

FEBRUARY  
2023



01 EDITION  
2023

## ENOC NEWS

### ENOC Bureau meeting in Strasbourg, January 2023

On 31 January 2023, the [ENOC Bureau met in person](#) in Strasbourg to discuss the 2023 work plan and priorities. The Bureau met in the afternoon with representatives of the **European Committee of Social Rights, CoE Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, Head of CoE Children's Rights Division, Regina Jensdottir, and Special Representative of the SG on Migration and Refugees, Leyla Kayacik.** [Among the themes discussed were:](#) Children's social rights and ESC compliance mechanisms, the protection of Child Human Rights Defenders, and Child protection issues for UAC & separated children. Specifically, [with the Commissioner for Human Rights the following topics were addressed:](#) the segregation of Roma children in schools, the inclusion of Sexuality Education in schools' curricula, child participation and youth activism, the rights of LGBTIQ+ children, and the impact of Artificial Intelligence on children's rights. All the meetings were fruitful to identify how ENOC and the stakeholders can cooperate.



### 2022 ENOC Policy Statement

ENOC 2022 [Policy Statement on Children's Rights and Climate Justice](#) is now also available in [Basque](#), [Catalan](#), [Croatian](#), [French](#), and [Spanish](#). Considering the urgency of the climate crisis, its impact on children's rights and the actions of children/youth advocating for climate change mitigation, the recommendations foresee the **Commitments of Commissioners and Ombudspersons of ENOC** in ensuring the best interests of children in climate and environmental action, in providing HR education, including on the environment, to children, youngsters, and adults, and in respecting relevant children's rights. The Policy Statement recommendations also intend to support the implementation of the [CoE Guidelines on child friendly justice](#). They are also made in the context of the forthcoming General Comment of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change.

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## Publication of ENOC 26th Annual Conference Report

On 25 January 2023, the ENOC 26th Annual Conference Report [Shaping The Future: Children's Rights In A Climate Crisis](#) was published and advertised on ENOC social media accounts. The Report includes the activities that took place during the three days of the event, including the **ENOC 26th General Assembly**, when the Bureau was elected.

## ENOC'S CONTRIBUTION TO EXTERNAL EVENTS

### 1st meeting of the EU Child Participation Platform Advisory Board

On 12 December 2022, ENOC Coordinator, Polina Atanasova participated online in the first meeting of the [EU Children's Participation Platform](#) Advisory Board. **ENOC is, indeed, one of the permanent members of the Advisory Board.** The Platform aims to bring children closer to decision-making processes at the EU level. A Children's Panel will be composed of up to 20 children from the currently participating 14 EU Member States recruited and onboarded through national offices of Save the Children and SOS Children's Villages – the European Commission's partners in this initiative. **The Advisory Board will include 7 children from the Children's Panel as permanent members**, and hold child-friendly meetings (with a child-friendly agenda and guidelines and facilitation pointers for adult members on how to consult with children).

### ENOC's past Chair intervention at the European Parliament Special Committee on COVID-19 pandemic session

On 8 December 2022, Theoni Koufonikolakou, ENOC past-Chair, spoke at a public hearing organised by the European Parliament Special Committee on COVID-19 pandemic (COVI) on ***The lessons learned and recommendations for the future on Socio-Economic impact on children***. During her intervention, Theoni informed the Committee of **ENOC's research mapping how Covid-19 emergency legislation across the ENOC membership**, has affected children's rights and wellbeing. She highlighted that the ENYA provided ENOC with substantive information on this impact directly from children's perspectives. After pointing out that the majority of Ombudspersons that receive complaints (76%) noted an increase in complaints during the pandemic, Theoni stressed the **need to ensure that a Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) is applied to all policies, legislation, and Emergency Measures**. Furthermore, she encouraged the EU and its members to pursue the sustainability of their responses, and prefer a long-term approach that can allow monitoring their progress.

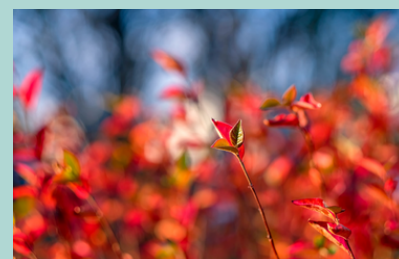
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*The impact of COVID-19 State measures has been devastating for children and the realisation of their rights. Violations have been identified in all CRC areas. The restriction measures exacerbated preexisting inequalities and deficiencies in the education, health and especially child protection sector.*

*There are important learnings while children continue to endure the long term impact of the pandemic.*

*Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) is an incredible tool to mitigate potential negative impact. It should be embedded in the development of emergency measures but also in Resilience and Recovery Plans.*

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Click on the image to  
access the report!



