



EU Children's Participation Platform

# 7<sup>TH</sup> ADVISORY BOARD MEETING REPORT

Brussels, 12-13 October 2025

OCTOBER 2025





## A SUCCESSFUL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

The 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Advisory Board of the EU Children's Participation Platform happened on **12–13 October 2025** in **Brussels, Belgium**. There were **13 child**, and **10 adult members**, the European Commission team, and the Platform's Secretariat.

### DURING THIS MEETING WE:

1. Met with **Commissioner Micallef** (child members).
2. Reviewed progress and upcoming activities from the **Work Plan 2025–2026**.
3. Reflected on and celebrated our **Advisory Board journey**.
4. Discussed ideas for the **next phase of the Platform**.
5. Shared thoughts and proposals during an **Open Floor** – Children's Topics session.






### WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

We were so happy to welcome four new members to the Board:

-  Barbora (Czechia)
-  Srna (Croatia)
-  Diego (Spain)
-  Greta (Italy)


### WELCOMING BACK CURRENT MEMBERS

We reconnected with the continuing members of the Board, who brought their experience, energy, and commitment to this new cycle of work:

-  Aleksandar (Ireland)
-  Maria (Romania)
-  Rayan (Cyprus)
-  Léonie (France)
-  Elisabeth (Estonia)

### A MOMENT OF APPRECIATION

We also said a heartfelt thank you and goodbye to four incredible child members who have completed their time on the Advisory Board:

-  Javier (Spain)
-  Daniel (Greece)
-  Tea (Croatia)
-  Helena (Croatia)

## WELCOMING BACK THE ADULT MEMBERS

- Marie Cecile Rouillon (European Commission)
- Marta Kuljon (European Commission)
- Marianna Musial (European Parliament)
- Sandra Aigner-Accardo (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights)
- Carine Le Borgne (Children's Rights Action Group (CRAG), Eurochild)
- Mathilda Diaz (CRAG), QUEST)
- Rebekka Perdereau (UNICEF, Representation to the EU)
- Suzanne Garcia Imbernon (European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC))
- Lidia Giglio (SOS Children's Villages)
- Katerina Nanou (Save the Children)



# TWO DAYS OF COLLABORATION

## DAY 1

## GETTING READY

The day started with a **welcome from Marta (DG JUST)** and **Lucia**, one of the adult facilitators, and some explanation about what the Board is. **Roxana**, the Child Protection Officer, led a short discussion on **safeguarding**. She asked the children: “What would you like adults to know to make sure you feel safe?” This conversation helped set the tone that everyone’s voices and feelings were important, and that the space was there for them to speak freely.

We played **Human Bingo**, reviewed our **Rules for Working Together**, about listening, respect, safety and inclusion, and then prepared for the meeting with adult Board members.

The children worked together to set their meeting goals. They brainstormed what they wanted to achieve, how to know if the meeting was a success, and the impact they hoped to make. Some of the main ideas:

- **Measuring success:** having a reporting system to track what was decided and if changes really happen.
- **Exploring new topics:** talking about issues that hadn’t been discussed much before and bringing in fresh ideas.
- **Welcoming new members:** taking time to get to know each other and share experiences.
- **Making children’s voices count:** being heard by decision-makers, taken seriously, and receiving honest feedback.
- **Sharing children’s realities:** bringing ideas and challenges from their home countries to the European Commission and spreading messages back in their communities.
- **Learning together:** growing more self-aware and informed through the work of the Board.
- **Creating change for the future:** making improvements for the next generations of the Board.
- **The big goal:** hearing directly from Commissioner Micallef his interest in the Platform’s work, how he can promote it, and getting answers to the children’s key questions.

Later in the day, the prepared for their **important conversation with Commissioner Micallef** who wanted to hear children’s views on: culture and cyberbullying. In addition, children wanted to discuss the future of the Call to Action.

The children split into teams, each on a different topic:

- The Culture team came up with creative questions to create an open discussion.
- The Cyberbullying team, built debate statements using the survey on cyberbullying that had been launched, looking at its first results.
- A third team worked on the Call to Action/Random Questions, with a fun game to ask the Commissioner questions on the Call to Action, big ideas from the children’s perspectives, and random questions to get to know the Commissioner professionally and personally.

