

Newsletter

March – April 2021

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Preliminary step – Planning the CRIA

- Setting the goals
- Planning your work/project management
- Risk analysis
- Ethical principles and tools



15 Ombudspersons for Children's offices were trained on CRIA in the framework of the ENOC-UNICEF initiative on COVID-19

The ENOC-UNICEF initiative on a multi-country impact assessment of COVID-19 states' measures on children's rights to protection aims to support some Ombudspersons for Children's offices in Europe and Central Asia to complete specific Child Rights Impact Assessments (CRIAs) related to COVID-19.

The assessments 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. In this framework, the two experts leading the project, Véronique Lerch and Vanessa Sedletzki, prepared a methodology package for participating Ombudspersons for Children's offices, including a detailed CRIA methodology based on [ENOC Common Framework of Reference – A Guide on how to conduct a CRIA](#), and guidance on child participation, semi-structured interviews, and CRIA questionnaire.

The methodology package was presented during three interactive training sessions held with the different participating countries online on 23-24 March 2021. The main objective was that participating countries get familiar with the steps and tools of the methodology, learn from each other's experience, explore ideas of what the country CRIAs might focus on, start putting the methodology into practice, and discuss and agree on the project deliverables and timeline.

Webinar for ENOC members on the United Nations Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty

The Global Campus of Human Rights, together with the ENOC Secretariat, organised on 17 March 2021 a webinar for ENOC members on the project "Enacting the Recommendations of the Global Study in the National Agenda and the European Context". There is considerable scope and a growing tendency for children's rights bodies across Europe to work together to develop a cross-national agenda and supranational policy making, and the Ombudspersons for Children are a key part of that. In the context of multi-level governance, the findings and recommendations emanating from the [United Nations Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty](#) entail *key challenges in child rights terms* and may require further selectivity in the strategic aims of Ombudspersons for Children, possibly leading to identify relevant priority areas for their work, both individually and collectively.

Therefore, the objective of the webinar was to present the findings and recommendations of the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty to ENOC members, to start initial discussion about the challenges and opportunities for ENOC members' engagement with the implementation of such recommendations, and to start considering feasible roles and actions in supporting and facilitating the development of follow-up strategies at national and/or regional level.

This webinar gathered about 60 representatives of Ombudspersons for Children's offices from 28 countries across Europe.

Upcoming Events

Save the dates!

1 June 2021:
ENOC Seminar, Day 1 on "COVID-19: learning for the future" – online

4 June 2021:
ENOC Seminar, Day 2 on ENOC Standards and values – online

1-2 July 2021:
ENYA Forum on "COVID-19: learning for the future" - online

Open Letter of the ENOC Bureau to support the Human Rights Defender Armenia in the context of a proposed amendment to the constitutional law on the Human Rights Defender

In an Open Letter published on 12 April 2021, the ENOC Bureau calls upon the President of the National Assembly of Armenia to review a proposed Constitutional amendment that may affect the independence, effectiveness and operational capacity of the institution of the Armenian Human Rights Defender (HRD). The ENOC Bureau was particularly concerned by the Armenian Government's recent proposal for amendment of Article 8(5) of the Constitutional Law on the HRD which provides that the amount of allocation for funding from the state budget to the HRD cannot be below the amount provided the precedent year. Such amendment would threaten the financial independence, adequate and consistent funding and resourcing of the institution. You can read the full Open Letter [here](#).

- **Update on European and International activities in the Children's Rights field**

Council of Europe Recommendation on the development and strengthening of effective, pluralist and independent National Human Rights Institutions

On 31 March 2021, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers adopted a "Recommendation on the development and strengthening of effective, pluralist and independent national human rights institutions (NHRIs)". This Recommendation acknowledges the role of NHRIs as pillars of respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy in Europe and recommends each Council of Europe Member State to establish, maintain and strengthen an independent NHRI in compliance with the Paris Principles and to ensure an enabling environment for, and cooperate with NHRIs. Read the full text of the recommendation [here](#).

New EU Strategy on the rights of the child and European Child Guarantee

On 24 March 2021, the European Commission adopted two important policy documents that will push forward efforts to protect, support and empower children in the EU and beyond, and put forward actions to better respond to current challenges: the first comprehensive [EU Strategy on the rights of the child](#) and a [proposal for a Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee](#).

