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report online

Promoting access to quality family support

2024

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

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Preliminary words

As we open the pages of our 2024 annual report, we look back on a year marked by transformation, innovation, and advocacy for a strong social Europe, that we all dream of, where no family is left behind.

At COFACE Families Europe, we continue to be the voice of families of all shapes and sizes, connecting grassroots realities with European policy making. Our network remains a vibrant, pluralistic community, expanding even further with the welcome addition of new member organisations from France, Georgia, Malta and North Macedonia. Their unique perspectives have enriched our common mission to shape a better Europe that supports and values every family.

In 2024, we invested significant energy in consolidating the European Family Lab, our incubator for innovation in education, policy and research. From advancing our L.I.N.K. educational programmes to developing new tools for NGOs, and strengthening our European Observatory on Family Policy, we translated our values into actionable resources. We released new outputs like the European childcare gap factsheet, and the continued success of our Breakfast Byte webinars gave greater visibility to family support work of COFACE members in Poland and Spain.

2024 was also a critical year for European democracy.

In preparation of the European elections, COFACE assessed the EU's impact on families and issued a State of the European Union for Families, paired with a strong Call to Action for the new Parliament and Commission to invest in effective family policies and an economy which cares. Our joint advocacy with the Child Rights Action Group helped preserve vital political spaces, such as the European Parliament Intergroup on Child Rights.

The challenges faced by families today are huge! Our policy work was more relevant than ever. We advocated tirelessly for the full implementation of the Work-Life Balance Directive, the European Child Guarantee, and the broader social agenda through the European care alliance that we launched early 2024. We updated key position papers on digitalisation, complementing this work with a new policy brief on supporting families in the digital era,

which highlights the work of COFACE members in this field. We strengthened our COFACE Disability European Charter for Family Carers, launching a public European debate in the EU Committee of the Regions on the state of family carers today. We contributed to crucial discussions on quality of early childhood education and care with a new COFACE position paper focusing on parental engagement in these services.

Throughout the year, we convened experts, families, and decision-makers in numerous events – from Brussels to Dublin, Vilnius to Zagreb. Our seminars, workshops and roundtables addressed the complex intersections of lifelong learning, inclusive labour markets, child protection online, and work-life balance, underlining our cross-sectoral approach to family wellbeing and resilience.

Together with our members, we worked through online working groups and capacity-building meetings on key themes like inclusive communication, financial inclusion, transnational families, and social services funding, always ensuring that family voices were heard in shaping Europe's future. Our actions were grounded in the major EU strategies that guide our work: from the European Pillar of Social Rights, to the European Care Strategy, the Disability Rights and Gender Equality Strategies.

None of this would be possible without the collective energy of our COFACE members and partners. With the newly elected Executive Bureau and Administrative Council in September 2024, the General Assembly, COFACE Disability platform, and the dedicated Secretariat in Brussels, we move forward in unity and with purpose, bringing everyone with us, and working toward a more just, inclusive, and family-supportive Europe.

Antonia Torrens, President &
Annemie Drieskens, outgoing President



INTRODUCTION

About us

Founded in 1958 and with 50+ member organisations in 25 European countries, COFACE Families Europe is a network which represents millions of families, volunteers, and professionals. Our areas of work include social and family policy, education, disability rights, gender equality, child rights, migration, consumer issues as well as the impact of technological

developments on families. 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.

COFACE Families Europe aims to achieve several positive overarching outcomes for families and society.





OUR MISSION

COFACE - FAMILIES EUROPE is a network promoting the well-being, health and security of families and their members in a changing society and serves as a trusted entity for family mainstreaming and for the voice/needs of families in the EU and beyond.

OUR VISION

COFACE Families Europe works 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, be fully included in the community, and enjoy their family life in dignity and harmony.

OUR VALUES

In a spirit of pluralism, working in the name of all types of families, COFACE Families Europe is rooted in a set of six core values:

Non-discrimination:

COFACE-Families Europe recognises all family forms.

Equal opportunities:

COFACE-Families Europe believes equality between women and men is a cornerstone for the reconciliation of family and professional life.

Respect of human rights:

COFACE-Families Europe seeks to advance the rights of families and their members to a decent quality of life.

Empowerment:

COFACE-Families Europe aims to give a voice to all family members as citizens, consumers and workers.

Social inclusion:

COFACE-Families Europe advocates for the shaping of policies to tackle poverty and social exclusion of families and their members.

Solidarity:

COFACE-Families Europe promotes intergenerational solidarity between family members.

COFACE views the family as a multi-faceted, dynamic and intergenerational entity coming in different shapes and sizes. We advocate for a systemic two-generation approach in policy-making to support families and children in different life transitions from birth to old age.



Key activities

REPRESENT ✓

Representing COFACE member organisations towards the European and international institutions (UN, OECD, Council of Europe), and towards other organisations operating at European level (EU agencies and stakeholder groups, NGO alliances, forums, platforms).

