



EU Children's Participation Platform

8TH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING REPORT

Brussels, 15 – 17 March 2026

MARCH 2026

A SUCCESSFUL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING – CHILDREN’S VOICES IN ACTION

The 8th meeting of the Advisory Board of the EU Children’s Participation Platform happened on **15–17 March 2026 at the European Parliament Info Hub in Brussels, Belgium**. There were **12 children**, and **9 adult members**, the European Commission team, and the Platform’s Secretariat. This meeting also marked the first time that a young expert from the Rise and Reflect Group supported the Advisory Board in a facilitation role, contributing to the preparation and delivery of the sessions.

WHAT WE DID DURING THIS MEETING

1. Met with Ewa Kopacz, Vice-President of the European Parliament, EP Coordinator on children’s right, MEPs Hristo Petrov and Lena Schilling.
2. Reviewed progress and upcoming activities from the Work Plan 2025–2026 and explored priorities for 2027–2028.
3. Reflected on and celebrated our Advisory Board journey.
4. Reviewed the draft online survey on the Digital Fairness Act Exchanged with adult members and partner organisations on children’s rights, participation, and the future of the Platform.





WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

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

-  Jake (Malta)
-  Ektor (Greece)
-  Petar (Bulgaria)
-  Yara (Portugal)
-  Rugile (Lithuania)
-  Marta (Italy, was not present at the meeting)

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:

-  Barbora (Czechia)
-  Srna (Croatia)
-  Diego (Spain)
-  Rayan (Cyprus, was not present at the meeting)

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

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

ADULT MEMBERS

- Marie Cecile Rouillon (European Commission)
- Marta Kuljon (European Commission)
- Marianna Musial (European Parliament)
- Anna Bracco (Council of Europe, Children’s Rights Division)
- Carine Le Borgne (Children’s Rights Action Group (CRAG, Eurochild)
- Mathilda Diaz (CRAG), QUEST)
- Suzanne Garcia Imbernon (European Network of Ombudspersons for Children -ENOC)
- Lidia Giglio (SOS Children’s Villages)
- Farida Elashwal (Save the Children)

THREE DAYS OF COLLABORATION

DAY 1 PREPARING TOGETHER

During this day, we looked at what we will discuss, shared experiences of previous meetings and made sure we create a safe and inclusive environment. Children also agreed on Rules for Working Together, focusing on listening, respect, safety, and inclusion.

Children took part in the interactive “Power Map Game”, exploring how decisions are made at EU level and the roles of key EU institutions, such as the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council.

At the end of the day, children prepared for their meeting with Members of the European Parliament, working in three thematic groups:

- Youth participation and democracy
- AI, online safety and digital education
- Well-being, education and equal opportunities



WELCOME AND GENERAL UPDATES

The meeting began with a welcome from Aleksandar and Marie-Cécile (DG JUST) and an update on key activities:

- [Safer Internet Forum](#) (3 December 2025), which focused on cyberbullying, harmful content, digital education, and platform responsibility.
- [Democracy Toolkit](#), now available in all EU languages, and shared plans for its wider dissemination.
- [upcoming study visit to Berlin](#) on mental health (April 2026).

Emanuele (Platform's alumnus) introduced the [Rise and Reflect Co-inquiry Group](#), which brings together children to reflect on their experiences within the Platform. The group looks at what works well, what needs to improve, and how participation can be made more meaningful. Its work aims to strengthen children's involvement and ensure their voices continue to shape the Platform.

Children reflected on the importance of staying engaged over time, representing other children's views, and strengthening inclusion in the Platform.



FROM ACTIVITIES TO POLICY IMPACT

Children took part in an “Impact Ladder” activity to reflect on how their contributions link to policy discussions across topics such as climate change, artificial intelligence, online safety, education, and wellbeing.

Marta (DG JUST) presented findings from recent consultations:

- cyberbullying survey (6,343 responses), highlighting the need for clearer reporting systems and safer online environments
- poverty and social inclusion consultation (over 41,000 participants), showing that while support exists, access remains uneven

The Action Plan on Cyberbullying aims to address children’s concerns, including improving reporting mechanisms and promoting safer online spaces, in line with broader EU initiatives such as the Safer Internet Programme and the Digital Services Act.

Children also reflected on the Call to Action and its key themes, including wellbeing, online safety, and climate action.



