Safeguarding a social, inclusive and diverse Europe for all families

2019

ANNUAL REPORT

www.coface-eu.org
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INTRODUCTION

Preliminary words

Dear Readers,

An annual report is always a good opportunity to reflect about the past and prepare for the future. The report you have in your hands shows clearly the wide range of expertise of our members and the activities we organised together: a series of successful European events and a conference to celebrate the 30 anniversary of the Universal Declaration of the children Rights "Shaping a healthy environment fit for children".

The adoption of the Work-Life-Balance Directive with a landslide majority in the European Parliament in April 2019 was our main achievement of the year! For COFACE, after years of hard work together with a broad Alliance of European NGOs, and helped by our Penguins, the adoption of this Directive is a milestone. It is also the first concrete legislative result of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

With our successful campaign # AllFamiliesSpeakOut in May, COFACE expressed clearly his ambition to build a strong social (child and family friendly!) and democratic Europe and we called for a clear S.H.I.F.T. towards a more inclusive society. It is clear that the challenges that tomorrow will bring are huge. More than ever, pluralistic civil society organisations like ours need broad support to promote core European values. It is clear that we and our members need to continue our action to defend the interest and needs of the wide diversity of families. Going forward we count on the further active involvement of our members and partners! Going forward we will use our “New Deal for Families of Today” as a compass to bring the European Pillar of Social rights and the “Sustainable Development Goals” to life!

Further, our strong gender equality agenda expresses our ambitions and our key priorities for the years to come:

⭐ Invest in a healthy environment fit for children and guarantee all children the education they need;
⭐ invest in the invisible Care work and make it visible as the hidden engine that keeps families, societies and companies going;
⭐ transpose the WLB directive into national legislation and focus on family carers, allow women and men to care for their families and better share the care with the ambition to close the “gender care gap”;
⭐ advocate for a safer internet for kids and ensure digitalisation serves the general interest of all children and their families;
⭐ Build an Inclusive society where nobody is left behind.

Time for an economy WHICH CARES ABOUT THE NEEDS OF ALL FAMILIES, at the service of society, an economy that invests in care.

We learned that change only happens when people get involved, get engaged and come together. And after more than 60 years we still believe that it is the beating heart of our organisation.

I thank my colleagues of the board of COFACE, the COFACE team and all our members for their active involvement and the nice cooperation. I thank all our partners for their support.

Together with the New European Commission that took office and the European Parliament, our members and social partners, we are ready to continue our concrete actions to bring about changes and build a better society for all families.

ANNEMIE DRIESKENS
President
About us

COFACE Families Europe is a pluralistic network of civil society associations representing the interests of all families. It was founded in 1958. With 58 member organisations in 23 European countries, we represent more than 25 million families in Europe.

COFACE’s focus is essentially on policies and legislation that impact the lives of children and families, in particular in the fields of social protection and inclusion, safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities and migrant persons and families, preventing and fighting child poverty, reconciling work and family life, promoting inclusive education and early childhood education and care, parenting support services to families, information and communication technologies, health and consumer policies.

COFACE Families Europe advocates for policies of non-discrimination and equal opportunities between persons and between family forms, and specifically supports policies aimed at increasing equality between women and men, with a special focus on reconciliation between work, care and family life.

Objectives

- Build a strong network of family organisations
- Give a voice to families in policy-making and implementation
- Promote fair access to Services of General Interest
- Build family-friendly policies and workplaces
- Achieve an EU status for family carers
MISSION
Our mission is to promote the well-being, health and security of families and their members in a changing society and serve as a trusted entity for family mainstreaming and for the voice/needs of families in the EU and beyond.

VISION
Our vision is to work towards a family friendly environment, enabling all families and their members to benefit from sufficient financial resources, available quality services and adequate time arrangements in order to live and enjoy their family life in dignity and harmony.

VALUES
Non-discrimination. COFACE Families Europe recognises all family forms.
Equal opportunities between women and men.
Respect of human rights for a decent quality of life.
Empowerment to all family members as citizens, consumers and workers.
Social inclusion of all families.
Solidarity between family members.
What have we done in 2019?