ADVOCATE ✓

Carrying out advocacy campaigns for families and family organisations wherever the interests of families and their members are at stake.

COORDINATE ✓

Coordinating and facilitating projects, programmes, activities and initiatives of member organisations, bringing a European dimension to their local initiatives to drive change for families.

MONITOR ✓

Closely following EU and international initiatives, assessing the negative and positive impacts for families. Assess emerging family trends across Europe through studies in various fields, and making the link with EU/international initiatives.

NETWORK ✓

Establishing networking systems for the continuing exchange of information and actions with member organisations on matters arising within the European Union, as well as reaching out to individuals who support COFACE's mission.

INITIATE ✓

Developing new research, projects, conferences, seminars, trainings and study days, and putting in motion programmes of action at European level, in partnership with other organisations.

EDUCATE ✓

Creating a wide range of tools to support life-long learning of families and professionals.

RESEARCH ✓

Collecting data through different channels to better understand policies and practices to support families of today.



2024 highlights

JANUARY

- EU Policy webinar on the **European Child Guarantee**
- **European Care advocacy alliance meeting** with the Belgian presidency of the EU

MARCH

- Media statement for **International Women's Rights Day on 8th March**, focusing on vulnerabilities of single motherhood
- **Online capacity-building for COFACE members** on EU funding and social services
- **Launch of rEUsilience Policy Lab** on measures to boost resilience of families

FEBRUARY

- **COFACE working group on the Child Sexual Abuse Regulation**, Berlin, Germany
- **Media statement for Safer Internet Day**: Time for the European Union to adopt strong rules to protect children from online sexual abuse

APRIL

- **European expert meeting on bringing the family perspective to the education field** (Dublin, Ireland)
- **Study seminar on child abuse in the digital world** (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Review of the **COFACE Disability European Charter for Family Carers**



MAY

- **State of the European Union for families: COFACE assessment of EU initiatives for families from 2019-2024**
- **COFACE welcomes new member organisations** from Georgia, France, Malta, North Macedonia
- **PATHS2INCLUDE policy forum on inclusive labour markets**, Hannover, Germany

JULY

- **COFACE participates in European Commission consultation** on the implementation of the Digital Services Act

JUNE

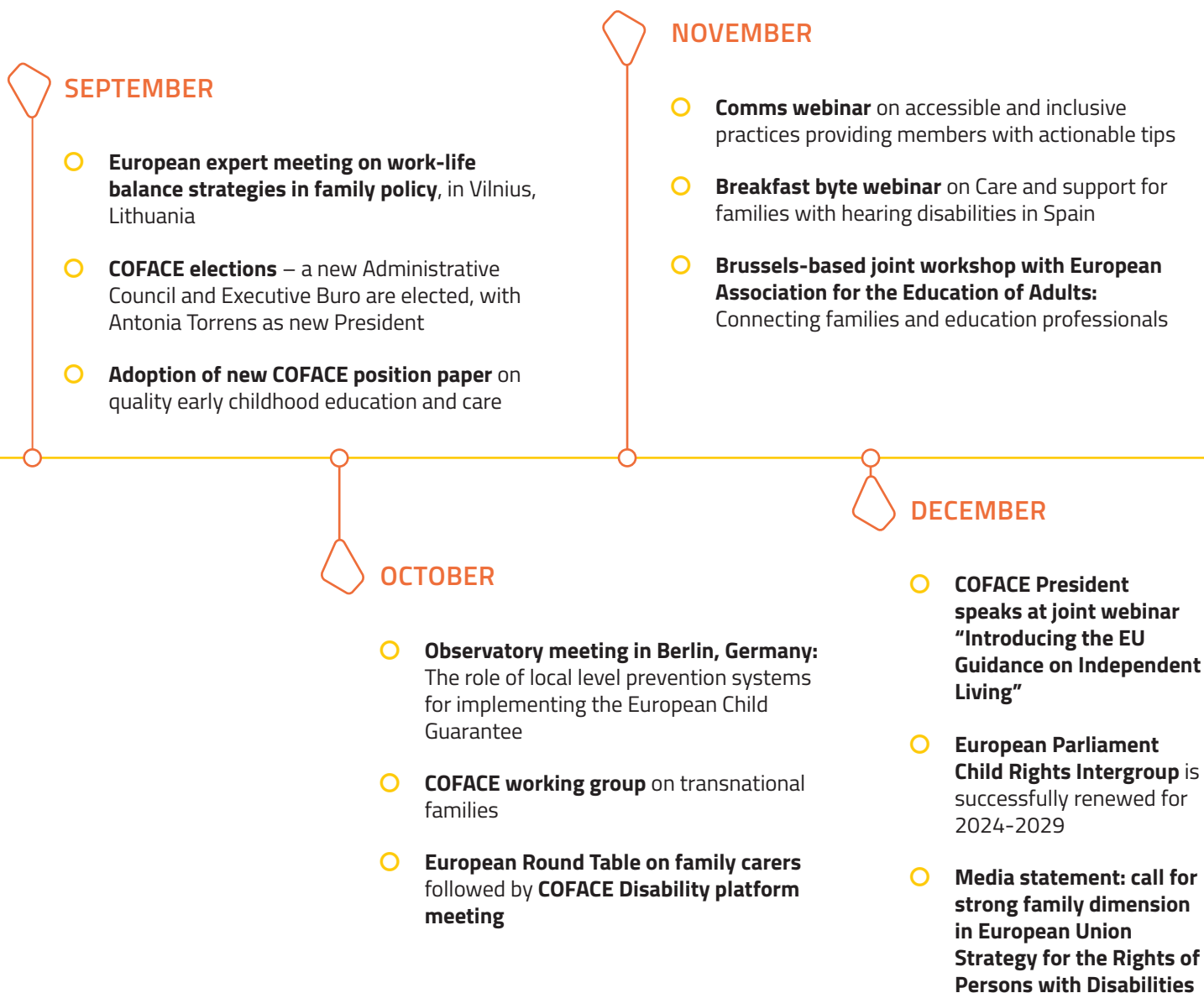
- **COFACE speaks at High-level conference of European ministers responsible for family affairs**, Vienna, Austria
- **Breakfast byte** on key tools for driving change towards parenting equality in Poland
- **COFACE working group on financial inclusion**

