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NEWSLETTER

EUROPEAN NETWORK OF OMBUDSPERSONS FOR CHILDREN



ENOC NEWS

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ACTIVITIES

ENOC Working Group on the Rights of LGBTQIA+ children

As part of ENOC's 2026 work plan, a special Working Group (WG) on the priority theme on the rights of LGBTQIA+ children, led by the ENOC Chair-elect, Aida C. Rodríguez Gímenez (Catalonia) and supported by two independent expert advisers, Associate Professors Ingrid Agud Morell and Angelina Sánchez Martí (Autonomous University of Barcelona), was set up in early 2026.

The WG and the experts developed a **survey on the rights of LGBTQIA+ children** to which ENOC members were invited to contribute, aiming to assess the current state of protection of the rights of this group of children across the ENOC membership.

The survey adopted a **rights-based, child-centred approach**, covering key areas such as education, health, participation, family and the juvenile justice system.

Addressed to all ENOC members (currently 44), the survey findings will be compiled in a Synthesis Report and will inform the terms of the related Policy Position Statement, which will be both endorsed at the ENOC 30th General Assembly in Barcelona, Spain.

Find out more about [ENOC 2026 annual theme here](#).

ENOC 2026 Spring Seminar

 **SAVE THE DATE**

 **INTERNATIONAL
YOUTH DAY**
10 August 2026

 **ENOC 30th
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**
Barcelona, Spain
30 September- 1
October 2026

 **ENOC 30th
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**
Barcelona, Spain
2 October 2026



On 8-9 June 2026, ENOC held its **annual Spring Seminar** in Oslo, Norway, hosted by the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children in Norway (Barneombudet).

Day 1 of the Seminar was organised as a working session focusing on the **annual theme “Advancing and Safeguarding the Rights of LGBTQIA+ Children.”** On this occasion, ENOC’s 2026 experts Professors Ingrid Agud Morell and Angelina Sánchez Martí from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) presented the preliminary findings of the ENOC research on the topic.

Day 2 was dedicated to a capacity-building workshop on children’s rights.

The programme included several sessions addressing violence against children, the digital environment, and child-friendly justice.

Contributions were delivered by Kirsten Sandberg, former Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as well as representatives from KRIPOS (Norwegian National Criminal Investigation Service) and other children’s rights organisations.

Find out more [here](#).

ENYA 2026 – In-country activities



As part of the **ENYA Project 2026**, 12 participating ENOC member institutions have been carrying out activities at national and regional levels, focusing on the rights of LGBTQIA+ children and young people. Each participating team will present five rights-based recommendations on this theme at the upcoming ENYA Forum.

On 21 May 2026, the ENYA Management Board held a general progress check meeting where the 12 ENYA country Coordinators reported on progress on the **implementation of in-country activities and exchanged** on challenges and opportunities throughout the ENYA process.

Find out more about [ENYA Projects here](#).

EU & INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS FIELD

Council of Europe – 13th meeting of the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)

On 2-4 June 2026, the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) held its 13th meeting, bringing together member states representatives, observers and experts to discuss the state of implementation of the CoE Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) under the Strategy's different thematic objectives.

A side event on "*Social Media and Children's Mental Health*" was held during the last day of the plenary, on 4 June 2026. It was organised in co-operation with the CDBIO (Steering Committee for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health). The discussions explored both the opportunities and risks associated with social media use, with a particular focus on its impact on children's well-being and mental health.



European Commission - New European Child Guarantee survey report

On 19 March 2026, the European Commission published the full report of the European Child Guarantee survey, based on the views of more than 41 000 children across the EU.

The report provides **insights into children's access to essential services**, including:

- education,
- healthcare,
- housing
- and nutrition

and will help inform future efforts to tackle child poverty and social exclusion across Europe.

[Read the report.](#)

ENOC holds observer status at the CDENF and was represented at its 13th plenary session and at the side event by the ENOC Principal and Assistant Coordinator.

[Find out more here.](#)

Council of Europe - Lanzarote Committee launches New Monitoring Round

In March 2026, the Council of Europe Lanzarote Committee launched a new monitoring round focusing on the screening of professionals, volunteers and other persons in contact with children for sexual offences.

This new round aims to assess how effectively States Parties ensure that individuals working with children are properly checked, in order to prevent risks of sexual exploitation and abuse. It also provides an opportunity to **identify good practices and challenges** in implementing preventive measures, while supporting countries in strengthening child protection systems.

