



Justice Starts with Us

DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN
INTERNATIONAL
GREECE



Youth Participation A Fundamental Principle in Every One of Our Initiatives

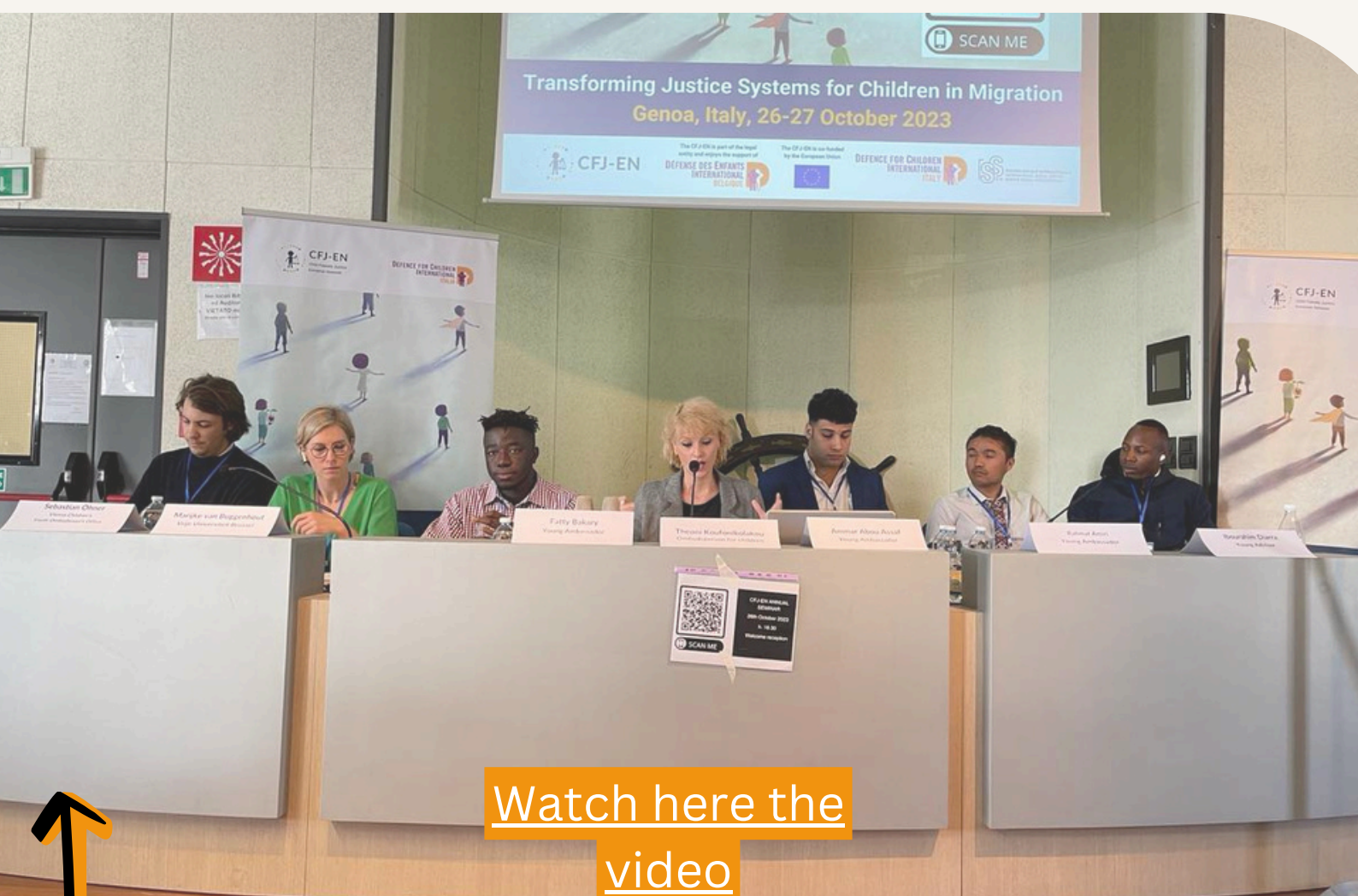
At DCI Greece, the participation of children and young people is not simply a process; it is the core of our work. We uphold their right to be heard, to co-shape decisions, and to be recognised as agents of change, as affirmed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We create spaces and opportunities for them to meet, connect, and transform their experiences into messages that reach communities and decision-makers. ***Because a child who feels safe and empowered does not merely hope for a better future – they help create it.***