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LOOKING AHEAD: FUTURE PRIORITIES

Children explored future priorities for the Platform reflecting on key issues affecting children today: Mental health, family wellbeing

- Poverty
- Artificial intelligence, misinformation, and online safety
- Education, and participation in decision-making
- Social mobility
- Environmental sustainability and climate action

Children also highlighted the need for:

- More inclusive participation, including reaching children outside the Platform
- Greater opportunities to engage with decision-makers
- Stronger collaboration and exchange between Member States

Following discussion and voting, key priority areas were grouped into:

- **Participation, including in democratic processes:** voting from age 16 in all EU Member States, more learning and sharing between Member States, more frequent meetings including online, and keeping direct meetings with decision-makers, civic education, awareness-raising.
- **Technology and online concerns:** the dangers of artificial intelligence, fake news and misinformation, threat for democracy, and safety in the online environment.
- **Basic needs:** child poverty, family separation,
- **Well-being:** the right to play and meaningful leisure time, free spaces for gathering; hate in schools, peer violence,
- **Environment:** pollution and waste collection, clean parks, accessible mobility, and learning about fast fashion and sustainability.



DIGITAL FAIRNESS ACT – CHILDREN’S CONSULTATION

Children reviewed the draft survey on the Digital Fairness Act and provided feedback to improve its clarity and accessibility.

They highlighted that some terms (such as advertising, recommendations, and platform features) can be difficult to understand, especially for younger children. They suggested simplifying language, shortening questions, and adding explanations where needed.

Children emphasised the importance of focusing on real experiences and key issues such as online safety, fairness, time spent online, and digital wellbeing.

Following the meeting, the survey was launched, incorporating this feedback to ensure it is more accessible and relevant for children taking part.



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DISCUSSION WITH ADULT MEMBERS LED BY MARIE-CÉCILE ROUILLON (DG JUST)

Adult members of the Platform **discussed** policy priorities that closely align with the Platform's objectives.

Key topics included online safety, digital fairness, and child participation. Organisations shared ongoing initiatives and highlighted the importance of collaboration, knowledge sharing, and strengthening participation across Europe.

Participants also stressed the importance of maintaining the Platform's collective knowledge and building a shared vision for its future.



REFLECTING AND CELEBRATING OUR JOURNEY

Children reflected on their journey in the Advisory Board, sharing experiences, achievements, and lessons learned.

They highlighted their personal growth, the value of working together, and their continued commitment to children's rights.

To finish the day, the children had an afternoon activity, a tour at **the House of European History in Brussels**.



Children met with Ewa Kopacz, Vice-President of the European Parliament and EP Coordinator on Children's Rights, at the European Parliament Info Hub. The session opened with a short welcome and an icebreaker, followed by a child-led discussion on key topics.

DIALOGUE WITH VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, EWA KOPACZ (COORDINATOR ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS)

Children raised questions on:

- Digital education and online safety
- Mental health
- Artificial intelligence and its impact on young people

Vice-President Kopacz highlighted both the opportunities and risks of the digital environment, stressing the importance of accessible digital education and stronger support systems for children.



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Maria shared children's concerns about online experiences:

“Victims of social abuse on internet often feel helpless, no face-to-face connection and they do not have the certainty that you will be listened to, and any measures will be taken.”

On mental health, children emphasised the lack of access to support and long waiting times. Vice-President Kopacz underlined the urgency of action:

“We need to focus on people who cannot find help. The EU must not sit idle.”

She also highlighted that artificial intelligence should remain a tool to support people, while safeguarding rights and decision-making.

The session concluded with a certificate handover to the four children completing their term on the Advisory Board.



DIALOGUE WITH MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: HRISTO PETROV AND LENA SCHILLING

Children engaged in dialogue with MEPs on democracy, climate, poverty and social equality.

Children asked how their voices can influence decision-making and how EU actions can better respond to their needs. MEPs encouraged continued engagement and highlighted the importance of advocacy and collaboration.

“ Measures related to children’s voices may not yield immediate results, but the voices of children are influential and can shape decisions over time. ”

Discussions also addressed environmental challenges and inequalities across Member States, with a focus on practical solutions and sharing good practices.



CLOSING REFLECTIONS

Children reflected on the meeting and suggested improvements, including allowing more time and ensuring broader inclusion.

The meeting concluded with a symbolic activity where children created a “tree” representing their shared values, strengths, and future priorities, highlighting their collective voice and commitment to children’s rights.





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