



ECPAT Belgium

Ending the sexual exploitation of children

# ACTIVITY REPORT 2019



In 2019, as in the past 26 years, ECPAT Belgium has worked continuously to tackle the sexual exploitation of children.

Hundreds of sensitized people, trained professionals and better equipped young people. Here is the concrete impact of the actions carried out by ECPAT Belgium in 2019.

Alongside these visible results, there are equally important observations: the projects, the publics affected, the partnerships, the calls for ECPAT Belgium's expertise are increasing and diversifying.

Therefore, many initiatives have been taken internally: looking for new sources of funding, starting a strategic planning process, soliciting more volunteers, relocating the office, etc.

While financial and human resources are still insufficient for the scale of the task, the organization's driving forces are showing boundless motivation to continue this necessary work.

Thank you for this wonderful collective adventure.

EDITORIAL

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**Preventing** the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children.  
**Listening** to victims, professionals and needs on the field.



**Mobilizing** everyone to create a world without exploitation tomorrow.



## Fighting the exploitation of children via new technologies

### (Dé)clik Project

Resulting from the observation that a young person facing difficulties tends to ask for help to another young person, [\(Dé\)clik](#) is a project that aims at giving teenagers sufficient tools to protect themselves from the dangers related to new technologies and to advise others.

This year, ECPAT Belgium was able to intervene twice at the establishment les Soeurs de Notre Dame in Namur. These interventions enabled us to address the issues of cyber-bullying, intimate space, sexting, privacy but also to secure parameters on social media.

ECPAT Belgium also conducted the activities of this project with **two organization accompanying victims of trafficking**: PAGASA and Esperanto.





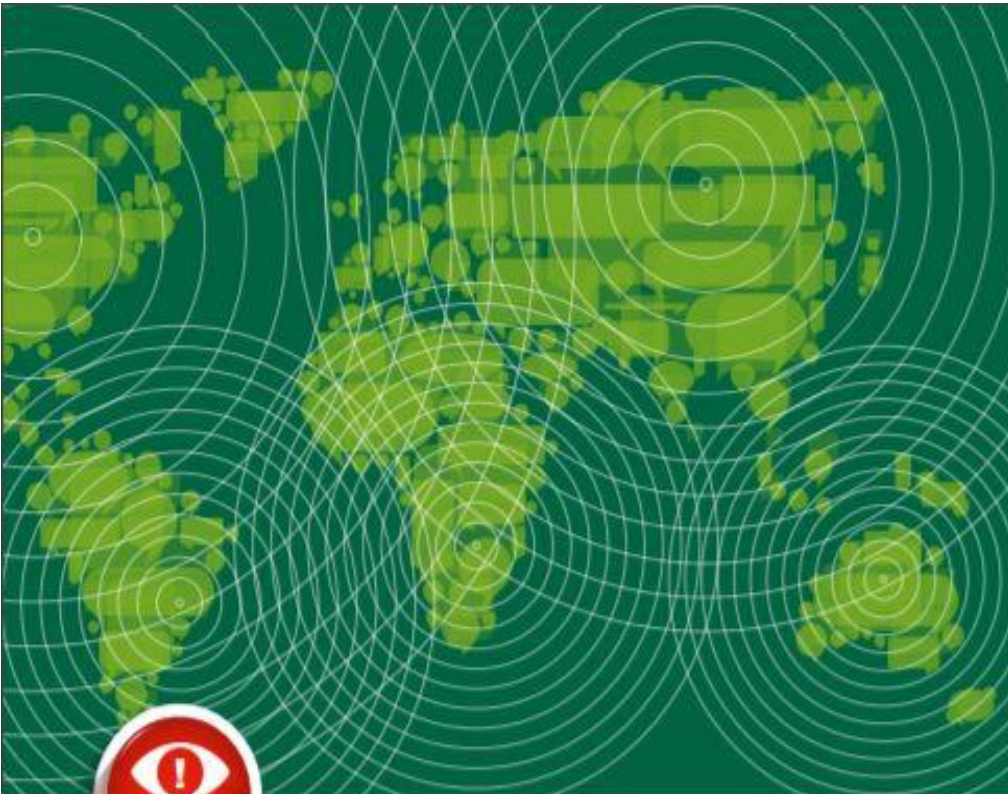
Through the [ReACT project](#) (Reinforcing Assistance to Child victims of Trafficking), ECPAT Belgium trains professional working in the field in order to prevent, detect and respond to cases of trafficking among the minors they accompany.