JANUARY
COFACE Families Europe responds to EU consultation on the EU Consumer Credit Directive.

FEBRUARY
COFACE Families Europe co-hosts with Gezinsbond a Communication seminar in Brussels on the European Elections.

COFACE Families Europe launches its Call to Action as start of the #AllFamiliesSpeakOut campaign ahead of the European Elections.

COFACE Families Europe responds to the consultation of High Level Expert Group (HLEG) on Artificial Intelligence (AI).

MARCH
On 8th March International Women’s Day, COFACE Families Europe calls to stop violence against women with disabilities.

Meeting with European Commissioner Gabriel on better protecting minors online.

APRIL
The European Parliament adopts the EU Work-life balance directive with a landslide majority of 490 in favour, 82 against and 48 abstentions.

Available in French: “Who cares?” COFACE Study on the challenges and needs of family carers in Europe.

COFACE Families Europe speaks at the 12th European Forum on the Rights of the Child reflecting on challenges of implementing child rights online.

MAY
New COFACE position paper “Building Inclusive Societies – First steps to bridging the gaps between family, education and migration policies” describes the role of the COFACE network in the migration debate.

COFACE Families Europe co-organises together with L’Associació Salut i Família a public round table focused on Family policy in Spain in a European perspective.

European Elections take place between May 23, 2019 – May 26, 2019.
JUNE
Joint Letter to the EPSCO Council: Let’s move towards swift transposition of the EU Work-Life Balance Directive!

COFACE Disability Platform for the rights of persons with disabilities and their families - meets in Luxembourg, hosted by APEMH on 13th and 14th of June.

JULY
Triggers a rethink of our monthly newsletter for our 3000+ readers in Brussels and across Europe. This results in Families Corner containing four sections:

- You&EU
- Creative Hub
- Debate&Discuss
- Timeout

OCTOBER
COFACE Families Europe publishes “A New Deal for Families of Today” which highlights priorities for 2020-2024.

SEPTEMBER
European conference under the Finnish presidency of the EU - in Helsinki, Finland, - on “Shaping a healthy environment fit for children”. With participants from 20+ countries we developed the build blocks for developing a 2030 compass for a healthy society, environment and economy fit for children.

NOVEMBER
Tell us your Toy Stories! On Universal Children’s Day COFACE Families Europe launches the first Europe-wide survey on #ToysandDiversity collecting 2000+ responses from all EU countries and beyond.

COFACE Disability platform produces the S.H.I.F.T. guide, which proposes 5 objectives, 15 tools, and 45 actions.

COFACE Families Europe, in partnership with its Greek Member KMOP, hosts seminar “Digital Families: the future is now”, and consolidates its Digital Families Map.

DECEMBER
Together with AGE Platform Europe COFACE Families Europe releases a media statement to inform that European political groups failed to create a pluralistic forum to discuss demographic change and intergenerational solidarity.
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European Parliament Elections 2019

CALLING TO SAFEGUARD A SOCIAL, INCLUSIVE AND DEMOCRATIC EUROPE.

The European Elections in May 2019 provided a key moment for addressing policy-makers and citizens across Europe.

COFACE Families Europe launched a campaign called #AllFamiliesSpeakOut ahead of the elections mobilising voters locally through its member organisations. The call to action to safeguard a social, inclusive and democratic Europe promotes:

★ A strong gender equality agenda and social inclusion of all families through access to resources and community-based services.
★ A Europe which invests in the health and education of all children.
★ A Europe which supports civil society organisations.
★ A Europe which builds an economic and financial system at the service of our society and our planet.

Multiple campaign materials informed citizens on how the EU functions, the elections work and emphasised the need to vote for parties and politicians with objectives and ambitions which meet ALL 10 principles – Non-discrimination, Accessibility, Child well-being, Solidarity, Respect of Human Rights, Equal Opportunities, Empowerment, Internet for all, Social inclusion and Sustainability.

The COFACE network came together leading up the election, including creating messages which fit their national and local needs and spreading those to mobilise voters. These included infographics, voter essentials, videos and much more.