**SAVE THE  
DATES!**



**Reykjavik**

7th CDENF (Steering  
Committee on the Rights of  
the Child) plenary meeting  
28-29 March 2023



**Reykjavik**

CoE Committee of  
Ministers Conference:  
Investing in Children - the  
key to prosperity  
30 March 2023



**Brussels**

2nd meeting EU Child  
Participation Platform  
Advisory Board  
15 March 2023



**Brussels**

2nd meeting of the  
EU Network for Children's  
Rights  
16 March 2023



**Stockholm**

ENOC Spring Seminar  
29-30 May 2023

# EU & INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS FIELD

## CoE MIGRATION FOCUS

On 14 December 2022, the **CoE Committee of Ministers** adopted a new **Recommendation** to member States on human rights principles and **guidelines on age assessment in the context of migration**.

In 2022 the **SRSG, Leyla Kayacik**, visited Czech Republic, Slovakia, Moldova, Poland and Romania and dedicated specific attention to the vulnerabilities of **migrant/asylum seeking children** as well as their rights.

The reports of the fact-finding missions carried out by the SRSG can be found [here](#).

### Equality package: Commission proposes new rules for the recognition of parenthood between Member States

The European Commission adopted [a proposal for a Regulation aimed at harmonising at the EU level the rules of private international law relating to parenthood](#). The proposal is focused on the best interests and the rights of the child. It will provide legal clarity for all types of families, who find themselves in a cross-border situation within the EU, be it because they move from one Member State to another to travel or reside, or because they have family members or property in another Member State. One of the key aspects of the proposal is that the **parenthood established in a Member State of the EU should be recognised in all the other Member States, without any special procedure**.

### Missing Children Europe celebrated 20 years of European action for missing children

For 20 years members across Europe have been striving to find missing children and fight against their sexual exploitation. What started with enthusiastic attempts to work together and speak the same language has evolved into a stable and effective structure for ongoing cross-border cooperation and exchange. **Missing Children Europe** dedicated its 20th anniversary to the **Ukrainian children being forcibly deported to Russia**.

### Council of Europe celebrated Safer Internet Day 2023

On 7 February 2023, the Council of Europe celebrated Safer Internet Day and supported for the 8th consecutive year, the [Safer Internet Day](#) Campaign. The right to access to and safe use of technologies remains one of the key priorities in the Council of Europe's current [Strategy for the Rights of the Child](#) (2022–2027) and is addressed through its standard-setting, monitoring, and cooperation activities.

### Lanzarote Committee held its 37th plenary meeting

From 31 January to 2 February 2023, the [Lanzarote Committee held its 37th plenary meeting](#) in Strasbourg and adopted its 7th activity report covering the period 1 July 2021 – 2 February 2023. Several very important achievements were made during this period, in particular, the conclusion of:

- the [evaluation](#) of the situation in 43 Parties to the Convention with respect to challenges raised by child-self-generated sexual images and videos;
- the compliance procedure with respect to the [follow-up](#) given by 41 Parties to recommendations by the Committee to enhance the protection of children affected by the refugee crisis against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.



## UN Child Rights Committee Concluding Observations

**Azerbaijan, Ireland, and Sweden** advanced their periodic reporting procedures as States parties to the CRC by holding constructive dialogues with the **CRC Committee at its 92nd Session**, between 16 January and 3 February 2023, in Geneva. The Irish Ombudsman for Children, Niall Muldoon attended the dialogue between the Committee and the Irish State, which was reported live from the Office's Twitter account [@OCO ireland](#). On 9 February 2023, the UN Child Rights Committee (CRC) issued its [Concluding Observations](#).

### UNCRC consultation on the first draft of General Comment No. 26

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child is inviting **children and young people and the global community to share their views** on the first draft of General Comment No. 26, on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change. The [Call for inputs on the draft general comment on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change is open until 15 February 2023](#).

## UPDATE ON ENOC MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

### LATVIA - The Ombudsman reiterates support for the establishment of Family Courts in Latvia

The Ombudsman has previously expressed his support for the establishment of family courts. He has stressed the **need to ensure the child's right to judicial protection, as is the case for adults**. At present, in Latvia, children's fate is decided by institutions outside the judicial system – Orphan's and Custody Courts. The Ombudsman affirmed that the decision-making function of Orphan's and Custody Courts should be transferred to the courts within the judicial system, while the other functions should be transferred to the social services of local governments. Social services could maintain their competence of immediate removal of a child from the family, if there are circumstances that endanger the child's safety, health, or life. The Ombudsman stressed that the **best interests of the child must be a primary consideration and should be assessed at all levels** – legislative, executive, and judicial.

### NORTHERN IRELAND, SCOTLAND, WALES - Children's Commissioners of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child

The [Children's Commissioners of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales published a joint report](#) in November 2022 addressed to the CRC Committee that set out the views and work undertaken by the Commissioners as part of the Committee's examination of the UK's combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic report under the CRC. The three Commissioners were accompanied by **young people to Geneva to participate in the 94th pre-session on the rights of the child**, held between 6-10 February. The young people discussed a number of topics, including **mental health, environment and climate justice, education, dignity, and food poverty**, which were all covered in detail by the submitted report.



ENOC is co-funded by the European Union's Citizenship, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme. The content of this publication represents only the views of ENOC and is its sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.

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