labor, sexual exploitation, trafficking in children.

INETE IELITE

Biographical note

Chair of the Board at Children's Forum of Latvia, Ms. Ielite has been working for human rights for more than fifteen years, promoting development of civil society in Latvia and participation of the most disadvantaged groups. She has been involved in creating new legislation, policies and services for children, young people and families both through professional and voluntary work.

Ms. Inete Ielite is a founder, one of the elected decision makers, researcher and reporter for national and international organisations makers and also spokesperson for Children' Forum of Latvia, one of the most active non-governmental organisations in Latvia.

Ms. Inete Ielite was Personal Representative of Prime Minister of Latvia to the Preparatory Committee for the UN GA Special Session for Children. She currently represents Latvia at European Institute for Gender Equality and regularly carries out several duties on behalf of the NGO sector in Latvia to promote cooperation with the parliament, government and local authorities such as leadership in EU 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Abstract of presentation

Joint solutions necessary

Poverty, high unemployment and social exclusion in Latvia are amongst the drivers of the migration, as well as the hope for better life, irrespective of the damages to the family. The population at risk of poverty in our country varies from 19% in 2004 to 26% in 2010, the highest in European Union, and yearly thousands of people leave the country. But the statistics does not provide data on families, who emigrated or the number of children leaving the country.

Reports on drop-outs and increasing cases of offences required urgent actions. The government tried to identify the situation of children left behind and fight the social exclusion in the plan for 2006-2009. The measures that required political support, coordination of the various stakeholders and finances were not implemented. And data on children left behind is not available for national child protection services even in 2011, and as the result - no action.

The most important actors dealing with the problems from the child perspective are the municipalities and non-governmental organisations. For example, the third biggest city - Liepaja – keeps regular monitoring and provides support to children. But the numbers of children concerned have doubled in five years, reaching 780 children in 2010. Non – governmental organisations are also active. Youth groups and child advocacy organisations are helping children and youngsters to deal with problems and depression, support integration activities and work towards policy development. But there is lack of resources.

Most problems encountered by children and local communities: children are left without legal guardians – they stay with grandparents, older siblings or just strangers to children; almost every child has psychological problems, many have behavioural disorders, etc. Only a few, mostly secondary school students are maturing early, taking responsibilities and dealing with life as adults.

Certainly, there is a need of action at the European level as governments and non-governmental organisations can not address the phenomenon alone.

EDITA ZIOBIENE

Biographical note

Ombudsperson for Children's Rights, Edita Žiobienė was born on 5 July 1973. A Graduate in Sociology and Law and Doctor of Social Sciences (Law), she is Assoc. Prof. for Comparative Constitutional Law, Institutional Human Rights Protection and Media Law at Constitutional Law Department in Mykolas Romeris University since 2003. She has occupied different positions before being appointed by Parliament as Ombudsperson for Children in 2010. She was member of the EU Network of Independent Experts on Fundamental Rights (2005-2006), Board member of European Network against Racism and Xenophobia (2006-2010), member of Ethics Commission of Journalists and Publishers (2003-2005), Chairperson of the Ethics Commission of Journalists and Publishers (2005-2010), member of the Electoral Commission (2008-2010), member of EU Network of Legal Experts in Non-discrimination Field (2005-2010) and is member of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (since 2010). She is author of numerous scientific publications on national human rights institutions, protection of human rights, protection of the right to privacy, problems of discrimination, trafficking, protection of minors, and etc.

Abstract of presentation

The Lithuanian Case

Over the last few years the number of emigrants from Lithuania has been growing very fast, a particularly intensive increase was observed in 2010. According to the statistics provided by the Department of Statistics, 83 577 people declared their emigration from Lithuania in 2010, i.e. 3,8 time more than in 2009. It should be noted, that statistics do not reflect the real situation of emigration, because not every person declares that he/she is emigrating from Lithuania. Anyway, statistics on declared and not declared emigration from Lithuania let us suppose that number of children suffering from negative results of emigrations grows every year. Parents decide to leave abroad expecting to increase their income, improve their (family's) living conditions and etc., without assessing the negative results of this decision, the threat to keep constant and strong family's relationship, affect to children socialization and psychosocial development. Often parents, who emigrated, do not return to Lithuania and (or) take children with themselves. Children, who experience parents' (one of them or single parent) emigration, can suffer loss of their loving ones, feel lonely and sad, become aggressive and etc.

RADOSLAW KOZLOWSKI

Biographical note

Radoslaw is working in the Warsaw University Institute of Political Sciences and currently in Brussels under a temporary arrangement with Polish Permanent Representation.

Abstract of presentation

The Polish Case

The phenomenon of Children Left Behind is present also in Poland. The intervention will focus on the presentation of results of a research conducted in schools in Poland.

GIOVANNI GIULIO VALTOLINA

Biographical note

Ph.D., is professor of Developmental Psychology at the Catholic University of Milan. He is also head of the Child and Family Department at ISMU (Initiatives and Studies on Multi-ethnicity) foundation in Milan. He published several articles and books on migrant family and second generation issues: "Multiple Belongings: the migration experience of the second generation"; The "open school": Italian and migrant parents in kindergarden"; "Migrant families and social inclusion: the services and the city".

Abstract of presentation

The challenge of being a transnational family

Defining transnationalism as a process through which migrants built "social spots of significance" that link the homeland and the host society, the presentation will highlight the importance of the mobility across the national border and the impact of the migration on the homeland. After presenting unlike levels of transnationalism – identitarian, relational and behavioural – attention will be drawn to the consequence into the everyday life.