Following the elections, the Members of the new European Parliament now have the responsibility to walk the talk and lead Europe towards a more social, inclusive and democratic future.
COFACE Families Europe held an expert meeting in Barcelona on work-life balance policies in May.

Participation in Spanish conference organised by UNAF Spain on the transposition of the EU work-life balance directive.

The work-life balance coalition of NGOs led by COFACE Families Europe published an Open Letter to the EPSCO Council urging to swiftly approve and follow up with enforcement and monitoring. (March 2019)

The work-life balance coalition of NGOs released a joint statement to urge the national governments to move towards swift transposition after the meeting of the EPSCO Council. (June 2019)

COFACE joined the advisory board of a new Horizon2020 European research consortium called “Euroship” on closing gaps in social citizenship for diverse groups including precarious workers with care obligations.

Media release of the Provisional agreement reached by EU co-legislators on Work-Life Balance measures. (January 2019)

COFACE Families Europe published an assessment of the EU work-life balance directive after the European Parliament and Council reached an agreement during the Trilogues on the 24th January 2019. Later on, the European Parliament adopted the Directive in April 2019 and the Council did the same in June 2019. The Commission published last 12th July in the Official Journal of the EU the WLB Directive, which entered into force three weeks later. The Assessment underlines how the Directive paves the way for a strengthening European values of gender equality, social inclusion, diversity and non-discrimination; examines the new minimum standards on paid family leaves; considers the employment rights and right to request flexible arrangements and underlines some derogation clauses which require further assessment. The document ends with guidelines for transposition to consolidate national policies and legislation.

In October COFACE Families Europe participated at EIGE’s Gender Equality Index Conference. The 2019 Index focused on work-life balance and parental leave. COFACE brought its expertise on Work-Life Balance to the discussions, and advocated for co-responsibility, adequate payment of parental leave and stimuli for men’s uptake of leaves, and finally introduced COFACE’s priorities for 2020-2024 “A New Deal for Families of today”.

10
Celebrating 10 years of the European Expert Group on the transition from institutional to community-based care (EEG) and taking on the co-chairwomanship for 2020.

Media release on International Women’s Day calling to end discrimination for women with disabilities and to take up our collective responsibility by supporting girls and women with disabilities.

COFACE Disability Platform meeting and field visits in Luxembourg, hosted by APEMH. The meeting focused on the implementation of article 19 UNCRPD promoting independent living, on inclusive early childhood education and care, and on the challenges of family carers.

“Who cares?”: the 2017 COFACE Study challenges and needs of family carers in Europe, based on the testimonies of 1000+ family carers in 16 countries, is available in French.

The campaign #BeTheSHIFT kicked off on the 28th November 2019 with the launch of the S.H.I.F.T. Guide. It was developed by the COFACE Disability Platform and highlights 5 objectives, 15 tools and 45 actions in the areas of Support, Human rights, Independence, Families and society Transition (S.H.I.F.T.).

Monitoring and shaping EU legislation as member of the High Level Group on Disability (advisory committee to the European Commission), and through close monitoring of the future EU budget negotiations, with a particular focus on securing the use of EU funds for the deinstitutionalisation process.

At the Social Platform Flagship conference, COFACE Families Europe, AGE Platform Europe, and Eurocarers held a workshop and published a Media Release calling for a EU Strategy on long-term care built on a holistic and lifecycle approach, so as to make the right to long-term care, as enshrined in the European Pillar of Social Rights, a reality for all in Europe.
At the 3rd stakeholder’s dialogue around regulatory affairs of the insurance business, COFACE Families Europe spoke and discussed the key drivers of change for insurance in the coming decade.

COFACE Families Europe contributed to the HLEG on Artificial Intelligence, commenting on and giving several points of concerns regarding the draft paper circulated ahead of a workshop organized on the financial services ecosystem.

COFACE Families Europe joined the CoE-FRA-ENNHRI-EQUINET Collaborative Platform on Social and Economic Rights discussion on how the financial crisis and austerity measures impacted human rights and equality in Europe, and recommended policy tools to counter the negative impact of austerity measures on vulnerable families and their members.