To finish the day, the children had a fun **social activity at the Museum of Illusions in Brussels**.



## DAY 2

# PART 1: CONVERSATION WITH COMMISSIONER MICALLEF

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Day two started with a meeting with **Commissioner Glenn Micallef** at the European Commission's headquarters in the Berlaymont building.

**Rayan** and **Maria** opened with a **welcome** and thanked the Commissioner for taking the time to meet the Platform again. The **Commissioner** replied: "Everywhere I go, I always mention how proud I am to have children who advocate for children's rights."

**Aleksandar** and **Daniel** then led a fun activity to get to know each other.

## CULTURE

**Willy** from the DG EAC (Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture) ran a short quiz, before handing over to the children's Culture team.



**Greta**, **Daniel**, **Elisabet** and **Barbora** spoke about how much they enjoyed art lessons and asked Commissioner Micallef:

- How other children across Europe could have the same opportunities?
- Why is art important?
- How can the EU support young artists so they can focus on creating art and not be afraid of not making enough money?
- How the EU could help young people learn about different cultures, noting that not everyone can benefit from Erasmus+?
- **The Commissioner** explained that art is not only about imagination and self-expression, but also about building communities and celebrating beauty. He added "We cannot have art without young artists, but many struggle to make a living. We need to work with governments to make sure they have protection and support." and told everyone about the [DiscoverEU programme](#), which gives 18-year-olds a free travel ticket across Europe to discover other cultures.

## CYBERBULLYING

**Tea** and **Léonie** explained that the team had prepared three debate statements for voting using agree or disagree paddles.

**Statement 1: “There should be stronger consequences for children who bully online, and even for their parents.”**

- **Commissioner** Micallef clarified. “When children bully online, often they are victims themselves,” he said. “Rather than punishments, we need to focus on education and support,” and added that prevention, reporting, and helping children feel safe online matters the most.
- **Children** suggested that consequences could exist alongside support programmes and that not all consequences had to be “bad.” For example, having to attend a programme to learn better behaviour could be positive.

**Statement 2: “Social media should be banned for anyone under 18 years old”.**

- **Children** argued against, saying that social media was also a vital tool for communication among young people, although they admitted it exposed them to risks. Some thought that it should be left up to parents to decide, since some children mature earlier than others and that raising the minimum age could benefit children, especially very young ones. Others warned that strict bans might only encourage children to break the rules.
- The **Commissioner** concluded that bans alone were not enough. He said, “We need to focus much more on digital education and skills, and ensure online platforms are safe places for children.”

**Statement 3: “Cyberbullying lessons should be compulsory in schools”.**

- Several **children** said they had digital education lessons but found them too rare to make a real difference. Others described weekly IT classes or counselling sessions that touched on cyberbullying but did not always grab students’ attention.
- The **Commissioner** listened closely, asking about what worked and what didn’t.



## CALL TO ACTION AND OTHER QUESTIONS

**Maria, Helena, Aleksandar, Diego, and Srna** presented a dice game with mystery questions and questions on the Call to Action

- Children asked how the Call to Action could be pushed forward so it wouldn't be forgotten, and how to connect with more decision-makers.
- The **Commissioner's** advice was clear: "Be vocal about topics you care for and never take no for an answer. Keep raising awareness about the issues that matter most to you."
- A question was asked about voting at 16, pointing out the example of Malta, and if the same could happen across Europe.
- The **Commissioner** replied that trusting young people is always a good idea. But it should go hand in hand with citizenship education, so you have the tools to make informed decisions." He explained that young people already had strong opinions, and with the right support, they could be powerful participants in democracy.
- There were a few personal questions for the Commissioner, like which football team he supported. Which turns out to be St Patrick's from Malta, but also Liverpool.

Everyone was invited to share some highlights. The Commissioner reflected: "This is the best job in the world. Meeting you inspires me."





## HANDOVER OF CERTIFICATES

Then came a special moment – the Commissioner handed over certificates to the four children finishing their term on the Board: **Helena, Javier, Tea, and Daniel**.



## WELCOME

**Tea, Helena, Greta** and **Marie-Cécile** welcomed everyone and introduced key updates on the Democracy Toolkit, which is being translated into all EU languages and the New Welcome Pack which is now live.



