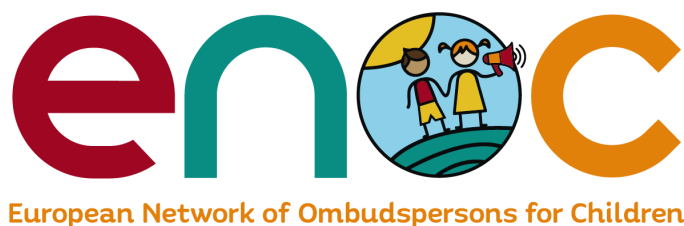


AUGUST  
2023



03 EDITION  
2023

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## ENOC NEWS

### ENOC Spring Seminar

On 29-30 May 2023 ENOC organised its annual [Spring Seminar](#) in Stockholm, hosted by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children, Sweden. **Day 1** of the 2023 Seminar, was dedicated to the issue of "**The role of Independent Human and Children's Rights Institutions in the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child**" in the format of a working session.

**Ann Skelton**, Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, addressed the event by video message. In her speech, she emphasized the value and importance of ICRIIs as reliable and independent sources of information that help the Committee shape its recommendations for change.

**Professor Ursula Kilkelly** and **Dr. Katrien Klep**, independent experts who lead the ENOC 2023 research on the role of ICRIIs, presented the preliminary findings of the study. Followed a discussion session on the scope and terms of the future ENOC statement on the same topic.

**Day 2** of the Seminar was a **capacity-building session** addressing children's rights in **crisis situations**, with a particular focus on the war in Ukraine, as well as in health crises, natural disasters and other emergency situations. Among the experts that intervened were **Anna Knutzen**, Senior Child Protection in Humanitarian Action Coordinator at UNICEF; **Olga Altunina**, Representative of the Parliament Commissioner for the Rights of Citizens Affected by Armed Aggression Against Ukraine; a panel with representatives from Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia assessing Child Protection responses & emergency preparedness in reception countries; **Maria Schillaci**, from Save the Children Sweden, and **Peter Brune**, from the Global Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Network (MHPSS) in Sweden, on the mental health of children in crisis and emergency situations.



## ENYA Forum

The [ENYA Forum](#) took place in **Malta** on **4-5 July 2023**, hosted by the office of the Commissioner for Children of Malta. The **Commissioner, Antoinette Vassallo**, and the **ENYA 2023 Coordinator, Suzanne Garcia Imbernon** led the Forum and supported 18 participating teams of young people to agree on common recommendations to strengthen Independent Children's Rights Institutions.

The **35 Young Advisors** came from Andalusia/Spain, Armenia, Basque country/Spain, Belgium/Flanders, Catalonia/Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Iceland, Jersey/UK, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Northern Ireland/UK, Poland, Slovakia, and Scotland/UK.

The recommendations they agreed upon pertain the role of Independent Children's Rights Institutions (ICRIs) in the protection and promotion of children's rights, and specifically on **ICRIs' accessibility, visibility, engagement and powers**.

[ENYA](#) activities and recommendations will be presented at the ENOC 27th Annual Conference in September in Brussels and reflected in the 2023 ENOC Policy Statement.



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

### EC Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health, 7 June 2023

On 7 June, the European Commission adopted a new [Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health](#), reaffirming that **childhood is a crucial stage in mental health**. One chapter specifically looks at difficulties that children and young people face and proposes some practical solutions to better prevent mental health problems and to help altogether those in need of assistance. More info [here](#).

### FRA Fundamental Rights Report 2023, 8 June 2023

On 8 June 2023, the [FRA's Fundamental Rights Report 2023](#) was published. The Report reviews major developments in the field in 2022, identifying both achievements and areas of concern. The review on the rights of the child uncover:

- **Child poverty:** COVID-19-induced increase continues despite attention in European Union policies;
- **Protection of migrant and asylum-seeking children:** a persistent challenge;
- New legislative initiatives to ensure the protection of children during **judicial proceeding**.

