



Joint European Union - Council of Europe  
Child-friendly Justice Project  
Launching Event of the  
Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool

27 March 2026

Organised by the European Commission and the Council of Europe

Hybrid format

In Brussels – Comet Louise

20, Place Stéphanie, 1050 Bruxelles

And

Online at the following Zoom link:

<https://coe-int.zoom.us/j/68539191841?pwd=F63zdtGmLlnalqavlnS3yh5Vh46tGM.1>

The project is co-funded by the European Union and co-funded and implemented by the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the European Commission, Directorate General for Justice and Consumers

## Joint Child-friendly Justice Project

The [Joint European Union-Council of Europe Child-friendly Justice project](#) is an innovative 30-month initiative driven by the combined efforts of the Council of Europe and the European Commission/Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST) and implemented by the Children's Rights Division of the Council of Europe. Launched on 1 January 2024, the project aims to improve the protection of children in contact with the law – as offenders, victims, witnesses or parties in non-judicial, judicial (such as civil and criminal cases) and administrative proceedings – across Europe at national and local levels.

Belgium, Poland, and Slovenia were selected as focus countries to pilot the implementation of activities at national and local level to collect data, identify gaps, improve legislation, policies, and practices. Greece, Hungary and Portugal joined the project as partner countries to stand in the project steering committee, provide guidance, advise on the activities, share approaches and good practices, and benefit from the achievements of the action.

From July to December 2024, Belgium, Poland, and Slovenia conducted their self-assessment through the roll-out of [the Council of Europe Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool](#) (translated into French, Dutch, Polish and Slovenian), operationalising [Council of Europe's Guidelines on Child-friendly Justice](#). A [roundtable](#) with children in contact with the law was held to present the findings of the self-assessments. The analysed data helped formulate recommendations to adapt the three focus countries' legal and policy framework, in line with the Council of Europe and European Union legal standards and *acquis* in the field of child-friendly justice.

Between September and December 2025, [capacities](#) of multidisciplinary professionals working for and with children in contact with the law were strengthened with the support of the [Course: Child-friendly Justice | Council of Europe HELP](#) (translated into French, Dutch and Slovenian and already available in Polish) and on child participation in judicial and non-judicial proceedings (in the three focus countries), the rights of children in migration context (in Belgium), inter-agency coordination in the field of child-friendly justice (in Poland) and guardians *ad litem* (in Slovenia).

In October-November 2025, the [awareness of children in contact with the law and adults](#) was also raised on the rights of children in judicial and non-judicial proceedings in Belgium, Poland, and Slovenia.

Besides, a first version of a Handbook on the state of play of child-friendly justice in Europe was drafted. The Handbook sets out international and European law and standards that have emerged on child-friendly justice, explores good practices and identifies where further reform is still needed.

The objective of the event in Belgium is to officially launch, in collaboration with the European Commission DG JUST, the Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool.

## Programme of the Launching Event

*27 March 2026*

8:30-9:00	Registration of participants
9:00-9:20	<p>Welcoming remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Agnes Von Maravić, Head of the Children’s Rights Division and Council of Europe Coordinator for the Rights of the Child</li> <li>➤ Marie-Cécile Rouillon, Coordinator for the Rights of the Child, European Commission DG JUST</li> </ul>
9:20-9:40	<p>Keynote speech – Child-friendly Justice in Europe: achievements and challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Philip Jaffé, Vice Chair of the United Nations Committee for the Rights of the Child</li> </ul>
9:40-10:30	<p>Panel Discussion – Introducing and piloting the Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool</p> <p>Facilitated by Zaruhi Gasparyan, Head of Co-operation and Capacity Building Unit, Children’s Rights Division, Council of Europe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Anne-Laure Baulieu, Senior Project Officer, Children’s Rights Division, Council of Europe</li> <li>➤ Lucia Dreser and Myriam de Hemptinne, High Council of Justice of Belgium</li> <li>➤ Elżbieta Proga and Joanna Gwizdak, Ministry of Justice of Poland</li> <li>➤ Andrej Del Fabro and Mija Cankar, Ministry of Justice of Slovenia</li> </ul>
10:30-11:00	Coffee break
11:00-12:00	<p>High-Level Panel – How can Europe become a champion on child-friendly justice</p> <p>Facilitated by Chrisoula Arcoudis, Policy Officer, Rights of the Child, European Commission DG JUST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Caroline Vrijens, Flemish Commissioner for Children’ Rights, Belgium, and member of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children</li> <li>➤ Professor Jennifer Davidson, Director Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures, University of Strathclyde Glasgow</li> <li>➤ Marta Gil Gonzalez, Terre des hommes on behalf of the European Child-friendly Justice Network</li> <li>➤ Nicole Drew, Global Partnerships, Inclusion &amp; Justice, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</li> </ul>
12:00-12:20	<p>Closing Remarks – Supporting Member States in implementing the Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Agnes Von Maravić, Head of the Children’s Rights Division and Council of Europe Coordinator for the Rights of the Child</li> <li>➤ Marie-Cécile Rouillon, Coordinator for the Rights of the Child, European Commission DG JUST</li> </ul>