

Newsletter

September – October 2020

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16-17 November 2020:
ENOC 24th Annual Conference on Child Rights Impact Assessment

18 November 2020:
ENOC 24th General Assembly

16-18 November 2020:
2nd Plenary meeting of the CDENF

• ENOC News and Announcements



ENOC Online Seminar on Child Rights Impact Assessment and the ENOC Statutes

On **21-22 September 2020**, ENOC₁ with the support of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland organised digitally a two day seminar.

The first day of the Seminar was dedicated to the first round of discussions on **Child**

Rights Impact Assessment, ENOC's annual theme. Participating ENOC members shared views and discussed Child Rights Impact Assessment to inform the future ENOC Statement on the same issue. ENOC members with extensive experience on CRIA shared concrete case studies or materials that helped drawing up a list of common recommendations aiming at providing guidance to states on how to implement CRIA. The ENOC work on CRIA is supported by Lisa Payne, external independent expert advisor.

On the same occasion, ENOC held a **capacity building session on the review of the ENOC Statutes** that took place on Day 2 of the Seminar, 22nd September 2020. ENOC members discussed the different articles of the Statutes and worked on improving the Network's internal procedures and processes. Based on the discussions, amendments will be presented and voted by the General Assembly on 18 November 2020.

You can find the agenda and the presentations [here](#).

ENYA Online Forum "Let's Talk Young, Let's Talk about Children's Rights in decision-making"

As part of the ENYA (European Network of Youth Advisors) child participation project, children and young people from across Europe have also focused on CRIA and worked towards the elaboration of specific recommendations that will be incorporated in the ENOC statement on Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA).



In this framework, ENOC together with the Office of the Norwegian Ombudsman for Children – General Coordinator of ENYA 2020 activities, organised on **3-4 October 2020** an **ENYA digital Forum**. Young people from 13 countries/regions (Andalusia, Basque country, Catalonia, Cyprus, Greece, Iceland, Malta, Montenegro, Northern Ireland, Norway, Slovakia, Scotland, Sweden) participated in the event.

Between February and October 2020, ENYA country teams have conducted several meetings and activities, most of them online due to the COVID19 crisis, where young people expressed views and opinions on Child Rights Impact Assessment. The main purpose was to consult children and young people about how they see their involvement in CRIAs and how CRIAs should be conducted in a right-based and child-friendly manner where children and

young people's views remain central. Child participation has therefore been an important topic addressed at the Forum. The ENYA country teams have also worked with the rights of LGBTIQ+ as a supporting topic to make CRIA less abstract for the young people. This topic has been used as a case study, to discuss to what extent this is a question of children's rights and understand how CRIA can be used as a tool.

At the ENYA Forum, country/region teams had the opportunity to present the outcomes of their domestic activities, discussed various aspects of CRIA, child participation and rights of LGBTIQ+ children, and worked on a set of common recommendations on these three topics. The ENYA young people will participate in the ENOC Annual Conference to present their recommendations.

Find more information [here](#).

- **Update on European and International activities in the CR field**

13th EU Forum on the Rights of the Child “Delivering for children: towards the European Strategy on the rights of the child”

Over three mornings and one afternoon, between **29 September and 1 October 2020**, more than 300 participants, including children and young people, ombudspersons for children, national authorities and policymakers, independent experts, international and non-governmental organisations, EU institutions and agencies etc, connected to the first digital edition of the EU Child Rights Forum.

Koulla Yiasouma, ENOC Chair, participated on behalf of ENOC in the high-level session on “*What can we learn from COVID19, children’s rights in emergency situations*” on 30 September. She presented the main challenges surrounding children’s rights in the different ENOC members and addressed extensively the issue of re-opening of schools and how and to what extent COVID19 related restrictive measures have affected the work of Ombudspersons for children in Europe.

Young people from across Europe have also been invited to actively participate in the EU Forum. Thus, **6 young people representing the ENYA group joined the event and contributed to various topic discussions**. 2 young people joined Koulla at the high-level session on COVID19 and shared their experiences of the pandemic. The rest of the ENYA young people took part in the interactive workshops on inclusive education and violence against children.

Find more information [here](#).

New EU Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2021-2024)

The European Commission is working on a new Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2021-2024), which will provide the framework for EU action to better promote and protect children’s rights. Children between 11 and 18 have been consulted through an online questionnaire. Other organisations (SOS Children’s Villages International, Defence for Children International and Terre des Hommes) are running targeted consultations with children. The [public consultation](#) targeting all stakeholders, namely any relevant EU agencies and international organisations, civil society organisations and academia, national (e.g. administrative, child protection authorities, judicial authorities, law enforcement agencies) regional and local authorities, as well as the general public, is open **until 8 December 2020**. The Strategy is expected to be adopted in Spring 2021.