AUGUST

- **COFACE moves office** next to Brussels Grand' Place



2024 highlights





2024 highlights

5

Media
releases

1

COFACE TV channel

43

countries reached
through COFACE
activities

94

news articles

23K+

website
page views

32

invitations to speak

10K+

Followers on
social media

4

internal online
expert meetings

17

onsite meetings

3

public webinars

4

new member
organisations

15

joint policy
statements

1

new policy brief on
families in the digital era

1

new position
paper on ECEC

1

new European
care alliance

4

meeting reports

1

Factsheet on the
childcare gap

1K+

stakeholders
reached

20+

responses to EU
consultations

3

European research
projects



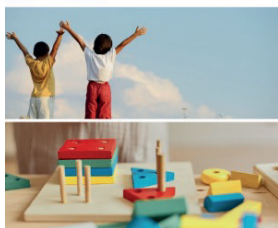
EUROPEAN FAMILY LAB

This European Family Lab, which we have been busy developing since 2020, serves as an innovation incubator for ideas and cross-country knowledge transfer to help family professionals deliver the best possible support for families and children. Major steps were taken in 2024 to further develop the Family Lab in cooperation with members and partners.



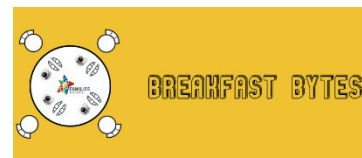
EU Policy Webinar on the implementation of the European Child Guarantee

Tuesday 23rd January 2024
10.30-12.30 CET
Zoom



Breakfast byte webinars on family supports

A room of the Lab is dedicated to the breakfast byte webinars focusing on NGO family supports, with 2 new breakfast bytes in 2024 attended by 25-35 participants each. One focused on the work of Share The Care Poland on the topic of parenting equality in Poland, and one spotlighted the work of FIAPAS on support to families with hearing impairments in Spain. We have diversified the webinar formats, to focus not only innovation and activities of COFACE members, but also on EU policy namely with an EU Policy webinar on the European Child Guarantee with speakers from the European Commission working on the ESF+ and on the monitoring of Child Guarantee implementation attended by 140 participants.



European Observatory on Family Policy

The European Observatory on Family Policy is a joint programme of COFACE Families Europe and the Centre for Family Studies of Odisee University of Applied Sciences. It aims to serve as a platform for the observation, analysis, and dissemination of evidence on family policy and other social concerns directly relevant to family well-being across the European Union. The first output of the Observatory, the report 'Towards Greater Family Policy Integration across Europe', was used as a basis to develop new partnerships, making policy recommendations and to start building a network of experts around the Observatory who came together in Berlin in October 2024. The Observatory also published a factsheet which addresses the 'childcare gap', the period, occurring after the end of well-compensated statutory parental leave from employment after the birth of a child, during which families have not yet accrued the entitlement to a state-supported, fulltime place in early childhood education and care (ECEC) for their children.

