



ANNUAL REPORT 2014

ECPAT
BELGIUM

Annual Activities Report 2014

ECPAT Belgium
Rue du Marché aux Poulets, 30
1000 Brussels
02/522.63.23
info@ecpat.be



TABLE OF CONTENT

TABLE OF CONTENT	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
ECPAT BELGIUM	5
HISTORY AND MISSION.....	5
AXES OF ACTION	5
GOVERNANCE.....	6
AWARENESS-RAISING	7
STOP CHILD PROSTITUTION BECOMES I SAY STOP!	7
FIFA ACTION BRAZIL	8
DON'T LOOK AWAY	8
TRAINING (FUTURE) TOURISM PROFESSIONALS.....	9
RESEARCH	10
ANALYSES AND STUDIES	10
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU DIRECTIVE 2011/93/EU.....	12
PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN.....	13
MAKE-IT-SAFE	13
SENEGAL	15
ADVOCACY	16
COLLABORATIONS	17
COMMUNICATION.....	19
FUNDING	20
CONCLUSION	22

INTRODUCTION

2014 has been a **commemorative year** for ECPAT Belgium and for rights of the child in general. At the national level, ECPAT has celebrated its 20-year anniversary in Belgium and 10 years of the campaign “Stop Child Prostitution,” which has for this occasion become “I Say STOP!” At the international level, November 20 marked 25 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Concurrently with these commemorations, this year has allowed ECPAT Belgium to redefine its **strategic planning** in order to adapt its work to the realities of a constantly evolving world as well as integrating the new strategic directions of ECPAT International, approved at the end of 2014.

ECPAT Belgium has chosen to concentrate its work along **4 main axes**: awareness/training, research, the participation of children and advocacy.

The **awareness-raising** axis has been realized, among others, by the launching of the website “I Say STOP!”, a new tool to report cases of commercial sexual exploitation of children abroad.

New joint efforts with the tourism sector, notably the ACCOR Belgium hotel chain, has allowed the development of a training component to help the staff to better detect cases of child sexual abuse by clients and know how to react to them.

Through the European project Make-IT-Safe, the emphasis has been placed on the **participation of children** in their own prevention against sexual exploitation through new technologies.

ECPAT Belgium has also continued its work of **advocacy** at the national and European levels in cooperation with other child rights organizations.

A new axis has been developed in 2014: **research**. Commercial sexual exploitation of children remains largely undocumented, both in terms of statistical data as much as its different aspects. This is why ECPAT Belgium has set as its goal to write each year 15 analyses and a study on the different aspects relative to prevention, new trends, causes, consequences, good practices, etc.

ECPAT BELGIUM

HISTORY AND MISSION

ECPAT Belgium is the Belgian member of the ECPAT International network¹, with which it shares the same mission: protecting children from all forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Launched in 1990 as a campaign, ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for sexual purposes) includes today more than 80 groups worldwide, and is the only international NGO exclusively dedicated to the fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children.

ECPAT Belgium started in 1993 at the instigation of several development cooperation and child rights NGOs in order to disseminate the ECPAT International campaign throughout Belgium. In 2004, ECPAT Belgium was recognized as an asbl (non profit organization).

AXES OF ACTION

In order to complete its mission, ECPAT Belgium is developing actions around four main axes and topics in line with the “Strategic Directions” of ECPAT International.

Axes
Awareness
Research
Participation
Advocacy

Topics
Child prostitution
Child pornography
Trafficking of children for sexual purposes
Child sex tourism

The fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children is not being done alone. In all its activities, ECPAT Belgium takes care to develop strategic cooperation with different partners from the public and private sectors as well as NGOs.

¹ ECPAT means: End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for sexual purposes.

GOVERNANCE

The General Assembly (GA) of ECPAT Belgium is composed of 13 members: Isabelle De Maegt, Ann De Neve, Marie-Paule Eskenazi, Inge Ledegen, Corentin Lefèvre, Sofia Rebolledo, Bernard Tuyttens, Karl Wintgens as well as five administrators.

The GA was held on September 12, 2014 in the ECPAT Belgium premises.

The Board meets every three months and is composed of:

- Sophie Jekeler, President
- Augustin Nteziyaremye, Treasurer
- Danielle Van Kerckhoven, Secretary
- Katlijn Declercq, Administrator
- David Boulanger, Administrator

Ariane Couvreur is the only permanent member of the team (full time). Her work is supervised by the Board. The latter approves the annual strategic plan, regularly evaluates the conformity of its activities with the objectives of the association and prepares the content of the General Assembly.

