

# Newsletter

December 2020 – February 2021

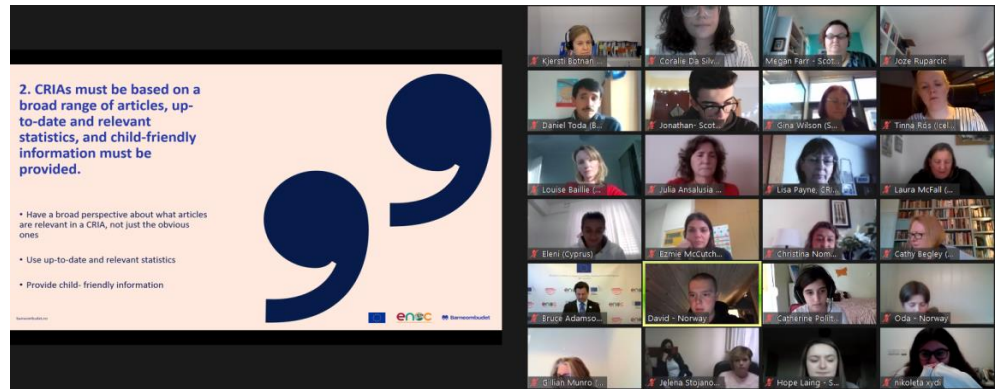
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### • ENOC News and Announcements



### New ENOC publications on Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA)

In 2020, ENOC focused extensively on **CRIA**, a key mechanism for implementing the UN Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC). The concluding event on the annual theme, the **ENOC 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference** took place online on 16-17 November 2020. It brought together 135 participants, including 89 Ombudspersons for Children and advisors and 15 young people and their coordinators participating in the ENYA project. On this occasion, the outcomes of ENOC’s work on CRIA were presented to participants. The ENYA young advisors animated different sessions throughout the conference and presented the outcomes of the ENYA project through different online tools: quizzes, live polling, online escape game to assess the impact of a state measure on children’s rights, etc. They also introduced ENYA young people’s recommendations on CRIA, child participation and LGBTIQ+ children’s rights.

On the occasion of the 24<sup>th</sup> General Assembly meeting on 18 November 2020, ENOC adopted [a policy position statement](#) on CRIA informed by the findings of a mapping study reflecting feedback received from 30 ENOC members on the state of play of CRIA within their jurisdictions; and a practical tool – [a Common Framework of Reference](#) for undertaking CRIA – providing a step-by-step guide to allow ENOC members and stakeholders to implement CRIAs as a standard practice. All ENOC materials on CRIA are available on a [dedicated page](#) on the ENOC website.

### ENOC Bureau held a series of online meetings with European stakeholders

In February 2021, the ENOC Bureau organised two meetings with European stakeholders to promote the outcomes of ENOC’s 2020 thematic work on CRIA, discuss respective work plans for 2021 and explore cooperation opportunities.

On 8 February 2021, the ENOC Bureau met with the Office of the European Parliament Coordinator on Children’s Rights and EP Vice-President **Ms. Ewa Kopacz**. Ms. Kopacz’s office highlighted the commitment of the Vice-President to advocate for CRIA at the European Parliament level. The EP Legal Affairs Committee is thus planning to organise a workshop on CRIA to start the reflection on a potential CRIA tool for the European institutions.

On 12 February 2021, the ENOC Bureau met with **Ms. Regina Jensdottir**, Head of the Council of Europe Children’s Rights Division, and her team. She presented the most recent work of the Division i.e. the [Handbook on children’s participation](#) “Listen-Act-Change”, the [Handbook for policy makers on the rights of the child in the digital environment](#), and updated the Bureau on the work of the Lanzarote Committee and the CDENF on the upcoming Council of Europe Strategy for the rights of the child (2022-2027).

## Upcoming Events

Save the dates!

