

VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY



www.viennafamilycommittee.org

Digital-Networks:

www.10yearsIYF.org

www.20yearsIYF.org



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ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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
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- ❖ Siemens
- ❖ United Nations Trust Fund on Family Activities



Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES 2024

At a Full Committee Meeting, which, was held in person, and 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 2024

1. Families International (FI)

Issues, Nos. 129-132 of the Quarterly Bulletin of the Committee, were published online in 2024 at 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 2024 included, amongst others: Issues relating to Families at the 62th United Nations Commission for Social Development (CSD) 2024, The State of the World's Children, Nutrition & Child Survival, as well as other relevant texts from United Nations Agencies.

Each issue of Families International also included texts submitted by member organizations of the Committee. Ca. 700 readers of 'Families International' are informed, by the Secretariat of the Committee, when each issue is published and available to download free of cost from the Committee Website.

2. International Forum: May 13th 2024

At the International Forum, The Vienna Committee hosted the distinguished speaker, Prof. Dr. Eva Beaujouan, from the University of Vienna, who provided invaluable perspectives on global family and fertility trends, and her comprehensive analysis, highlighted the evolving dynamics of family structures and fertility patterns over the past three decades, as well as providing a profound understanding of the social, economic, and cultural factors influencing these trends, and offering insights into how these changes shape family life worldwide. The Vienna Committee also hosted Prof. Dr. Bahira Trask from the University of Delaware, who joined the meeting online, to present on "Supporting Families in a Globalized World: Family Science and the United Nations 2030 Agenda." Prof. Trask emphasized the critical role of family science in addressing the challenges faced by families globally, especially as they are a vital source for sustainable development. and also underscored the need for the recognition of families within global policy frameworks, aligning family support measures with the broader goals of sustainable development.

3. International Forum: Nov. 4th 2024

The Committee further organised and held a second International Forum, during a Full Committee Meeting, on Monday Nov. 4th 2024 at the United Nations Vienna International Centre, with Regina Hartweg-Weiss, from the Dept. of Family Policy at the Federal Chancellery of Austria, on ‘Celebrating 30years of the of the International Year of the Family: Austria’s Initiatives in 2024’ and with Vlatko Gorchev, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation & Development (OECD) and National Coordinator for Demography, Macedonia, on ‘A Macedonian View on Family and Youth Policy’

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 above mentioned International Forum to observe the United Nations International Day of Families in May 2024.

The 62th United Nations Commission for Social Development (UNCSD) scheduled for February 2024, had 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 was signed by a number of member organisations of the Committee, and subsequently timely submitted 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 20th 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 22nd 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 also included in the footnotes.

4. Website of the Committee

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.129 to 132, which were published in 2024, may be downloaded from our website without cost to the reader. A button entitled ‘Families Online’ is also 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. An update of the Committee website at will go online in 2025.

5. The Digital Networks of the Committee CSOs Networked - in Sub-Saharan Africa

Laura Mysliwicz 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 2024, show that 5.5 billion or ca. 68% of the world's population is using the Internet, but only about 38% of the African population is online, while in the Americas it was 87%, Arab States 70%, Asia-Pacific 66%, in Europe 81%, while in lower developed countries it was merely 27%.

In the Digital Networks, set up and maintained by the Committee, many are based in Sub-Saharan Africa, which is particularly affected by the 'Digital Divide'. These 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 relevant for, amongst others, families.

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 10th 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 15th 2004. The book was also submitted to the members of the special session of the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations on Dec. 6th 2004, to observe the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

The United Nations Secretary General referred to the above publication in his Report to the 59th 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

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To facilitate the implementation of an update of the above-mentioned study, originally carried out at www.10yearsIYF.org, a further website was setup by the Committee at: 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.

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 by the Committee, which observed in 2024 the 39th Anniversary of its inception in 1985.

7. The Board of the Committee Elected 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: Franziska Reichel, Kolping International,
Treasurer: Julia Zacharenkova, European Union of Women, who resigned in 2024.
Claudia Schatzl-Alqudah, European Union of Women, was elected, as the new Treasurer

Board Members:

Julia Birner B.A., Families International,
Christin Kohler M.A., Families International,
Karin Kuzmanov M.Sc., Families International,
Hannah Pruewasser B.A., Families International
Alexandra Pirker, Committee Co-Ordinator,
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,

Vienna NGO Committee on the Family

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Chairperson: Valeria Foglar-Deinhardstein, M.Sc.

January 2025

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Secretary: Peter Crowley, Ph.D.

THE FOUR-PILLAR STRUCTURE OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY

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

