

## VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY



[www.viennafamilycommittee.org](http://www.viennafamilycommittee.org)

Digital-Networks:

[www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org)

[www.20yearsIYF.org](http://www.20yearsIYF.org)

[www.civilsocietynetworks.org](http://www.civilsocietynetworks.org)



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### *ANNUAL REPORT 2023*

Since its inception in 1985 projects of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family have been supported by:

- ❖ Austrian Federal Government
- ❖ Bank Austria Creditanstalt
- ❖ Berndorf Group
- ❖ Country Womens Association in Lower Austria
- ❖ E.F.T. Transportagency GmbH
- ❖ European Commission
- ❖ Government of Germany
- ❖ Government of Liechtenstein
- ❖ Government of Luxembourg
- ❖ Government of Spain, Catalonia and the Balearic Islands
- ❖ International Non-Governmental Organisations
- ❖ Lower Austrian State Government
- ❖ Lower Austrian Insurance AG
- ❖ OMV Energy Group
- ❖ Rotary International
- ❖ Schoeller-Bleckmann Oilfield Equipment AG
- ❖ Shell Austria AG
- ❖ Siemens
- ❖ United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities



## **Vienna NGO Committee on the Family**

### *PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES 2023*

At a Full Committee Meeting, which was held as a Zoom video conference, representatives of the 41 International Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), who are members of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family, and 22 associate member organisations, discussed various institution-building projects and activities. The Board of the Committee had worked out a schedule for their implementation, which was realised in co-operation with the support of the member organisations of the Committee and their representatives. The worldwide network of civil society organisations, research and university institutions, government agencies and individuals, continues to be, not only a beneficiary of interactive exchange, but is in many cases, directly involved in the work of the Committee. The Vienna Committee on the Family, understands itself, as a non-political non-denominational umbrella organisation, with a global focus on the well-being of families worldwide, providing a bridge between families-oriented Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), The United Nations, Governments of Member States of the United Nations and Academia, as well as between CSOs themselves, through the various digital-networks set up and maintained by the Committee.

### *The following projects were realised in 2023*

#### **1. Families International (FI)**

Issues, Nos. 125-128 of the Quarterly Bulletin of the Committee, were published online in 2023 at [www.viennafamilycommittee.org](http://www.viennafamilycommittee.org) The Editorial Committee consists of the Editors, Julia Birner B.A., Christin Kohler, M.A., Karin Kuzmanov M.Sc., Hannah Pruewasser, B.A., and the Deputy-Editor, Peter Crowley, Ph.D., who had been the Editor from 2009 to 2020.

Special features in FI in 2023 included: Issues relating to Families at the 61th United Nations Commission for Social Development (CSD) 2023, Migration & Families, Gender Equality from a global perspective, United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC) Global Report on Trafficking in Person & the UNODC Observatory on Smuggling of Migrants, as well as Climate Change on Human Mobility & Displacement, Each issue of Families International also included texts submitted by member organizations of the Committee, as well as other relevant texts from United Nations agencies.

Ca. 700 readers of 'Families International' are informed, by the Secretariat of the Committee by E-Mail, when each issue is published and available to download free of cost.

#### **2. International Forum: May 15<sup>th</sup> 2023**

The Committee organised and scheduled an International Forum, during a Full Committee Meeting, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre (UNVIC) for Monday May 15th 2023, to observe the United International Day of Families (UNIDF) 2023, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre. It was also held as a Zoom conference and entitled: 'Climate Change Migration - Impact on: Families, Presentation of Latest Research', by Dr. Claire Healy of the United Nations Organisation on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Report 2022, on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling with a Focus on Children as well as a presentation by Prof. Dr. Czaika, from Krems University, Austria, on Climate Change; Migration - Impact on Families; Presentation of Latest Research

#### **3. International Forum Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> 2023**

The Committee further organised and held a second International Forum, during a Full Committee Meeting, on Monday Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> 2023 at the United Nations Vienna International Centre, with Prof. Roman Hoffmann, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), Austria, entitled: "Climate Change, Environmental Stress and Human Migration: Evidence and Policy Lessons".