**17 March 2021: Webinar on the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty, for ENOC members only**

**23-24 March 2021: Training sessions on CRIA for participants in the ENOC-UNICEF initiative for a multi-country impact assessment of COVID-19 measures on children’s rights**

## Launch event ENOC-UNICEF initiative for a multi-country impact assessment of COVID-19 states' measures on children's rights

On 18 February 2021, ENOC launched online a joint ENOC-UNICEF initiative on a multi-country impact assessment of COVID-19 states' measures on children's rights to protection. This initiative aims to support some Ombudspersons for Children's offices in Europe and Central Asia to complete **specific CRIAs related to COVID-19**. The assessment will cover specific vulnerable groups of children including those in institutional care, in detention/closed institutions, affected by violence, involved in child labour, caught in migration, etc.

The event gathered representatives from the 15 Ombudspersons for Children's offices (*Cyprus, Ireland, Sweden, Slovakia, The Netherlands, Montenegro, Serbia, Georgia, Greece, Bulgaria, Moldova, Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan*) and the 10 UNICEF Country offices participating in the project. It started with a presentation of the project by **Bruce Adamson**, ENOC Chair, who also introduced the two experts leading the project, **Véronique Lerch and Vanessa Sedletzki**. **Afshan Khan**, UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia gave an introductory speech and highlighted the aim of the initiative which is to strengthen independent child rights monitoring mechanisms, evaluate states' responses to the pandemic, and create opportunities for exchange between national child rights institutions, the UN and EU institutions. This was followed by a panel with keynote speakers from the EU and the UN. **Velina Todorova**, Vice Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, **Monika Jagiello**, Advisor to Ewa Kopacz (European Parliament Vice Chair and Coordinator on children's rights) and **Valeria Setti**, European Commission Coordinator for the rights of the child shared reflections on the impact of COVID-19 on children's rights. The second part of the event was dedicated to a roundtable where participants presented themselves and shared preliminary ideas on the scope of domestic project activities.

## ENOC Open Letter on the temporary derogation to the ePrivacy Directive to combat child sexual exploitation and abuse

ENOC published on 15 February 2021 an Open Letter on the temporary derogation to the ePrivacy Directive to combat child sexual exploitation and abuse. In this letter, ENOC urges the European institutions to agree on the temporary derogation to the ePrivacy Directive, which would enable tech firms to continue to legally use established tools to detect child sexual exploitation and abuse. You can read the Open Letter [here](#).

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

## The European Commission consulted over 10,000 children on the EU's upcoming Child Rights Strategy

In preparing for the new EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2021-2024), the European Commission decided to set a new standard by inviting children living in Europe and beyond to share their views and influence how the strategy would be shaped. To this end, the European Commission called on five child rights organisations (ChildFund Alliance, Eurochild, Save the Children, UNICEF and World Vision) to facilitate consultations with over 10,000 children and young people on the upcoming Strategy and the EU Child guarantee. The results from these consultations are outlined in the report "Our Europe, Our Rights, Our Future". The overarching messages from the children are that the EU Strategy and the Child Guarantee commit to focusing on concrete and effective measures to ensure: equal treatment for all children, with particular attention to children in vulnerable situations, equal access to quality and affordable education for all children, from early childhood education and care to secondary education, measures to stop violence against children, children's participation in decision making and children's access to mental health support. You can read the report [here](#).

## Publications

### UNCRC General Comment No 25 on children's rights in the digital environment

On 4 February 2021, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted General Comment 25 on children's rights in relation to the digital environment. The document explains what the digital environment means for children's rights and the accountability of the state as the primary duty bearer in ensuring that the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are adhered to, including the periodic reporting process to the committee on how the obligations were met. States are also obliged to ensure that all duty bearers within their jurisdiction meet their responsibilities regarding children's rights. General Comment 25 will be published soon [here](#).