CHILDCARE GAP
IN THE EUROPEAN UNION
A 2025 OVERVIEW

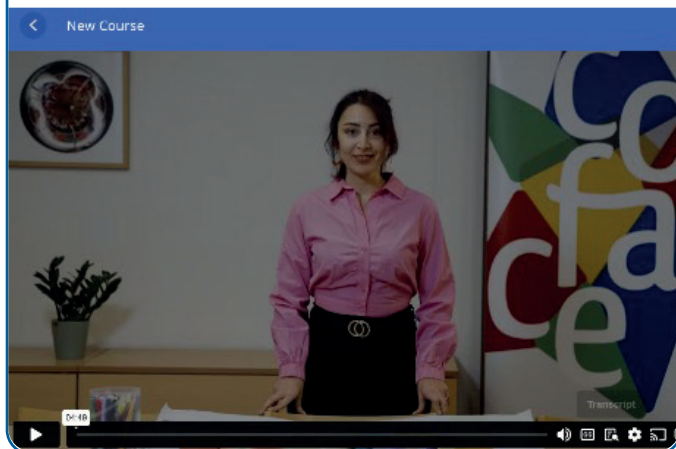




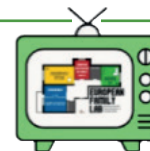
EUROPEAN FAMILY LAB

L.I.N.K: An education and training programme for lifelong learning on social rights from a whole-family perspective

The goal of L.I.N.K. (a joint programme of KMOP Education Hub and COFACE) as modern education centre is to develop courses for three different target groups: families, professionals, organisations. The courses may follow asynchronous, synchronous, and blended e-learning methods. The first L.I.N.K. e-learning tool is a 3-hour course on “School bullying management: effective skills for educators”, for professionals, and namely teachers working in any educational setting, students of psychology, education, social sciences. This course is available in English and Greek. A second course was designed, this time aimed at organisations to help them create a short course to advance social rights: the 3Ds how to Design, Develop and Deliver a short course. The LINK community was also boosted through the European expert meeting in Dublin, Ireland, on the topic of lifelong learning and the family perspective in education (more below).

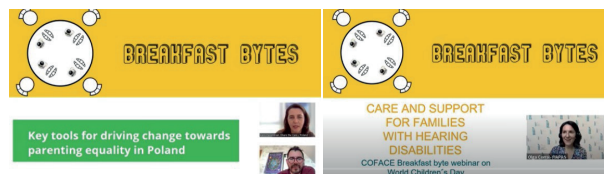


COFACE TV



COFACE TV channel collecting videos on policy & practice

A room of the Lab is dedicated to COFACE TV, a YouTube channel collecting different types of videos on family policy and practice, functioning as a resource to find expertise, people and organisations to connect with. The new videos available in COFACE TV are especially recordings of the breakfast byte webinar expert talks on parenting equality in Poland and on support to families with hearing disabilities in Spain.



Families2030 peer exchange group

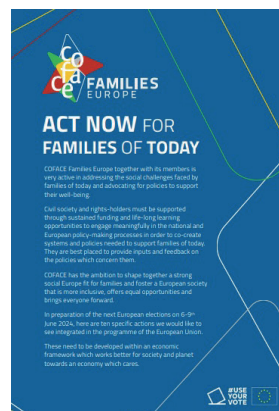
Coordinated by COFACE, this group of policy makers from 20+ ministries of social affairs aims to reinforce cross-country cooperation. In 2024, we held a meeting of this group in Vilnius with family policy-makers from 17 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden. During this meeting the participants discussed the family dimension of the European Child Guarantee and different models of integrated family support. This group of national family policy makers have met three times now: in Berlin in 2022, in Madrid in 2023, in Vilnius in 2024.



FOCUS: 2024 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

In the run-up to the elections, COFACE assessed the impact of EU policies on families during the 2019-2024 mandate which was used as a basis to publish our call to the new European Parliament to Act Now for Families of Today. These demands were launched in the run-up to the European elections through a public affairs event in Brussels on 15th May international day of families, to counter the rise in populism. This event was attended by different European Commission departments (EMPL and JUST), EU agencies, key European civil society partners and key social partners like Business Europe.

Following the EU elections, we analysed and monitored the political group formations and their potential impact on policies for diverse families (through different internal meetings and briefings) and sent our demands to different elected Members of European Parliament. We also closely followed the nomination of new European Commissioner-designates, preparing the hearings in European Parliament with different civil society alliances. We engaged with family-supportive Commissioners and actively lobbied for the Child Rights Intergroup of the European Parliament to be maintained, as well as support to two other intergroups: one on mental health and one on urban/housing policy. As member of the Child Rights Action Group (CRAG), COFACE Families Europe was proud to celebrate the re-establishment of the European Parliament Intergroup on Children's Rights. The Intergroup on Children's Rights was the most voted Intergroup obtaining the highest number of combined votes among all political groups!



COFACE ASSESSMENT

State Of The European Union for Families

COFACE assessment of the European Union's work from 2019-2024

Achieving 8 positive outcomes...





POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Policy Brief. Supporting Families in the Digital Era: How to ensure safe and enriching online experiences for children and their families?