First exchange of the CDENF on the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child

On **17 September 2020**, the Council of Europe Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) held a plenary session online to proceed to a thematic exchange of views on the preparation of the CoE Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027).

Publications

Child Rights Connect: two new tools to fostering the ratification of the OPIC

Child Rights Connect released two new publications on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure (OPIC). The [OPIC Ratification Toolkit](#) shares concrete arguments and tools to advocate for the ratification of the OPIC. By October 2020, only 46 states (20% of the CRC parties) have ratified the OPIC, which is well behind the ratification of the two other protocols. This toolkit is therefore an important tool to explore some concerns and misconceptions that may be creating barriers to ratification, as well as to provide arguments for ratification and case studies of ratification experiences. It is part of a broader publication project to provide a better understanding of the OPIC, which includes the publication of an [OPIC Info Pack](#). This Pack gives information concerning the individual communications and inquiry procedure of the OPIC.

Global Study on Children deprived of liberty – latest updates

To address the worrying situation of children deprived of liberty, the UN Secretary General commissioned an independent in-depth study on this issue, led by the expert Manfred Nowak. The final report on the Study was submitted to the UN General Assembly in September 2019. The Global Study on children deprived of liberty is now available in an [interactive version](#) online, allowing you to navigate through the different parts of the study. An executive summary of the study is also available [here](#). The UN GSCDL findings have also been referenced in the most recent [report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants](#) which focuses on ending immigration detention of children and providing adequate care and reception for them. The NGO Panel for the Study will pursue efforts next year to bring forward a UN General Assembly resolution with the aim of formalising the follow-up mechanism of the Study.

Koulla Yiasouma, ENOC Chair and Bruce Adamson, ENOC Chair-elect represented ENOC as observers at this session. Discussions covered the state of implementation of the current Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) notably in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the preparation of the next Strategy (2022-2027). The Committee looked into the work programme and key issues for its design, decided on the roadmap for broad multi-stakeholder consultations, including children, and started discussions on priority areas to be included therein.

Find more information [here](#).

- **Update on ENOC members' activities**

Two new reports of the Children's Commissioner for England on children's rights and COVID-19

The Children's Commissioner for England published two new reports on children's rights during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first report "[Childhood in the time of COVID-19](#)" highlights the ways in which children's lives have been impacted as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, and provides a roadmap for what must be done to enable children to recover from their experiences and how their needs must be put first in the event of further lockdowns. This report shows that in many decisions taken over the last months, children have not been at the forefront. For example, while pubs, restaurants and non-essential shops opened, the majority of children were not able to attend schools in England. Consequently, 41% of children reported being more stressed about their schoolwork and exams since schools closed in March. The second report "[Stress among children in England during the coronavirus lockdown](#)" is based on the results of two surveys conducted by the Children's Commissioner at the beginning and during the lockdown among children aged 8-17. This report shows that COVID-19 has emerged as a new cause of stress amongst children. For example, the first survey showed that 88% of children reported that they had ever felt stressed while 24% of children felt stressed most days or every day.

The Hungarian Commissioner for Fundamental Rights' Annual Report (2019-2020)

In September 2020, the Hungarian Commissioner for Fundamental Rights published the [Annual Report](#) on its activities in 2019. It includes a special section related to the enforcement of children's rights. One of the most important progresses notified by the report is that the Minister of State and the Ministry of Human Capacity, upon the Commissioner's call, have begun to prepare the accession of Hungary to the third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure. It also highlights cases, inquiries and reports related to the protection of children's rights, especially of the rights of vulnerable children, for example children in institutional care, hospitalised children or children with disabilities.

The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland Annual Report (2019-2020)

The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland published its [Annual Report 2019-2020](#) on 30 October 2020, which covers the period from April 2019 to the end of March 2020. This report covers important progress on issues including: the incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into domestic law, with a commitment to a bill which fully and directly incorporates the UNCRC to the maximum extent possible by the end of the Parliamentary session, the protection of children from corporal punishment, with the Children (Equal Protection from Assault) Scotland Act which provides children with full protection from physical punishment, and the raising of the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 8 to 12. Child participation also took an important part in the work of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland. For example, young advisers led the work of the office's [new four-year strategic plan](#) to protect children's rights and continue to put the voice of children and young people at the heart of CYPCS's work.

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