COFACE Families Europe published a report of the European stakeholder seminar entitled “Economics at the service of society”.

COFACE Families Europe animated a workshop session for teachers on finance and democracy, and spoke on the closing panel of the annual eTwinning conference on how to influence school systems to be more democratic.

When the European supervisory authorities (ESAs – EBA, EIOPA, ESMA) held their yearly Consumer Day in Dublin COFACE Families Europe brought the consumer perspective on the panel dedicated to the topic of financial education and the mandate of the European Banking Authority (EBA) which is supposed to review and coordinate financial literacy and education initiatives by the national authorities.

Finance Watch held their annual conference entitled “Ten Years after Pittsburgh: Changing Finance for Good?” in Brussels. COFACE Families Europe spoke about financial inclusion during the first panel session. The intervention covered two main topics: fair pricing and exclusion due to the costs of financial products, and AML/KYC (anti-money laundering and know your customer) as potential obstacles to accessing basic financial services such as a basic bank account.

Together with 6 other organisations (BEUC, EHN, EPHA, CPME, World Obesity, and IBFAN) COFACE Families Europe publicly left the European Platform for Diet, Physical Activity and Health and called for a review of methods for consulting European civil society organisations to better address childhood obesity.

COFACE-Families Europe submitted a joint reply to the consultation on the revision of the Consumer Credit Directive (CCD). The joint reply, to which COFACE-Families Europe contributed, was coordinated by Finance Watch, of which COFACE-Families Europe is an associate member.
European Schoolnet’s project SELMA Hacking Hate (Social and Emotional Learning for Mutual Awareness) aims at tackling hate speech online by promoting tolerance, awareness and respect. COFACE Families Europe participated in the final conference which took place in Brussels.

COFACE Families Europe, in partnership with its Greek Member KMOP, hosted a seminar “Digital Families: the future is now” on the topic of digitalisation, looking to future challenges and opportunities. The seminar was broken down in two parts. The first part consisted in a mini-training session on the challenges that digitalisation brings, as identified by COFACE-Families Europe, and how these can be tackled. The second part showcased the good practices and activities of three COFACE Member organisations from Belgium, Croatia, and Greece.

ETUCE held a meeting for the EU CONVINCE project, which stands for “EU CommoN Values INclusive Education”. The project, which COFACE Families Europe is part of, aims at providing all school actors with tools and methods related to Citizenship. On this occasion, COFACE Europe was invited to present good practices from its network and from its internal activities related to digital citizenship.

COFACE Families Europe monitored EU legislation and its impact on families. The General Data Protection Regulation is also on our radar. In order to communicate about the Directive in more practical terms, we started a series of educational videos about the GDPR and the new rights that online users acquired.

COFACE Families Europe joined a consortium of researchers to support the dissemination of their research results into policy and practice across the EU and in EU/international policy-making. The 3 year Horizon 2020 project will focus on the impact of digital transformations on children and youth – the digital generation.

COFACE Families Europe held focus groups with parents in Croatia, France, Germany, Greece and Belgium as part of the Council of Europe’s Digital Citizenship Education Project. In these focus groups participants tested various tools and material about Digital Citizenship Education.

COFACE Families Europe participated in the plenary meeting of the EUIPO (Intellectual Property Observatory) where we represented civil society on a panel dedicated to emerging threats and opportunities in piracy and counterfeits.

COFACE Families Europe was invited to speak at the 12th European Forum on the Rights of the Child reflecting on challenges of implementing child rights in the digital world.

DIGITALISATION
SHAPING FUTURE POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The European Elections in May 2019 provided a key moment for addressing policymakers and citizens across Europe. COFACE Families Europe launched a campaign called #AllFamiliesSpeakOut ahead of the elections mobilising voters locally through member organisations all based on the call to action ‘To Safeguard a social, inclusive and democratic Europe’.

COCFACE Families Europe President Annemie Drieskens took part in the ceremony for the European Sustainability Award, as jury member for the Award.

