Asia-Pacific Council for Juvenile Justice
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The APCJJ is a council created by the International Juvenile Justice Observatory in 2012 to support Asia-Pacific countries in their reforms to advance juvenile justice systems in the region. It aims to make informed recommendations based on best practices, the experiences of members, as well as groundbreaking research.

The Council is a professional network of 46 local experts from 18 countries coming from academia, public administration, civil society organisations and the judiciary. It enhances the promotion of international standards regarding child rights and the fostering of transnational cooperation within the region.

The Council's members strive to protect the rights of children at risk of social exclusion, particularly those in conflict with the law, witnesses to or victims of crime, or otherwise vulnerable to cycles of violence, and to address these issues in a child-friendly manner.
Action Lines

The APCJJ’s activities include:

- Promoting sustainable collaboration between stakeholders in the development of juvenile justice policies aimed at integrating socially excluded young people.
- Exchanging of promising and evidence-based practices and programmes.
- Developing strategies to ensure the respect for the rights of young people in conflict with the law and to promote crime prevention policies toward regional institutions, based on existing initiatives and programs.
- Advocacy towards international and regional institutions to call attention on the issues facing children who are caught in the cycle of violence.
There is also a specific subcommittee dedicated to the ASEAN region. With these countries moving closer towards political and economic integration the Subcommittee aims to realise the possibility of closer collaboration in child rights as well, specifically the rights of those in conflict with the law.

The APCJJ brings together juvenile justice stakeholders from all countries in the region, this multi-disciplinary approach is reflected in its composition:

- **The Academic section**, which is composed of doctors, professors, academics, universities, faculties and/or departments representing disciplines such as Criminology, Criminal Law, International Human Rights Law, Psychology, etc.

- **The NGO section**, which is made up of national and local NGOs working with young offenders on the ground and on a daily basis.

- **The Public Administration section**, which gathers Ministries or Departments of Justice and other governmental agencies and entities in charge of youth justice policies.

- **The Judiciary section** composed of judiciary professionals, such as judges, prosecutors and judicial staff, who come into contact with children and young adults.

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First Meeting of the APCJJ: Bangkok 2012

The APCJJ held its first meeting in conjunction with the Department of Juvenile Observation and Protection of the Thai Ministry of Justice in September 2012 on the theme of an Asia-Pacific region specific strategy for juvenile justice.

Bringing together experts from 20 countries, a wide range of subjects were discussed, including juvenile delinquency tendencies, prevention programs in the region, how to promote child friendly justice, and inclusion for young offenders. The objective was to translate these discussions into policy and training recommendations.

First Meeting of the ASEAN Subcommittee 2014

Held in September 2014, it aimed to exchange knowledge and experiences, share proper practices, and propose improvements for the treatment of children in conflict with the law in the ASEAN countries. It was held in together the Thai Ministry of Justice’s Department of Juvenile Observation and Protection. Talks revolved around how best to ensure these children got access to the services they need, as well as how to address the lack of freedom in neighbouring states.
Going forward, the APCJJ has agreed to establish working groups as a means of generating and disseminating new work and innovative practices throughout the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, how the APCJJ could support reforms that introduced alternatives to detention and restorative justice to ensure that a child’s liberty is only deprived as a last resort.

Based around the results of the first meeting and the conclusions of its subsequent report, the meeting revolved around the best ways to support countries in the region in their efforts to ensure that the rights of children in conflict with the law are protected.

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The conclusions reached during its First Meeting formed the basis for the APCJJ’s publication ‘A Voice for the Future of Juvenile Justice in Asia-Pacific: An Introduction to the Asia Pacific Council for Juvenile Justice and Leading Juvenile Justice Reforms in the Region.’

Authored by Alice McGrath it analyses the regional responses to juvenile justice issues from a child rights perspective. The report makes a number of recommendations on juvenile crime prevention, the development of restorative justice approaches and the condition of detention in the region.

Alongside an overview of the APCJJ, the report aims to raise awareness of promising juvenile justice reform initiatives across the region, thus providing a basis for further reforms.
The IJJO aims to promote and encourage the improvement of juvenile justice systems and policies, the implementation of international standards, the strengthening of professional competence, and the exchange of innovative good practices.

The IJJO’s main lines of action cover all phases in the process of violence, from citizen security policies, social prevention of situations of risk and violence, and the administration of justice to children and young adults, to crime and penitentiary policies designed to achieve effective social integration and entry into the labour market. They include:

- Research and Innovation
- Cooperation and Technical Assistance
- Training and Professional Development
- Advocacy
- Awareness Raising
- Generation and Management Of Information
Apart from the APCJJ, the IJJO has established councils for Europe (ECJJ), North America (NACJJ), Latin America (LCJJ), Africa (ACJJ) and the Middle East (MECJJ).

The issues facing children differ across the world, as do the best approaches to creating a child friendly justice system. To promote region specific juvenile justice approaches the IJJO brought together local experts in its different Continental Councils.

The aim of these think tanks is to disseminate knowledge and good practices throughout their respective regions. They also provide forums for discussions between experts that will drive new research and innovative reforms.

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