This COFACE policy brief highlights the importance of digital technologies for children and their families, presents some activities that are in place or in current debate at EU level and draws some findings for further measures to support families in the digital era. To do this, the first section analyses some of the EU frameworks which include measures to ensure safe and empowering digital experiences for children, and whether they integrate a families perspective. The second section of the policy brief spotlights some practices of COFACE member organisations from 9 different European countries. The practices are diverse, ranging from boosting digital parenting skills to tackling and preventing specific risks, such as child sexual abuse online. Finally, the concluding section brings key messages and recommendations for EU policy makers

Position paper. Digitalisation Principles: Creating a better internet and web for children & families

This declaration aims at referencing the core values and principles underlining the organisation's actions and activities in the field of digitalisation. While the concrete topics covered by COFACE Families Europe are very wide and diverse, including child online safety, artificial intelligence, big data, online business models, decentralised technologies or blockchain technology, the recommendations and policy proposals formulated always rely on core principles and values, which are applied to any new development in the field of digitalisation. COFACE Families Europe's aim is to ensure that digitalisation and new technological developments serve the general interest of all European citizens, support families and respect the rights of children.





POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Position paper. Review of the European Charter for Family Carers

COFACE Disability released an updated version of its European Charter for Family Carers in October 2024 for the UN international day of care and support. The Charter is written in light of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) and other major international conventions and documents drafted under the auspices of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Union, and the European Disability Forum, as regards the life, dignity, rights and full citizenship of persons with disabilities and their families.

The European Charter addresses the needs of family carers irrespective of the cause of the person's support need (impairment, age, illness, accident etc.). An Easy-to-read version of the Charter is also available.



New position paper on quality early childhood education and care



Early childhood education and care (ECEC) has emerged as a critical priority within European and national states policy frameworks, underscoring its pivotal role both in shaping children's developmental trajectories and contributing to broader societal advancement and the reconciliation of family and professional life. This COFACE position paper adopted end 2024 analyses how the quality of interaction between ECEC services and families can enhance educational outcomes and the overall experience for both children and parents. Through a thorough exploration of these critical intersections, the paper makes recommendations in six key areas, aiming to underscore the vital role that family engagement plays in achieving and sustaining high-quality early childhood education and care.



GROWING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

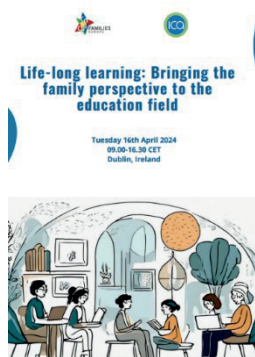
Key public networking events

FEBRUARY 2024



In Berlin in February 2024, with COFACE member AGF, a working group was hosted on the Proposal for a Child Sexual Abuse Regulation. 20+ people participated (German family organisations, COFACE members, child rights online experts, survivors, industry representatives, and the European Commission) in person and online. The meeting focused on different aspects of the CSAR proposal (risk assessment, detection, EU centre), resulting in open and critical discussions. This empowered German family organisations to better understand the state of play and key points of contention, helping them to engage more effectively and meaningfully with their government to bring the families perspective in the discussions. They developed a position paper.

APRIL 2023



In Dublin in April 2024, COFACE and its member the Irish CountryWomen's Association co-hosted a European expert meeting on Life-long learning and bringing the family perspective to the education field. This was an opportunity to show the multiple life-long learning approaches available in the COFACE network ranging from formal learning, non-formal learning in schools, and informal learning in families. The key findings can be found on the COFACE website. The meeting, hosted in the European Commission representation in Dublin, brought together around 50 speakers and participants from Ireland and Europe to help pave the way for family-centred education and learning systems. The expert meeting was an opportunity to discuss the links between education and social rights, spotlight the diversity of educational approaches by featuring professionals working with families in different EU countries, to share their insights on developing learning materials by-with-for families; and build partnerships with key education stakeholders at national and European level. We made the most of COFACE presence in Dublin to organise two networking sessions: one with family organisations in Ireland to meet, connect and exchange on Irish realities and update them on the EU context; and one with Eurofound and Irish ministry representatives to exchange on the state of play of activities at Irish level (around the Child Guarantee) and EU-level initiatives and studies of Eurofound.



GROWING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Key public networking events

MARCH 2024



The rEUsilience Policy Lab panels kicked off in March 2024 and met in Brussels to discuss rEUsilience research. Policy Labs are designed and promoted as initiatives aimed at fostering innovative policymaking in the public sector. rEUsilience (Risks, Resources and Inequalities: Increasing Resilience in European Families) is an EU-funded research project (with COFACE as impact partner) that aims to understand how different families respond when faced with socio-economic shocks and how they make major decisions regarding managing family life and securing a decent income. A range of policies, such as work family reconciliation, income support, and care policies, has been examined to identify strengths and weaknesses in supporting family transitions. The Policy Lab sought to identify, develop, and test possible policy changes that would help families. This work builds impact by design within the project by road-testing the evidence identified in the stocktaking pillar of our research. Expected outputs include a review of relevant policies, a set of recommendations for policy reforms, and a roadmap for implementation. There are two stakeholder panels in the Lab: a families panel and a European policy panel.

