



PARALLEL THEMATIC SESSION

5 April 2016

Child-friendly justice: hearing children in judicial procedures



Sofia/София
5-6 April 2016
5-6 avril 2016
5-6 Април 2016

Conference on the Council of Europe Strategy
for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021)
Conférence sur la Stratégie du Conseil
de l'Europe relative aux droits de l'enfant (2016-2021)
Конференция за Стратегия на Съвета на Европа
за правата на детето (2016-2021)



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



Aim of the session

A decorative header image showing a child in a blue dress floating in the air, holding a large red balloon. The background features a blue sky with soft clouds and a range of blue mountains in the distance.

This session gave the opportunity to reflect and discuss on:

- The specific needs of a child in contact with a justice system.
- The key outstanding difficulties faced by professionals in practice.
- How judiciary build and secure the capacity of the child to be a real actor in judicial procedures concerning him/her.



Fahima

- Speak in a child-friendly manner:
 - Understand the situation
 - *Emotional*
 - *Cognitive*
 - Understand the consequences of his or her testimony.

Nick

- Children need to feel safe in justice-situations



- *Training of professionals to teach them how to think and reflect on the same level*
- *Child-specialized judges and lawyers*
- *Multidisciplinary organisation*

Nermina



- Take the opinion of the child seriously!
- The opinion of the child is most important.
- When the outcome is different from the vision/opinion/wishes of the child, the judge must explain this to the child.

Ways forward



- Need of national guidance for professionals working with or for children.
- Trainings on children's rights and on how to communicate better with them.
- Sharing good practices between member states.
- Multidisciplinary approach between professionals.
- Increase efforts on civil and administrative proceedings.