## DEBRIEF

**Aleksandar** and **Elisabeth** invited the group to reflect on the morning's meeting with Commissioner Micallef.

- Many felt proud that the Commissioner had asked to meet them directly and liked how seriously he engaged with their questions. Children explained how the meeting with the Commissioner was prepared and shared a few main ideas discussed, including:
  - How art and culture help people share their feelings and connect with others, and that young artists should get more support so they can create freely without worrying about money.
  - Cyberbullying and how they agreed with the Commissioner that it should be stopped through education and support, not just by giving punishments
  - Digital education and online safety, saying that schools should teach more often how to use the internet safely, and that online spaces should be better protected for children.
  - Child and youth participation, saying that young people should learn more about how decisions are made and have more chances to share their opinions.



## WORK PLAN 2025–2026

**Daniel** and **Barbora** presented what had been achieved so far and what lay ahead.

- **Marta** spoke about the [Study Visit in Ireland](#)
- **Elisabeth** and **Léonie** reported on the [2nd General Assembly](#) and [Call to Action](#), explaining the different workshops and how everyone could share their opinions freely and hear many new ideas from young people across Europe.
- **Jane** shared the new 'Welcome' webpage and the video featuring young Board members
- **Ruth** shared the preliminary results of the [cyberbullying survey](#), explaining that the final results would be available in the coming weeks.



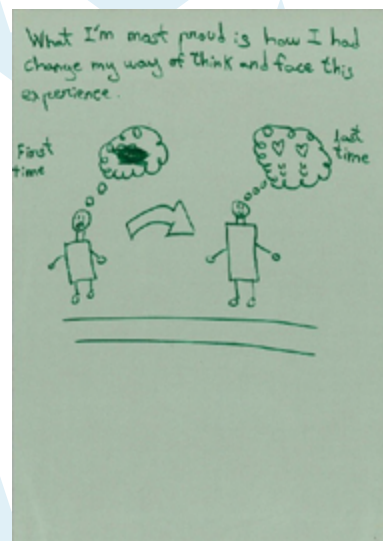
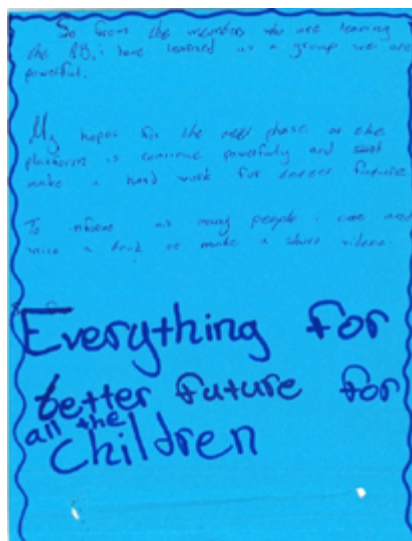


## REFLECTING AND CELEBRATING OUR JOURNEY

**Aleksandar, Maria, and Srna** created a space to look back on the Board's journey.

**Marie-Cécile** thanked **Javier, Daniel, Tea, and Helena**. Members wrote/drew their reflections on board paper. Among some of the main messages included:

- *"From the members who are leaving the AB, I have learned that as a group we are powerful. My hopes for the next phase of the platform is to continue powerfully and make a hard work for a better future"*
- *"I will continue advocating for our [children] opinions, working on the important topics and problems that impact us"*
- *"What I am most proud is how I had change my way of think[ing] and [how I have] face this experience"*
- *"I am proud if the fact [that] I found this programme and that I spoke my thoughts with no shame, anxiety or fear. I learned so much more about myself during this programme and the experience helped me mature and adapt to my surroundings"*



## CONSULTATION ON THE NEXT PHASE OF THE PLATFORM

Lucia explained the consultation process and Board members worked together to imagine the future of the Platform.



### ***Category 1: Likes and Dislikes***

#### **What everyone liked most:**

- Good communication and space to express their ideas.
- In-person meetings (travelling, meeting new people, and learning from others).
- Fun icebreakers that build energy and connection.
- Conversations with the Commissioner.
- Good food during the activities!
- A supportive, equal, and enjoyable atmosphere.

