

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT COORDINATOR ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

**Annual Report 2021 and Work Programme 2022
of the EP Coordinator on Children's Rights
Mrs Ewa Kopacz
Vice President of the European Parliament**

Summary of the EP Coordinator's on Children's Rights main events and work in 2021 within the statutory activities

Act as central contact point to monitor and actively promote children's rights in EU policies, ensuring coherence and visibility of Parliament's actions in this area

- ✓ Workshop on "Mainstreaming children's rights in the EU legislation under the Better Regulation Agenda" co-organized with Committee on Legal Affairs on 26 May 2021
- ✓ Hearing on "Child protection under the EU law" co-organized with Committee on Legal Affairs on 28 June 2021 to support the Committee's work on the own - initiative report on protection of the rights of the child in civil, administrative and family law proceedings 2021/2060 (INI)
- ✓ Debate on the mental health of children and adolescents post-COVID in the Committee on Environment, Health and Food Safety on 28 June 2021
- ✓ Public hearing "From lab to life: transforming childhood, adolescent and rare cancer care" organized within the activities of the Special Committee on Beating Cancer on 23 February 2021
- ✓ Cooperation with different parliamentary committees on child related issues
- ✓ Cooperation with other European institutions
- ✓ Cooperation with external actors active in the field of the promotion and protection of children's rights

Promote cross-border mediation in international family disputes

- ✓ Participation in AMICABLE project on the cross-border recognition and enforceability of mediated family agreements in the EU
- ✓ Encouraging and informing individual enquirers on the possible use of mediation in their particular cases

Be a central information point for citizens of the Member States in international parental child abduction or other cross-border family disputes

- ✓ Dealt with almost 70 inquiries coming from the citizens concerning child related issues
- ✓ Dealt with over 20 requests for information and collaboration submitted to the Office
- ✓ Addressed the systematic breaches of EU and international rules concerning cross-border family matters

✓ events and activities planned and realised

Annual Report 2021 and Work Programme 2022 of the EP Coordinator on Children's Rights

Background

The European Parliament Coordinator on Children's Rights mandate was established by a decision of the Bureau in 2018 to enable Parliament to have a comprehensive and coordinated approach on issues affecting children through the creation of a single point of contact both within the Parliament and externally in Parliament's work on children's rights. The position itself evolved from the European Parliament Mediator for International Child Abduction. The Coordinator remains a central contact point in the Parliament on parental child abduction and cross-border family matters, thereby keeping the link with its historical mandate and her particular relation with the Committee on Legal Affairs. President David Maria Sassoli appointed Vice President Ewa Kopacz to this position in July 2019.

Ms Ewa Kopacz was re-elected as a Vice President of the European Parliament in January 2022 and President Roberta Metsola asked her to continue in the role of EP Coordinator on Children's Rights until the end of the parliamentary term 2019-2024.

The Coordinator continued her activities despite the existing challenges and restrictions caused by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The Office made use of remote meetings and other digital technology solutions to successfully carry out the responsibilities of the Coordinator across the three areas of the Coordinator's mandate. The Coordinator presented her annual report 2020 and the work programme for 2021 to the Legal Affairs Committee on 22 February 2021.

This paper presents a summary of the main activities and achievements of 2021 together with the work programme for 2022 under the three headings reflecting the main responsibilities within the Coordinator's mandate.

Heading I. Coordination of the EP activities in the field of children's rights.

Heading II. International child abduction and other cross-border family disputes.

Heading III. Focusing on specific issues in the field of children's rights.

I. Coordination of the EP activities in the field of children rights

2021 activities summary

The obligation to protect and promote children's rights is enshrined in Treaties, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which all Member States ratified. Published in March 2021, the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child presents a detailed and comprehensive roadmap for steps to take at both EU and Member State level to protect and promote children's rights across European Union and beyond. In 2021, many parliamentary committees worked on a number of issues related to children's rights, in response to the EU Strategy but also to react to the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic and the related restrictions had on children. The Coordinator undertook certain initiatives seeking to embed the mainstreaming of children's rights within the institution during 2021 engaging in cooperation with relevant parliamentary committees and Members active in the field of children's rights.