We strengthened European alliances in order to consolidate joint advocacy for social rights through the COFACE-led Work-Life Balance alliance of NGOs, and with organisations such as Social Platform, European Disability Forum, European Expert Group on DI, Alliance for Investing in Children, Sustainable Development Goals Watch, Right to Energy Coalition, European Platform for Asylum and Migration, Finance Watch, and Better Internet for Kids coalition.

COFACE gave various speeches, and trainings on the European Pillar of Social Rights including in a networking session organised for Irish family organisations in Dublin.

A New Deal for Families of Today – COFACE Families Europe highlighted priorities for 2020-2024 which include 10 principles for the next 5 years. This list of key short-term demands to be achieved by the new European Commission from 2020-2024, are to be seen as concrete steps to meet the long-term goals of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

COCFACE contributed to the Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth 2019 presenting the paper “How can the European Pillar of Social Rights support the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals? and co-hosting a side event with Finance Watch and AGE Platform Europe giving lightning talks on access to financial services for all.

The European Commission publishes the Reflection Paper ‘Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030’ after a conference. COFACE Families Europe is an active member of the SDG Multi-Stakeholder Platform and contributed actively to the Reflection paper of the European Commission. During the conference, our COFACE Families Europe President Annemie Drieskens took part in the ceremony for the European Sustainability Award, as jury member for the Award.

We built and maintained bridges with EU institutions, mainstreaming social concerns in social/family policy concerns in the EU social agenda and legal/policy frameworks which have an impact on the well-being of families, and consolidated the role of civil society in shaping EU policy and legislation. We did this through participation in various EU stakeholder groups & committees:

- High Level Group on Disability (EMPL)
- EU Diet platform (SANTE)
- Financial Service Users Group (FISMA)
- European Banking Authority’s (EBA)
- Alliance for protection of minors online (CNECT)
- Multistakeholder platform on the implementation of the SDGs (SecGen)

COFACE participated to the ESF Transnational Platform activities and brings voice of family carers to European budget discussions in their workshop, co-organised with Eurocarers, on the use of European Structural and Investment Funds to support family/informal carers.
COFACE Families Europe contributed to the magazine of the German Association of Binational Families and Partnership with an article on European family policies and on COFACE work of empowering families in Europe for the last 60+ years.

COFACE Families Europe, in coalition with several European NGOs working on asylum and migration, signed a joint statement on the Fund on Asylum and Migration for 2021-2017 followed by joint advocacy efforts.

COFACE Families Europe brought testimonies of its members’ activities in the field of migration during in the social partners’ seminar on promoting effective integration of migrants and refugee in education.

COFACE Families Europe published the position paper “Building Inclusive Societies – First steps to bridging the gaps between family, education and migration policies” and the policy brief “COFACE members in action to support inclusion of migrant families”, describing the role of the COFACE network in the migration debate, as well as the role of education in building inclusive societies.

COFACE Families Europe joined the Public Hearing on Education and Migration organised by the European education trade unions (ETUCE) and employers (EFEE), hosted by the Member of European Parliament Pierfrancesco Majorino.

COFACE joined the International Commission on Couple and Family Relations (ICCFR) and the International Centre on Family Studies (Cisf) in their annual conference that focused on refugee and migrant children and families. There, COFACE held a workshop on the right to education for migrant children in Europe.
A GROWING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Shaping a healthy environment fit for children
European conference under Finnish Presidency of the EU
#environment4children

COFACE Families Europe co-hosted with Vaestoliitto under the Finnish EU-Presidency the “Shaping a healthy environment fit for children” on 3-4 October in Helsinki, Finland.

We celebrated the 30 years of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. For the occasion and with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) in mind the meetup, which gathered 100+ participants across Europe, started on 3rd October with a Spotlight on Finland: Round table on evidence-based methods on family work. The next day offered an insight into the topic through six open sessions, several hotspots and two keynote sessions.