## **Cooperation with the United Nations Focal Point on the Family in New York**

The Board of the Committee keeps its various networks informed with documents of United Nations Resolutions and Reports of the United Nations Secretary-General pertaining to family issues, and organised the abovementioned International Forum to observe the United Nations International Day of Families in May 2023.

**The 62<sup>th</sup> United Nations Commission for Social Development (UNCSD)** scheduled for February 2024, has as its **Priority Theme: ‘Fostering social development & social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication.’**

The Committee Coordinator for the UNCSD, Franziska Reichel, drafted a statement for the Committee on this theme, and it was signed by a number of member organisations of the Committee, and subsequently submitted timely in 2023 to the UNCSD by the Committee, and has since become an official document of the UNCSD in 2024.

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N23/358/25/PDF/N2335825.pdf?OpenElement>

An eighty page report, of a study update entitled: **‘Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families’** by Peter Crowley Ph.D. Secretary of the Committee, in cooperation with the United Nations Focal Point on the Family, which was presented by the author, at the United Nations in New York, to observe the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations International Year of the Family in 2014, is available to download, on the United Nations website:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/international-day-of-families/2014-3.html>

The Report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the General Assembly on November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023, (A/79/61-E/2024/48) on page 14, which relates to activities of the Committee on the Family in 2023, brings to bear the appreciation of the highest office of the United Nations for the endeavours of our Committee, the Member Organisations and their representatives, for the well-being of families worldwide: “The Vienna non governmental organisation Committee on the Family organized an international forum to observe the International Day of Families with presentations on the theme: ‘Climate change. Migration: impact on families’ where the latest research by the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime on human trafficking and migrant smuggling, with a focus on children was presented. The Committee also included migration as a theme in its quarterly bulletin “Families International” to highlight the preparations for the thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, in 2024.” The website address of the Committee was included in the footnotes.

#### **4. Website of the Committee**

[www.viennafamilycommittee.org](http://www.viennafamilycommittee.org)

This website, which was set up in 2000 is, amongst others, the main vehicle to publish our online quarterly bulletin ‘Families International’. Issues Nos.125 to 128, which were published in 2023, may be downloaded from our website without cost to the reader. A button e.g. entitled ‘Families Online’ is available on the homepage with a direct link to the proceedings of three International Forums organised by the Committee, between 2017 and 2021, dealing with families and digital media usage.

#### **5. The Three Digital Networks of the Committee** **[203 CSOs Networked - 92 in Sub-Saharan Africa]**

Laura Mysliwiec and Sebastian ‘Oberreiter, kindly accepted the invitation of the Committee, in 2022, to become the ‘Committee Digital-Networks Coordinators’ updating the networks & websites.

A so-called **‘Digital Divide’** exists between those connected and not connected to the Internet. Statistics from the United Nations International Telecommunications Union based in Geneva, for 2023, show that 2.6 billion or ca. 67% of the world’s population is using the Internet, but only about 37% of the African population is online. 42% of African males, as against 32% of females, were using

the Internet in 2023. Worldwide 70% of men are using the Internet compared with 65% of women. 81% of those living in urban areas in 2023 were using the Internet, while in rural areas this figure was 50%.

In the three Digital Networks, set up and maintained by the Committee, 92 CSOs or 45.3% of the total of 203 CSOs, are based in Sub-Saharan Africa, which is particularly affected by the 'Digital Divide'. These 92 CSOs offer important knowledge resources for the well-being of families, especially in the first 1000 days of a child's life, which are so important for its future development, as UNESCO already pointed out in 2014. These digital knowledge networks expand the concept of Civil Society being an advocacy and discourse entity, to also being a resource entity, especially of knowledge.