Cooperation with parliamentary committees (legislative/non - legislative work)

In 2021, the Coordinator engaged directly with some of the key committees with competences in the area of children's rights.

Cooperation with Committee on Legal Affairs

The Coordinator continued her special and close relations with the Committee on Legal Affairs reflected in the ongoing cooperation on the legislative competences of this committee, namely family law issues, with a particular focus on cross-border procedures on custody and parental child abduction, mediation and alternative disputes resolution and better law making. During 2021, the Office of the Coordinator continued to work closely with the Committee on these topics.

J Workshop on "Mainstreaming children's rights in the EU legislation under the Better Regulation Agenda"¹

Following the request from the EP Coordinator, Coordinators in the Committee on Legal Affairs decided to hold a workshop on the mainstreaming children's rights in the EU legislation to explore the possibility to embed in the existing rules and guidelines on impact assessment concerning new and reviewed legislative proposals, a "child rights" test. The workshop also focused on children's right to participate in the decision-making process and how those rights could be reflected at EU level. The work carried

¹ For detailed information, please see Annex I.

out by the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) in the field of child rights impact assessment (CRIA) was presented, together with a practical example of CRIA in the national case study from Flanders (Belgium). Finally, experts from the European Commission outlined how the current elements of the better regulation agenda can include a child rights perspective in EU legislation.

J Public Hearing on “Child protection under the EU law”²

To follow-up the notion of ensuring child friendly justice systems in the EU, one of the main pillars of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, the Coordinator turned to the Committee on Legal Affairs to co-organise a public hearing and to invite experts in the field of justice and children’s rights. The main purpose of this hearing was to investigate the needs of children who are involved in civil, family or administrative proceedings and to explore how to achieve best practice in addressing these needs through EU law and policy. This event also addressed cross-border cooperation between judicial systems and other authorities involved in proceedings concerning children. Finally, the hearing explored how mediation, as a child-friendly tool, can help solve family disputes including those of a cross-border nature. The outcome and discussion from this hearing supports the work on the own-initiative report entitled "Protecting the rights of the child in civil, administrative and family law proceedings" (rapporteur: Adrián Vázquez Lázara) sponsored by the Committee.

The Office stays continuously at the disposal of the Committee to collaborate and support its Secretariat on issues related to children’s rights, mediation and cross-border family law.

Cooperation with Committee on Environment, Health and Food Safety

In line with her commitment to highlight the topic of mental health among young EU citizens, the Coordinator turned to the Chair of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee with a request to organise a debate on the mental health of children and adolescents post - Covid. The exchange of views, in the presence of the European Parliament Coordinator on Children’s Rights, took place during the Committee meeting on 28 June 2021³. During this debate, the European Commission DG SANTE and DG JUST shared the outcomes of their conference “Mental health and the pandemic: living, caring, acting!”⁴ together with the key elements embedded in the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child on mental health. The OECD presented the main findings from its research “Supporting young people’s mental health through the Covid -19 crisis”⁵. The presentations were followed by a discussion with the Coordinator and Members of ENVI Committee.

² For detailed information, please see Annex II.

³ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/ENVI/OJ/2021/06-28/1234813EN.pdf

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/health/other-pages/basic-page/mental-health-and-pandemic-living-caring-acting_en

⁵ <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/supporting-young-people-s-mental-health-through-the-covid-19-crisis-84e143e5/>

Cooperation with Committee on Petitions

The Coordinator and her Office has an established day-to-day cooperation with the Committee on Petitions. In 2021, the Coordinator received 10 petitions transferred to her by the PETI Chair, based on the decision of the PETI Coordinators and Members. Most of the petitions are submitted for information only. In one particular case of child sexual abuse, the Coordinator was requested to participate in the debate on the petition during the committee meeting, which she actively did.

Cooperation with the Special Committee on Beating Cancer

From the beginning of her mandate, the Coordinator remains involved in a number of activities relating to childhood cancer. She also engaged with the BECA Committee on this topic and took part in the public hearing “*From lab to life: transforming childhood, adolescent and rare cancer care*”⁶ where the treatments and research on paediatric cancer was discussed with experts. There was also a panel on the rights and needs of childhood cancer patients outlined by representatives of different organisations supporting patients, survivors and families.