ECPAT Belgium welcomes several interns each year. Since 2014, a proactive search for interns has been implemented with different French- and Flemish-speaking universities/"hautes écoles". The students targeted are in criminology, law, tourism, translation and communication.

In 2014, ECPAT Belgium cooperated with:

- Camille Seccaud (January-May)
- Alberto Punzi Fontana (February)
- Lisa De Laet (April-June)
- Blair Elisabeth Allan (July-August)
- Sophie Bosseloir (September-October)
- Damien Kerlouët (September-December)

Since March, 2014, ECPAT Belgium has moved! Our offices are now located at: 30, rue Marché aux Poulets - 1000 Brussels.

AWARENESS-RAISING

Too many children are still victims of commercial sexual exploitation throughout the world. The development of low-cost mass tourism has had an impact on the number of annual travellers, which exceeded a billion in 2012. Unfortunately, the constant increase in the number of travellers makes children more vulnerable to exploitation. At the same time, the substantial development of new technologies makes the prevention and detection of such abuses more complicated, even facilitating the exploitation of children. In particular, one can think of child sex tourism through webcam, where the abuser does not have to move, but only “orders” an abuse that he is watching live.

It remains, therefore, imperative for all travelers in Belgium, whether they are tourists, businessmen, deployed soldiers, diplomatic personnel, tourism professionals, etc., to be aware on how to react to an abusive situation committed abroad.

STOP CHILD PROSTITUTION BECOMES I SAY STOP!

In order to celebrate the 10 years of the “Stop Child Prostitution” campaign, ECPAT Belgium and its partners from the STOP Group launched a new website, “I Say STOP!” (www.isaystop.com) to make Belgian travellers aware of the existence of this crime and give them the means to react according to their profile (tourist, travel guide, journalist, etc.). Five actions are proposed for travelers: I report, I act, I bear witness, I support and I relay.

The reporting form was changed to facilitate the use of data, and the website has been directly linked to the European platform “Don’t Look Away” which gathers all reporting lines in Europe (www.reportchildsextourism.eu).

The site was launched officially during a press conference on November 6 at Egmont Palace in the presence of Minister Didier Reynders and different partners of the campaign (Police, Justice, Foreign Affairs, Defense, FIT, FEBETRA, Child Focus, Plan Belgium, Samilia Foundation and ECPAT Belgium). The event had extensive media coverage and was made the subject of a number of articles in the press.

Numerous flyers were also created in French and Flemish as well as a banner bearing the messages of the campaign.

FIFA ACTION BRAZIL

Large sporting events, like the FIFA World Cup or the Olympic Games, increase the risk for sexual exploitation of children because they create an unusual movement of travelers in a festive environment. This risk is even greater if the child protection systems in the targeted destinations are inadequate.

In collaboration with its partners from the STOP Group, ECPAT Belgium coordinated a special awareness-raising campaign a few days before the start of the World Cup (June, 2014). Posters representing famous Brazilian soccer players Kaka and Juninho, bearing the slogan “During the World Cup, be a responsible supporter” were distributed through a press release as well as the different partners' (social) networks.

ECPAT Belgium also wrote and distributed two analyses on the issue: one on the relation between large sporting events and the sexual exploitation of children; the other specifically on the Brazilian situation.

DON'T LOOK AWAY

Since the end of 2012, ECPAT Belgium has been an associate member of the European project “Don’t Look Away”, which brings together 16 European countries coordinated by ECPAT France. This project aims to strengthen the fight against the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Europe, notably through the creation of materials that raise awareness for travelers. The flyers “I Say STOP!” and the “FIFA Brazil” posters were created from “Don’t Look Away” materials.

Besides raising awareness, the project “Don’t Look Away” also contains a training section for tourism professionals that meets the objectives of ECPAT Belgium. Thus, ECPAT Belgium participated in the Training of Trainers for ECPAT groups (Freiburg, October 2014) to familiarize them with the basic techniques for training (future) professionals on the issue.

