

ENOC 30th Annual Conference **Barcelona 2026**

SAFEGUARDING AND ADVANCING THE RIGHTS OF LGBTQIA+ CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

30 September and 1 October 2026 – ENOC 30th Annual Conference

2 October 2026 – ENOC 30th General Assembly

Conference Venue:

HUB SOCIAL

(Girona Street, 34 – 08010-Barcelona)



Co-funded by
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"The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires States to respect and ensure the rights of every child without discrimination of any kind."¹

"States should also take effective action to protect all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex adolescents from all forms of violence, discrimination or bullying by raising public awareness and implementing safety and support measures."²

Despite the growing recognition of the rights of LGBTQIA+ children and young people within international and European human rights frameworks, many continue to experience discrimination, exclusion, stigma and violence in different areas of their lives. Barriers to the effective enjoyment of their rights persist across education, healthcare, family environments, child protection systems, social services, and public life, limiting their opportunities to develop and to participate fully and safely in society.

Children whose sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics (SOGIESC) do not conform to dominant social norms, or who are perceived as such, often face additional vulnerabilities. These challenges can negatively affect their physical and mental health, well-being, participation, access to services and sense of belonging. Although legal protections have expanded in many countries, there are still significant gaps between existing standards and their practical implementation.

This year's ENOC Annual Conference will focus on the implementation of international and regional standards relating to the rights of LGBTQIA+ children, and on the role of Ombudspersons for Children in monitoring, reporting and addressing violations of their rights. Particular attention will be paid to the extent to which legal and policy frameworks effectively respond to the realities and needs of LGBTQIA+ children across Europe.

The Conference will mark the conclusion of ENOC's annual activities on the topic. Research findings from the ENOC project Safeguarding and Advancing the Rights of LGBTQIA+ Children, to which 29 ENOC member institutions contributed, will be presented and discussed. These findings provide an overview of existing frameworks, identify persistent gaps and challenges, and highlight promising practices to strengthen the protection and promotion of children's rights.

The meaningful participation of children and young people remains a central component of ENOC's work. The experiences and recommendations developed by participants in the European Network of Young Advisors (ENYA) 2026 will complement the research findings and contribute to the discussions. Their perspectives provide valuable insight into the barriers, challenges and opportunities encountered by LGBTQIA+ children and young people in different contexts.

¹ [Article 2 UNCRC](#)

² [General comment No. 20 \(2016\) on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence](#), para. 33.

Key questions to be addressed include: What are the main obstacles preventing LGBTQIA+ children from fully enjoying their rights? How can Ombudspersons and Independent Children's Rights Institutions strengthen monitoring and accountability mechanisms? What measures are required to ensure safe, inclusive and child-centred services? How can the voices of LGBTQIA+ children and adolescents be better heard and reflected in decision-making processes affecting their lives?

Ombudspersons and Commissioners for Children from across Europe and beyond, representatives of European and international organisations, governmental authorities, professionals, researchers, civil society organisations and young people are expected to actively participate in the event and share their insights on the Conference theme.

DAY 1
ENOC 30th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Wednesday 30 September 2026

09:00-09:30 Registration

09:30-10:00 **Welcoming and Opening Session**

Speakers:

- Esther Giménez Salinas, Ombudsperson of Catalonia
- Josep Muñoz Luque, General Director for Prevention and Protection of Children and Adolescents, Government of Catalonia
- Georgina Pol Borràs, Secretary for Equal Rights and Non-Discrimination, Catalonia
- Vasile Coroi, ENOC Chair, People's Advocate for the Rights of the Child, Moldova

10:00-11:00 **Session 1: From European to local frameworks for safeguarding the rights of LGBTQIA+ children in a context of increasing polarisation**

Moderator: Vasile Coroi, ENOC Chair, The People's Advocate for Children's Rights, Moldova

Speakers:

- Ewa Kopacz, EP Vice-President and EP Coordinator on Children's Rights (by video message)
- Anne Kayser, Secretary of the Council of Europe Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)
- Javier Rodríguez Núñez, Commissioner for Childhood, Adolescence, Youth and LGBTI Policies at Barcelona City Council

Q/A

11:00-11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30-12:45 **Session 2: Panel discussion on the Rights of LGBTQIA+ children and young people: Between Progress and the Risk of Backsliding**

Moderator: Aida C. Rodríguez, ENOC Chair-elect, Deputy Ombudswoman for Children, Catalonia (Spain)

- Nevena Vuckovic Sahovic, former member of the UNCRC
- Miltos Pavlou, Senior Project Manager, EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)
- Gabriella Calleja, Senior Policy Advisor, SOGIESC Unit, Council of Europe
- Rú Ávila Rodríguez, Deputy Executive Director and Policy & Research Manager, IGLYO

Q/A

12:45-13:00 **Group photo**

13:00-14:00 *Lunch*

14:00-15:15 **Updates from ENOC members**

Participants to split into three groups

15:15-15:45 **ENOC 30th anniversary celebrations**

15:45-16:15 *Coffee break*

16:15-17:15 **ENYA 2026**
“Let’s Talk Young, Let’s Talk about the Rights of LGBTQIA+ Children and Young People”

17:15-17:30 **Closing of the day**

Moderator: Aida C. Rodríguez, ENOC Chair-elect, Deputy Ombudswoman for Children, Catalonia (Spain)

20:00 *Dinner*
 ([L'Estació Espai Gastronòmic](#), Av. del Marquès de l'Argentera, 6, 8, Ciutat Vella, 08002 Barcelona)

DAY 2
ENOC 30th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Thursday 1 October 2026

09:00 Arrival of participants

09:20-09:30 **Opening Day 2**

- Vasile Coroi, ENOC Chair, The People's Advocate for Children's Rights, Moldova and Aida C. Rodríguez, ENOC Chair-elect, Deputy Ombudswoman for Children, Catalonia (Spain)
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09:30-11:00 **ENYA 2026 Recommendations on the Rights of LGBTQIA+ Children and Young People**

11:00-11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30-12:30 **Session 3: Results and conclusions of the ENOC survey on the current state of the protection and promotion of the rights of LGBTQIA+ children and young people**

Speakers:

- Prof. Angelina Sánchez and Prof. Ingrid Agud, Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), Catalonia (Spain)

Q/A

12:30-13:00 **Good Practices from ICRIIs and Pathways for Policy Implementation**

13:00-14:00 *Lunch*

14:00-14:15 **Conference evaluation and closure**

Speakers:

- Vasile Coroi, ENOC Chair, The People's Advocate for Children's Rights, Moldova and Aida C. Rodríguez, ENOC Chair-elect, Deputy Ombudswoman for Children, Catalonia (Spain)
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14:15 - Departure for field visits

15:00-17:00 **Field visits**

- CJAS: Youth Centre for Sexuality Support
- Centre LGBTI: a hotel of entities such as the Observatory against LGBTI phobia or the LGBTI Families Association
- Trànsit Unit: Trans and non-binary people's health care and promotion service of the Catalan Institute of Health
- Barnahus

17:00-17:30 *Coffee break*

17:30-18:30 **General Assembly pre-session (only for ENOC members)**
Discussion on ENOC's Position Statement

DAY 3

ENOC 30th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Friday 2 October 2026

09:00-09:30	Registration
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09:30-11:30	ENOC Annual General Assembly (Part 1)
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11:30-11:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
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11:45-13:00	ENOC Annual General Assembly (Part 2)
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13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
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