Coming to the transnational families, it will be emphasized the implications that this family choice entails, mainly underlining the central role of the women/mother in this peculiar form of migration, where they try to give their children a better life, going away, far from them.

Studies on very different migrant communities around the world showed that mothers overcome the pain of the separation through three different strategies: the replacement of the caregiving with gifts; the inhibition of the emotional stress, emphasising their hard life in the host country and denying the emotional costs of the separation from their children; the rationalization of the distance, stating that economical advantages are greater than the emotional burden and that the geographical distance can be managed - and overcome - through a regular and frequent communication.

ASUN BERNE

Biographical note

M. Asunción Llena Berne is Vice-dean, Teacher and researcher at Faculty of Pedagogy University of Barcelona. Dra in Pedagogy, extraordinary prize of phd. Director of the book collection Community action. Has been teaching in the bachelor degree of social education and in several masters and postgraduate studies. In charge of the international relation of the Faculty of Pedagogy of Barcelona University. Member of the executive board of the faculty, member of the executive board of the Iberoamerican Society of Social Pedagogy. She has been working as European expert over the last years in Romania working for the Ministry of Labor, Family and Equal Opportunities to develop social services and on social inclusion. Member of the group of research GPS for social inclusion and cohesion, research, planning and evaluation. She has published several articles, and books.

Abstract of presentation

Data about Romanians in Spain

Romanians migration process what about children?

Romanian population flows have been increasing in the last years especially since 2000 when we had 6.240 Romanians registered until the 798.892 Romanians in 2009. The main explanations of this increase are related to the socioeconomic situation in Romania and to the fact that Spain improve the socio-economic situation and the existence of a black market. Among the population the main group is concentrated in the age of working with a major concentration in 4 areas (Madrid Comunitat Valenciana, Andalucia and Catalunya). There are no specific policies or actions that take in account the situation of children left behind or the impact of migration on children. Nevertheless focus is put on the welcoming processes and tools for helping people to get integrated in school to understand the language, the system and the culture.

FEDERICA MARENGO

Biographical note

Federica MARENGO is a project officer for ALC, a French NGO created in Nice in 1913. She has more than 10 years experience in national and European projects for assistance of trafficked persons. She is part of the coordination team of the French National Network for assisting and protecting victims of trafficking (Ac.Sé Network), which is composed by 50 shelters and 20 specialized NGOs and provides safe sheltering and assistance to victims who are in danger and counseling for professionals. Since 2009 she works on a European project funded by a common initiative of EC and UNDP on the specific issue of the left-behind children.

Abstract of presentation

The French experience as receiving country

Since 2002, when the French National Network for assisting and protecting victims of trafficking was created, Around 20% of the persons who have been protected in our shelters have children left-behind.

Most of them where from Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria. Now, a largest number comes from Nigeria. The social inclusion in France of these people is conditioned by the presence of the children in the countries of origin.

In 2009 we decided to share our experience in the social assistance of the migrant parents with a Moldovan NGO (CRIC) which works with children left-behind. The "Support for parents and children in migration" project is founded by EU and UNDP and provides actions for children in the country of origin and for migrant parents in France, as well as information activities for professionals. As the migration concerns also many other people and other nationalities, we are adapting the methodology of work not only for Moldovan people but also for Bulgarian, Romanian, Russian, and Nigerian.

LOUISE RYAN

Biographical note

Louise Ryan is a Reader in Gender and Migration and Co-Director of the Social Policy Research Centre at Middlesex University www.mdx.ac.uk/sprc. She has published widely on issues relating to gender, ethnicity, social networks and family migration. Her articles have appeared in *Sociology*, *Sociological Review*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. She has produced several research reports on migrant and ethnic minority children in British schools. She is co-editor (with Wendy Webster) of *Gendering Migration: Masculinity, Femininity and Ethnicity in Post-War Britain* (Ashgate, 2008).

ALESSIO D'ANGELO

Biographical note

Alessio D'Angelo is a Lecturer in Social Sciences at Middlesex University. He has extensive experience in conducting both quantitative and qualitative research on a wide range of areas, including migration policy, migration statistics, ethnic diversity and identity, social exclusion and discrimination, service provision, community organisations and social networks. Recent research include large grants from the European Union, various British Research Councils as well as projects commissioned by Local Authorities, public bodies and charitable organisations. Alessio has also been working on a number of partnership initiatives with Third Sector and community organisations, including events, consultations and evaluations. In the last few years Alessio has been working on a number of projects focusing on the experiences of young migrants in schools, including two projects on "Polish Children in London Primary Schools", one on "Newly arrived migrant and refugee children in the British educational system" and the production of a "Guide to Schooling in England for Newly Arrived Migrant Parents".

Abstract of presentation

Family Migration: the role of children and education in family decision-making strategies of Polish Migrants in London

EU enlargement in May 2004 brought large scale and unanticipated migration from Eastern Europe, especially Poland. In Britain, almost 600,000 Polish people registered with the Workers Registration Scheme. While the majority of these were single adults, over time it became apparent that family reunion was taking place. Little was done by the UK government to prepare for these new forms of migration, particularly the needs of family members e.g. for education. Data sources suggest large numbers of Polish children arriving in British schools - there are now over 26,000 school pupils in England whose first language is Polish. Using qualitative data from three studies, our presentation examines the decision making processes of Polish parents about bringing children to the UK or leaving them behind in Poland.