MAY 2024



COFACE and its member Step by Step Parents association held a study seminar in Zagreb (Croatia) in May 2024 on tackling and preventing child abuse online/offline. They wished to review their Child Assault Prevention programme through a digital lens with the help of experts from other European countries. 50+ people participated, including family organisations, psychologists, survivors, safer internet centres (from Greece, Luxembourg, Croatia, Finland, Bulgaria, UK) and INHOPE hotlines. The morning consisted of a European study seminar on tackling and preventing child abuse in the digital world; presentations included a spotlight on the Croatian Child Assault Prevention programme, prevention practices and toolkits in Greece and Spain (by KMOP and a representative of the Brave Movement), and research on how AI is being misused for creation of child sexual abuse material (by the Internet Watch Foundation). In the afternoon, there was an internal COFACE working group on safer internet to highlight some EU developments (BIK+ Strategy, CSA Strategy, DSA, and AI Act), to hear from the INHOPE and Insafe networks, and to spotlight some COFACE members' practices (Finnish research on digital well-being within families and Spanish campaigns against sexism in videogames).



GROWING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

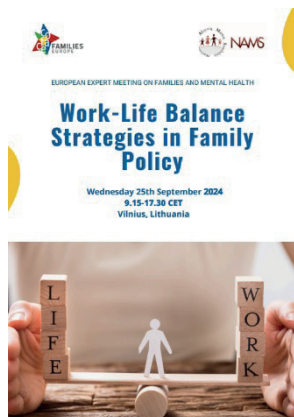
Key public networking events

MAY 2024



In May 2024, in Hannover (Germany), COFACE organised the PATHS2INCLUDE Policy Forum at the University of Hannover gathering researchers, experts on employment policies and civil society representatives to discuss the role of research in advancing inclusive labour market policies. The first panel focused on “Supporting evidence-based policies for the inclusion of people in vulnerable situations in the labour market”. The second panel took a closer look at the situation of women and carers, in the labour market, by examining gender gaps in the labour market and the inclusiveness and flexibility of work-life balance policies. The afternoon session of the forum was a workshop aimed at harvesting collective knowledge to explore policy solutions for inclusive labour markets. The workshop fostered interaction and exchanges on potential solutions at different levels (company policy, public policy, services) from an intersectional perspective. PATHS2INCLUDE is a European research project focusing on understanding processes that shape barriers or facilitate inclusive labour markets. It aims to uncover factors that can be changed and revised by political decisions aiming to reduce inequalities and promote social inclusion in the European labour markets. COFACE is impact partner in the project, bringing a policy and practice perspective to the research, as well as disseminating the research to different policy and practice communities.

SEPTEMBER 2024



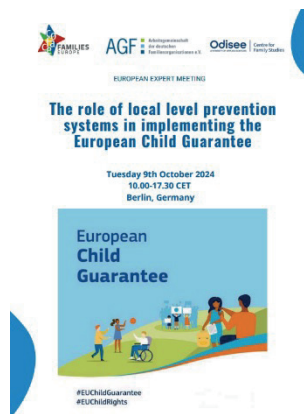
COFACE and its member NAMS Lithuania organised a European expert meeting in Vilnius in September 2024 to discuss work-life balance as core objective of family policy. The meeting brought together stakeholders from academia, government, civil society and social partners. The meeting was attended by 98 participants from 26 European countries and held in the Lithuanian Parliament, with an opening by the social affairs minister of Lithuania. Speakers included a wide range of key stakeholders including COFACE members, ministry representatives, EU agencies (Eurofound and EIGE), EU networks (Equinet, AGE), and trade union and employer representatives from Lithuania. COFACE also organised a Baltic networking session for family organisations to meet and exchange about the realities in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.



GROWING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Key public networking events

OCTOBER 2024



Building on the first Observatory report published in November 2023 (which aims to provide a comparative description of the state of family policy in five countries of the European Union), we organised a European expert meeting in Berlin together with our German member organisation (Association of German Family Organisations) bringing together a first multidisciplinary group of experts under the European Observatory on Family Policy. This network represents a mix of academic, policy and practice experience, all coming together to discuss local implementation of policies aiming for integrated family support in the framework of the European Child Guarantee. It was attended by researchers from different countries (Belgium, Italy and Germany), civil society organisations working on service delivery for families, Child Guarantee focal points for Germany and Estonia, and representatives from the European Commission, OECD, European Social Network, and Population Europe. Following the meeting, we organised a strategic exchange the next day in Berlin to discuss research on family policy in the context of the Observatory's work.