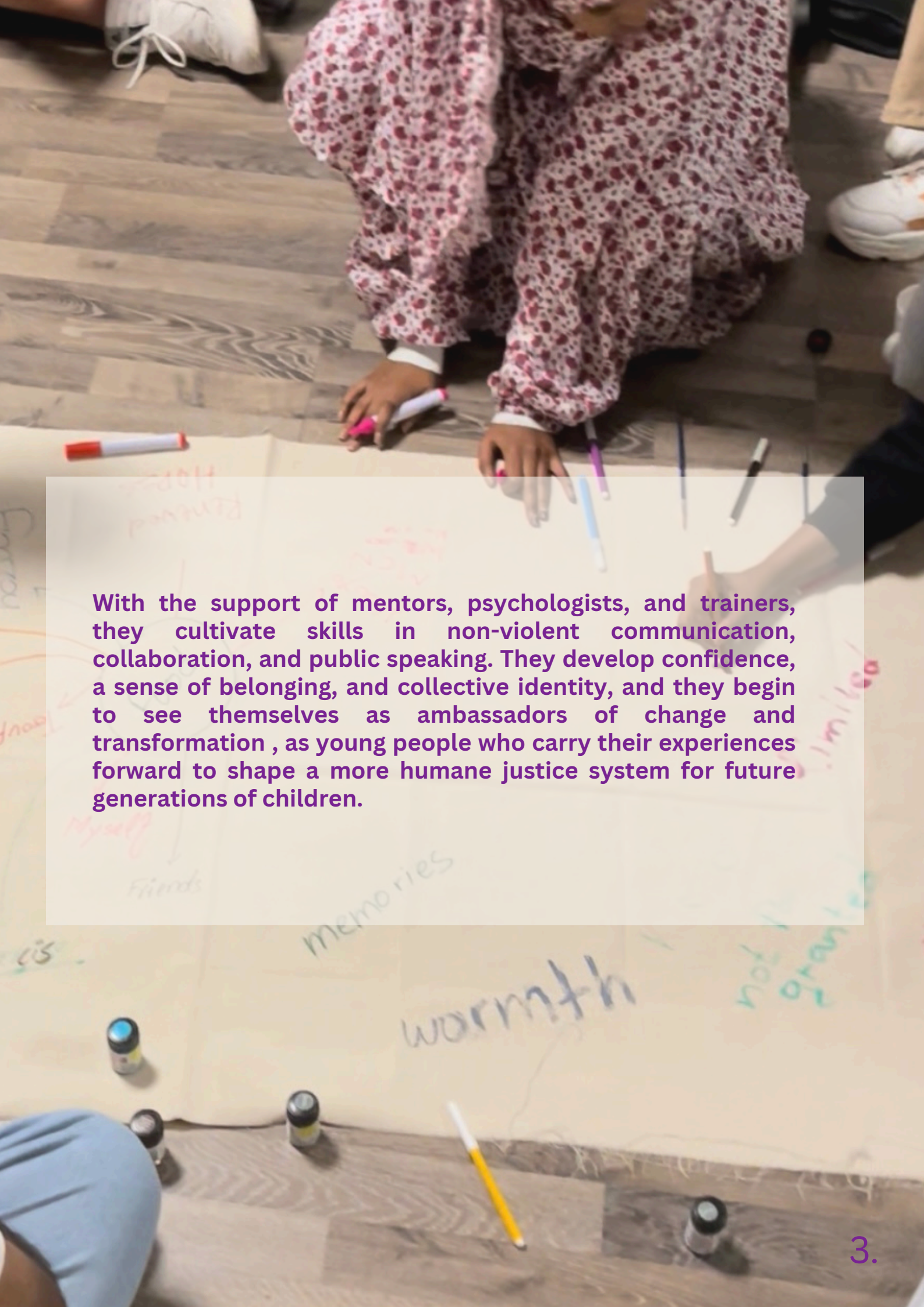
Legal Empowerment & Preparation for Participation

Through Justice Starts with Us, children and young people learn about their rights, gain an understanding of the justice system, and process their experiences in a safe environment. They prepare to communicate these experiences to policymakers and justice professionals – judges, prosecutors, legislators – actively contributing to the improvement of the system.



