



FOSTER

Fostering Child-Friendly Legal Environments
through collaborative networks

Press Release
FOSTER Final
Conference
*“Enhancing Child-
Friendly Justice Systems
for Victims of Crime”.*



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On 21 May 2026, the Centre for European Constitutional Law, in Greece, in collaboration with all partners of the EU-funded project FOSTER Project: Society of Social Psychiatry P. Sakellaropoulos, in Greece, the Center for the Study of Democracy, in Bulgaria, ELTE Centre for Social Sciences, in Hungary, and the Institute of Criminology at the Faculty of Law Ljubljana, in Slovenia, organised the project's final conference entitled "*Enhancing Child-Friendly Justice Systems for Victims of Crime*".

The conference took place in Athens at the Golden Age Hotel and was held in a hybrid format, bringing together legal professionals, academics, judicial representatives, child protection experts, and civil society practitioners from across Europe.

The FOSTER project aims to strengthen the capacity of lawyers to effectively represent child victims of crime, while fostering sustainable cooperation networks among legal practitioners, judicial authorities, state actors, and civil society organisations working in the field of child protection.

A total of 106 participants from Slovenia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Hungary attended the conference either in person or online. The event provided participants with a comprehensive overview of the project's achievements and facilitated a multidimensional discussion on the implementation of child-friendly justice principles for child victims of crime across the partner countries.

The conference opened with welcoming remarks from distinguished representatives of institutions that supported the objectives of the FOSTER project in Greece:

- Ms. Monioudi-Pikrou, Ombudsperson for Children's Rights
- Mr. Papadopoulos, Lawyer and Legal Advisor at the Athens Bar Association
- Ms. Sfakianaki, General Director of the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA)

During the opening session, FOSTER Project Coordinator Ms. Alexopoulou from the Centre for European Constitutional Law presented the project's key outputs and achievements. She highlighted the project's contribution to strengthening cooperation between legal practitioners, public authorities, and civil society organisations through activities aimed at enhancing knowledge and professional skills related to the protection of child victims of crime.

The conference also featured two keynote interventions that introduced the broader challenges and developments related to child-friendly justice systems:

- Ms. Xeni Dimitriou, Honorary Public Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of Greece
- Mr. Konstantinos Panagos, Assistant Professor at the Law School of Athens, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Their presentations set the framework for the three thematic panel discussions that followed, bringing together experts from the countries participating in the FOSTER project.



The first panel discussion, entitled “*Safeguarding the Rights of Child Victims of Crime*”, was moderated by Mr. Hafner, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Criminology of the Faculty of Law Ljubljana, Slovenia. The panel included contributions from:

- Ms. Kozjek, Judge at the Ljubljana Court of Appeal, Slovenia
- Ms. Lingorski, New Bulgarian University’s Know-how Center for Alternative Childcare, Bulgaria
- Ms. Angelopoulou, Lawyer and Legal Advisor at SOS Villages, Greece
- Dr. Csalár, Head of the Internet Hotline Department at the National Media and Infocommunications Authority, Hungary

The second panel, “*Building Safe Communication with Child Victims of Crime*”, was moderated by Ms. Lux, Research Fellow at the ELTE Centre for Social Sciences, Hungary. Speakers included:

- Ms. Naggyőr, Lieutenant Colonel at the National Police, Hungary
- Dr. Hudoklin, Child Clinical Psychologist, Slovenia
- Ms. Oikonomou, Head of Children’s House Piraeus, Greece

The third and final panel discussion focused on “*Improving Child-Friendly Justice Systems in Practice and Policy*” and was moderated by Ms. Alexopoulou from the Centre for European Constitutional Law. Contributions were delivered by:

- Mr. Karountzos, Deputy Head of the Department for Monitoring Reports of Child Abuse at the Child Protection Directorate of the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA)
- Ms. Kanellopoulou, Access to Justice Project Coordinator at Terre des Hommes Hellas
- Mr. Spetsidis, Project Coordinator at the Union of Women Associations of Heraklion Prefecture, Greece

Through the exchange of expertise, practical experiences, and institutional perspectives, participants gained a deeper understanding of the current state of child protection and safeguarding mechanisms for child victims of crime in Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovenia, and Greece.

The conference highlighted both the progress achieved and the challenges that remain in ensuring child-friendly justice systems that place the rights, needs, and wellbeing of child victims at the centre of legal and protection procedures. At the same time, the discussions reinforced the importance of continued cross-border and cross-sectoral cooperation among legal professionals, public authorities, and civil society actors.

The FOSTER project concludes with a strengthened network of professionals committed to improving access to justice and protection for child victims of crime, while contributing to the promotion of child-friendly justice systems across Europe.



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