**Open Space 1**: Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education for children in Finland: Delivery, advocacy and building support

**Open Space 2**: Building child-friendly spaces and cities for well-being

**Open Space 3**: Inclusive early childhood education and care – a great start for children with disabilities

**Open Space 4**: The health impact of environmental risks for children with special focus on air quality and endocrine disruptors

**Open Space 5**: Nutrimedias: a training on the impact of advertising on the food and nutritional choices of children

**Open Space 6**: A family environment at risk of poverty: the economic, social and health consequences for well-being of children
European seminars with EU and national policy-makers on Work-Life Balance, Persons with Disabilities and Digital Parenting

COFACE Disability Platform meets in Luxembourg

APEMH, member of COFACE Families Europe, hosted the last COFACE Disability Platform meeting on 13th and 14th of June.

Day one provided not only practical tools, but also food for thought: independent living was at the centre of the discussion of the afternoon roundtable focusing on the state of play, challenges and successes of the implementation of UNCRPD article 19 in Luxembourg. Contributions on the topic came from the COFACE network, APEMH, the Luxembourg Ministry of Family Affairs, Integration and the Greater Region, and Info-Handicap, the National Council of Persons with Disabilities, and the European Commission representation in Luxembourg.

During the second day of meeting, the members of the COFACE Disability Platform had fruitful discussions on the key activities, and planned the future actions of the network, kick-starting the creation of the S.H.I.F.T. guide for the inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families.

Digital Families: the future is now

COFACE Families Europe and Greek member KMOP organised the “Digital Families: the future is now” event on 20th of November in Athens.

Topics addressed included:

★ "Artificial Intelligence" & its potential consequences: discrimination, manipulation and more.
★ Blockchain and decentralization: the end of censorship?
★ Online business models: all about advertising and data.
★ Profits before people? Children and parents vulnerable online.
★ Virtual environments (Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality) and the impact on children: more empathy or more trauma?
★ E-inclusion and the digital divide: what role for technology in schools?

Roundtable on Family policies in Spain in a European perspective

The roundtable was organised by COFACE Families Europe together with its Spanish member Salud y Familia in Barcelona on 8th of May. The public event focused on family policies and work-life balance.

Firstly, an overview of Family Policy in Spain, the challenges and solutions was given by Elvira Méndez, Director of ASF. This presentation covered aspects of the three pillars of our COFACE Work-Life Balance vision: Resources, Services, Time (eg: childcare, long-term care, family leaves, tax systems, flexible work arrangements etc.). Afterwards a discussion with COFACE members followed taking Spain as the starting point, taking stock of the situation of family policies in the different countries represented at the expert meeting. The European perspective was presented by COFACE Families Europe and looked in detail into the EU Work-Life Balance Directive, New EU deal for childcare, the family dimension of Long-term care.
A GROWING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Online and offline

We ensured an ongoing society watchdog function to raise awareness about new trends and emerging challenges for families at EU and national level. We aim to foster transfer of knowledge across countries, sections and levels. We do so in order to develop and disseminate innovative policy and practices as well as give a voice to challenges and needs of all types of families in the EU and inspire one another to tackle current and future issues.

We built various online information and advocacy campaigns to disseminate COFACE/EU activities strategically to local communities in Europe and beyond and at the same time spread grassroots information to the EU level.

Our main communication channels which help in achieving our objectives are online and offline. Social media are an integral part of our dissemination strategy. Through our activities on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (NEW!) we have started building various communities of EU and family professionals from different backgrounds, individuals interested in family matters and partnerships across sections, countries, languages and political beliefs.

Become part of our community by signing up to our newsletter and following us on social media: http://tinyurl.com/cofacenws.

10 Newsletters with 208 articles
12 Media releases
6 ongoing Social Media Campaigns, and 3 major campaign waves
1 Survey with 2000+ participants
7000+ followers across four social media platforms
1 new social media channel: Instagram
1 Video series on GDPR rights
1 Social Media influencer: Uno – the Penguin
Spotlight on the #BeTheSHIFT campaign

The campaign #BeTheSHIFT kicked off on the 28th November 2019, ahead of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, with the launch of the S.H.I.F.T. Guide. COFACE Families Europe started the campaign to raise awareness of the need to fully respect the rights of persons with disabilities and their families, and to inspire different actors in society on what can be done to foster their full inclusion. The S.H.I.F.T. guide was developed by the COFACE Families Europe Disability Platform highlighting 5 objectives, 15 tools and 45 actions in the areas of Support, Human rights, Independence, Families and society Transition (S.H.I.F.T.).