TRAINING (FUTURE) TOURISM PROFESSIONALS

Since 1998, a “Code of Conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism” (the Code) has been implemented to encourage companies to integrate the protection of children into their structure. In fact, businesses like hotels, travel agencies, tour operators, etc. are front-line actors to detect and prevent the sexual exploitation of children by travellers. This Code of Conduct was signed by more than 1000 companies throughout the world. It contains 6 criteria that members are committed to respect, in particular the training of their staff.

To help companies implement this Code, there is a “local representative of the Code” in each country, very often undertaken by ECPAT groups. ECPAT Belgium is no exception to the rule.

ACCOR Belgium, having shown its willingness to sign the Code at the national level in 2014, was assisted by ECPAT Belgium in implementing the training criterion into its structure. Although the trainings will only begin in 2015, several meetings were already organized to set their content and timing. ECPAT Belgium also participated to the signing ceremony of the Code by ACCOR Belgium on November 19, 2014.

At the same time, ECPAT Belgium continued to give awareness-raising sessions for future tourism professionals in 2014, still in collaboration with "hautes écoles" for tourism, where ECPAT Belgium made a presentation of its work. Innovative, however, were the students in “Ethics and Tourism” of Thomas More Mechelen, who also did their trimester assignment on the dissemination of the "I say STOP!" campaign among young travellers and backpackers.

RESEARCH

Commercial sexual exploitation of children remains an unknown phenomenon whose magnitude is very often underestimated. Therefore, in order to better target prevention and protection measures, obtaining more data on the phenomenon is of utmost importance, both at the quantitative and qualitative levels.

ANALYSES AND STUDIES

ECPAT Belgium has decided to provide analyses illustrating different aspects of the commercial sexual exploitation of children in clear and accessible terms for the general public. Since the fight to protect children is everyone's business, all of us must be able to feel involved in this struggle. A critical analysis of the problem and its challenges is an excellent way to promote a responsible attitude and commitment not only from citizens but also from professionals and politicians, whom these articles also address.

Once a year, a more substantial study (50 pages) allows the development in depth of a particular topic. In 2014, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the study examined all the measures implemented in Belgium for the protection of children against commercial sexual exploitation.

All studies and analyses are available on the ECPAT Belgium website. The choice of topics is presented by the team at the beginning of the year and approved by the Board. Other stakeholders are also involved at different stages of the writing process (proposal of subjects, assistance in writing, reviewing, etc.)

The analyses and studies touches upon six main topics covering different aspects of the commercial sexual exploitation of children: the role of first line actors, the participation of civil society, the causes and consequences, the good practices, the follow-up of Belgian actions and from the North to the South. The complete list of analyses is shown below:

1. The FIFA World Cup in Brazil and the sexual exploitation of children: what risks and what prevention strategies? May, 2014
2. Major sporting events and the sexual exploitation of children: what connections? May, 2014
3. Online solicitation of children: which changes in the new law? May, 2014
4. The role of the health care sector in the fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children, June 2014
5. The Convention on the Rights of the Child 25 years later: successes and challenges in the fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children, July, 2014
6. Child sex tourism via webcam: a new disturbing trend, August, 2014
7. The Code of Conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism: successes and challenges, September, 2014
8. Involving boys and men in the fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children, September, 2014
9. The commercial sexual exploitation of children in Senegal: background and possible actions, October, 2014
10. The role of travelers in the fight against child sex tourism in Senegal, October, 2014
11. Minors involved in prostitution in Belgium: little knowledge, many uncertainties! November, 2014
12. Working with unaccompanied foreign minors on online safety: experiences from the Make-IT-Safe, November, 2014
13. "I Say STOP!", a new tool to act against commercial sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, December, 2014
14. Youth participation in the fight against commercial sexual exploitation of children, December, 2014
15. A child-friendly justice for children victims of sexual exploitation: strengths and weaknesses of the Belgian criminal system, December, 2014

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU DIRECTIVE 2011/93/EU

In collaboration with two other Brussels-based organizations, Missing Children Europe and eNACSO, ECPAT Belgium conducted research on the implementation of the “EU Directive on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography” (Directive 2011/93/EU). Approved in 2011, this Directive has binding force on Member States, who were required to transpose its different provisions into their national legislation before the end of 2013.

This research follows a preliminary investigation led by the same organizations in 2012 but enlarged for all of the Member States. It is based on the analysis of 27 national reports focusing on 7 main topics contained in the Directive: knowingly obtaining access to child abuse materials, online grooming, disqualification and screening, victim identification, extraterritorial jurisdiction, assistance and protection to child victims as well as take down and blocking of websites containing child pornography.