Cooperation with bodies/institutions active in/outside the EP in the field of children rights

During 2021, Institutions and stakeholders across the EU focused their work on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the related measures to contain the spread of the virus had on children and their rights, especially in the field of education, physical and mental health and safety in light of the increased statistics on violence and abuse against children. Furthermore, the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child gave a new impetus and focus to the protection and promotion of children’s rights, including the emphasis on child participation.

Cooperation with the European Commission

-)] Cooperation with the Office of European Commission Coordinator on the rights of the child: the Office of the EP Coordinator established close relations with the EC Coordinator resulting in exchange of information and cooperation on the planned activities of both Institutions.
-)] The Coordinator’s Office participated in meetings of the Commission’s informal network on the rights of the child that are organised by the EC Coordinator on a regular basis with national experts in the field of children’s rights.
-)] European Union Visitors Programme - the Coordinator’s Office participates in EUVP meeting young professionals from countries outside the EU to discuss the activities and

⁶ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/BECA/DV/2021/02-23/BECA_draft_programme_hearing_paediatric_rare_cancers_EN.pdf

duties of the EP Coordinator on Children's Rights and child related initiatives undertaken by the parliamentary committees in the European Parliament.

Cooperation with the Council of Europe

In 2021, The Coordinator and her Office established closer contacts with the Council of Europe, which resulted in cooperation and contributions on two particular reports:

- J Report on *The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children's rights*⁷ of the Committee of Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe - rapporteur Baroness Doreen E. Massey.
- J Draft Report on *The right to be heard: child participation, a foundation for democratic societies*⁸ of the Committee of Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe - rapporteur Baroness Doreen E. Massey.

Cooperation with NGO's, stakeholders and experts

- J Ongoing collaboration with the European Network of Ombudsperson for Children (ENOC):
 - The Coordinator addressed the ENOC's 25th Annual Conference dedicated to the topic of *Covid-19 - Learning for the future* that took place in a hybrid mode in Athens in September 2021⁹.
 - Following the Coordinator's suggestion, the Chairperson of ENOC Mr Bruce Adamson presented the work and research findings of the network on child rights impact assessment (CRIA) during the workshop in Legal Affairs Committee¹⁰.
- J Joint ENOC-UNICEF initiative: the Office of the Coordinator took part in a launching event of the joint ENOC-UNICEF initiative on a multi-country impact assessment of COVID-19 states' measures on children's rights to protection. The project aims to support some Ombudspersons for Children's offices in Europe and Central Asia to complete specific CRIAs related to COVID-19. The event took place in February 2021.
- J Support to the euCONSENT project: euCONSENT is a consortium of representatives of tech-companies and civil society organizations working towards making the internet a safer place for children through the development of an age-verification and parental consent tool across EU Member States. The project's objective is to protect children from harm online whilst ensuring that they can access the benefits of the internet too.
- J Support to O.S.C.A.R (Online Safety for Children and Relatives) project: the project founded by Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society aims to ensure that children

⁷ <https://pace.coe.int/en/files/29244/html>

⁸ <https://assembly.coe.int/LifeRay/SOC/Pdf/TextesProvisoires/2021/20211201-ChildParticipation-EN.pdf>

⁹ http://enoc.eu/?page_id=4313

¹⁰ Please consult Annex I.

and young people are informed and conscious users of technology, and their safety and wellbeing is protected while online. This project seeks to implement the UN International Telecommunication Union 2020 guidelines on Child Online Protection into the Maltese national legislation and to introduce practical actions and measures to protect children and young people from online abuse and cyberbullying in Malta. The project also proposed to develop a best practice toolkit that could be adopted by other States in the EU.

