

Newsletter

May - June 2020

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Upcoming Events

Save the dates!

The ENOC/ENYA events have been tentatively rescheduled (subject to significant improvement of the COVID-19 situation)

19-20 September 2020:

ENYA Forum – CRIA and LGBTIQ(+) children's rights
Stockholm, Sweden

21-22 September 2020:

ENOC Seminar, Stockholm, Sweden
Day 1 – Child Rights Impact Assessment
Day 2 – ENOC Statutes

16-18 November 2020:

ENOC Annual Conference on CRIA & General Assembly meeting, Edinburgh, Scotland

• ENOC News and Announcements



ENOC-UNICEF Report on Ombudspersons and Commissioners for Children's Challenges and Responses to COVID-19

In May 2020 ENOC and UNICEF conducted a short **online survey** on Ombudspersons and Commissioners for Children's responses to the new challenges generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty three ENOC members responded to the survey: Armenia, Basque Country/Spain, Bulgaria,

Catalonia/Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Jersey, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Northern Ireland/UK, Republika Srpska/ Bosnia & Herzegovina, Scotland/UK, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Wales.

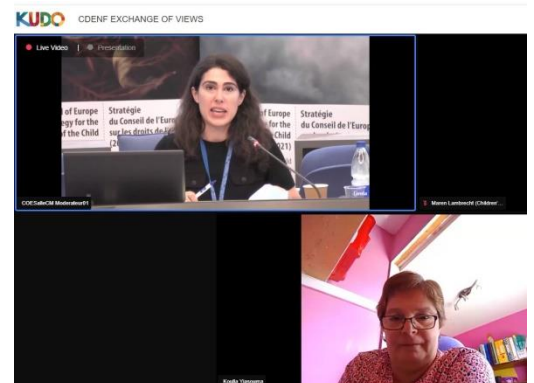
Following up on the survey, nearly 60 representatives of Ombudspersons for Children's offices and UNICEF participated in an **online session on June 2nd 2020**, to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on their work and on children's rights in their respective countries, and share innovative practices. The main issues raised in the survey and during the joint online session are summarised in the **Synthesis Report « Ombudspersons and Commissioners for Children's Challenges and Responses to COVID-19 »** available on the [ENOC website](#).

A dedicated page on COVID-19 and children's rights has also been created on the ENOC website. You can find [here](#) the materials published by ENOC as well as a regularly updated list of useful resources produced by ENOC members and international organisations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Council of Europe Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) First thematic exchange of views

The Council of Europe Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child held an online meeting on 26 June 2020 to exchange views on lessons learnt to date from the management of the COVID-19 pandemic in member states and future perspectives to ensure that children are treated as rights holders during the pandemic and beyond.

Koulla Yiasouma, ENOC Chair and Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, participated in the event. She presented the outcomes of the ENOC-UNICEF online survey on the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the work of Ombudspersons and Commissioners for Children and on children's rights. The first session focused on mapping implications of COVID-19 policy responses for children's rights and priority areas of focus by the CDENF; and the second on mapping effective interventions of COVID-19 responses by the child protection and the justice systems, including with respect to situations of violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. You can find the concept note and agenda [here](#).



This exchange of views followed the first meeting of experts of the Working group on Violence against children, held on 23-24 June 2020. They examined mandatory reporting mechanisms for professionals to signal various forms of violence against children, peer to peer violence and harmful sexual behaviour by children.

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

ENOC joined the virtual roundtable of the Intergroup on Children's rights on the impact of COVID-19 on children

Following on from the Intergroup [statement on the impact of the COVID-19 on Children](#), the European Parliament Intergroup on Children's Rights organised a virtual roundtable on the impact of COVID-19 on children on 6 May 2020. The objective of this meeting was to highlight the threats and hidden risks that the current COVID-19 outbreak has on children. It also sought to identify concrete measures to take, both at EU and national level, to mitigate the impact and protect children. Speakers from the European Commission, Members of the European Parliament Intergroup on Children's Rights, UNICEF and child rights NGOs shared views and discussed Child Poverty and the EU Recovery Plan, the Global Response Plan and investment on children, and the upcoming EU Child Rights Strategy.