[www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org)

This website continues to experience interest, as a digital network, and also as a resource archive for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF) in 2004, with many relevant links to other sources. It resulted out of the participation of the then Chairperson, and present Secretary of the Committee in a consultative meeting of twenty international and regional Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) set up by the United Nations Secretariat in New York, in 2002, to implement a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly to observe the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF) in 2004. There it was agreed to prepare a study, under the Chairmanship of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family entitled: 'Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families' since 1994. The original study, in which thirty two CSOs, from eighteen countries in five continents participated, was also published in book form with the financial support of the United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities in 1994, under the title: 'Documenting Contributions of Civil Society Organisations to the Well-Being of Families' and edited by the then Chairperson and present Secretary Peter Crowley, who presented the study at a meeting of the United Nations in New York, to observe the United Nations International Day of Families on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2004. The book was also submitted to the members of the special session of the 59<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> 2004, to observe the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The United Nations Secretary General referred to the above publication in his Report to the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly (A/59/176, 2004). The contents of the book, which also includes a comparative perspective of international, national, and local families-oriented civil society organisations enhancing social justice, are also available to download at [www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org)

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To facilitate the implementation of an update of the above-mentioned study, originally carried out at [www.10yearsIYF.org](http://www.10yearsIYF.org), a further website was setup by the Committee at: [www.20yearsIYF.org](http://www.20yearsIYF.org) to gather data entered by the twenty-eight participating CSOs, from seventeen countries in four continents. This network continues to offer knowledge resources on family issues for visitors to the website, by creating a so-called 'Cyber Street' of websites of families-oriented CSOs, which deal with the eight categories of the study relevant for families: 'Children; Economic-Financial; Education; Gender; Health Issues; Organisation; Parents; and Subsistence-Services.' This website is also a further digital network and includes a series of links, inter alia, to the United Nations Focal Point on the Family in New York.

[www.civilsocietynetworks.org](http://www.civilsocietynetworks.org)

An Interactive-Internet-Forum for civil society organisations world-wide, including local, national and international CSOs, as well as academic and research institutions, was set up at the request of many organisations from around the globe, and went online in August 2004 at [www.civilsocietynetworks.org](http://www.civilsocietynetworks.org). This Network had 143 member organisations from 25 countries in 2023 having incorporated the Interactive-Forums the Committee had originally set up with civil society organisations in Eastern African and in Central and Eastern European Countries, between 2000 and 2004, and was then extended and opened up, as a further digital network, to worldwide

membership in 2004. Civil Society Organisations worldwide can join, and participate in this Forum, free of cost, by contacting the Committee at: [contact@viennafamilycommittee.org](mailto:contact@viennafamilycommittee.org)

Each organisation receives an individual User-Identity and Password and is able to enter and change data as necessary. The Forum also includes a discussion board, internal e-mail and online conference facilities, as well as a newsletter function, for each individual member organisation of the network.

The above outlined facts and figures, reflect perhaps, the ever-increasing interest generated by issues relating to families and also speak for themselves, with regard to the continued and increasing endeavours worldwide of the Committee, which observed in 2023 the 38<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its inception in 1985.