-) Continued cooperation with the European Society for Paediatric Oncology, SIOP Europe, on Gold September project and work on the final report of the Special Committee on Beating Cancer.
-) Ongoing cooperation with Missing Children Europe in the field of children's rights, parental child abduction and mediation.
-) Engaged with academia in the field of child-friendly justice.
-) Providing information and materials to researchers on the Parliament's activities in the field of children rights.
-) Participation in various fora:
 - The Office of the Coordinator attended a seminar hosted by TikTok entitled "*Safety by design: Sharing insights on protecting teens online*" on 30 November 2021. This seminar presented research findings from the report "Exploring effective prevention education responses to dangerous online challenges" Praesidio Safeguarding November 2021, commissioned by TikTok to enhance understanding on online challenges and suicide or self-harm hoaxes.
 - The Office of the Coordinator attended the Fundamental Rights Forum on 10-11 October 2021, Vienna, Austria (online). The Forum addressed two overarching topics - young people and Europe's future and Europe's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Modernisation of the website

In 2021, the work on the modernisation of the website of the Coordinator within the official European Parliament website continued. The webpage of the Coordinator now contains a new section "*Latest information*" where citizens are informed on the most important formal activities of the Coordinator and on new developments in the field of the rights of the child at EU level.

Coordinator's Agenda 2022 in the field of coordination of the EP activities in the field of children's rights

The Coordinator plans to continue to cooperate closely with relevant parliamentary committees to facilitate the implementation of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child.

In collaboration with Committee on Legal Affairs, the Coordinator's priority will be to focus on the implementation of the new rules on cross-border custody and parental child abduction cases under Brussels II a Regulation that will be applicable from 1 August 2022 and future legislative proposals in the field of cross-border family law and mediation. The Coordinator intends also to explore further the possibility to introduce the Child Rights Test into the impact assessment of legislative files.

The Coordinator will continue to engage with experts and organisations in the field of children's rights to ensure that the issues relevant to the promotion and protection of children's rights will remain high on Parliament's agenda.

II. International child abduction and other cross-border family disputes

2021 activities summary

This part of the Coordinator's mandate remains a core aspect of her work. Through her Office's direct contact with European citizens, the Coordinator is uniquely positioned to understand and react, within her mandate, to the difficulties faced by parents and children in cross-border family disputes across the European Union, in particular parental child abductions. In 2021, the Coordinator continued to react to breaches of EU and international law including the 1980 Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and Council Regulation 2201/2003 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in matrimonial matters and matters of parental responsibility.

Individual requests addressed by citizens to the Coordinator¹¹

Similar to previous years, in 2021 the majority of requests addressed to the Coordinator came from citizens involved in complex cross-border legal proceedings that were highly conflictual and often long running. In such cases, the parent may have experienced difficulty in seeking legal remedy or long delays in seeking resolution of the dispute. In cases where parents addressed requests at the early stages of the dispute in cross-border custody cases or international child abduction, the Office provided information on the possible steps to take and on relevant services and authorities in the Member States or third countries to contact.

During the period January 2021 - December 2021, the Office dealt with 38 cases of international parental child abduction or other cross-border family disputes. A decline in the number of individual queries than received in previous years, that could be a result of the

¹¹ For statistics on individual inquiries, please consult the Annex III

increased information provided on the webpage of the Coordinator. However, the issues raised remain unchanged - the following problems are identified in regards to cases:

-) long delays of cross-border procedures;
-) difficulty in seeking the enforcement of court decisions to return the child to his/her habitual residence following a parental abduction;
-) difficulties in finding legal representation experienced in cross-border family disputes often resulting in insufficient or even incorrect legal advice received by the parent;
-) insufficient financial means at the parent's disposal, or exhausted legal aid, meaning that the parent could no longer afford to pay for a lawyer and the associated costs involved in pursuing redress in cross-border family legal disputes;
-) denial of access rights by the parent with whom the child lives resulting in little or no contact for the left-behind parent with his/her child;
-) Covid-19 pandemic restrictions still negatively influence proceedings, especially hearings, and the possibility to exercise the access and visiting rights;

With the exception of Covid-19 pandemic, the issues experienced by parents during this period are similar to those experienced in previous years.

With more recognition within the Institution, the Office observed an increasing number of referrals regarding family cases of a cross-border nature transferred by Members or other EP bodies with a request for advice and/or information on the possible steps to be taken.