ECPAT Belgium coordinated the analysis of topic 5 (extraterritorial jurisdiction) and topic 6 (assistance to child victims) in order to evaluate if the measures of protection against sexual exploitation of children contained in the Directive were effectively transposed into national legislations. A summary reviewing the key findings, good practices, as well as challenges, was prepared for the final conference scheduled for mid-2015.

PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN

Promoting the participation of children in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects that concern them is one of the cornerstones of the work of ECPAT International. On an issue as serious as commercial sexual exploitation, listening to the voices of youngsters (victims or not) proves to be essential. In fact, young people are in the best position to determine their real needs when it comes to prevention and protection. Recognizing children as subjects and not objects of rights allows us to better empower them to protect themselves and the others against commercial sexual exploitation.

MAKE-IT-SAFE

In 2013 and 2014, ECPAT Belgium was partner in a EU-funded project conducted with four other ECPAT groups (Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and United Kingdom) to promote online safety for youth (12-18 years old) through peer education.

Each youngster participating in the project was trained to become a “peer expert” capable of training other young people to become responsible digital citizens. Two underlying observations were behind this “peer educators” approach: when they face problems online, youth tend to speak with other youth rather than to adults; in addition, new technologies are an integral part of their life, and they are more likely to use the right words to raise awareness among their peers.

In Belgium, the project was implemented in centers for unaccompanied foreign minors (El Paso, Les Hirondelles, Petit Château), AMOs (Mikado and Dinamo), a school (Athénée Royal de Beauraing) and several scout units from the Walloon Brabant. ECPAT Belgium, in fact, tried to focus primarily on more informal youth groups, where few awareness-raising activities had taken place, such as the centers for unaccompanied foreign minors or the scouts.

In each implementing partner organization, two youngsters and a coach were trained by ECPAT on a safe use of new technologies. The role of the coach was to help the youngsters in their mission and recruit new peer experts to ensure the sustainability of the project.

In order to more actively involve youngsters in the project and to facilitate their work in raising awareness, 6 films and three comics on different themes relating to online safety were created by youth (image rights, sexting, grooming, password, private life, cyber-bullying, etc.). All were widely disseminated through the website and the social networks of ECPAT Belgium, press releases, newsletters as well as the networks of ECPAT Belgium.

Two manuals, one for peer experts and another for coaches, were also published: they contain interactive methods to train peer educators and youth in online safety.

Besides the work with youth and coaches, ECPAT Belgium organized information sessions with parents. A flyer “Recommendations for parents to discuss online behaviour with their children” was created for the occasion and translated into a number of languages: French, English, Dutch, German, Arabic, Turkish, Serbo-Croatian, Hindi, Pashtun, Polish, Romanian, etc.

The project concluded with a final conference organized on November 17 and 18 in Brussels by ECPAT Belgium in the presence of youth and coaches from the five participating countries. The aim of the conference was to exchange experiences of the Make-IT-Safe project, good practices, difficulties encountered, as well as to discuss its sustainability. Throughout the conference, the emphasis was set on the participation of youth. For example, during an interactive session with representatives from European institutions and experts on online safety, the peer experts had the opportunity to question the speakers on the measures taken at the European level to ensure youth participation in matters of online safety.

Although the funding of the Make-IT-Safe project ended in December 2014, ECPAT Belgium is committed to continuing its work in raising awareness through peer education in 2015 by organizing trainings for peer experts/coaches and the dissemination of materials.

SENEGAL

In 2013, ECPAT Belgium supported a project to draw a mapping on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Senegal conducted by the Youth Environment Action Association (Action Jeunesse Environnement). The originality of this study is its methodology: participatory action research where youth themselves collect the data, analyze the results and formulate the conclusions. Although this research was carried out in 2013, the narrative report was postponed to the beginning of 2014 by AJE, thereby permitting ECPAT Belgium to write a final report of the project presenting the key findings with a particular emphasis on youth participation.

Two analyses were also written from this report (see above).

ADVOCACY

Although an international legal framework protects children against commercial sexual exploitation, the fight against this phenomenon is not always a priority for States Parties. Consequently, ECPAT Belgium is conducting advocacy work to improve awareness of the rights of the child in public policy at the national and European levels.

