

Press release

Child custody

The European Parliament hosted the conference: “Facing the crisis of the family in the name of the children”

An initiative organized by the European platform Colibrì

On 23rd October the European Parliament in Strasbourg hosted an important conference on parental separation and divorce in Europe “Facing the crisis of the family in the name of the children”.

Children are the most vulnerable parties in the event of family conflicts and their rights, as enshrined in Article 24 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, need to be protected. Unfortunately the rate of divorces is rapidly increasing with huge consequences for children’s welfare.

In the presence of Ms Roberta Angelilli, Vice President of the European Parliament with responsibility for children's rights and European Parliament mediator for international parental child abduction, and Mr Carlo Casini, President of Constitutional Affairs Commission, the event was an ideal occasion to present the first European survey on children's custody, by the Italian paediatrician Vittorio Vezzetti, scientific responsible of the platform for joint custody, co-parenting and childhood named “Colibrì”.

Authoritative experts from different countries of Europe have explained the different ways of managing the children's custody in Europe, since there are very wide differences among States, showing that children's best interests are treated very differently according their nationality and the judiciary systems they are subjected to. In some countries, as Dr. Vezzetti reported, one child out of three loses contacts with a parent after the parental couple dissolution while in other ones the situation is much better.

Custody and co-parenting have direct effects also on physical and psychological wellbeing (for example on hormonal assessment, on bioumoral parameters, on behavioural risks like alcohol, tobacco and drug use, even on chromosomal structures), so it would be necessary to consider this issue not only from a juridical point of view but also using a comparable scientific language, by launching European scientific research.

The European Parliament places great importance on the protection of the rights of the child and has constantly sought to incorporate these rights into EU legislation; this has become a specific objective of the EU since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty.

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