ChildON Europe, which held its first official meeting on the 24th January 2003, was set up after two years of preparatory work in the context of the Permanent Intergovernmental Group L’Europe de l’Enfance, whose aim is, among others, to work for the introduction of mainstreaming of children’s policies and the rights of the child in all EU policies.

ChildON Europe, through its Secretariat, may, on the invitation of the State holding the EU Presidency, participate in the L’Europe de l’Enfance meetings to report on the accomplished activities. ChildON Europe may also take into consideration the suggestions on possible topics emerging from L’Europe de l’Enfance meetings.

ChildON Europe pursues the following aims:

- exchanging knowledge and information on laws, policies, programmes, statistics, research and best practice regarding childhood and adolescence;
- undertaking surveys, studies and research on specific issues related to childhood mainly through a multidisciplinary and comparative approach;
- disseminating research findings among the partners of the Network and to other national and international organisations dealing with childhood;
- identifying, sharing and promoting good practice from the results achieved through the work of comparison and analysis also in support to the reflection on national and European policies;
- developing and exchanging knowledge on indicators and methodologies in order to obtain the comparability of data and information;
- organising conferences, seminars and mutual training to share experience finalized also to the use of minimum common tools for data and information collection.

History and aims

ChildON Europe is made up of an Assembly and a Secretariat. The Assembly comprises the institutions appointed by the Network Member States. It is the decision-making body of the Network. In the Assembly the institutions nominated by EU States that are not Network Members, are admitted in the capacity of Associated Members. A Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson are elected by the

Powers and procedures

ChildON Europe is supported by the documentation services offered by the Biblioteca Innocenti (www.biblioteca.istitutodeglinnocenti.it), which is one of the few in the world specialised in children’s rights.

ChildON Europe activities and working documents are published and disseminated mainly through its web site: www.childoneuropa.org.

The website also offers a number of services such as links to the websites of the most important international governmental and non-governmental organisations and university centres working on childhood-related matters, links to the EU programmes and call for tenders that may be relevant to childhood and a list of events, such as conferences, seminars and courses, taking place at European level. Furthermore the Secretariat prepares reports, brochures and CD-ROM on the Network’s activities.
Activities

Since 2003 ChildONEurope has carried out the following activities:

**Organisation and procedures**
- Convening two annual Assemblies and one annual Seminar at the Headquarters of the ChildONEurope Secretariat in Florence.
- Actively involving the new Partners in all the Network's activities and working towards the integration of the remaining EU Member States of recent accession.
- Defining and updating of more in detail the procedural aspects of the Network's terms of reference.

**Research and dissemination**
- **National and Intercountry Adoption**
  - Drafting of a comparative report on national and intercountry adoption.
  - Drafting of the Guidelines on post adoption services.
  - Contributing to the drafting of a European comparative survey on international adoption entrusted to the Istituto degli Innocenti by the European Parliament.
  - Drafting of a survey on the management of the demand in intercountry adoption.
- **Children's legal representation**
  - Drafting of a survey – entrusted by the Slovenian Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs – on children's legal representation and presentation of the survey at the meeting of L’Europe de l’Enfance in Ljubljana in March 2008.
- **Child Abuse**
  - Drafting of a comparative report on national registration systems on child abuse.
  - Elaboration of a report on national legislations and statistical data on child abuse.
  - Drafting of guidelines on the implementation of national registration systems on child abuse.
- **Child Participation**
  - Drafting of a comparative report on national laws and policies.
  - Drafting of a review on national child participation practices.
- **Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Services**
  - Drafting of a survey on the ECEC Services in the EU Countries.
- **Family Mediation**
  - Drafting of a survey on family mediation requested by the Luxembourg EU Presidency focusing in particular on national and international legislation, statistical data, practices of services and institutions which provide training in family mediation and presentation of the report at the meeting of L’Europe de l’Enfance in Luxembourg in April 2006.
- **Concluding Observations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child**
  - Drafting of a study – requested by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Security, Railways and Consumer Protection – on the Concluding Observations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning the last reports presented by the 27 EU Members, as well as by the adhering countries Croatia and Turkey.
  - Presentation of the study at the meeting of L’Europe de l’Enfance in Vienna in May 2006.
  - Presentation of another report based on the study focusing on early childhood education and care at the meeting of L’Europe de l’Enfance held in Helsinki in November 2000 and on juvenile justice at the meeting of L’Europe de l’Enfance held in Berlin in June 2007.
- **State support to family**
  - Drafting of a survey – entrusted by the Portuguese Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity – on the role of parents and the support from the Governments in the EU and presentation of the survey at the meeting of L’Europe de l’Enfance in Lisbon in October 2007.
- **Seminars**
  - Organizing thematic seminars on the following issues: unaccompanied foreign children, methodology for collecting information and statistical data, in particular on child abuse, services supporting families in the post adoption phase, systems for mentoring child abuse, child participation in the daily life, child well-being indicators, early childhood education and care services, impact of the economic crisis on childhood.
- **Communication and promotion**
  - Production of CD-ROM's containing the researches carried out by the Network and related documentation.
  - Creation and updating of the Network's website www.childoneurope.org; increasing and facilitating contacts among partners.
  - Participation in conferences and seminars organised at a European level by other national and international governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with childhood-related issues, including the European Forum on the rights of the child.

**Membership**

ChildONEurope is an interinstitutional Network of the National Observatories or institutions on childhood appointed by the national ministries who comprise the Intergovernmental Group L’Europe de l’Enfance.

At the last Assembly of 2010 ChildONEurope was composed of 8 Members: Belgium (French community), Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and Spain.

The latter may decide to become Members of the Network by appointing a National Observatory or institution to provide official public data on the condition of children and adolescents.