At the national level, ECPAT Belgium is a member of the Coordination of NGOs on the Rights of the Child (CODE) and its Dutch counterpart the Kinderrechtcoalitie (KIRECO). Both are responsible for the redaction of the “Alternative Report of NGOs on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by Belgium”, an independent report that complements the official report delivered by the Belgian authorities to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, emphasizing the gaps in the effective implementation of the rights of the child in Belgium. The part concerning the commercial sexual exploitation of children is being systematically undertaken by ECPAT Belgium.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ECPAT Belgium focused its annual study on the situation in Belgium. Besides an assessment of Belgian initiatives relating to the protection, prevention and coordination, the “Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children” lists a series of recommendations to ensure the correct implementation in Belgium.

At the European level, ECPAT Belgium is mandated by ECPAT International to represent the network at different meetings and consultations on the subject. In 2014, it participated in the meetings of the “EU Civil Society Platform Against Trafficking in Human Beings” organized by the European Commission as well as a number of other European events on the issue of trafficking in human beings, migrant children, new technologies, etc. ECPAT Belgium is also a partner of the European Mario II Project (2013-2014) aiming to improve the protection of migrant children from Eastern and Central Europe against sexual exploitation and trafficking. With Terre des Hommes Brussels Office, it was responsible for the advocacy section of the project, in particular, the monitoring of relevant policies, the dissemination of recommendations and the redaction of a newsletter on the initiatives undertaken in Brussels.

COLLABORATIONS

The development of strategic collaborations with partners from the public and private sector as well as NGOs is an essential and necessary component of the work of ECPAT Belgium in achieving its missions.

As mentioned previously, ECPAT Belgium is a member of two coalitions, the Flemish- (KIRECO) and French-speaking (CODE), which gathers the child-rights organizations in Belgium. For a number of years, it has also been part of the Platform for the Rights of the Child in the Development Cooperation and has regularly cooperated with the National Commission on the Rights of the Child.

Specifically concerning the topic of child sex tourism involving children, ECPAT Belgium is one of the founding members and the main coordinator of the working group “STOP”, the initiator of the campaign’s name. This group joins partners both from the public and private sectors as well as NGOs.

As the local representative of the Code, ECPAT Belgium is cooperating with private businesses in order to help implement the six criteria of the “Code”, in particular, the aspect of training. Throughout 2014, support was offered to the hotel group ACCOR Belgium, which wanted to establish a training module for its employees.

At the international level, the General Assembly of the ECPAT network was held in Paris on December 2 and 3 2014 and gathered more than 80 groups from around the world. During this meeting, new strategic directions were approved. Four axes of action were kept which will guide the work of ECPAT Belgium in the future: awareness-raising, youth participation, research and network consolidation.

To prepare the International Assembly, a regional consultation for groups from Western Europe was held in October in Freiburg. The objective of these two days was to re-discuss group priorities in the region and to develop a new strategy. Given its involvement in European advocacy, ECPAT Belgium participated in the redaction of the “concept note” and the agenda of the meeting.

ECPAT Belgium regularly replies to requests for information or interviews from students or other child-rights organizations.

Besides presentations in tourism schools, ECPAT Belgium was invited as a speaker during the training cycle on trafficking in human beings organized by the “El Paso” center for unaccompanied foreign minors.

On November 27, ECPAT Belgium gave a conference in Louvain-la-Neuve on the topic of trafficking in children in Belgium.

COMMUNICATION

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is still quite an unfamiliar subject for the general public, which ECPAT Belgium has endeavored to make more visible through communication with the media, politicians and the professional sector.

Concerning the media, ECPAT Belgium has been interviewed twice by Radios Chrétiennes Francophones. It also took part in the broadcast “7 billion neighbors” on Radio France International on the occasion of the World Day against the sexual exploitation of children.

The campaign “I Say STOP!” had been widely echoed in the written medias (La Libre Belgique, Metro, la DH, L'avenir, De Morgen, Het Laatste Nieuws, Het Nieuwsblad), by news websites of the RTBF and RTL, by radio broadcasts on la Première and Radio Contact, as well as through newsletters of several travel magazines (Pag Tour, Info Travel, UPAV) and sites/social networks of its partners.

The Facebook post on the press conference was seen by almost 1500 people.