Deadline for insights: 1 September 2026

[More information.](#)

Court of Justice of the European Union - Ruling on child protection and fundamental rights

On 21 April 2026, the Court of Justice of the European Union delivered its judgment in **Commission v Hungary**, concerning Hungarian legislation restricting access to LGBTQIA+ content. The Hungarian authorities had justified the measures on the grounds of protecting children. The Court found that the legislation was incompatible with EU law and fundamental values, including respect for human dignity, equality and freedom of expression. The Court emphasised that **child protection cannot be used as a general justification** for measures that **restrict rights in a disproportionate or discriminatory manner**.

[Read the ruling here.](#)

FRA report on child protection in the digital environment

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) published a report on children's rights in the digital environment, focusing on social media use. The report highlights both the opportunities and risks linked to children's online activities and **calls for stronger safeguards, platform responsibility and rights-based measures** to better protect children online.



[Read the report.](#)

KIND - New Resources for Guardians Supporting Children on the Move

[KIND \(Kids in Need of Defence\)](#) has published new resources developed to support unaccompanied refugee and migrant children as they transition to adulthood.

The resources include:

- [Practical Toolkit for Guardians: Supporting Children Transitioning to Adulthood](#), adapted and translated for several countries
- [Policy Recommendations for Supporting Guardians Assisting Unaccompanied and Separated Children in the Transition to Adulthood](#)

UPDATE ON ENOC MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

FINLAND - Report of the Ombudsperson for Children

The Ombudsperson for Children in Finland has submitted its report to the Finnish Parliament, providing an overview of the state of children's rights in Finland between 2022 and 2025. The report aims to support the Parliament in **taking children's rights into account in decision-making** and in **promoting effective policies for children, young people, and families.**



Ireland - Annual Report of the Ombudsman for Children

The Ombudsman for Children's Office has launched its Annual Report 2025, providing an overview of the key issues affecting children and young people across Ireland.

The report highlights the experiences and concerns raised by children, families and advocates and examines a range of challenges impacting young people's daily lives, including housing insecurity, access to education, disability services, mental health supports and online safety.

The report also identifies areas where further action is needed to ensure that children's voices are heard and their rights protected.

Read the [report](#).

The report sets out key proposals, including:

- The principle of the best interests of the child should be explicitly included in the fundamental rights provisions of the Constitution of Finland.
- Consistent structural solutions and a clearer division of responsibilities should be introduced in substance abuse and mental health services for children and young people through national legislation.
- A council for child rights impact assessment should be established, alongside the development of indicators for monitoring child policy and a dedicated database.

Read the [report \(in English\)](#).

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) - Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility Report

The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) has published a new report in April 2025 "The evidence for raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility in Northern Ireland - Learning from Europe". The report contributes to the ongoing considerations of members of the NI Assembly in relation to the potential to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility (MACR) through an amendment to the Justice Bill which will be debated in the coming weeks.

It is clear from this brief scoping, that European countries overwhelmingly use welfare responses, diversion, education, family support and a variety of child protection based interventions, with social services as primary lead in cases where children under the MACR display harmful behaviour.

It also incorporates feedback from ENOC members that helped inform its development, and NICCY wishes to thank all those for their engagement with it.

Read the [report](#).

The Netherlands – Publication on the rights of LGBTQIA+ children

The Ombudsperson for Children’s Rights for the Netherlands published the English version of its report on the rights of LGBTQIA+ children to grow up freely. The publication explores issues including **safety, family environment and access to rights** such as education, health and participation.

Read the [report \(in English\)](#).

New ENOC member

We are pleased to welcome a [new associate member](#) - MIO, the National Advocacy Centre for Children’s Rights in Greenland!



Congratulations!

Welcome!

Two new Ombudspersons have recently taken office in the following ENOC member countries:

- Alina Jakavoniene, Ombudsperson for Children’s Rights, Lithuania
- Dijana Možina Zupanc, Deputy Ombudsman at the Human Rights Ombudsman’s Office of the Republic of Slovenia
- Alma Faskaj, Commissioner for the Protection and Promotion of Children’s Rights, People’s advocate of Albania

We extend our warm wishes to their predecessors, Edita Ziobiene (Lithuania), Dr Jože Ruparčič (Slovenia) and Olta Ataj (Albania) for their dedication to children’s rights and for their active involvement in ENOC.



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