# SAVE THE DATES!



**Geneva**

94 Session of the CRC  
4-22 September 2023



**Brussels**

ENOC 27th Annual  
Conference  
19-20 September 2023



**Brussels**

ENOC 27th General  
Assembly  
21 September 2023



**Strasbourg**

CoE Committee of Experts  
on the Prevention of  
Violence (ENF-VAE)  
11-12 October 2023

Click on the image to  
access the video on the  
EC Communication





## EU summit on 29-30 June, Brussels

At the two-day [summit of the European Council](#), EU leaders discussed topics ranging from external relations, migration and continued support for Ukraine. **EU leaders called for the immediate safe return of Ukrainian children, who have been unlawfully deported to Russia and Belarus.**



## European Youth Event 2023: young people discussed Europe's future in Strasbourg

On Friday 9 June and Saturday 10 June, the European Youth Event 2023 ([EYE2023](#)) featured more than 300 in-person and hybrid activities – debates, discussions, networking opportunities, artistic performances, sports activities and interactive workshops.

**EP President Roberta Metsola** opened the EYE2023 on Friday 9 June in Parliament's hemicycle. A "Youth Ideas Report" summarising the ideas, expectations and concerns of young people was distributed to all MEPs after the closing session on Saturday.

## EU Children's Participation Platform – EU Child Participation's First General Assembly

On 26-27 June 2023, around **60 European children** between the ages of 9-17 participated in Brussels to the first General Assembly co-created and co-chaired with them to discuss and work on child participation at EU-level. **16 EU countries** were represented, together with national government representatives from many EU countries, and people from EU organisations that work with children. Among the high-level guests were Dubravka Suica, Colin Scicluna and Ana Gallego from the European Commission, and Milan Brglez from the EU Parliament. More info [here](#).

## Lanzarote Committee 38th Meeting – Questions to the Russian Federation and launching of new monitoring round

At its [38th meeting](#) (30 May - 2 June 2023), the [Lanzarote Committee](#) decided to address [questions](#) to the Russian Federation, which remains a party to the Lanzarote Convention (\*The Lanzarote Convention is open to ratification by any State worldwide, including States that are not members of the Council of Europe). The **Russian Federation** has been requested **to submit a special report on the protection against sexual exploitation and abuse of Ukrainian children unlawfully transferred or deported** to its territory or areas temporarily controlled or occupied by it. Given the particular risks faced by these children and their extremely vulnerable situation, the Lanzarote Committee has requested the Russian Federation to respond by 10 July 2023.

At the 38th meeting, the Lanzarote Committee also agreed that **all 48 Parties to the Convention should provide information about their legal frameworks** to assess progress made in ensuring that children are protected against sexual abuse in their circle of trust. An electronic questionnaire was addressed to the Parties on 20 June 2023 (the text of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix II of the [list of decisions](#)) with the deadline being 20 September 2023.

## The CoE Committee of Experts on the Prevention of Violence (ENF-VAE) first meeting

On **16-17 May 2023** the CoE Committee of Experts on the Prevention of Violence ([ENF-VAE](#)) held its first meeting, elected the Chair (Mária Vargová, Slovakia) and the Vice-Chair (Alina Seel, Austria) of the Committee and adopted its work plan. The Committee heard **presentations from external experts** for its immediate task, which concerns the drafting of a feasibility study on age-appropriate comprehensive **sexuality education** to strengthen responses for *inter alia* **preventing and combating violence against children**, including risky or harmful sexual behavior by children and held an **exchange on the key areas and main challenges in law, policy and practice** on this topic, particularly through the provision of such education. The next meeting of the Committee will take place in Strasbourg, from 11 to 12 October 2023.



