



# Reaching the heights for the rights of the child

**Council of Europe Strategy  
for the Rights of the Child  
2016-2021**

**High-Level Launching Conference  
Sofia, 5-6 April 2016**

**Conference Outline**



**Bulgarian Chairmanship**  
Council of Europe  
November 2015 – May 2016  
**Présidence de la Bulgarie**  
Conseil de l'Europe  
Novembre 2015 – Mai 2016



A new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child is to be adopted by the Committee of Ministers in early 2016. The Strategy, which was drafted over the past year by Council of Europe member states in co-operation with civil society and other stakeholders, will be launched on 5 and 6 April 2016 at a high-level conference in Sofia, Bulgaria.

The Conference is organised in the framework of the Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and will be hosted by the State Agency for Child Protection and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Bulgaria. The Conference will provide a platform for an in-depth exchange on the five priority areas identified in the Strategy:

- equal opportunities for all children;
- participation of all children;
- a life free from violence for all children;
- child-friendly justice for all children;
- rights of the child in the digital environment.

**Objective:**

The aim of the conference is to identify how all actors in Council of Europe member states can work together to realise the objectives of the Strategy over the years to come.

**Participants:**

The Conference will gather around 180 participants, including Ministers from Council of Europe member states and other high level guests, representatives from national and local governments, parliaments and civil society, the Council of Europe and other international organisations, professional and academic networks, ombudspersons for children, as well as children themselves.

**Format:**

The conference duration is two days, including a reception hosted by the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, on the eve of the conference, a high-level opening session on the morning of 5 April, thematic discussions in parallel sessions, and ample space for presentation of initiatives, networking and interaction.

**Invitation:**

Participation in the Conference is by invitation only.

Ministers responsible for children's rights from all 47 member states will be invited to attend the Conference. The maximum size of national delegations is three persons. The participation of one representative per member state will be paid by the Council of Europe.

Invitations will also be issued to representatives of Council of Europe bodies and of other international organisations.

Representatives from non-governmental organisations, ombudspersons for children, professional and academic networks are selected through a call for expression of interest. Funding will be provided for a part of the participants selected through the call.

**Children:**

As in all major Council of Europe events and processes on the rights of the child over the past 10 years, children will be involved in the preparation, duration and follow-up of the conference.

**Venue:**

Hotel Sofia Balkan ([www.sofiabalkan.com](http://www.sofiabalkan.com))

**Working languages:**

The working languages of the Conference are English, French and Bulgarian, with the possibility to arrange for interpretation from other Council of Europe languages for high-level speakers, as appropriate.