## Fighting child trafficking

Two training sessions on child trafficking issues were given to a key audience: the youth care sector. These training sessions took place in May and September and each time gathered around 40 participants. Additionally, in June and November, ECPAT Belgium gave a **2-hours presentation and a day of training on child trafficking to guardians**, at the request of Caritas International Belgium.

ECPAT Belgium also joined the **KOUTCHA project**, whose objective is to set up a collaboration protocol between Belgium and France for the care of children victims of trafficking.

Since October 2019, **ECPAT Belgium has become a member of the [CAPISCE project](#)**. The objective of the project is to strengthen the protection of child victims of trafficking during legal proceedings. This will notably be achieved through the analysis of existing mechanisms and good practices and the creation of a training module for interpreters.



## Obstacles to report suspicions of sexual exploitation of children

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## Fighting the exploitation of children in travel and tourism

The ALERT project, like the I say STOP campaign, aims at improving the protection of children victims of sexual exploitation in travel and tourism. It began in April 2019 with ECPAT Belgium's participation in an European training for professionals on the reporting mechanisms of European platforms and their possible improvements. **The project supervises and enables the financing of all the activities to fight sexual exploitation in travel and tourisme carried out by ECPAT Belgium in 2019.**

In April 2019, an online questionnaire on **obstacles to reporting child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism** collected more than 300 responses. As a result, three focus groups were created with young people, tourism professionals and partners of the I say STOP! campaign in order to analyse the results of these questionnaires and develop clear recommendations. These recommendations were gathered in a study published in November 2019, as well as in a short brochure outlining the main obstacles.



On November 7 and 8, 2019, ECPAT Belgium took part in a European training session (in Freiburg) bringing together ECPAT groups and police authorities from around ten European countries in order to improve European reporting platforms and establish minimum quality standards for these mechanisms.

On November, 15, the **I say STOP! Campaign** was presented to the **Belgian association of travel management (BATM)**. The BATM is a leading non-profit association in the field of business travel whose members are among the main buyers and suppliers of business travel services in Belgium.



As every year, ECPAT Belgium had the pleasure of **organising a competition** for communication students from the IHECS. This competition, launched in November as part of the Hackaton, challenged 8 students to come up with innovative, creative and youth-oriented concepts to spread the I say STOP! campaign.