During the period January 2021 to December 2021, citizens addressed the Office on 29 other issues relating to children's rights. Most of them concerned domestic family disputes involving children, including access and custody rights and placement of the child outside of the family. Other inquiries concerned issues like violence and child abuse, and questions of residence permit and identity documents. While the Coordinator does not have competence to intervene in domestic matters, her Office tries to provide information and refer citizens to the relevant authorities or services in the requester's State in order to react to all inquiries.

During the last year, the Office of the Coordinator observed more interest in the work and activities of the EP Coordinator. The Office experienced an increased number of requests from academics, researchers, journalists and national/local non-profit organisations and networks of legal professionals on the international and EU legal framework, possible collaboration and on the work of the Coordinator within the European Parliament. The Office was invited to bilateral meetings with Central Authorities to discuss cooperation and cases of cross-border abduction.

Data protection measures

Throughout 2021, the Office carried out a review of its working methods to ensure the protection of the personal data and privacy of citizens who contact the Office are fully in line

with the highest standards set out in Regulation (EU) 2018/1725¹². The Office worked closely with the Data Protection Officer in the European Parliament and his team to assess and put in place measures to safeguard the personal data and privacy of citizens. This project was completed and approved by the Data Protection Officer in December 2021.

Promotion of the international and EU legal frameworks and their proper implementation in cross-border family law

The Coordinator continued to raise awareness about the EU and international legal framework in the field of cross-border family law and to address the outstanding issues concerning the proper implementation of the existing rules.

-) The Coordinator co-organised with the Committee on Legal Affairs the public hearing on “Child protection under EU law”.
-) The Office of the Coordinator continued to develop and foster excellent cooperation with colleagues in the European Commission, especially with DG JUSTICE on cross-border family law issues.
-) The Office of the Coordinator continued to develop and collaborate with networks of experts, judges, lawyers, mediators and academics in international family law, in particular on parental child abduction and mediation.
-) The Coordinator gave her support to the work of the Parental Alienation Study Group (PASG) and the Office attended the 4th annual conference of PASG entitled “*Protecting family ties after separation*” in Brussels on 9 -10 September 2021.
-) The Coordinator addressed a symposium to launch the publication of *International Handbook on Child Participation in Family Law* on 15 October 2021¹³. The Coordinator stressed the importance of the right of the child to be heard in family law proceedings and on the benefits of mediation in her address entitled “*Promotion and protection of children's rights in cross-border family proceedings - from the point of view of the European Parliament Coordinator for the Rights of the Child*”.

Promotion of cross-border mediation

The Coordinator continued to advocate for the use of mediation in disputes involving children in cross-border family cases, in particular among those most closely involved in such disputes, i.e. judges, lawyers and national central authorities. During the year 2021, the Coordinator continued to highlight the importance of mediation to help parents reach agreement in the best interests of their child.

¹² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/LSU/?uri=CELEX:32018R1725>

¹³ <https://www.uu.nl/en/events/international-handbook-on-child-participation-in-family-law>

- J AMICABLE project.¹⁴ The aims of the project are twofold, firstly to develop a best practice model to introduce mediation within child abduction proceedings and secondly to develop a best practice toolkit to facilitate the recognition and enforceability of mediated agreements in child abduction, relocation and parental responsibility cases in the EU. The Office of the Coordinator participated in the project as part of the Steering Committee. The Coordinator presented the opening lecture on “*The importance of mediation as an alternative method to resolve family disputes in the context of parental abduction*” at the national seminar of the Amicable Project in Wrocław, Poland in March 2021 and gave the welcoming address to the Final Conference of the Amicable project held in Berlin, Germany in June 2021.
- J Accord project. The Coordinator provided her support to the Organisation MiKK for their “Accord” project that aims at providing advisory services on mediation in custody disputes and child abduction cases for parents and outreach to strengthen and promote judicial co-operation in the EU.
- J The Office of the Coordinator addressed the inaugural conference of the organisation Justice for Minors Romania on cross-border mediation and children involved in legal proceedings that took place on 6 December 2021.
- J Where appropriate, the Office of the Coordinator advocated for the use of mediation in individual cases addressed to the Office.

