

The relationship between the central authorities and social services on transnational child protection

CBSS

25th – 26th November 2014, Riga

Swiss Foundation of the International Social Service ISS

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What is ISS ?

- 1924 International Migration Service IMS
→ 1946 International Social Service ISS
- Yesterday: Europe/USA; today: a worldwide network
- 20 national branches and affiliated bureaus
- 100 correspondents (NGO's, some are governmental)



What is ISS?

Scope of activity

- Children and families separated by borders:
 - Parental conflict (custody issues, visiting rights, alimony)
 - Parental child “abduction”
 - Child abuse, neglect; child welfare checks; child protection alerts
 - Transnational child foster or kinship placements etc.
 - International adoption, search for origins, tracing persons
- Social and legal intervention in two or more countries
- Mediation / Alternative dispute resolution (ADR)
- Transnational adult protection



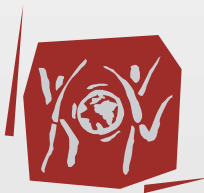
ISS in numbers

- ISS global network: 20'000 cases / year
- ISS Switzerland: 1062 cases in 2013



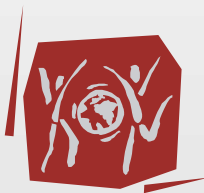
Fundamental principles of ISS practice

- A child-focused and needs-based approach
- Professional casework standards
 - Individualized, case by case approach
 - ISS-Network support for ISS correspondents and branches (training, methodology), internationally shared working tools, conferences
 - Interdisciplinary teams (social workers, legal experts/lawyers, family mediators) in some ISS Branches
 - Creativity, openness, pragmatism



THC 1996 foresees cooperation with “other bodies” like ISS

- Art. 31 and 32 of THC 1996 foresees services to be delegated / outsourced to other bodies
- What possibilities of cooperation exist between CA’s and “other bodies” in line with the principle of the best interest of the concerned child or children?



Possible levels, channels and principles of cooperation between the THC 1996 bodies and ISS

- Possible levels:
 - Direct cooperation on a case-by-case basis
 - Institutional (formal or informal) cooperation between national CA and ISS unit
 - International cooperation on policy issues between Permanent Bureau and ISS General Secretariat



Possible levels, channels and principles of cooperation between the THC 1996 bodies and other bodies ISS

- Possible channels for the treatment of individual cases:
 - Through the CA's channels only
 - Through ISS only
 - Through a combination of both
 - Through a double channel (i.e. assessment by ISS, legal transfer and recognition of protection measures through CA)
 - Through other channels (diplomatic network)



Possible levels, channels and principles of cooperation between the THC 1996 bodies and ISS

- Principles and criteria to consider for determining which channel:
 - Linguistic capacities of the different actors
 - Institutional capacities in terms of available resources and professional expertise
 - Expected time-frame to treat case
 - Urgency of the specific situation
 - Expected resources and expertise of the counterpart abroad



Examples of cooperation between CA's, social services and ISS in Switzerland

- Case example: THC 1980 child abduction between Switzerland and Turkey: providing joint and complementary services
- Case example: THC 1996 ensuring wellbeing and transfer of protective measures between Switzerland and France
- Case example: THC 1996 (Art. 33) transnational kinship placement between Portugal and Switzerland





Thank you very much for your attention !

For more information:

- www.ssiss.ch ; www.conflits-familiaux.ch;
www.enfants-migrants.ch
- www.iss-ssi.org

