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## ENOC NEWS

### ENOC 2025 Spring Seminar

On 26-27 May 2025, ENOC held its annual **Spring Seminar in Luxembourg**, hosted by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children and Youth in Luxembourg (OKaJu).

Day 1 of the 2025 Seminar was designed in a working session format on the annual theme addressing **"The Protection and Promotion of Children's Right to Physical Health"**. On the same occasion, ENOC's 2025 expert, Professor Rodica Gramma, Associate Professor at the SUMPh "Nicolae Testemitanu" University of Moldova, shared the first findings of the ENOC research on the topic. The afternoon was dedicated to a learning café session, where ENOC members had the opportunity to share practices and experiences on different aspects of children's right to physical health.

Day 2 of the Seminar was a capacity-building workshop on **"Guardianship and Quality of Care for Asylum-Seeking Children in the context of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum"**, in collaboration with the [European Migration Network \(EMN\) Luxembourg](#). The session included contributions from PICUM (Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants) and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, followed by a practices and experiences sharing session by several Ombudspersons for Children's offices.



### IN THIS ISSUE:

ENOC News P. 1

EU and  
International P.3  
Activities

ENOC members' P. 5  
activities

## ENOC Bureau meeting in Brussels, Belgium

In March 2025, the ENOC Bureau met with key EU stakeholders who hold an important role **in advancing children's rights in Europe**, and discussed topical child rights issues with:

- Marie-Cécile Rouillon, EU Commission Coordinator for Children's Rights
- Ewa Kopacz, Vice President of the European Parliament & EP Coordinator on Children's Rights
- Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President and Sabine Saliba, Secretary-General of Eurochild

On the same occasion, the ENOC Chair, Elina Pekkarinen, presented the [ENYA 2024 recommendations](#) at a joint [EMPL JURI Committees' hearing in the European Parliament on the protection and promotion of the rights of children placed in alternative care](#). She intervened in the session related to the dissemination and promotion of **the views of care-experienced children** and the system changes they advocate for.

Click here to **find the EP joint hearing replay!**



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**enya Project 2025**

The ENYA country activities continue!

As part of the ENYA Project 2025, the 14 participating ENOC member institutions resumed activities at the regional or national level exploring children's right to physical health. The teams will bring their **5 rights based recommendations** on the topic to Croatia where the ENYA Forum will be held on 1-2 July 2025.



Croatia and Basque country (Spain) teams in action !



**SAVE THE DATES !**



**International Day of Play**  
11 June 2025



**Brussels**  
**15<sup>th</sup> EU Forum on the Rights of the Child**  
23-24 June 2025



**Croatia**  
**ENYA Forum 2025**  
1-2 July 2025



**Romania**  
**ENOC 29th Annual Conference**  
17-18 September 2025  
**ENOC 29th General Assembly**  
19 September 2025



### ECHR - Failure to Consider Child's Needs in Care

The European Court of Human Rights found that Dutch authorities violated the right to family life by ending a mother's parental authority without properly considering the child's best interests.

The Court stressed that efforts to reunite mother and child were stopped too early, and that maintaining family ties should have been prioritised unless clearly against the child's welfare.

Find out more [HERE](#).



### UN Committee on the Rights of the Child – New Chair, Bureau, and Members Elected

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child elected Sopio Kiladze (Georgia) as its new Chair, with 4 Vice-Chairs.

The Committee also welcomed four new members, and is now composed of members from Kenya, Moldova, Malta, Zambia and Mauritania.

Congratulations!

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

## CoE mid-term Review Conference on the Strategy for the Rights of the Child

The **mid-term Review Conference of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child** (2022–2027) took place on 3–4 April 2025 in Strasbourg. The event brought together national representatives, NGOs, experts, and young people to assess progress, discuss emerging challenges, and renew momentum for action.

Six workshops focused on the Strategy's key objectives, including artificial intelligence, sexuality education and child poverty, leading to exchanges and innovative ideas to advance children's rights across Europe.

The NGO Child Rights Connect supported the **participation of 7 child advisors**, who :

- presented outcomes from consultations on [comprehensive sexuality education](#)
- launched the [booklet "Your health, your say!"](#), a resource on children's participation in health decisions.

The following **ENOC members** & ENOC Secretariat attended the event:

- Belgium / French community
- Croatia
- Iceland
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg



Find out more [HERE](#).



## EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) Report

The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published the **report** ["Towards Integrated Child Protection Systems"](#), highlighting persistent gaps that put children at risk.

The report compares national systems across the EU and provides guidance to strengthen them. It includes **recommendations on legal frameworks, coordination, funding, data collection, child rights awareness, and the quality of care**. It also points to promising practices already in use in some Member States.