Coordinator’s Agenda 2022 in the field of international child abduction and other cross-border family disputes

Guided by her mandate, the Coordinator and her Office will continue to provide requesting parents with information in cross-border family matters and address the shortcomings in the implementation of the existing rules through diplomatic interventions, where deemed necessary. She will continue to promote cross-border family mediation.

The recast of the Brussels IIa Regulation will come into force in August 2022. The Coordinator plans to engage in a dialog and possible cooperation with the Commission, European Judicial Training Network and the Legal Affairs Committee in order to support the implementation of the new rules on cross-border parental responsibility disputes and parental child abduction cases.

She will also seek to cooperate closely with relevant partners within the European institutions to follow-up on the results and heritage of the AMICABLE project with the view to address possible legal solutions in the area of the cross-border mediation.

¹⁴ <https://www.amicable-eu.org/>

III. Special issues to be addressed by the Coordinator in the field of children's rights

2021 activities summary and plans for 2022

As outlined in her 2020 Strategy paper, besides her statutory obligations the Coordinator continued to highlight certain issues relating to children's rights and wellbeing. The focus of the Coordinator's activities was on:

-) the physical and mental health of children and adolescence, and
-) child rights and safety in the online environment.

As both topics increasingly attracted public attention since the Covid-19 pandemic emerged, the Coordinator sought to bring these issues and challenges into Parliament's spotlight¹⁵ and plans to continue those activities in 2022, engaging with all relevant actors and bodies both inside and outside the European Parliament.

¹⁵ Please refer to the part on cooperation with parliamentary committees and with NGOs and stakeholders.

ANNEX I

WORKSHOP

POLICY DEPARTMENT FOR CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND
CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS



Wednesday 26.05.2021 - 14:15-15:45

JOZSEF ANTALL BUILDING – ROOM **REMOTE & JAN 6Q1**

Webstreaming: <https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/webstreaming>

Mainstreaming children's rights in the EU legislation under the Better Regulation Agenda



- ADRIÁN VÁZQUEZ LÁZARA, MEP, CHAIR OF JURI COMMITTEE

- EWA KOPACZ, MEP, VICE-PRESIDENT & EP COORDINATOR ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Committee on Legal Affairs

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Mainstreaming children's rights in the EU legislation under the Better Regulation Agenda

WORKSHOP FOR THE COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AFFAIRS

26 May 2021, 14.15–15.45

JAN 6Q1 & remote participation

DRAFT PROGRAMME

14.15–14.30 Opening of the workshop by the JURI Chair **Adrián VÁZQUEZ LÁZARA**, MEP

Welcome words by **Ewa KOPACZ**, Vice-President & EP Coordinator on Children's Rights

14.30–15.00 **Presentations by experts** **Topics**

14.30–14.50 **Bruce Adamson**
Children and Young People
Commissioner, Scotland
Chairperson of ENOC
*Work of the European Network of
Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) in the field
of Children's Rights Impact Assessment and
child participation*

14.50–15.00 **Leen Ackaert**
Policy Advisor
The Flemish Office of the Children's
Rights Commissioner, Belgium
*Children's Rights Impact Assessment in the
Flemish jurisdiction*

15.00–15.15 **Intervention of the Commission**

Antonina Cipollone
Head of Unit
DG General Secretariat
Unit A2
*Addressing children's rights in the impact
assessments and evaluations of EU legislation*

Valeria Setti
Commission Coordinator for the
rights of the child
*Tools for child participation in the EU decision-
making process under the new Strategy on the
Rights of the Child*

15.15–15.35 **Questions and answers**

15.35–15.45 Concluding remarks by **Ewa KOPACZ**, Vice-President & EP Coordinator on Children's Rights

Closing words by JURI Chair **Adrián VÁZQUEZ LÁZARA**, MEP

ANNEX II

PUBLIC HEARING

COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AFFAIRS

MONDAY 28 JUNE 2021 – 16.45-18.45

JOZSEF ANTALL BUILDING – ROOM **4Q1** AND INTERACTIO



Child Protection under EU law



**Adrián Vázquez Lázara, MEP,
Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs with
Ewa Kopacz, MEP, Vice President & EP Coordinator
on Children's Rights**