VERT  
BLEU  
SOLEIL

# SALON DES VACANCES



Other activities related to the fight against exploitation in travel and tourism

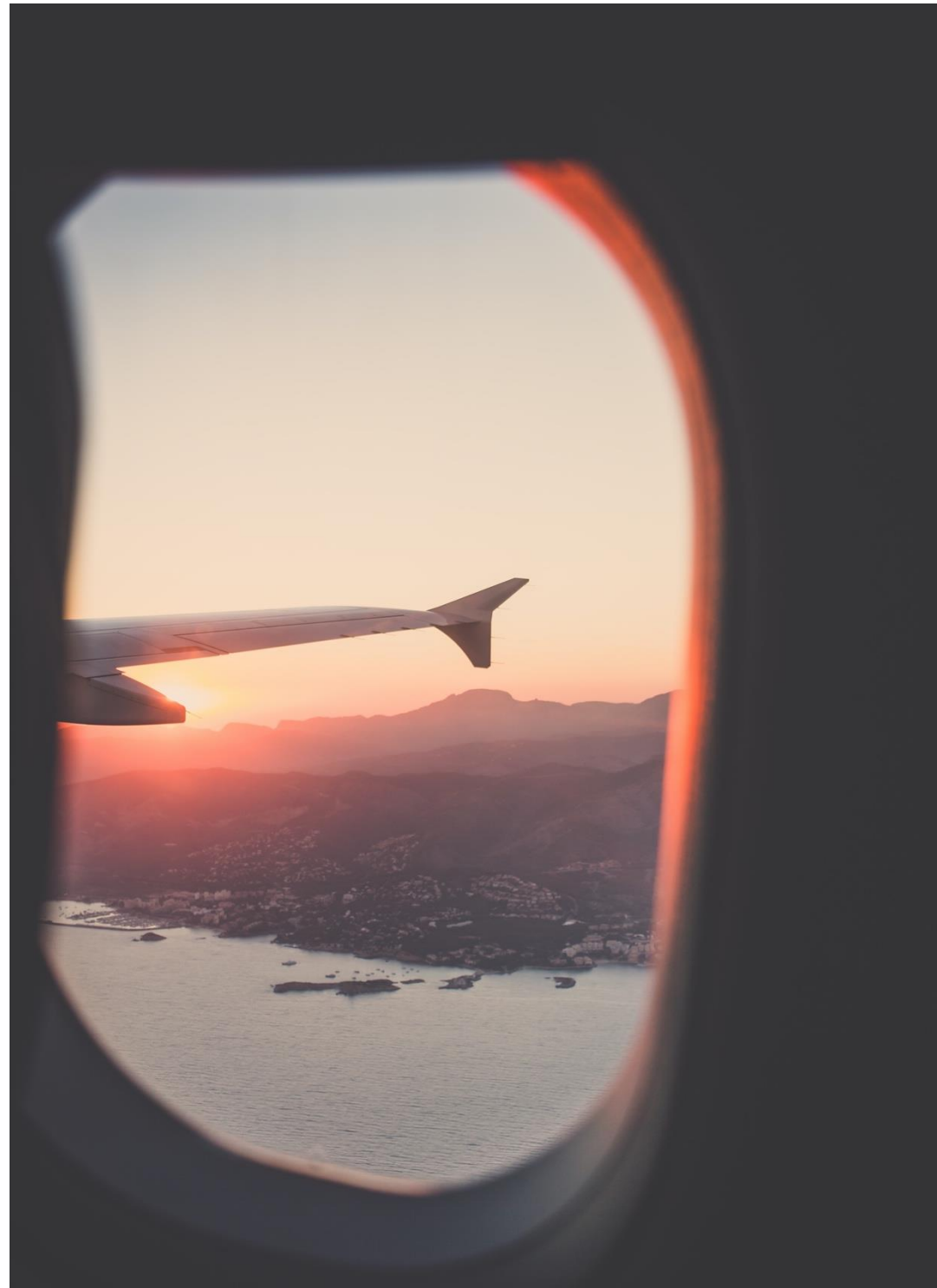
At the national level, ECPAT Belgium took part in [the Vert Bleu Soleil tourism fair in Liege](#) as well as in the HEPH tourism fair.

During these two events, several hundred visitors were informed of the existence of the site "I say STOP!" website, which allows to report any case of child sexual abuse committed abroad. Many travellers told us that they have encountered suspicious situation abroad. They took the "I say STOP!" flyer with them and thanked us for our work.

In Berlin, ECPAT Belgium participated at the largest tourism fair in Europe. This enabled us to strengthen international contacts and, following the fair, to organise a meeting with the local members of the Code (the "[Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism](#)") with a prospect of creating a new e-learning for tourism companies.

This year, **225 future tourism professionals were trained by ECPAT Belgium** to prevent, detect and respond to the sexual exploitation of children. These trainings took place, respectively, at UCLLeuven, Limburg, PXL Hasselt, Howest Kortrijk, HEPH Condorcet Saint Ghislain, Institut Charles Péguy (Louvain-la-Neuve), Thomas More Mechelen in Mechelen and ISALT in Brussels.

**30 travel guides** from the Reis-en-Opleiding Centrum in Ghent (one of the only members of the Code in Belgium) and **75 employees of Sofitel Brussels Europe** also benefited from a complete training course.



# ADVOCACY

## National advocacy

Following its participation to the "Jeudi de l'Hémicycle" in 2018, ECPAT Belgium had the pleasure to contribute, by means of a "carte blanche", to the brochure marking the 30th anniversary of the Brussels French-speaking Parliament.

On November 21, 2019, ECPAT Belgium was delighted to go back there to present its prevention projects during a morning of reflection organised around "cyberbullying practices through the gender prisms



The year 2019 has also offered opportunities for **strategic meetings**, for example with federal deputy Sophie Rohonyi, who has a strong interest in the fight against sexual exploitation in travel and tourism. This year also enabled an **opening to other sectors and realities**. For example, during the open day at Impact House Brussels, ECPAT Belgium had the opportunity to present its work to the private and commercial sector, and especially to the financial sector.



