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## 17th COPE International Conference

### Stigma dismantled, dignity upheld

### *Child rights standards for children affected by parental imprisonment*

12 June 2025, Caritas Malta Community Centre, Malta  
hosted by Mid-Dlam għad-Dawl

### Agenda

Conference chair: Rachel Brett, *human rights lawyer and former COPE President*

**9.30 – 10.00**

#### **Opening speech, welcome, greetings**

- Rachel Brett, *Conference chair*
- Mireille Farrugia, *Lawyer*
- Sina Opalka, *Photographer & photo journalist*
- Mid-Dlam għad-Dawl representative
- Michael Falzon, *Minister for Social Policy and Children's Rights (Malta)*

*I: Setting the context: children's rights and parental imprisonment*

**10.00 – 10.10**

**Glenn Micallef**, *EU Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport (Malta)*

**10.10 – 10.20**

**H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca**, *Former President of Malta, Former President of EuroChild*

**10.20 – 10.30**

**Juliana Scerri Ferrante**, *member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (video presentation)*

**10.30 – 11.00**

**Coffee break**

12 June 2025  
9.30 – 16.00

Caritas Malta Community Centre  
Triq Mountbatten, Hamrun  
HMR1577 Malta

<https://childrenofprisoners.eu/>  
[contact@networkcope.eu](mailto:contact@networkcope.eu)



## II. *Dismantling stigma, respecting rights*

**11.00 – 11.10**                      **Keep up hope: critical reflections on a targeted stigma-reducing intervention**

Fiona Donson, Aisling Parkes & Daragh Bradshaw  
*University College Cork (Ireland)*

**11.10 – 11.20**                      **The child's right to access child rights standards**

Ruth Farrugia, *University of Malta (Malta)*

**11.20 – 11.30**                      **Parental Imprisonment Collective - challenging the secret sentence**

Tasha Cowperthwaite, Jemmar Samuels & Evie, *Parental Imprisonment Collective; Jemmar Samuels also founder of Collective Punishment Campaign (UK)*

**11.30 – 11.40**                      **Art as a means to dismantle stigma and humanise family spaces in prison**

Belén Masola & Helena Cabo Vila, *Projecte Nius (Spain)*

**11.45 – 13.15**                      **Lunch**

## III. *Models for change*

**13.15 – 13.25**                      **Addressing stigma in Roma communities: developing support projects for children and families affected by imprisonment – Game with Mum & Dad**

Šárka Vlková, *Romodrom (Czechia)*

**13.25 – 13.35**                      **The ASPIRE project: Exploring a national approach to improve outcomes for children in Wales with a parent in prison**

Nancy Loucks, *Families Outside (UK)*



**13.35 – 14.45**

Breakout Groups Session

**1. Voices of lived experience: empowerment and agency**  
*Centering the perspectives of children and young people affected by parental imprisonment to drive change and reshape narratives.*

**2. Supporting mental health and well-being**  
*Addressing the emotional and psychological impact of stigma on children affected by parental imprisonment and promoting trauma-informed support systems.*

**3. Education without barriers: support at school**  
*Addressing stigma in educational settings, training educators and creating supportive school environments.*

**4. Advocacy and policy change: shaping fairer systems for children affected by parental imprisonment**  
*How laws, policies and grassroots movements can challenge systemic discrimination and improve support structures.*

**14.45 – 15.50**

**Feedback from Breakout Groups + Q&A session**

**15.50 – 16.00**

**Concluding Remarks**