## EP Coordinator Presents 2024 Report and 2025 Work Plan on Children's Rights

On 18 February 2025, Vice-President Ewa Kopacz, EP Coordinator on Children's Rights, presented her [2024 Annual Report and 2025 Work Programme to the Committee on Legal Affairs](#).

The report outlined key activities and upcoming initiatives under three core areas:

- **Coordination of the European Parliament's work on children's rights;**
- **International child abduction and cross-border family disputes;**
- **Protection and promotion of children's rights.**

VP Ewa Kopacz emphasised her strong cooperation with the JURI Committee (Committee on Legal Affairs) and highlighted shared priorities for the upcoming months, including child rights impact assessments of EU legislation and cross-border family mediation. She also addressed current challenges affecting children, such as rising online violence and cyberbullying, mental health needs, and increasing child poverty in the EU



### UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Pre-Session Cancelled & 99th session Outcomes

The UN's financial crisis **continues to severely affect the functioning of treaty bodies**, especially the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), leading to **multiple cancellations and delays in 2025**. Indeed, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights announced that the UN has received only 73% of its approved regular budget for 2025 (compared to 87% in 2024).

The 101st pre-session of the CRC, scheduled for May 2025, was cancelled, postponing meetings with civil society and children for nine States, including ENOC members in Serbia and Slovenia.

The 100th CRC session in September was also cancelled, pushing back the reviews of Spain and eight other countries to January 2026.

Despite these issues, the 99th CRC session was held in May 2025. The Committee reviewed the reports of seven States, including the ENOC member from Norway.

Read the UNCRC's conclusion on Norway [HERE](#).



### CoE - New Recommendations to Protect Children in Separation and Care Proceedings

The Council of Europe has adopted **two new Recommendations** to help member states better **protect the rights and best interests of the child during parental separation and care proceedings**.

## FOCUS ON

### Displaced and Deported Ukrainian Children

#### CoE - Safeguarding Displaced Children from Trafficking

In April 2025, the Council of Europe hosted a side event in Vienna during the 25th OSCE Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference, focusing on **the protection of displaced children from Ukraine**.

The discussion explored how CoE standards help prevent children displaced by war from trafficking and online exploitation, using the Ukrainian context as a case study. Experts focused on digital risks and shared tools to prevent abuse.

Find out more [HERE](#).

#### CoE - European Action for Deported Ukrainian Children

On 15 May 2025, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and the Finnish Parliament hosted a high-level conference in Helsinki to address the situation of Ukrainian children deported.

The event focused on **justice, accountability, and the children's return, rehabilitation, and reintegration**.

Elina Pekkarinen, ENOC Chair and Ombudsperson for Children in Finland, also took part in the discussions.

More info [HERE](#).





### 5th World Congress on Justice With Children

The **5th World Congress on Justice With Children** took place in Madrid on 2-4 June 2025, gathering global experts around the theme:

**"Advancing Child-Centred Justice: Preventing and Responding to Violence Affecting Children in Child Justice Systems."**

The forum highlighted the need to put children at the centre of justice systems and explored responses to violence and systemic challenges affecting child safety.

Find out more [HERE](#).



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#### ENOC Secretariat

Council of Europe «Agora Building»  
Office n° B5 07V  
67075 Strasbourg Cedex  
Web: [www.enoc.eu](http://www.enoc.eu)  
Tel: +33 3 90 21 54 88  
e-mail: [secretariat@enoc.eu](mailto:secretariat@enoc.eu)

If you have any suggestions or if you would like to include any information or upcoming events in our newsletter, please send the details to [secretariat@enoc.eu](mailto:secretariat@enoc.eu)

These texts offer clear guidance to national authorities on ensuring child-friendly, fair, and timely decisions, by stressing the importance of hearing children, upholding their rights, and considering their individual situations.

Read the recommendations :

- [on the protection of the rights and best interests of the child in parental separation proceedings](#)
- [on the protection of the rights and best interests of the child in care proceedings](#)

## UPDATE ON ENOC MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

### Estonia - Chancellor of Justice's 2023/2024 Annual Report

The Estonian Chancellor of Justice launched its Annual Report for 2023/2024. It covers various themes, including children and parental care, kindergarden and school and health.

Read the review [HERE](#) (in English).



### Ireland - Child Death Review report

The Ombudsman for Children in Ireland (OCO) published in April 2025 a statutory child death review system, highlighting the lack of centralised data and accountability for child deaths, where the OCO stressed the need for an independent, transparent system that learns from each death and supports affected families.

Find the full report [HERE](#) (in English)

Find the summary [HERE](#) (in English)



### Belgium/Flanders - Commissioner for Children's Rights re-elected

Caroline Vrijens, the Children's Rights Commissioner for Flanders (Belgium), has been reappointed by the Flemish Parliament for a second term.

Congratulations!