#### **What could be improved:**

- Include more social activities.
- Find a better balance between fun and serious discussions.
- Allow longer breaks and short stretching pauses between sessions.
- Create more opportunities to interact with adults and share results.
- Offer more preparation before meetings.
- Review and update the Code of Conduct.





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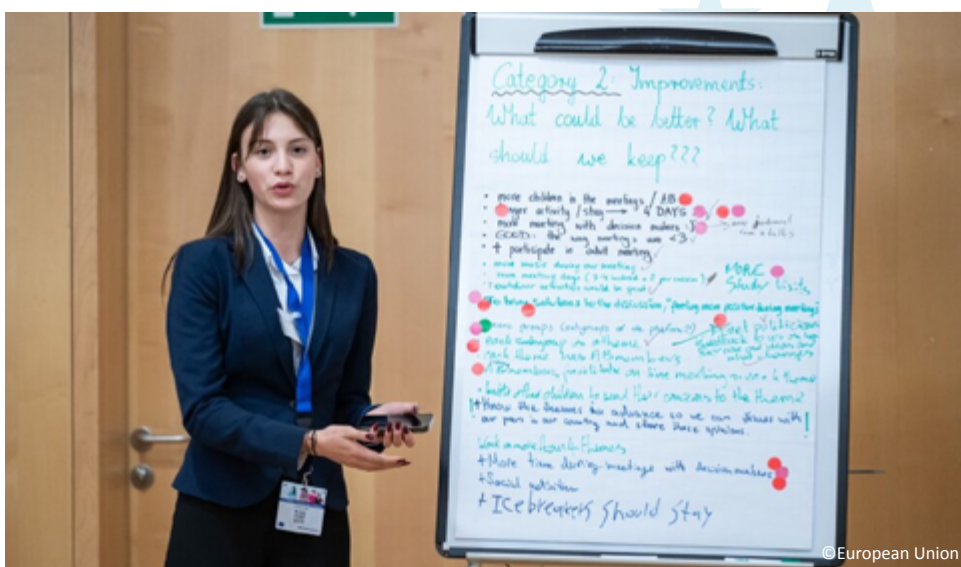
## Category 2: Improvements

### Ideas to make the Platform even better:

- Include more children in the Advisory Board.
- Extend meetings to 3–4 days.
- Create more opportunities to meet and collaborate with decision-makers.
- Add more music and outdoor activities.
- Organise more study visits.
- Form subgroups to focus on specific themes.
- Ask politicians to report back on how children's ideas are being used.
- Involve Board members in facilitating online meetings.
- Share themes in advance so children can discuss them with peers in their countries.

### What to keep:

- The overall structure of meetings.
- Participation in adult sessions.
- Fun icebreakers that bring energy and connection.



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### **Category 3: Communication and Visibility**

- Make the Platform more visible and accessible to young people.
- Own social media channels — Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube were top suggestions.
- Create podcasts with politicians and ex-CPP members.
- Share videos about the Platform’s work and involve children in editing them.
- Hold presentations in schools to spread the word.
- Organise fun events and creative projects like a book or movie about the Platform.
- Produce picture books for younger children to understand the Platform.
- Offer short school courses about the Platform and the EU.
- Improve how surveys reach more children and enlarge the child network in Member States.

### **Category 4: Future Vision**

- Include children from diverse backgrounds, those living in poverty, in care, with disabilities, and from different ethnicities.
- Make participation to the Board open to children who do not speak English.
- Hold more meetings with politicians and decision-makers.
- Organise workshops on how to speak up with confidence.
- Develop an “ideas app” to collect and summarise children’s contributions.
- Produce more official documents (like the Call to Action) to showcase children’s impact.
- Expand the Board — one or two children per Member State or through rotating memberships.
- Keep meetings fun, balanced, and meaningful.
- Invite national children’s platforms to share their experiences with our Platform.





## OPEN FLOOR

Children discussed the following comments or ideas inserted in the Your Voice box by all Board members:

- Feedback and impact of the Platform's activities (e.g. a yearly survey)
- Methodology of the Platform's activities
- Information about what the EU does – e.g. on education
- What to do after finishing the term at the Advisory Board
- Sharing images of the members of the Platform
- More opportunities to speak directly with EU decision-makers





**#EUChildParticipation**