Spotlight on the #ToysAndDiversity campaign

As every year in the pre-Christmas period, we trigger a social media campaign wave. 2016 was about stereotype hunting, 2017 year was about stereotype boycotting, 2018 provided checklists to think critically when buying toys. In 2019, on Universal Children’s Day, we launched “Toy stories”, the first Europe-wide survey on #ToysAndDiversity, highlighting the importance of letting children decide what to play with for their creativity, imagination, learning development and fun. This means not limiting children’s choices of which toys to play with by imposing on them predefined and stereotyped categories.
External cooperation

An important role of COFACE Families Europe is to function as a bridge between civil society organisations, research bodies and public authorities. We build on the experience of our member organisations and we listen to the needs of families at grassroots level and channel these to policy and decision makers at EU level, daily ensuring links between EU and local realities. In addition to consulting our member organisations, we regularly link up to other networks to exchange best practices, learn about other ways of solving societal problems, and grow our network, on which we can rely for our events, projects and advocacy work.

We are actively engaged in a number of official European Commission stakeholder groups, to which we bring our knowledge about the needs of the families across Europe. This is also the case with key Members of European Parliament. Finally, we also work closely with EU agencies and international bodies.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
- Disability Intergroup
- Child Rights Intergroup
- Interest Group on Carers
- Committees FEMM, EMPL

EUROPEAN COMMISSION STAKEHOLDER GROUPS
- European High-Level Group on Disability (EMPL)
- Financial Services Users Group (FISMA)
- Alliance to Better Protect Minors Online (CNECT)
- Stakeholder Group for the Fitness Check of EU Consumer Law (JUST)
- Multi-stakeholder platform on the implementation of the SDGs (SECGEN)

EU AGENCIES
- European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)
- European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)
- Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)
- European Banking Authority (EBA)
- European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)

INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES
- United Nations (special consultative status at the ECOSOC)
- Council of Europe
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
EU CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORKS

⭐ EU Work-life Balance coalition
⭐ Better Internet for Kids
⭐ eTwinning
⭐ EASPD cooperation (together with MHE, ENIL, EDF, Inclusion Europe)
⭐ EESC – Liaison Group
⭐ EU Alliance for Investing in children
⭐ European coalition to end violence against women and girls
⭐ European Disability Forum (European NGO Group)
⭐ European Expert Group on the transition from institutional to community-based settings
⭐ European Platform on Asylum and Migration
⭐ Finance Watch
⭐ Population Europe
⭐ Social Platform
⭐ Sustainable Development Goals Watch Europe

CORPORATE NETWORKS

⭐ ICT Coalition for Children Online

EU projects

FINISHED PROJECTS

⭐ WAF Project: Work Autonomy, Flexibility and Work Life Balance
⭐ FamiliesAndSocieties: studying diversity of family forms, relationships, and life courses in Europe
⭐ ENABLE: European Network Against Bullying in Learning and Leisure Environments
⭐ Delete Cyberbullying: European Awareness raising campaign on Cyberbullying
⭐ SIP-Bench III: Benchmarking of parental control tools for the online protection of children
⭐ Female breadwinner families in Europe: on the impact of earnings and distribution power in families
⭐ POSCON: Positive Online Content and Services for Children in Europe
⭐ EU CONVINCE – EU COMmon Values INClusive Education – Create an alliance of schools for inclusion

CURRENT PROJECTS

⭐ European Platform for Investing in Children
⭐ Digital Citizenship Education (with the Council of Europe)
⭐ EuroFam-Net. The pan-European Family Support Research Network
⭐ Euroship – Closing gaps in social citizenship
⭐ More Years Better Lives: on the challenges of demographic change
⭐ TRIPS – TRansport Innovation for disabled People needs Satisfaction
⭐ DigiGen – The Digital Generation
⭐ Ad-PHS: Advancing Personal and Household Services
⭐ EUSOCIALCIT
THE ROAD TO A NEW DEAL FOR FAMILIES OF TODAY

#AllFamiliesSpeakOut

ACCESSIBILITY: A Europe which promotes the participation of persons with disabilities and their families in all areas of life.