### Study on child participation in EU political and democratic life

The European Commission published a study on child participation in EU political and democratic life. The study looks at the situation in the EU and UK at national level, and in 10 countries at national and local level - with 12 case studies. One of the case studies is on the European Network of Young Advisors, ENOC's child participation project. You can read the report [here](#).

### KIND report "Advancing Protection for Unaccompanied Children in Europe by Strengthening Legal Assistance"

Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) and Child Circle published a new report "Advancing Protection of Unaccompanied Children in Europe by Strengthening Legal Assistance". The new EU Migration and Asylum Pact introduces proposals that could harm children and undermine their best interests. KIND and Child Circle's report provides recommendations on how the EU can make its commitment to protect unaccompanied children a reality, for example through free quality legal assistance. Read the report [here](#).

## Council of Europe Handbook on Children's Participation

The Council of Europe launched a Handbook on children's participation "Listen-Act-Change" on 21 January 2021 during a webinar moderated by Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and ENOC Chair. The Handbook is a practical step-by-step tool which explains the concept of child participation in theory and in practice, while guiding professionals to involve children meaningfully and safely in different settings. The launch webinar brought together the three experts who prepared the Handbook, children and interested professionals to discuss the importance of child participation in decision making and explore some of the possible ways forward. You can find the Handbook [here](#).

## PACE consultation on the impact of COVID-19 on children's rights

Bruce Adamson, ENOC Chair, participated in an online consultation organised by Baroness Massey of Darwen, Member of the Sub-Committee on Children of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, on 16 February 2021, and introduced ENOC's work on the impact of COVID-19 on children's rights. Baroness Massey of Darwen is currently in the process of preparing a Report for PACE on this issue. Find out more [here](#).

- **Update on ENOC members' activities**

*Farewell to the outgoing Ombudsperson for Children of Luxembourg, René Schechter, and Children's Commissioner for England, Anne Longfield. You will be truly missed! & a warm welcome to the new Ombudsperson for Children of Luxembourg **M. Charel Schmit**, and to **Dame Rachel de Souza**, the new Children's Commissioner for England*

## The Chancellor of Justice of Estonia Annual Report (2019-2020)

The Chancellor of Justice published its [Annual Report 2020](#), available in English, which covers the period from 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020. It gives an overview of the activities of the Chancellor of Justice in the area of the rule of law, the rights of the child, inspection visits, protection of privacy, etc. The section on children's rights, available [here](#), covers various issues such as children and parental care, alternative care, kindergarten and school, children with special needs, protection of children's data, prevention and promotion, and inspection visits to childcare institutions.

## Comparative Study of the Latvian Ombudsman – National regulations to protect children from potentially dangerous employees

In Latvia under the current law persons who have been convicted of criminal offences that are related to violence or threats of violence, or criminal offences against morals and sexual inviolability – irrespective of whether or not the conviction is extinguished or set aside – are forbidden to work with children. This applies to every person without any individual exemptions or evaluations. The Supreme Court of Latvia challenged this law provision before the Constitutional Court of Latvia. The Latvian Ombudsman was requested to provide views on the challenged provision and its compliance with the Constitution. In this context, the Ombudsman of Latvia requested ENOC members to share their national regulations that prevent the risks of employing persons who would be dangerous for children, thus seeking to find out what protection methods are used in other European countries. The results of the consultation of 13 ENOC members are available in the comparative overview published [here](#).

## Virtual exhibition by children and young people in Cyprus

On the occasion of the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the UNCRC on 20 November 2021, the Cypriot Commissioner for Children's Rights launched a virtual tour to a unique Art Exhibition, currently available on the Commissioner's website: 250 children from 10 schools, from all age groups and from all over the island, as well as 9 Cypriot artists, have created their own artwork, on the subject "the right of the child to participation". You may visit the art exhibition [here](#).

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ENOC is co-funded by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (REC 20142020). The content of this newsletter represents only the views of ENOC and is its sole responsibility. The European Commission does not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.