

Transnational Exchange Workshop on inclusive considerations for children with disabilities in legal proceedings

**Brussels, Belgium
13-14 November 2025**

The workshop will serve as a collaborative space to explore inclusive considerations for children with disabilities in legal proceedings. This workshop will focus on the barriers that children with disabilities face when participating in legal proceedings. It will explore procedural accommodations, the role of facilitators, and strategies to ensure accessibility in judicial settings. The workshop will also address how legal frameworks can better align with the rights of children with disabilities under international human rights law. Through a combination of expert-led discussions and case examples, participants will engage in specific sessions including:

- > International legal frameworks addressing disability-inclusive justice;
- > The role of intermediaries, interpreters, and disability support professionals in ensuring effective participation of children;
- > Case-law related to legal proceedings involving children with disabilities;
- > Strategies for legal professionals working with children with disabilities.

This transnational workshop will convene experts and practitioners with extensive experience working in the field of legal proceedings and child participation, including lawyers, social workers, probation officers, intermediaries, persons providing support in proceedings to children with specific vulnerabilities, judges and prosecutors from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Malta, Austria and the Netherlands. This in-person workshop, part of a three-part transnational exchange series held in Belgium, will feed into a report serving as a practical guide for child-friendly justice and procedural rights.

DAY 1

9:00-9:30 COFFEE AND REGISTRATION

9:30-9:45 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Introduction of the project, agenda, and themes

Laura Duchamp, Legal Researcher, International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)

9:45-11:15 RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: INTERNATIONAL AND EU LEGAL FRAMEWORK

9:45-10:15 **Access to justice and procedural accommodations for persons with disabilities**

The Model Benchbook on the rights of persons with disabilities in criminal proceedings

- Equal treatment before the law
- Right to procedural accommodations
- Right to information and communication in accessible formats

Karolína Babická, Senior Legal Adviser, ICJ

10:15-10:35 **Focus on the rights of children with disabilities in legal proceedings**

Articles 7 and 13 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- Introduction to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Simona Florescu, Litigation Director, Validity Foundation

10:35-11:00 **Q&A and discussion**

Moderator: Laura Duchamp, ICJ

11:00-11:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:30-13:30 NATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORKS IN ENSURING DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE JUSTICE

11:30-12:15 Breakout groups by countries

Discussion on challenges and good practices in ensuring access to justice for children with disabilities

- How are legal proceedings involving children with disabilities handled in practice?
- What are the main challenges?
- Do you have examples of good practices in your country?

12:15-13:00 Reporting back

Moderator: Mieke Breedijk, Lawyer, Independent, Nederlands Juristen Comité voor de Mensenrechten (NJCM)

13:00-14:00 LUNCH BREAK

14:00-15:45 THE NEED FOR PROCEDURAL ACCOMMODATIONS

14:00-14:30 Findings of a baseline study conducted in Austria, Romania, and Serbia
Viktoriya Konashava, Legal researcher, ICJ

14:30-15:15 Ensuring effective participation with the support of intermediaries, interpreters and support professionals

How can legal professionals adapt communication methods to meet the needs of children with intellectual, psychosocial, or sensory disabilities?

- Communication support, sign language interpreters, and facilitators
- Recent case-law

Ruth Farrugia, Lawyer and Senior Lecturer, University of Malta

15:15-15:45 Q&A and reflections

Moderator: Karolína Babická, ICJ

15:45-16:15 COFFEE BREAK

16:15-17:00 FOCUS ON CHILD VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES

16:15-17:00 The rights of victims of crime with disabilities
Karolína Šebková, Lawyer, Forum for Human Rights

Moderator: Laura Duchamp, ICJ

19:00 DINNER

DAY 2

9:15-9:30 COFFEE

9:30-10:30 PROCEDURAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

9:30-10:00 Simona Florescu, Litigation Director, Validity Foundation

10:00-10:30 Q&A and reflections

Moderator: Laura Duchamp, ICJ

10:30-11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:00-13:00 INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES FOR LEGAL PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

11:00-12:00 Breakout session on good practices

Discussion on inclusive practices in legal settings involving children with disabilities

- What procedural accommodations are most effective in ensuring meaningful participation of children with different types of disabilities?
- What are the barriers to accessibility in courtroom settings, and how can they be overcome?

- How can interdisciplinary collaboration (e.g., with support professionals, interpreters, intermediaries) be strengthened to support children with disabilities?
- What national remedies are available when the rights of a child with disabilities are denied in legal proceedings, and how accessible and effective are they?

12:00-12:45 **Feedback and group insights**

12:45-13:00 **Closing**
Karolína Babická, ICJ

Moderator: Ruth Farrugia, University of Malta

13:00 LUNCH



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