



European Day Panel: Learning from victims/survivors of childhood sexual violence to inspire policy change

Strasbourg and online (ZOOM platform) by invitation only

30 November 2023, 09:30 – 13:00

Introduction

Child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse affect children everywhere. The majority of abuse happens in the child's circle of trust and in many cases it is never reported to the police. The 2023 edition of the European Day to End Child Sex Abuse (18 November) focuses on learning from victims/survivors of childhood sexual violence.

Victim/survivor engagement can exist in different forms, including calls for testimonies in the context of public inquiries,¹ ad hoc consultation groups, and permanent advisory boards or councils.² There are also examples of victim/survivor engagement in the context of sports,³ and religious institutions.⁴

Engaging with victims/survivors provides an opportunity for policy makers to learn and understand what could have been done better to react, report and to support them. This will in turn lead to evidence informed legislation and policies that will better prevent and protect children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Engaging with victims/survivors also involves a number of ethical and safeguarding considerations. It is very important that any form of engagement or consultation is done in a trauma informed way to avoid re-victimisation and re-traumatisation.

The aims of this panel are to raise awareness about examples of promising practices for victim/survivor engagement in policy making and to identify guidance, recommendations or lessons learned for policy makers looking to strengthen their engagement with victims/survivors.

*The terms victim/survivors have been used to be as inclusive as possible, given that not everyone with lived experience of childhood sexual abuse will identify with the term "survivor".

Background information

UBSKM - **Office of the Independent Commissioner for Child Sexual Abuse Issues (Germany)** was established by the Federal Government in 2010, and declared a permanent institution by the Federal Cabinet in 2018. The UBSKM mandate includes developing concepts to improve protection against CSEA, identification of legal and research gaps and ensuring independent inquiries into CSEA in Germany. The UBSKM established a survivors' Board in 2015 to ensure the structured participation by survivors in the work of the Commissioner. The members of the Survivors' Board are appointed by the Commissioner and support her work on a voluntary basis. There are currently 16 members.

IICSA - **Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (England and Wales)** was established by the Government in 2015. The aim was to identify the extent to which State and non-State institutions had failed to protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation and to make recommendations in order to protect children from such abuse in the future. Approximately 7,300 victims and survivors of child sexual abuse participated in the Inquiry through various mechanisms including: the Victims and Survivors Consultative Panel, the Truth project, Victims and Survivors Forum, investigations, and research. The inquiry published its final report in 2022.

CIIVISE – **Independent Commission on incest and sexual violence against children (France)** was established by the President in 2021 for two years. The aims of the Commission are to understand and

¹ Truth project, Independent inquiry child sex abuse, available at: www.iicsa.org.uk/victims-and-survivors/truth-project.html; CIIVISE www.ciivise.fr/

² Survivor's Board at UBSKM available at beauftragte-missbrauch.de/en/survivors-board/survivors-board-at-ubskm

³ Break the Silence: www.destilteverbroken.nl; army of survivors: thearmyofsurvivors.org/

⁴ Survivor network of those abused by priests: www.snapnetwork.org

raise awareness about the extent of sexual violence against children, and to make recommendations to strengthen policies to better prevent and protect children. The Commission is formed of 27 experts including diverse professionals, victims and representatives of victims' associations. As of March 2023 over 10,000 testimonies had been gathered by the Commission. The [final report](#) of the Commission was published on 20 November 2023.

[Brave Movement](#) is a global, inclusive, survivor-led advocacy movement with two key strategies: elevate and support survivor voices and leadership, and support international movement building and aligned, coordinated advocacy and campaigns. With three key pillars - 'Prevention, Healing and Justice' - Brave is mobilizing a powerful global movement of survivors and allies to end sexual violence against children. The Movement is formed of a survivors advisory board, 'Survivor Advocates Globally Empowered' (SAGE), a global steering committee of seven international organisations, and a global action team dispersed across three continents.

[Global Collaborative](#) is an all volunteer, survivors led network of child advocacy organisations, academic institutions, survivors networks, NGOs and faith actors. It was founded in 2019 has been instrumental in working with the UN General Assembly to recognise the 18 November as an international day for the prevention of and healing from child sexual exploitation and abuse. The Global Collaborative works to raise awareness, educate the public to better protect children and promote solutions to prevent intergenerational trauma and protect children.

[ECPAT Sweden](#) run a helpline and a hotline for victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in Sweden as well as holding focus groups and running a yearly survey. In 2022, over 13000 children participated in their survey on a range of topics related to OCSEA. Results from this survey were included in Government reports and have been used in the context of developing a national strategy to combat and prevent violence against children.

Agenda

Thursday 30 November 2023 09:30 – 13:00	
09:30 - 09:35	Introductory Remarks Gioia Scappucci, Executive Secretary to the Lanzarote Committee
Panel 1 – Examples of victim/survivor engagement established by the Government	
09:35 – 10:30	Independent Commissioner for Child Sexual Abuse Issues and Survivors Advisory Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Kerstin Claus, Independent Commissioner ❖ Wibke Müller, Independent Commissioner’s Survivors Board (online)
	Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, Victims and Survivors Consultative Panel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Chris Tuck, Victims and Survivors Consultative Panel ❖ Fay Maxted, Victims and Survivors Consultative Panel
	Independent Commission on incest and sexual violence against children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Edouard Durand, Co-Chair of the CIIVISE ❖ Nathalie Mathieu, Co-Chair of the CIIVISE ❖ Arnaud Gallais, Member of the CIIVISE
	Exchange with Committee
Panel 2 – Examples of victim/survivor engagement led by civil society	
10:30-11:15	Brave Movement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Mié Kohiyama, co-chair Brave Movement Europe working group
	Global Collaborative (online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Jennifer Wortham, Co-founder ❖ Sara Dekker, member
	ECPAT Sweden (online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Madelaine Forsberg, Counsellor ❖ Mamadou Diallo, Counsellor
	Exchange with Committee
11:15 – 11:30	Coffee break and group photo (optional)
Panel 3 – Discussion of draft guidelines for victim/survivor engagement in policy making	
11:30 – 12:50	Presentation of draft Guidelines for victim/survivor engagement in policy making Caroline Taylor Independent expert for the Council of Europe Sophie Otiende (online) Independent expert for the Council of Europe
	Exchange with the Committee
12:50 – 13:00	Closing remarks Ms Maria José CASTELLO-BRANCO, Portugal, Chairperson