



Kick-off and First Steering Committee Meeting

Joint European Union - Council of Europe

Child-friendly Justice Project – Phase II

29 September 2026

Online (Teams link below)

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/371898091777352?p=iY7o340OxE1484bjfH>

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

Context

Phase II of the [Joint European Union-Council of Europe Child-friendly Justice Project](#) is a 24-month initiative driven by the combined efforts of the Council of Europe and the European Commission and implemented by the Children's Rights Division of the Council of Europe.

Launched on 1 July 2026, Phase II aims to further strengthen 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.

By aligning with priorities of the [European Union Strategy on the Rights of the Child](#) and [the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child \(2022-2027\)](#), Phase I of the project facilitated the practical implementation of the [Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on Child-friendly Justice](#) through the development of the [Council of Europe Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool](#). The instrument was then translated into [Dutch](#), [French](#), [Polish](#) and [Slovenian](#), and adapted into a [child-friendly version](#).

In the framework of Phase II, France and Greece have been selected as focus countries to conduct the implementation of activities at national and local level to collect data, identify gaps, improve legislation, policies, and practices. The two focus countries will implement the following activities:

- Through the roll-out of the Council of Europe Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool, recommendations to adapt the legislative and policy framework in line with the Council of Europe and European Union standards related to child-friendly justice will be formulated.
- Capacities of specialised staff with respect to child-friendly procedures will be strengthened with the support of the Council of Europe *Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals Programme (HELP)*, that includes a specific course on child-friendly justice and which will be adapted to the national context and needs.
- Awareness of children in contact with the law and their parents will be raised on children's rights before, during and after judicial proceedings. A particular attention will be paid to parents/guardians with potential vulnerabilities such as disabilities, psychosocial distress, parents/guardians in contact with the law, etc.

The Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool will be further enriched through the development of three annexes on thematic areas identified during the Project Phase I: diversion and child-friendly alternatives to detention, restorative justice, and prevention of first offence and recidivism. Experts will be hired by the Council of Europe to design the annexes and use the findings of a feasibility study conducted on these thematic areas during Phase I. These annexes will also contribute to promoting different approaches, identifying best practices and facilitating mutual learning in alignment with national systems, European Union legal and policy frameworks, as well as international legal frameworks and standards on children's rights and child-friendly justice.

Besides, Italy and the Slovak Republic have joined the second phase of the project as partner countries. They will contribute by sitting in the Steering Committee and providing their perspectives and insights to the project, enriching the overall approach and ensuring its effectiveness across diverse European contexts.

Kick-off and Steering Committee Meeting Programme	
10:00-10:15	Welcoming remarks • <i>Agnes Von Maravić, Head of the Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i>
10:15-10:30	Updates from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights • <i>Astrid Podsiadlowski, Head of Sector on Social Rights and Project Manager on Rights of the Child, EU Agency for Fundamental Rights</i>
10:30-10:40	Remarks from the European Union • <i>Marie-Cécile Rouillon, Coordinator for the Rights of the Child, European Commission DG JUST</i>
10:40-10:50	Presentation of the Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on Child-friendly Justice • <i>Tanja Gerwien, Programme Officer, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i>
10:50-11:00	Presentation of the Council of Europe's Child-friendly Justice Assessment Tool • <i>Zaruhi Gasparyan, Head of Co-operation and Capacity-Building Unit, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i>
11:00-11:15	Break
11:15-11:35	Presentation of the Joint European Union-Council of Europe Child-friendly Justice Project – Phase I and Phase II • <i>Frederique Privat De Fortunie, Senior Project Officer, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i> • <i>Anna Bracco, Senior Project Officer, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i>
11.35-11.40	Administrative references • <i>Mara Fabrizi, Project Assistant, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i>
11:40-12:10	Focus & Partner Countries • <i>Presentation of Focus and Partner Countries</i> • <i>Discussion of focus countries' needs (training, awareness, etc.), reform plans, and good practices in the field of child-friendly justice – 5 min per country</i> • <i>Discussion of partner countries' good practices, challenges and reform plans in the field of child-friendly justice – 5 min per country</i>
12:10-12:20	Updates from the Child-friendly Justice European Network • <i>Marie Chapot, Advocacy & Project Officer, CFJ-EN - Child Friendly Justice European Network</i>
12:20-12:30	Closing Remarks • <i>Chrisoula Arcoudis, Policy Officer, Rights of the Child, European Commission DG JUST</i> • <i>Zaruhi Gasparyan, Head of Co-operation and Capacity-Building Unit, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i>