Selected EU actions on children and coronavirus

Since the outbreak of the coronavirus, the European Commission adopted a number of measures to counterbalance the negative effects of the different, necessary measures adopted by the EU Member States. Assistance has also been provided to third countries. The European Commission prepared a summary table with examples of responses put in place to cope with the situation of children. You can find this document [here](#).

UNICEF Regional Conference on Access to Justice – Conference Report

UNICEF's Europe and Central Asia Regional Office and UNICEF's Bosnia and Herzegovina Country Office organised a Regional conference on "Children's Access to Justice" on 25-27 February 2020 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The conference took stock of what has been achieved over the past years in justice for children reforms and provided the opportunity to share promising practices with a focus on victims and witnesses of crime, children involved in civil proceedings, and children on the move. The event brought together over 150 government officials, civil society, young people and representatives of international organisations and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The intention was to strengthen partnerships between these critical sectors and their interface on justice for children and access to justice matters. The Conference Report published on 2 July 2020 highlights the discussions and ensuing recommendations. You can find the report [here](#) and related materials [here](#).

Committee on the Rights of the Child – new webpage with information for children

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) launched a [new webpage](#) with information for children about the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The OHCHR Children's Advisory Team provided suggestions for the development of this webpage.

Publications

FRA 2020 Fundamental Rights Report

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights published its [Fundamental Rights Report 2020](#). This report reviews major developments and shortfalls of human rights protection in the EU over the past year. Its focus section highlights how the EU's Fundamental Rights Charter has gained visibility and sparked a new fundamental rights culture at EU level. However, nationally, awareness and use of the Charter remain limited despite it being legally binding for 10 years. Other key issues identified include fundamental rights of migrants, risk of poverty, artificial intelligence, etc.

FRA has also launched a series of Bulletins on "Coronavirus pandemic in the EU". The [first edition](#) outlines some of the measures EU Member States have put in place to protect public health during the COVID-19 pandemic and covers the period from 1 February to 20 March 2020. The [second](#) and [third](#) editions focus on declarations of states of emergency and the impact on fundamental rights in important areas of daily life.

ENNHRI 2020 Report "State of the rule of law in Europe"

ENNHRI released a new report on the state of the rule of law in Europe. This report brings together reporting from NHRIs in Europe on the rule of law situation in their country, based on their monitoring and reporting functions and collected over April to June 2020. It identifies key trends across the region and details the specific situation in each country, including in the context of governments' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the challenges identified are the common issues affecting the independence and effectiveness of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), including a lack of adequate resources and insufficient consultation and cooperation with NHRIs. Read the report [here](#).

- **Update on ENOC members' activities**

The Children's Commissioner for Jersey Annual Report

The Children's Commissioner for Jersey has published her first annual report 2018-2019 after the establishment of her office, the first National Human Rights Institution in January 2018. The Annual Report gives an overview of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey's work to protect and listen to children and young people including support to schools through the Rights Respecting School Award Scheme, the establishment of the Commissioner for Young People and Children's Law, the creation of a Youth Advisory Panel, casework, etc. You can find the report and all related information [here](#).

The Children's Commissioner has also released an animated version of the report for children and young people. The video is available [here](#).



Report on the Activities of the Public Defender of Rights of the Slovak Republic for 2019

The Public Defender of Rights in Slovakia has published an abridged version in English of its 2019 Annual Report. It provides information on the Public Defender of Rights' work on protecting fundamental rights. It includes a specific section on the right to private and family life, and the rights of children and parents (including women's reproductive rights, social and legal protection of children, protection of the rights of child victims of violence in criminal proceedings, adoptions, etc). The Report is available [here](#).

The People's Advocate Report on the observance of human rights in the Republic of Moldova in 2019

The People's Advocate has released its report on the observance of human rights in 2019. This report assesses the protection of human rights in Moldova throughout the year 2019. Chapter 2 is dedicated to the observance of child rights in the Republic of Moldova in 2019. In this, the Children's Ombudsman concludes that public policy is ineffective in protecting the rights of the child, the national child protection system does not meet the special needs of children at risk, the national education system does not provide children with the necessary training for social integration, and the juvenile justice system fails to perform the basic tasks of prevention and protection of the child with complex emotional behavior. The report is available [here](#).

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