



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
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Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child (CSC-RC)
Comité de la Société Civile sur les Droits de l'Enfant (CSC-DE)

2022 June 21st 9:30-12:30 Webinar

Evaluation and determination of the best interests of the child in parental separation and care proceedings

Exchange of views and knowledge among specialists and professionals

Speakers

Gerhard Ermischer, President of the Conference of INGOs.



My first direct contact with the Council of Europe was in 2000 through the European Landscape Convention and since then I have been active with the convention, its conferences and workshops as well as the inter-governmental steering committee (CDCPP) linked to it. My association was a cofounder of Civilscape, a European umbrella organization for NGOs dealing with civil participation in landscape management. Civilscape gained participatory status in late 2009 and I have represented this organization in the Conference of INGOs since January 2010. I have served the Conference of INGOs as Vice-President of its Committee for Democracy and was a member of its Standing Committee

Seamus Carroll, Chair of the Committee of Experts on the Rights and the Best interests of the Child in Parental Separation and in Care Proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE).



While serving as Ireland's representative on the Council of Europe's Committee on Legal Cooperation (CDCJ), Seamus acted as Chair of the group of specialists that drafted the Council of Europe's Guidelines on Child-friendly Justice. He is currently chairing the committee of experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE)

Fabien Bacro, Psychologist, university of Nantes,



Fabien Bacro is a Associate Professor at the University of Nantes and is attached to the Centre de Recherche en Education de Nantes (CREN). His work focuses on attachment relationships, emotional security and children's well-being in different life contexts. He has carried out a study on the relationship between the mode of residence, attachment representations and behaviour problems in children of separated parents. He participated in the writing of a consensus article, co-authored with more than 70 specialists, 'Attachment goes to court: child protection and custody issues' published in open access.

Theoni Koufonikolakou, Deputy Ombudsman on Children's Rights



Theoni Koufonikolakou is the Greek Deputy Ombudswoman for children's rights and the Chair of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC). As an attorney at law, she has worked on human rights protection and domestic violence tackling cases. She has cooperated with NGOs providing legal aid to vulnerable populations.

Furthermore, she has worked with the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE) as a researcher and instructor in adult education, and the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI) in family protection cases. She is currently a PhD candidate with the Law School of the University of Athens and she holds a Master's degree in Political Science and Sociology.

Nuala Mole, Director at The AIRE Centre, Consultant for CJ/ENF-ISE



Nuala Mole founded the AIRE Centre and has worked for more than 25 years in the field of human rights. Nuala has conducted training for the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the AIRE Centre for judges, public officials, lawyers and NGOs in 40 of the 46 member states of the Council of Europe on a wide range of topics including immigration, prisoners' rights, children's rights and family law. Since 2001, she has been assisting in curriculum development and implementation for judicial training centres in South East Europe. She works with national and international judges and public officials throughout Western, Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, but particularly in the Balkans, promoting familiarity and awareness with human rights standards and providing assistance in applying them in practice.

Galina Markova, doctor of social work, Director of the Know How Centre for Alternative Care for Children, New Bulgarian University.



Galina is Manager of the Know How Centre on Alternative Care for Children in the New Bulgarian University in Sofia. She has a Masters in Clinical Social Work at the New Bulgarian University and a PhD in Social Work from Smith College, USA. Her PhD dissertation is on research into attachment representations of parents whose children live in institutions. Her experience in the field of deinstitutionalisation started when she took part in a survey of the impact of institutionalisation of babies in Bulgaria. Galina combines attachment theory and strengths-based approaches in teaching, research, and clinical practice. She has implemented innovative practices for integrating children and families affected by multiple discrimination.

Benoît Van Keirsbilck, Committee on the Rights of the Child



Benoît Van Keirsbilck is trained in Social work and Children's rights; he was one of the founders and is currently Director of the Belgian section of Defence for Children-International. He is member of the National Commission on the Rights of the Child and particularly member of the Independent Advisory board of this Commission which is in charge of giving advice to the Belgian authorities in the implementation of the CRC in the Country. Finally, he was elected as a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child for a 4-year term (2021-2024) and therefore sits on the Committee as an independent expert

Carolyn Willow, Founder Director, Article 39, United Kingdom



Carolyn Willow is a registered social worker (qualified in 1988). She started her career in child protection social work and then moved into roles promoting and protecting the rights of children in foster and residential care amid the first wave of revelations of institutional child abuse.

Carolyn co-ordinated two major submissions from non-governmental organisations to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. She was principal author and editor of nine of CRAE's annual State of Children's Rights in England reports, and has written extensively on children's rights over the past 30 years, including for the Council of Europe, Save the Children Sweden, Save the Children International and UNICEF.