OCTOBER 2024



The reviewed Charter for Family Carers - available in English and French (and in English Easy-to-read format) - was formally launched during a European round table hosted by the EU Committee of the Regions in Brussels, attended by 56 participants and including speakers from the European Economic and Social Committee, European Commission, and European Disability Forum. This Round table fostered debate on the realities and support needs of family carers in Europe today. It shed light on the role of European policies and legal frameworks to support families with disabilities and/or in need of care through robust community-based intervention models at the local and regional levels. The European Charter for Family Carers can be used as a reference tool to understand the needs and adequate responses for family carers, and used as a basis to include family carers as an explicit target group of the European Social Fund Plus. It was followed by a COFACE Disability platform meeting with family and professional carers to discuss key matters such as respite care for family carers, employment, accessibility and early childhood intervention.



GROWING INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Online communities

COFACE ensured an ongoing society watchdog function to raise awareness about new trends and emerging challenges for families at EU and national level, aiming to foster transfer of knowledge across countries, sections and levels.

COFACE does 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.

This involves building 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.

The state-of-the art multi-lingual website stays a central European hub on family matters, with 94 news articles, 23.000+ page views in 2024.

Equally the Families Corner newsletter gathers all relevant aspects about COFACE, its members, the EU and beyond which are sent out monthly to 4000+ people. In 2024, COFACE published 11 Families Corner newsletters and connected you all by sharing key information and news affecting families across Europe and beyond through four sections:



- ★ **YOU&THE EU:** European initiatives which affect our daily lives directly or indirectly.
- ★ **CREATIVE HUB:** Highlights about the great work of the COFACE members and partners to support the rights of families.
- ★ **DISCUSS&DEBATE:** Opinion pieces from inside and outside COFACE to show the pluralism of views in our inclusive and democratic European societies.
- ★ **TIMEOUT:** A section with elements which will make you laugh, reflect or relax. Fun and smiles are an integral part of the Families Corner experience.

Social media platforms are an integral part of our dissemination strategy. This includes multilevel interactions with the 10.000+ followers on our social media communities which are growing steadily through our activities on LinkedIn, Facebook, X and Instagram. We are building various communities of EU and family professionals from different backgrounds, individuals interested in family matters and partnerships across sectors, countries, languages and political beliefs.



COFACE_EU



Families Europe
@COFACE.EU



Families Europe
youtube.com/user/coface2010



familieseurope



COFACE Families
Europe



THE NETWORK

Members

- ★ Austria
- ★ Belgium
- ★ Bulgaria
- ★ Croatia
- ★ Cyprus
- ★ Czech Republic
- ★ Finland
- ★ France
- ★ Georgia
- ★ Germany
- ★ Greece
- ★ Hungary
- ★ Ireland
- ★ Italy
- ★ Latvia
- ★ Lithuania
- ★ Luxembourg
- ★ Malta
- ★ The Netherlands
- ★ North Macedonia
- ★ Poland
- ★ Portugal
- ★ Slovakia
- ★ Slovenia
- ★ Spain
- ★ Switzerland
- ★ United Kingdom



In 2024, we welcomed four new member organisations into the COFACE network.

- ★ **CNAFAL**, secular families, from France
- ★ **Child, Family, Society** from Georgia, advocating for families with disabilities
- ★ **National Parents Society for Persons with Disability** from Malta
- ★ **Youth of Diverse Families** from North Macedonia, advocating for single and one parent families



THE NETWORK

Online member exchanges

In 2024, COFACE members met regularly online, which also brought the COFACE secretariat closer to the members across 25+ countries. This was mainly positive in creating greater network cohesion and real-time exchanges on European to local actions.

These meetings took the format of online working groups :

- ★ In March, we organised a capacity building for COFACE members on the use of the European Social Fund +, bringing their expertise and the expertise of the secretariat together in a session which was supported by the EU Helpdesk for social services (EASPD), which helped identify some challenges and opportunities for investing funding in family support. Fostering new communication channels between staff, members and key EU partners is essential for COFACE network cohesion and pooling of expertise.
- ★ In June, we organised a financial inclusion working group meeting to discuss key priorities in financial inclusion at the European level, learn about political developments and the “Reset Finance” campaign from Finance Watch, and share good practices through the work of COFACE’s Spanish member Isadora Duncan Single Parents

Foundation on supporting financial literacy for families. The meeting gathered members and attendees from across Europe to address the pressing issues faced by families in Europe related to economics and finance.

- ★ In October, we organised a working group on transnational families in cooperation with Trafady. It brought together 20+ participants consisting of COFACE members, as well as partner organisations from Italy, France, Belgium, Denmark, Germany (linked to the European network of binational couples), and Trafady researchers. There were different realities of transnational families discussed, as well as a deep dive into the obstacles to family reunification.
- ★ In November, we organised an online webinar for the COFACE communication network on the topic of inclusive and accessible communications. The aim of the training was to get a better understanding of what inclusion and accessibility means when it comes to communication and information; improve our skills in writing, design and using communications channels, like websites and social media, in a more inclusive and accessible way; and to empower communications professionals with information and practical tips.



PARTNERSHIPS

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 build new EU projects and participate in many Horizon Europe projects as advisory board member or direct impact partner fully engaged in the project. We 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.