## European Advocacy

On April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, ECPAT Belgium participated in the **12th EU Forum on the rights of the child**. "Where are we and where do we want to go?" These were the guiding questions for the 250 participants from all over Europe over the two days. The objective: to better protect children's rights. ECPAT Belgium is pleased that specific attention was paid to the participation of children, specifically in the fight against sexual exploitation.



On April, 3<sup>rd</sup>, ECPAT Belgium was invited by the **European Parliament's Intergroup on children's rights** to the presentation of an international index on the exploitation of children online, based, among other things, on the work of the ECPAT network. ECPAT Belgium is also a member of the **Children in Migration Initiative** and continues to represent ECPAT International on the **European Platform against Trafficking of Human Beings**.

Finally, ECPAT Belgium took part in a **training course for the implementation of minimum standards for all reporting sites**, to ensure standards for the access to the *Don't look away* Platform (quality standards to be published in 2020).

## International Advocacy

ECPAT Belgium met with Facebook during an *online safety expert meeting* in Belgium.





## Studies and analyses

In 2019, ECPAT Belgium wrote several opinion pieces on current events:

“Sexual abuse of minors in the Church: the obligation to denounce, a real step forward?” On May 9, Pope Francis introduced a new decree into canon law requiring the denunciation of cases of sexual violence against minors. This text was eagerly awaited by the victims, does it keep all its promises?

“The non-punishment of victims of trafficking finally inserted in Belgian law”: Imagine a Nigerian minor forced into prostitution with false documents. Or children forced to commit robberies in organized gangs. While being victims of trafficking of human beings, these minors are also perpetrators of crimes committed under duress. Can justice prosecute them? Yes, but since July 1, 2019, these victims can no longer be punished for offences resulting from their exploitation.

ECPAT Belgium has also contributed to the publication of two European research papers:

“Reluctance to report sexual exploitation of children”: How many people would be willing to report cases of sexual exploitation while travelling abroad? To answer this question, we asked 1081 participants from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

“Comparison of European low-threshold reporting mechanisms”: Are the (inter)national reporting mechanisms efficient to collect reports of child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism? What would be the improvements needed to ensure that the information provided by travelers can be used in investigations and lead to prosecutions?

## Strengthening the network

At the Belgian level, ECPAT Belgium continued its collaboration with members of the **NGO coalitions for children's rights**, CODE for the French-speaking side and KIRECO for the Dutch-speaking side.



On May 2, by participating in the **Child Focus' round table on loveboys**, which also welcomed Her Majesty Queen Mathilde, ECPAT Belgium was able to join the piloting committee of a study to analyze this issue at the level of the Brussels Capital Region.

As every year, ECPAT Belgium worked in collaboration with Defence for Children International Belgium to **train professionals from various sectors on issues related to child trafficking and exploitation**. Finally, this year was a turning point for the **strengthening of partnerships with all the shelters and support centers for victims of trafficking** in the North and South of Belgium.



Within the ECPAT movement, this year has been a particularly busy one:

On March 4 and 5, 2019, European ECPAT groups met in Berlin for a [regional consultation to develop effective strategies to end the sexual exploitation of children](#). As "Focal Point on the EU Institutions", ECPAT Belgium was asked to give a presentation on advocacy strategies.

In May, an exchange of good practice was organised in Vienna, focusing on the [good collaboration between the ECPAT groups in the East and West](#). Many ideas for joint projects emerged from this session, which brought together around 30 groups from Europe and Central Asia. ECPAT Belgium also gave a presentation on the European fundings available, in order to find ways to concretise future projects.

How can we make sure that reports of sexual exploitation of children abroad are investigated? During a meeting in Freiburg on November 7-8, policemen and ECPAT groups from 10 European countries discussed this issue. The meeting was extremely rewarding and provided an opportunity to exchange views on the difficulties travelers encounter when they wish to report cases of sexual abuse while travelling.



# BY THE NAME OF TANIA

A FILM BY  
BÉNÉDICTE LIÉNARD & MARY JIMÉNEZ

## Organisation of events

Full room for [the premiere of "By the name of Tania"](#) in Brussels! The screening, organised on the occasion of the EU Anti-Trafficking Day 2019, did not leave the 120 participants indifferent and gave way to a captivating exchange with the co-directors and PAG-ASA, which supports victims of human trafficking.

