



NEWSLETTER

International Association of Youth and Family
Judges and Magistrates

2025

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Child Participation as Victims and Witnesses

AIMJF has published its last research on “child participation as victims or witnesses in criminal cases”. With the participation of 45 countries from all continents, except Oceania, the research covers the legal conditions for child participation, broad perspective of the legal framework and procedure, preparation for the child participation, protection and support provided for children; the environment where children are heard; specific legal guarantees for the child; the interviewing structure and procedure; the offender’s rights during or after the interview; how parallel proceedings in family or child protection courts are coordinated; training provided for the judges; and reform in progress.

The Commonwealth Magistrates’ Judges Association (CMJA) and Penal Reform International have provided networking support to reach countries where AIMJF do not still have members. We thank both institutions for their partnership and collaboration.

All national reports and its general analysis can be read in the Chronicle:

<https://chronicle.aimjf.info/index.php/files/issue/view/8>

The outcomes of the research will be discussed in the World Congress on Justice an Children (see below).

Children Below the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility

This year AIMJF has decided to address the issue of “children below the minimum age of criminal responsibility: measures, rights, procedure, participation”.

The questionnaire addresses topics such as the existence of one or more minimum ages in each country, especially if *doli incapax* rule is adopted; how age assessment is made and the rights of the child in this context; the intervention of the police, if any; the measures that may be applied to children; the procedure observed in this context and by which institution; if any other kind of assessment is made; the legal and procedural guarantees of children regarding the measures that may be imposed; the role of the justice system in this context, if any; the assistance received by children; how the child participates; legal implications of the involvement of children with criminal offences and reforms in progress.

If you are interested in participating, writing a report regarding your country, please contact our Editor in Chief, Eduardo Rezende Melo, in the following e-mail address:
aimjfchronicle@gmail.com

Vilnius

In October 2024, AIMJF has organized a study tour in Vilnius, Lithuania, in partnership with the Law School of Mykolas Romeris University. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jolanta Apolewicz, Vice-Dean for International Relations and International Studies has brilliantly supported AIMJF in organizing the study tour program and we thank her for this unique opportunity.

The program was based on understanding of local legal standards, but also on special challenges the country is facing, and visits to the court and local programs. During the study tour, the European Section, under the leadership of Judge Ellen van Kalveen, has organized its annual meeting.

Members from seven countries have participated in the program.



04. 2025 STUDY TOUR

London in October

In 2025, due to the world Congress, there will be no study tour in the first semester, but in the last week of October AIMJF will organize a study tour in London, UK, with the support of Judicial Office from the Royal Courts of Justice. The program will be finished soon and shared with our members.

Those who are interested in participating should respond the following inscription form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeG9RkE5HtlcyMGskAoFz7iFanpuWkzA0kil6NGVuPVt8M8dw/viewform?usp=header>

05. THE SWISS CONFERENCE IN SEPTEMBER

From 3-5 Sept 2025, AIMJF board members will contribute to the Annual Conference of the Swiss Association of Juvenile Justice Professionals, which will take place in Geneva this year, and is dedicated to the topic of comparative law/practices ("Droit pénal des mineurs - Au-delà des frontières").

Information on the program will be uploaded in French and German on the webpage of the Swiss Association (<https://www.julex.ch/index.php/de/>).

06. WEBINARS

AIMJF has organized two webinars this year, one in French, on “Long-term placement: a comparative approach between France and Quebec in dialogue with the justice system”, presenting the research conducted by professor Carmen Lavallée, from Canada, and Caroline Siffrein-Blanc, from France, with the participation of two judges, Mélanie Roy, from Canada, and Mathieu Gozdiaszek, from France. The mediation was made by Judge Laurent Gebler, from France.