JURI Committee

Public Hearing

Child protection under EU law

Monday, 28 June 2021, 16.45 - 18.45

Room: József Antall JAN 4Q1, semi - remote

Draft programme

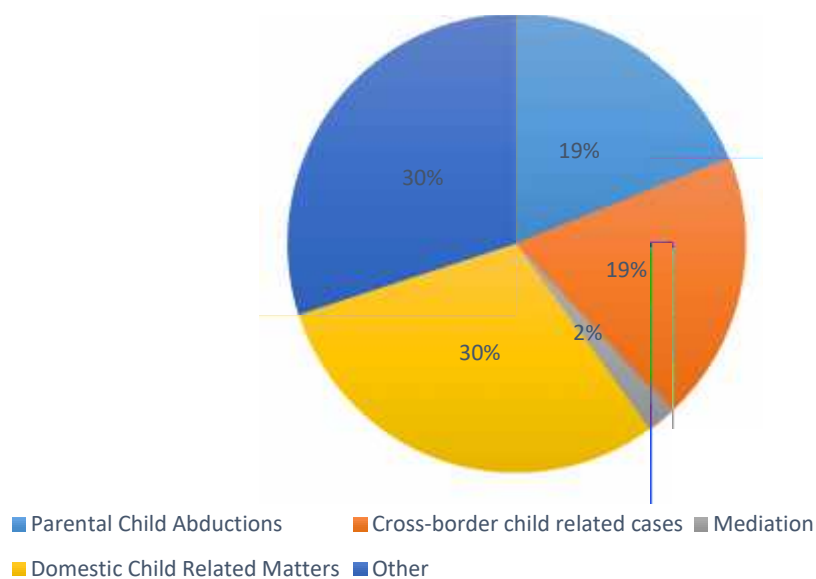
16.45-16.55	<p>Welcome by Mr Adrián Vázquez Lázara, Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs</p> <p>Opening remarks by Mrs Ewa Kopacz, Vice-president and EP Coordinator on Children's Rights</p>
16.55-17.20	<p>Recognizing the needs: How to guarantee the rights of the child in civil, family and administrative proceedings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr Marek Michalak - <i>Chairperson of the International Janusz Korczak Association, Chairperson of the Janusz Korczak Institute on the Rights of the Child in Poland, Commissioner for Children's Rights in Poland (2008-2018)</i> (12 min)• Ms María Luisa Carcedo - <i>senator in Spanish Congress, first High Commissioner for the Fight against Child Poverty in Spain (2018), Minister of Health, Consumer Affairs and Social Welfare (2018-2020)</i> (12 min)
17.20-17.45	<p>Addressing the needs: How to make justice child-friendly?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Francisco Javier Forcada Miranda - <i>Senior Judge in Court of Appeal in Madrid, Head of Section International Relations Service at the Spanish General Council of the Judiciary, Spanish representative to International Hague Network of Judges, Spanish contact point at the European Judicial Network in civil and commercial matters</i> (12 min)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Geoffrey Shannon - <i>Senior Counsel, Solicitor and senior lecturer in Child Law and Family Law at the Law Society of Ireland, a leading authority and internationally recognised expert in child and family law and in child protection, Government appointed Special Rapporteur on Child Protection Ireland (2006 - 2019), Chair of the Independent Child Death Review to examine the deaths of 196 children in state care in Ireland (2000 - 2010)</i> (12 min)
17.45-18.00	<p>Searching for amicable solutions: Can mediation be the best option for children caught up in family disputes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juliane Hirsch - <i>LL.M., Independent Expert on PIL and International Family Law, Family Mediator and Trainer</i> (12 min)
18.00-18.40	Q&A
18.40-18.45	Closing remarks by Adrián Vázquez Lázara, Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs

ANNEX III

Statistical overview of the requests for information by citizen's to the European Parliament Coordinator on children's rights - January - December 2021

Subject of queries directed to the EP Coordinator January - December 2021



Queries relating to Cross Border Disputes within the EU Member States or With a Third Country.

