

Scottish Carers Parliament 2018

Report of the visit of European delegates 23.-26. October 2018

1. Background

As for previous Scottish Carer Parliaments, the Steering Group had again agreed to invite representatives from the European network of carer organisations to attend the SCP in 2018, in keeping with past practice to provide a learning exchange.

Previous learning exchanges had brought successful outcomes, e.g. by Finland launching its own Carers Parliament and the Portuguese Carers Association (purely voluntary run) campaigning for improved rights of carers in Portugal.

To mark Scots Year of the Young Person and focus on young carers it was agreed to invite visitors with an active interest in developing young carer networks and services in their countries. VOCAL took the lead in promoting the opportunities and coordinating the visit and programme.

The Scottish Government had agreed to award a grant of £3,000 to support accommodation, travel, catering and management costs.

2. Visitors

The opportunity was reported to members of Eurocarers at their June AGM in Brussels. Seven visitors registered strong interest and confirmed their attendance:

Jonna Skant, Finland	Folkhälsans förbund, Familjer och relationer
Malla Heino, Finland	Coordinator Carers Finland (both are member of a Finnish young carer collaborative similar to Scotland's NCO group or YC Services Alliance)
Anita Vatland, Norway	Director Pårørendealliansen - Norwegian Alliance for Carers
Lynni Tran, Norway	Board member Ung Kreft (Young Cancer)
Stefani Buoni, Italy	Adult YC; Presidente e Fondatrice - "Children of mentally ill parents"
Jessica Lerner, Sweden	Adult YC; member of Eurocarers Young Carers Project
Stecy Yghemenos	Director of Eurocarers, leading a number of young carers research and policy initiatives in Europe

Unfortunately, Lynni Tran from Norway had an accident just a couple of days prior to the visit and was prevented from travelling to Scotland.

3. Programme

Arrival

Visitors arrived on Tue 23 October in the afternoon and evening. VOCAL provided the welcome and arranged a meal for visitors to meet.

Wed 24 October 2018

Visitors travelled to the Scottish Carers Parliament and were introduced to many delegates and members of carer organisations. They joined in the full programme and workshops and several visitors were interviewed on site for the media report.



Thursday 25 October 2018

This day was dedicated to meetings at the Edinburgh Carers Hub, 60 Leith Walk, Edinburgh and to a visit to Edinburgh Young Carers Project in the afternoon.

9:30 – 12:00 Caring across frontiers ...

Introductions to

- all guests and their projects in Finland, Norway, Sweden and Italy
- Scotland's carers movement
- Carer support in Edinburgh
- Eurocarers' role and work and to new opportunities for carers rights within the 10 principles of the European Social Pillar

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch with staff at the Edinburgh Carers Hub

13:00 – 14:30

Working with Young Carers, input from young carer projects, including Hannah Todd, Young Carers Education Officer, **Stirling Carers Centre** (www.stirlingcarers.co.uk) about their young carer work with schools

From 15:00 – 17:30

Visit to **Edinburgh Young Carers** – www.youngcarers.org – to get to know one of the longest established young carer projects in Scotland. Visitors spent two hours with all EYC staff and four representatives of the Young Carer Forum. This was an amazing inter-active exchange which hugely stimulated and motivated all visitors. There were many photo opportunities and some social media work and filming to take messages from young carers to young carer networks in other countries.

After a hectic programme, the last evening was dedicated to a stroll around the old town and some delegates left early the next morning to head home.



4. Outcomes

Delegates took an enormous amount of ideas, inspiration and motivation on the development of young carer support services back to Eurocarers and their own countries.

The Swedish delegate, a young adult carer, features soon after in one of Sweden's main live talkshows and was able to refer to her personal experiences and the excellent practice she had encountered in Scotland live on TV

<https://www.tv4.se/efter-tio/klipp/jessica-lerner-om-broders-funktionsnedsattning-nar-jag-tog-hem-vanner-blev-de-radda-for-min-bror-11926968>



[Jessica Lerner om broderns funktionsnedsättning: "När jag tog hem vänner blev de rädda för min bror" - Malou Efter tio - tv4.se](https://www.tv4.se)

www.tv4.se

Veckans tema: Anhörig. Jessica Lerner växte upp i skuggan av sitt funktionsnedsatta syskon. I en känslotark intervju berättar hon om deras starka band men också om rädslan att göra brodern upprörd.

<https://www.tv4.se/efter-tio/klipp/psykolog-egil-linge-om-att-vara-anhorig-det-ar-viktigt-att-fa-vara-sig-sjolv-nagonstans-11926970>



[Psykolog Egil Linge om att vara anhörig: "Det är viktigt att få vara sig själv någonstans" - Malou Efter tio - tv4.se](https://www.tv4.se)

www.tv4.se

Psykolog Egil Linge om syskonskap och om att vara anhörig.

Finnish colleagues took many examples of best practice back to their national collaborative on young carers, in particular for their work to approaching the education sector and schools, and also for the development of young carer – led forums as they experienced at the excellent visit to Edinburgh Young Carers.

Our Italian visitor, also an adult young carer, gave an interview to the media team at the SCP and she has since reported that she and her young carer organisation in Italy are using the learning experience from Scotland for developing further plans for submission to their respective regional and national governments.



Eurocarers already have set up a European YC group and are keen to strengthen their focus on young carers further. One of the European Interest Group meetings in Brussels had been featuring young carers already in 2018 and Eurocarers will be planning further meetings with greater involvement of Scotland.

The opportunities to join us for the SCP 2018 were widely circulated in advance, and although no one attended from Germany this year, Sebastian Fischer has received an invitation to report on Scotland's work with carers on 23 May 2019 in Berlin, as part of the 2019 Hauptstadtkongress - <https://www.hauptstadtkongress.de/>.

Finally, the young carers at Edinburgh Young Carers asked for the opportunity to be invited to visiting other countries to report of their project and experiences and we would hope some opportunities will be arising, particularly in the Scandinavian countries, in the years ahead.

5. Finances

The budget of £3,000 was tight but had again made this visit possible, Eurocarers helped with some additional costs incurred as most visitors themselves work without or within very small budgets. A financial statement will be submitted with the formal paperwork.

All delegates repeatedly expressed their gratitude for the opportunity and their thanks for Scottish government support. VOCAL wishes to echo this, this project would not have been possible without Scottish Government grant.



VOCAL would like to thank

- the Scottish Government, the Steering Group of the Scottish Carers Parliament and Eurocarers for financial and logistic support
- the organisers of the Parliament around Carers Scotland;
- Edinburgh Young Carers, Stirling Young Carers and the Coalition of Carers in Scotland for their input into the programme, and
- VOCAL staff and volunteers for helping to host the second day.