CHILD WELL-BEING: A Europe which invests in the health and education of children.

SOLIDARITY: A Europe which promotes intergenerational solidarity, with full support and recognition of the role of family carers.

RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS: A Europe which advances the rights of ALL families and their members.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES: A Europe which believes in equality between women and men, as a cornerstone for achieving reconciliation between family and professional life.

EMPOWERMENT: A Europe which gives a voice to ALL families to act as citizens, consumers, and workers, with strong support for European and national civil society organisations.

INTERNET FOR ALL: A Europe which harnesses the transformative power of technology.

SOCIAL INCLUSION: A Europe which tackles poverty and social exclusion of families and their members, through access to resources and community-based services.

SUSTAINABILITY: A Europe which wants to make the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals a reality.

At EU level, during the course of 2020-2024, the von der Leyen Commission must prove that it is actually committed to drive real change and ensure tangible results for Europe’s citizens in the next 5 years, all in context of the European Pillar of Social Rights and Sustainable Development Goals.
THE NETWORK

MEMBERS

Austria  ★
Belgium  ★
Bulgaria  ★
Croatia  ★
Cyprus  ★
Czech Republic  ★
Finland  ★
France  ★
Germany  ★
Greece  ★
Hungary  ★
Ireland  ★
Italy  ★
Latvia  ★
Luxembourg  ★
The Netherlands  ★
Portugal  ★
Slovakia  ★
Slovenia  ★
Switzerland  ★
United Kingdom  ★
WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK...

Our members for their enthusiasm and active involvement offline and online.

The Administrative Council members:
Elisabeth Potzinger (AT), Anemie Drieskens (BE), Christophe Cocu (BE), Eric de Wasch (BE), Mariela Modeva (BG), Ivana Hronova (CZ), Hervé Hoffmann (CH), Sven Iversen (DE), Antonia Torrens (EL), Jean-Bernard Audureau (ES), Norma Bernad (ES), Eija Koivuranta (FI), Mériaedc Rivière (FR), Virginie Durin (FR), Silvija Stanic (HR), Kinga Joo (HU), Shirley Power (IE), Gaetano Santonocito (IT), Roland Anen (LU), Gonçalo Solla (PT) Peter Grabner (SL), Stanislav Trnovec (SK), Lucy Peake (UK).

The Executive Bureau members:

Annemie Drieskens (BE) - President, Virginie Durin (FR) - Treasurer, Antonia Torrens (EL) - Vice-President and Jean-Bernard Audureau (ES) - Vice-President.

The COFACE Disability platform for the rights of persons with disabilities and their families, and namely the co-chairs of the platform: Sylvie Hirtz (APEMH) and Chantal Bruno (APF France Handicap).

Our Secretariat in Brussels is in charge of ensuring the organisation of all those events, in close cooperation with COFACE members and partners. The Secretariat is made up Elizabeth Gosme (Director), Florian Charron (Senior Project and Finance Manager), Isabell Wutz (Communication Officer), Martin Schmalzried (Senior Policy and Advocacy Manager), Pascual Martinez (Policy and Advocacy Officer), Irene Bertana (Policy and Advocacy Officer) and Nienke Broekstra (Project and Advocacy Officer). We would like to thank Arianna Giorgi, Rachel Muhorakeye, Merilyn Charalampous and Maureen Morlet for their great work and for joining the team on temporary projects.

And last but not least thank to all our partners, followers, fans, supporters, colleagues, friends, and of course, our main funder, the European Commission and in particular, DG Employment and Social Affairs.
Join us!

Is your organisation an NGO representing families or services to families?
Do you want to join an international community of practice to work collectively in the interest of families?
Do you want to become an expert on EU family matters?
Do you have a local innovation you would like to scale up across other EU countries?
Are you looking for best practices from other countries or seeking to set up new European projects?

If you are interested in any of the above, you’re in the right place.