

# What COFACE Families Europe stands for

**Easy-to-read text**

****‘Easy-to-read’ is information

that is written in a simple and clear way

so that people with intellectual disabilities

and all people can understand it.

You can find more information about easy-to-read

at [www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read](http://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read).

## Who we are

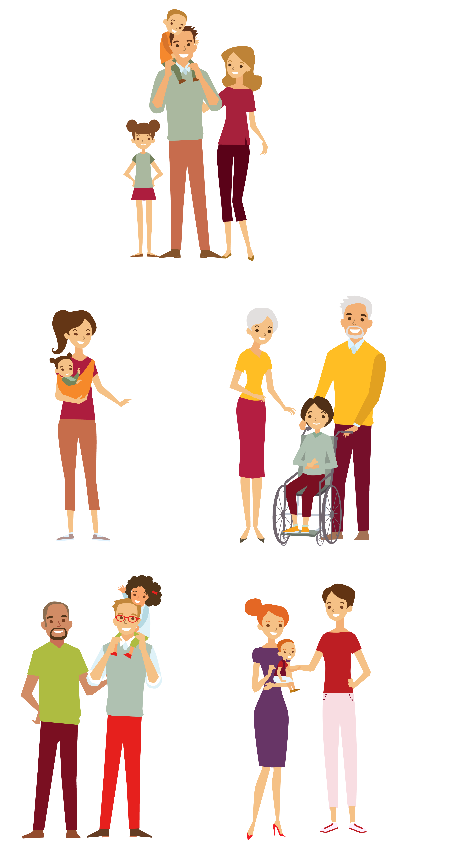
We are ‘COFACE Families Europe’.

We are an organisation that works for the rights

of all families in Europe since 1958.

In short, we are called ‘COFACE’.

At COFACE, we want to make sure   
that all families can enjoy   
a good, healthy and safe life.



We often think of families   
as parents and children.

But families can have many forms.

For example,   
there are children who grow up   
only with one parent or with their grandparents.

There are also children who grow up   
with two fathers or two mothers.

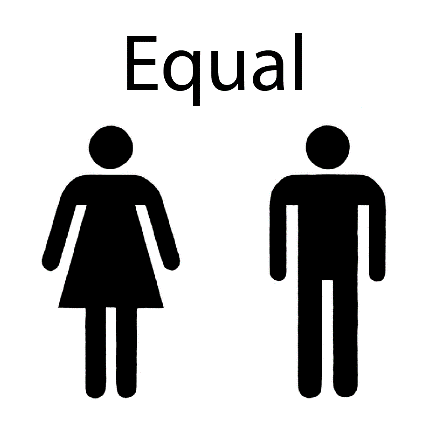
At COFACE, we believe that:

* All forms of families are important

and they have the same rights.

No family should be left out

just because it has a different form.

* Men and women are equal   
  and they have the same rights and duties   
  when they become parents.
* All families have the right   
  to enjoy a good life.
* All families have the right   
  to speak up for themselves.
* Countries should give support to families in need  
  so they can have a good life and take part in the community.
* It is important that family members of different ages   
  can learn from each other.

## Our members

COFACE has more than 50 members   
in 23 countries in Europe.

Our members are organisations which work

to help families to have a good and safe life

and especially those in higher risk of being left out.

For example:

* Families who are very poor.
* Single parents who raise their child alone.
* Families with children with disabilities.
* Families who live in places away from the community

and do not have easy access to hospitals

and other important things.

[You can check the list of our members per country   
by clicking here](https://www.coface-eu.org/about-2/members/)

## How we work

Once per year, we organise a big meeting with all our members.

This way we can talk about important topics for families in Europe

and plan our work to make things better.

We call this meeting **‘General Assembly’.**

We also have:

* The **‘Administrative Council’**.   
  This is a group of people   
  who make decisions for COFACE.
* The **‘Executive Bureau’**

This is a group of people who work   
to make sure these decisions   
are put into practice.



* The **‘Secretariat’**

This is a group of people who work   
in our office in Brussels  
and do the every-day work of COFACE.

In 1998, we made   
the **‘COFACE Disability Platform’**.  
This is a group of more than 20 organisations that came together to make things better   
for people with disabilities and their families.   
For example, they push countries to:

* Listen to the needs   
  of people with disabilities and their families  
  and respect their rights.
* Give them the right support to enjoy their lives   
  and make their own choices.

## What we work for

At COFACE, we work to make sure that countries:

* Understand the needs of all families,
* Respect their rights,
* Support them to have a good life.

We want to have a society   
in which all families can take part and enjoy their rights.

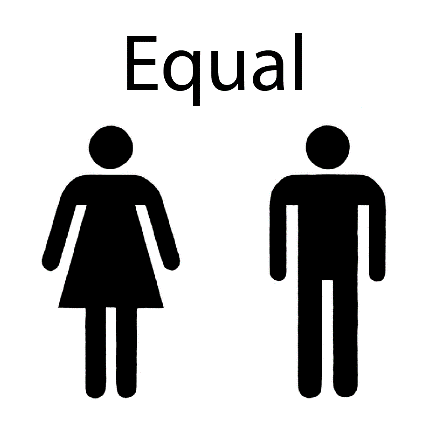
We want to make sure that:

* Parents who work get the right support

to be able to take care of their families.

For example, they should be able   
to take time off work   
when their children are sick.

* Women and men who are parents

have the same rights and duties.

It should not be expected   
only from one of them

to care for their child.

* People with disabilities and their families

get the support they need

to be independent   
and make their own choices in life.



* All children have the chance   
  to go to school and take part in activities   
  with other children.

They should not be left out

if they have a disability, they are poor

or anything else.



* Children have the right to grow   
  in a safe and healthy family and society.
* Countries spend their money   
  to make things better   
  for their people and the planet.
* Countries help families in need

like those who are very poor or left out.

* All families have access to technology

like computers or tablets.

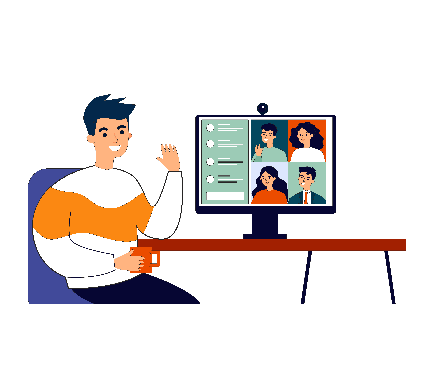
Using technology can help them

to work, study, learn new skills   
and stay in contact with other people.

## Join us!

At COFACE, we think it is important to come together,

share our experiences and learn from each other.

That is why in January 2021 we started organising the ‘Breakfast Bytes Webinars’.

These are meetings that happen online   
every month.

People working with families and children   
talk in these meetings about their experience and explain why it is important for families   
to get the right support.

Everyone who is interested in these topics   
can take part in these meetings.

[You can find more information   
about these online meetings here](https://www.coface-eu.org/breakfast-bytes-webinar-series-2021-on-family-supports/)

## More information

If you want to know more about our work

or if you have any questions,

you can send us an email at

[secretariat@coface-eu.org](mailto:secretariat@coface-eu.org).