Based on real-life testimonies, "By the name of Tania" tells the story of an adolescent girl forced into prostitution in the gold mines region of Peru. Trapped by false promises of employment, the young woman gradually finds herself dispossessed of her rights, and more deeply from her identity. By retracing with a lot of respect Tania's journey, this film gives a voice to these teenage girls who have been deprived of it. A nice way to close the "Fortnight of Solidarity. International" organised by the City of Brussels, which supported the event.

[ECPAT Belgium has moved!](#) Since August 1, the fight against sexual exploitation of children had been carried out from a co-working space within the [Impact House](#). Please note the new adress : Rue Joseph II, 20, 1000 Brussels

This year has also been a year of renewal in other areas.

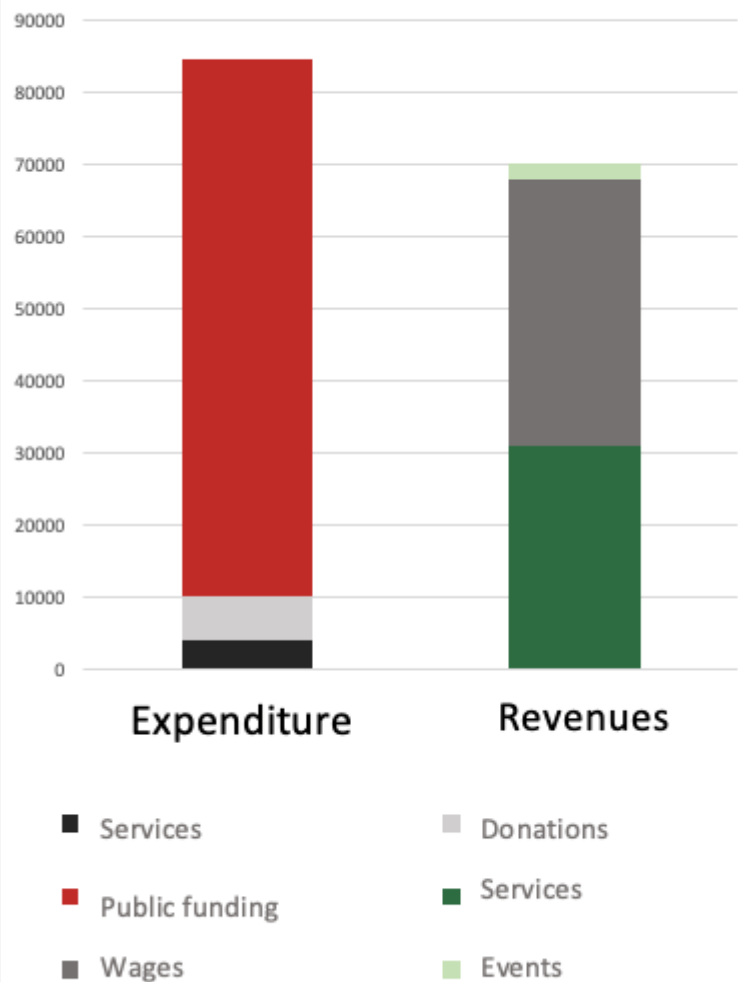
The team and the General Assembly met to develop a new Strategic Plan for the coming years. This process is currently underway and should lead to clear lines to guide the future priorities of ECPAT Belgium.

Finally, [the website](#) has been updated. You can now find a description of the main projects currently underway, our new contact details and all our news. We invite you to consult it regularly so you don't miss anything!





Profit and loss accounts 2019



### Special thanks to:

To our historical supporters, the city of Brussels, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation and the European Commission.

The John Cockerill Foundation, which agreed to put its trust in ECPAT Belgium for the first time in 2019. ONG Conseil Belgium, with whom we carried out a donor recruitment campaign on the street which ended in January 2020.

All our private donors, and especially Camille Dautricourt, for registering ECPAT Belgium on her wedding list. Congratulations again.

Thank you all, most sincerely.



Finally, thanks to the volunteers who have personally invested themselves in ECPAT Belgium this year

You bring our actions to life.

### THE OFFICE

Ariane Couvreur- office manager

Sharon Verkeste, William Quentin, Marianne  
Gély et Alexia Gallucci

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**ECPAT Belgium**

**Ending the sexual exploitation of children**

**To follow and support us in 2020**