## **7. The Board of the Committee for 2022 - 2025**

### **Board Officers:**

Chairperson: Valeria Foglar-Deinhardstein, M.Sc. European Union of Women

Deputy Chairperson: Wolfgang Engelmaier, M.A. Kolping International,

Secretary: Peter Crowley, Ph.D., International Council of Psychologists,

Deputy Secretary: Katharina Muegler, Kolping International,

Treasurer: Julia Zacharenkova, European Union of Women

### **Board Members:**

Julia Birner B.A., Families International,

Christin Kohler M.A., Families International,

Karin Kuzmanov M.Sc., Families International,

Isabella Nening M.A., Families International,

Hannah Pruewasser B.A., Families International

Franziska Reichel, Committee Coordinator,

United Nations Commission for Social Development,

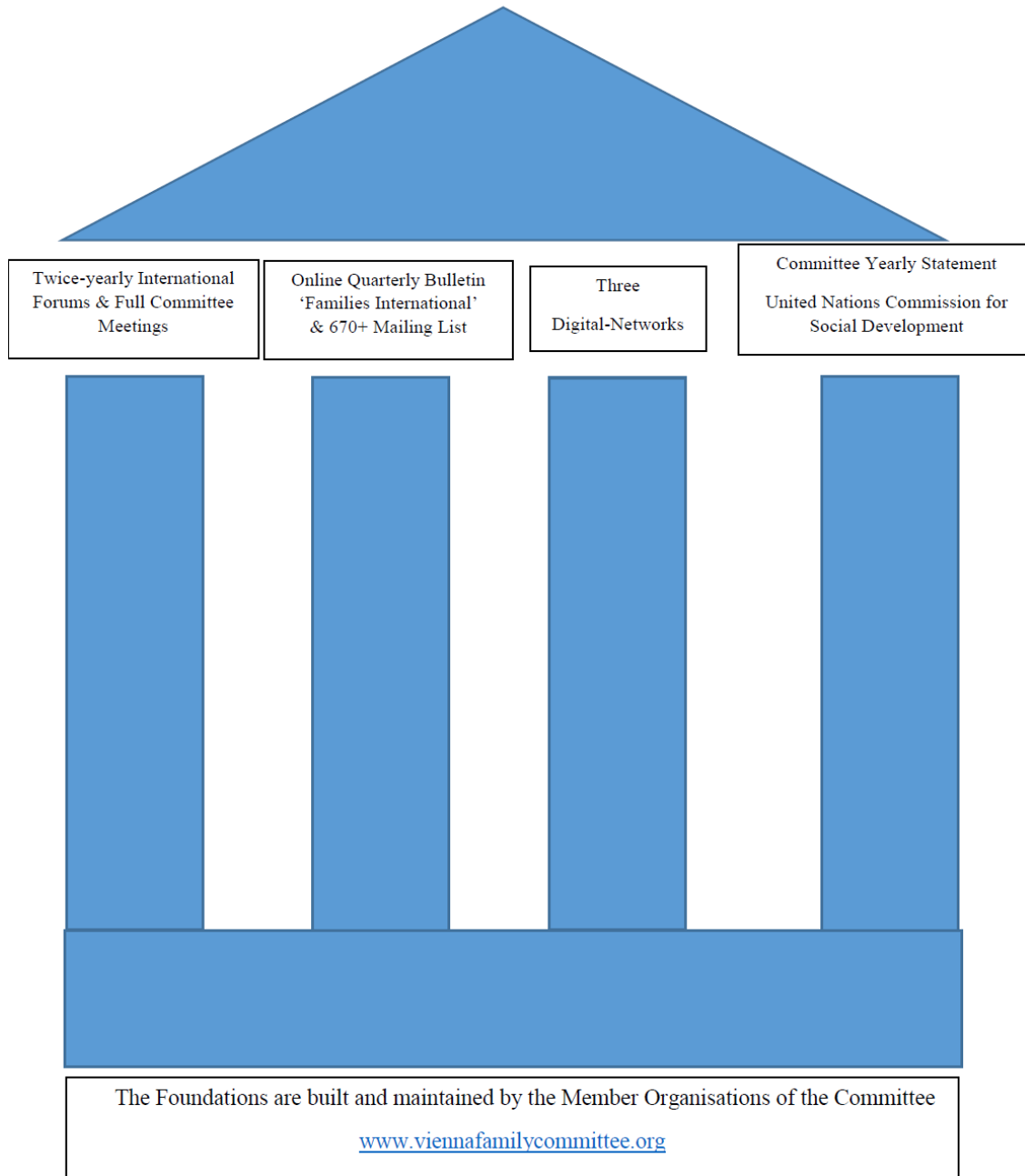
Dr. Eleonora Teixeira Da Costa Rossoll,

Federation of Catholic Family Associations.

Dr. Maria Riehl, Women's Federation for World Peace,

**THE FOUR-PILLAR STRUCTURE OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY**

The Roof is built and maintained by the Board of the Committee



Vienna NGO Committee on the Family  
[www.viennafamilycommittee.org](http://www.viennafamilycommittee.org)  
Chairperson: Valeria Foglar-Deinhardstein, M.Sc.

January 2024  
[contact@viennafamilycommittee.org](mailto:contact@viennafamilycommittee.org)  
Secretary: Peter Crowley, Ph.D.