Webinar
March 13, 2024
1:00 pm UTC

placement longue durée: approche comparée France-Québec en dialogue avec la justice
Long-term placement: a comparative approach between France and Quebec in dialogue with the justice system
Acogimiento de larga duración: un enfoque comparativo entre Francia y Quebec en diálogo con la justicia

Participants:

- Laurent Gebler** (France): Président de la chambre des appels à la Cour d'appel de Paris, France
- Carmen Lavallée** (Canada): Professeure titulaire à la Faculté de droit de l'Université de Sherbrooke, Canada
- Caroline Siffrein-Blanc** (France): Professeur des universités au sein du Laboratoire de Droit Privé et de Sciences Criminelles de l'Université d'Aix-Marseille, France
- Mélanie Roy** (Canada): Juge en chef adjointe à la Chambre de la jeunesse depuis 2024, Québec, Canada
- Mathieu Gozdiaszek** (France): Tribunal judiciaire de Juge des enfants

AIMJF has also organized a webinar on “Child Justice in KRI (Kurdistan Region of Iraq): Challenges, good practices and way forward” with the participation of Judge Ameera Saleem, former Unicef Child Protection Officer Shadan Tahir. The webinar was moderated by AIMJF deputy secretary-general, and former Swiss child prosecutor, Ursina Weidkuhn.



Webinar
Feb 26, 2025
1:00 pm UTC

Child Justice in KRI (Kurdistan Region of Iraq): Challenges, good practices and way forward
La justice des enfants dans la région du Kurdistan irakien : Défis, bonnes pratiques et perspectives d'avenir
Justicia de menores en KRI (Región del Kurdistan de Irak): Desafíos, buenas prácticas y camino a seguir

Participants:

- Ameera Saleem** (KRI): Juvenile Judge in Erbil Governorate / KRI
- Shadan Tahir** (KRI): Former UNICEF Child Protection Officer/Justice for Children Specialist, KRI
- Moderator: Ursina Weidkuhn** (Switzerland): Former Swiss Child Prosecutor/Judge and International Consultant

Both webinars can be seen on our YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjm16W9K_FczispcjvsGstA) and in our website (www.aimjf.info)

07. WORLD CONGRESS ON JUSTICE WITH CHILDREN

The World Congress on Justice with Children, a joint initiative from AIMJF, Terre des Hommes and Penal Reform International, will take place between June the 2nd until the 4th in Madrid. Inscriptions are still possible and participation may happen both in person or on-line on the following link: <https://register.justicewithchildren2025.com/5th-world-congress-on-justice-with-children>

3 JUNE 2025

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM CET

Drug Trafficking as the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Public Policies and the Justice System

Eduardo Rezende Melo

Reconstructing Multilateralism: the Role of Academia in Advancing Sustainable Capacity-building for Children's Rights

Ton Liefwaard; Ann Skelton, Karabo Ozah

Child Protection Responses to Violence in the Family

Marielle Bruning

3 JUNE 2025

11:45 AM - 12:45 PM CET

Advancing Child-centered Justice for Underrepresented Children in Complex Judicial Contexts

Jaap Doek

Child Participations as Victims and Witnesses in Criminal Cases. An Aimjf Comparative Research

Eduardo Rezende Melo; Ursina Weidkuhn, Lana Petö Kujundizic

4 JUNE 2025

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM CET

Advancing child-centered justice through OPIC: ensuring access to remedies, policy reform and state accountability

Ann Skelton, Ton Liefaard

Access to justice for children: the perspective of the justice system. An AIMJF analysis

Eduardo Rezende Melo, Jorge Jimenez, Mary Beloff, Ursina Weidkuhn

4 JUNE 2025

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM CET

La Participación De Adolescentes en La Justicia Juvenil: El Escenario Latinoamericano Y Mercosureño (in Spanish)

Eduardo Rezende Melo, Elbio Ramos, Juan Carlos Bordon, Marta Pascual

Attending to Language Ability as a Prerequisite to a Child-centered Justice

Lana Petö Kujundizic

AIMJF will organize a dinner with all members attending in person in Madrid on Tuesday evening (place and cost to be defined according to the number of participants).

If you are interested in joining this informal moment together, please let it know to the Chronicle's Editor in Chief, Eduardo Melo, on the following e-mail address: aimjfchronicle@gmail.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the research team, AIMJF staff, and our IT partners for their unwavering dedication and expertise in the creation of this newsletter. Your collective efforts have been instrumental in delivering insightful content and innovative technical solutions, reflecting the highest standards of excellence and collaboration.

Our sincere thanks also go to the executive management of our associated partners, whose strategic guidance and support have been pivotal in realizing our shared vision. This newsletter stands as a testament to the power of teamwork and shared commitment, and we are deeply appreciative of everyone's contributions.

CONTACT

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AIMJF-117342133359569>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjm16W9K_FczispcjvsGstA