## Presenting CP4Europe Project achievements and recommendations related to child participation & launching of the CP4Europe child-participation web-platform

The European Union - Council of Europe Joint Project "[CP4Europe - Strengthening National Child Participation Frameworks and Action in Europe](#)" held its Final Conference "**NextGen Europe: Unleashing Youth Voices**". The event was organised by the Council of Europe Children's Rights Division and took place on **5-7 June in Strasbourg, France**. The Conference was designed together with children and saw the participation of young people and adults, including 15 girls and boys from the five CP4Europe country partners (the Czech Republic, Finland, Iceland, Portugal, and Slovenia, and at the European level) who have been engaged throughout the project in a wide range of activities. For more information on the Platform, visit [this page](#).

## UN - Publication of CRC General Comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change

On 28 August 2023, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child published [General Comment No. 26](#). ENOC contributed to the child consultation process through its membership and participated in the consultation with stakeholders by conveying the findings of its **2022 annual research and policy statement on Children's Rights and Climate Justice**.

**Prof. Aoife Nolan**, member of the Advisory Committee to the CRC on GC26, commented on the progressive approach in the development of GC26, and on the dynamic interpretation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Committee. Find the full Twitter thread [here](#).

1. The Committee expressly recognises the *right to a clean, healthy & sustainable environment as a right in and of itself 'implicit' in the Convention*;
2. The Committee makes *explicit the linkages between Convention rights & the challenges posed by environmental harm* (and states' (non)responses to it) to children across the rights spectrum;
3. The Committee deals in detail with the *obligation of international cooperation under the Convention* and the challenges posed by dealing with *transboundary and extraterritorial harms*.

## ENOC 2022 Annual Topic: "Children's Rights & Climate Justice"

Access our related resources below!



What happens to children and young people with imprisoned parents? Learn more about the work of the [COPE network](#), funded under the CERV programme.



Council of Europe celebrates International Children's Day by launching a new [video on Barnahus](#).



## UN: UDHR 75th anniversary & Human Rights 75 Initiative

OHCHR has launched the [Human Rights 75 initiative](#) to rejuvenate the spirit that led to the adoption of UDHR and look into the future of human rights.

Together with a **Youth Advisory Group (YAG)**, the OHCHR will conduct a **global youth consultation** and has launched a **survey** to gather the views of young people from around the world to inform the development of the **Youth Declaration!**

If you are **between 18-30 years old**, fill in [the survey](#) and give your contribution!

## RESOURCES:

- Advancing Child Rights  
Strategic Litigation resources:  
[here](#)
- Child Rights Connect: [UPR brief for States Parties on Child Human Rights Defenders](#)



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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## UN - CRC session 93: the Concluding Observations are available

The Committee on the Rights of the Child concluded on 26 May 2023 its 93rd session after adopting [concluding observations](#) for three ENOC members' countries: Finland, France, and the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

Click on the flags below to access them!



## UPDATE ON ENOC MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

### MOLDOVA - Appointment of the new People's Advocate for the Rights of the Child

On July 14, 2023, **Vasile Coroi** was appointed by the Parliament as the People's Advocate for the child's rights for a 7 years mandate.

### SCOTLAND - New Children and Young People's Commissioner

On 16 August 2023, **Nicola Killean** took office as the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland, after being nominated by the Scottish Parliament on 24 April 2023.

### NORTHERN IRELAND - New Commissioner for Children and Young People

On 21 June 2023, **Chris Quinn** was appointed as the new Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, and will take up his post on 18 September 2023.

### BASQUE COUNTRY - Basque country, Spain, Ararteko co-organised Seminar on Ombuds Institutions, 12-13 June 2023

On 12-13 June 2023, Ararteko co-hosted the seminar "**The Law of the Ararteko. Proposals for the Future. Rethinking Ombuds institutions**" together with the Basque Parliament. At the event, current and former Ombudspersons, representatives of the Basque Parliament and other experts from academia discussed how the Ararteko has evolved over the years, and shared different tools - including at the international level - that Ombuds institutions have been equipped with in order to continue with their mission of defending the rights of citizens.