CORE PARTNERS

- ★ rEUsilience – Risks, Resources and Inequalities: Increasing Resilience in European Families
- ★ Paths2Include – European Labour markets under pressure: New knowledge on pathways to include persons in vulnerable situations
- ★ Child protection and empowerment in the digital age – the family perspective
- ★ TRAFADY - Transnational family dynamics in Europe

ADVISORY ROLE

- ★ PlatFAMs - Platforming Families: Tracing digital transformations in everyday life across generations
- ★ Transeuroworks – Transforming European work and social protection: a New proactive welfare state fit for the future world of work



PARTNERSHIPS

We were actively engaged in a number of official European Commission stakeholder groups, to which we bring our knowledge about the needs of 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

- ★ Interest group on Solidarity between Generations
- ★ Disability Rights Intergroup
- ★ Child Rights Intergroup
- ★ Committees FEMM, EMPL

EU ADVISORY GROUPS

- ★ Disability Platform (EMPL)
- ★ Consultative Commission on Industrial Change (EESC)

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 Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA)
- ★ European Labour Authority (ELA)

INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

- ★ United Nations (special consultative status at the ECOSOC)
- ★ Council of Europe
- ★ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- ★ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)



BEHIND THE SCENES

We would like to thank...

ALL our members for their enthusiasm and active involvement offline and online.

The COFACE Administrative Council members: Elisabeth Potzinger (AT), Annemie Drieskens (BE), Madeleine Guyot (BE), Jeroen Sleurs (BE), Maria Petkova (BG), Michaela Marksovà (CZ), Sven Iversen (DE), Antonia Torrens (EL), Amaia Echevarria (ES), Marina Wetzer-Karlsson (FI), Jérôme Gourod (FR), Silvija Stanić (HR), Anna Nagy (HU), Mary O'Halloran (IE), Gaetano Santonocito (IT), Rasa Zemaite (LT), Romain Kraemer (LU), Marchita Mangiafico (MT), Gonçalo Solla (PT), Peter Grabner (SI), Karolina Andrian (PL), Chantal Bruno (COFACE Disability Platform for the rights of persons with disabilities and their families).

The four Executive Bureau members:

- ★ Annemie Drieskens (BE) President
- ★ Silvija Stanić (HR) Treasurer
- ★ Antonia Torrens (EL) Vice-President
- ★ Sven Iversen (DE) Vice-President

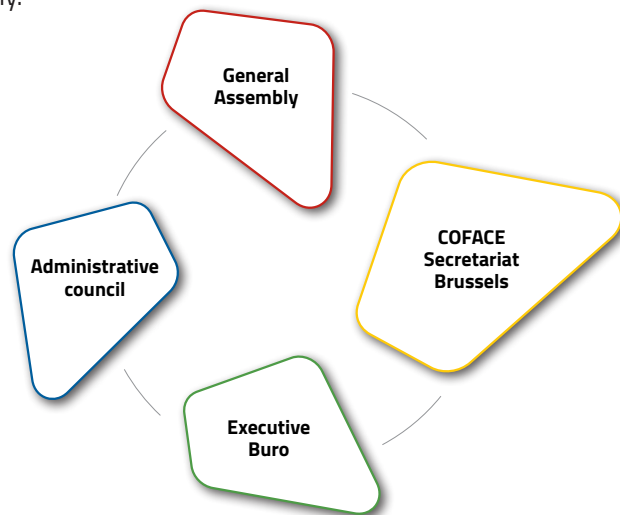
As well as the newly elected Executive Bureau:

Antonia Torrens (EL) - President, Sven Iversen (DE) - Vice-President, Amaia Echevarria (ES) - Vice-President, and Karolina Andrian (PL) - Treasurer.

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

Our **COFACE Secretariat in Brussels**, in charge of ensuring the organisation of all those events, in close cooperation with COFACE members and partners. In 2024, the Secretariat

was made up of Elizabeth Gosme (Director), Florian Charron (Senior Project and Finance Manager), Bettina Guigui (Senior Communication Officer), Martin Schmalzried (Senior Policy and Advocacy Manager), Holly Shorey (Senior Project and Advocacy Officer), Attila Böhm (Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer), Martino Serapioni (Senior programme coordinator for the European Observatory on Family Policy) and Beybin Elvin Tunç (Senior Education programme coordinator), Samira Boumakdi Isabel (Project and advocacy officer), Beatrijs Gelders (Policy and Advocacy Officer) and Sebastian Gonzalez (Policy and Advocacy Officer). We would also like to thank Eirini Vlachopoulos, Patrick Gergö Jefferson and Marie Braun who joined us for an internship, and of course our COFACE penguin family.



And last but not least thank you to all our **partners, followers, fans, supporters, colleagues, friends, and of course, our key funders and financial partners: the European Commission and in particular, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, the OAK Foundation, KMOP Education Hub and the Odisee Centre for Family Studies.**



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.



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