Besides Facebook, ECPAT Belgium is also active on Twitter, where it has almost doubled its number of followers in 2014 from 200 to nearly 400 people. ECPAT Belgium is regularly retweeted by international organizations and political personalities. The FIFA campaign was tweeted by the Belgian Soccer Union.

The Dutch version of the ECPAT Belgium website was completed in 2014. Information about the activities of ECPAT Belgium and news on the issue are from now on available in three languages.

2014 also marked the launching of the new site “I Say STOP!” in three languages. ECPAT Belgium manages its content for the different partners of the STOP Group and regularly posts news connected to extraterritorial jurisdiction cases.

Five press releases were issued in 2014 about the Make-IT-Safe project (2), the FIFA campaign, the “I Say STOP!” website, and the study on the 25 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Three Make-IT-Safe newsletters were also written and sent to the ECPAT Belgium network.

FUNDING

Since 2010, ECPAT Belgium receives funding from the Brussels Region to cover the costs of Ariane Couvreur's salary. It is the only recurring funding. In order to complete its projects, ECPAT Belgium applies for ad hoc subsidies, alone or in partnership with other ECPAT groups in Europe.

Consequently, in 2014, ECPAT Belgium was involved in three projects funded by the European Union, namely, Make-IT-Safe (Daphne III), Don't Look Away (EuropeAid) and Mario II (Oak Foundation).

The costs linked to the launch of the new website "I Say STOP!" were covered by a subsidy from the National Lottery. Several private sponsors also contributed to the funding of the website: ACCOR Belgium, Jetair and Mindstretch. Besides that, the translation of the website into three languages was donated by Data Translations.

As part of the signing of the Code of Conduct by ACCOR Belgium, the sessions for raising awareness carried out by ECPAT Belgium for General Managers was reimbursed.

ECPAT Belgium used the UN Online Volunteering Service for the translation of its annual study in English as well as for the translation of the present report in English (Harold Slamovitz) and in Dutch (Cécile Vandewoude).

With its various European subsidies ending at the close of 2014, ECPAT Belgium has taken care to implement a long-term funding strategy in line with its axes of action. The different possible tracks for funding were compiled by Camille Seccaud (intern) and explored during 2014 after their approval by the General Assembly.

In particular, ECPAT Belgium presented a mapping project on youth in prostitution to Soroptimist and to the Oak Foundation but without any outcome.

Shortly before the launch of the website "I Say STOP", approximately 50 companies working in the travel sector (travel agencies, travel magazines, rental cars, insurance) were contacted to become sponsors of the website, but very few responded positively.

In order to be able to develop the research approach more in depth, ECPAT Belgium, after approval of the Board, decided to apply for recognition as a lifelong learning association with the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. That means that ECPAT Belgium must annually provide 15 short analyses and a more substantial study on the subjects connected to the commercial sexual exploitation of children. A sizeable part of the work of ECPAT Belgium has thus been devoted to preparing these tasks in order to apply in 2015.

CONCLUSION

2014 has allowed ECPAT Belgium to redefine its plan of action by structuring its projects around four priorities: raising awareness/training, advocacy, the participation of children and research.

While 2013 witnessed the development of the axis “youth participation”, 2014 placed a particular emphasis on research. The latter is absolutely complementary with the other activities of ECPAT Belgium. In fact, having more data about the phenomenon, its causes and consequences, new trends, good practices, etc. will support the actions of advocacy as well as those raising awareness among the general public.

In order to implement these axes of action, ECPAT Belgium has also taken care to continue developing strategic collaborations, in particular with the private sector (for example, ACCOR Belgium) and communicating regularly about its projects. Twice the number of followers on Twitter as well as the extensive media coverage of the new website “I Say STOP!” are proof that this strategy has paid off.

The four axes of action will remain the guidelines in 2015, not only in the planning of projects but also in the selection of lines of funding. In fact, with several projects ending in 2014, ECPAT Belgium will need to address new sponsors, still keeping its working topics, namely child prostitution, child pornography, child sex tourism and trafficking of children for sexual purposes.

2015 will commemorate a double anniversary: the 25 years of the ECPAT network and the 20 years of Belgian law on extraterritoriality. An occasion to highlight ECPAT’s work at the international and Belgian levels. The next study of ECPAT Belgium will, moreover, focus on an assessment of the law of extraterritoriality 20 years after its implementation in Belgium.