[Watch here the video](#)

Our Ambassadors speak at the Annual Conference of the European Network for Child-Friendly Justice, titled “Transforming Justice Systems for Children on the Move.”



With the support of mentors, psychologists, and trainers, they cultivate skills in non-violent communication, collaboration, and public speaking. They develop confidence, a sense of belonging, and collective identity, and they begin to see themselves as ambassadors of change and transformation, as young people who carry their experiences forward to shape a more humane justice system for future generations of children.

Restorative Justice and Art



Restorative justice offers safe spaces where children and young people can share experiences, be heard with respect, and reconnect with the community.

Using art as a tool for empowerment and expression, we organise restorative circles and train our Ambassadors of Change to facilitate them.

For World Refugee Day (June 2025), a circle designed by our youth brought together children, young people, community members, and local stakeholders. The gathering concluded with the creation of the “**Tree of Community,**” a symbol of solidarity and shared humanity that now stands in our Centre.

When Theatre Becomes a Tool for Justice

Theatre creates a vibrant space where children and young people can express themselves, process their experiences, and find their voice in a creative and safe way. As a tool for social change, it helps them ***understand their stories, collaborate, develop empathy, and transform personal experiences into a collective message.***

Through ***theatre workshops, improvisation, and performance, children and young people strengthen their confidence, cultivate communication skills,*** and take an active role in shaping actions that carry their voices to communities and institutions.

The Collaboration with Teatro Mpellos

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In October, at the historic Teatro Mpellos, our young participants – many of whom have had direct contact with the justice system – presented their original theatrical intervention under the direction of Aikaterini Papageorgiou and with dramaturgy by Christos Tsoukalis.

The performance emerged from a series of workshops with the director – a creative process that evolved into stage language, collective narration, and a shared voice.

Among the audience were policymakers, judges, and representatives of the European Commission and the United Nations, offering the young people a meaningful opportunity to share their messages about the need for greater justice in their experiences and their lives.



Our Young Ambassadors of Change on International Platforms

[Watch here the video](#)



When our Ambassadors travelled **to Brussels in October**, their purpose was to amplify the voices of children and young people and to share their experiences within **justice and migration systems**.

During their visit, they met with Marie-Cécile Rouillon, the European Commission's Coordinator for the Rights of the Child, and Helena Pall from the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs.

Their discussions focused on the need for safe and accessible pathways, child-friendly procedures, and more substantial support for young people as they transition into adulthood.

At the European Parliament, the Young Ambassadors participated in a **constructive dialogue with Members of Parliament, policymakers, and institutional representatives**, conveying the proposals, perspectives, and aspirations of children on the move.

When Their Voice Takes Centre Stage



One of our Ambassadors, Rahmat Amiri – a former unaccompanied minor from Afghanistan – participated as a speaker on the panel **“Institutional Violence Against Children on the Move,”** held as part of a UNHCR side event marking its 50th Anniversary in Geneva.



Tap her to listen to his speech

When Their Voice Takes Centre Stage



At the United Nations event titled “*Protecting Children on the Move in Times of Crisis Cannot Wait*,” organised by Dr. Najat Maalla M’jid, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children,

Bakary spoke about the importance of a child-friendly justice system.

He called ***on policymakers to view every child through the eyes of a parent***, ensuring access to care, housing, education, and protection for all children on the move.

[Tap here to listen to his speech](#)



Our Team at the European Forum for Restorative Justice Athens



A youth-led dialogue session, developed by the young participants last May, brought together experts, practitioners, and community members, fostering the exchange of experiences and perspectives on creating a justice system that is more child-friendly and humane.

Led and facilitated by the young people themselves, the session created a shared space of open discussion, empathy, and connection – a setting in which their voices reminded everyone of the importance of dignity, visibility, and inclusion.

“I want to remind you that I am a human being just like you, and I deserve equal opportunities,” one of the young participants said.



“When you truly see us, you help us believe that change is possible.”
— Member of the Youth Ambassadors Group, Justice Starts with Us

Children and young people carry the wisdom, creativity, and vision for a world that is more just and more compassionate. With guidance, care, and opportunities, their voices become bridges and their stories become pathways that lead us closer to understanding and justice. Let us keep alive every child’s right to be heard and to participate.