More than 10000 children contributed to the strategy during the consultation process that preceded the adoption. Children also worked on the [child friendly version](#) of the Strategy. The EU Strategy focuses on six thematic areas and proposed action: participation in political and democratic life, the right of children to realise their full potential no matter their social background, the rights of children to be free from violence, to child-friendly justice, to safely navigate the digital environment and harness its opportunities, and the rights of children across the globe. Learn more about the Strategy [here](#).

On the other hand, the European Child Guarantee aims to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and social exclusion, and promote equal opportunities by guaranteeing free and effective access for children in need to: early childhood education and care, education and school-based activities, at least one healthy meal each school day and healthcare.

Publications

New UNICEF tools in the NHRIs Series

UNICEF published two new tools in its National human rights institutions Series to support child-friendly practices. The first tool "[Advocacy with and for children in the work of NHRIs](#)" provides detailed guidance on what is meant by advocacy, the steps involved and how to undertake advocacy in partnership with children. The objective is to enhance understanding of a rights-based approach to advocacy and highlight approaches to involving children. The second tool "[NHRIs and monitoring children's rights in closed settings](#)" provides guidance for NHRIs on how to fulfil their independent monitoring function in places where children are cared for or detained without the possibility to leave freely. The aim is to enhance understanding of the monitoring function and offer a step-by-step approach to effective monitoring.

Groupe Enfance, Checklist to integrate the child rights-based approach into the project cycle

Groupe Enfance is a network of 19 NGOs committed to protect the rights of the child internationally. Within this organisation, a working group has reflected on quality criteria for the integration of the child rights-based approach in development and humanitarian projects. The aim of the "Checklist to integrate the child rights-based approach into the project cycle" is to propose a list of criteria to help professionals better understand the rights of the child and integrate a child rights-based approach throughout the project management cycle. You can use the interactive checklist [here](#).

The Sociology of Children's Rights, by Brian Gran

The Sociology of Children's Rights is a recently published book written by Brian Gran which grounds readers in core theories and key data about children's legal entitlements. The chapters tackle central questions about what rights accrue to young people, whether they advance equality and how they influence children's identities, freedoms and participation. This book shows how current frameworks hinder young people from possessing and benefiting from their rights, arguing that they function as cynical invitations to question whether we truly believe children are endowed with human rights. You can find the book [here](#).

First Council of Europe Webinar on “Overcoming Education Challenges” in its series on COVID-19 and children’s rights

The Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child ([CDENF](#)) has launched a series of three webinars to have an exchange on the most urgent challenges related to children’s rights in the context of COVID-19 pandemic. The first edition titled “Overcoming education challenges” was held online on 22 March 2021 with the aim to illustrate the latest activities by UNICEF, OECD and WHO, and have an exchange on good practices amongst the responses provided in the area of education during the current health crises. The webinar brought together CDENF national delegations, participants and observers, as well as international experts and, last but not least, children who had fruitful discussions on a number of important issues, *inter alia*, access to education, digital/home schooling, inclusion, safety and others. Read more [here](#).

- **Update on ENOC members’ activities**

The Children’s Commissioner for England launched the biggest ever consultation with children

Dame Rachel De Souza, Children’s Commissioner for England, launched the largest ever consultation with children undertaken in England. The survey asks children aged 4-17 across England to set out their priorities for improving childhood post-COVID. The results of this survey will help the Children’s Commissioner identify the barriers preventing children from reaching their potential, put forward solutions and set ambitious goals for the country to achieve. Two weeks after the publication of the survey, tens of thousands of children had already had their say. Children and young people can answer the survey [here](#) until 19 May 2021.

Incorporation of the UNCRC in Scotland

Since its establishment, the Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland’s office have been working to make UNCRC Incorporation a reality in Scotland. On 16 March 2021, the Scottish Parliament unanimously passed the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill, meaning it will soon become Scots law and come into force. Scotland became the first part of the UK to vote to enshrine the UNCRC into domestic law, which gives children real power to hold the government to account. Bruce Adamson, the Commissioner, warned the government and decision-makers that there is now no hiding place when it comes to upholding children’s rights. Read the Commissioner’s statement [here](#), and learn more about the Commissioner’s work on incorporation [here](#).

Progress towards Child Rights Impact Assessment in Norway

The Ombudsman for Children in Norway has been advocating for the implementation of Child Rights Impact Assessment in Norway, especially through ENOC’s 2020 work on this issue. In March 2021, a milestone was reached with the new White Paper about children and young people’s culture adopted by the Norwegian government. In this White Paper, the Norwegian government mentions the States’ duty to respect Article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to conduct CRIAs in policy and decision making processes. The Norwegian government underlines that authorities must assess what consequences the proposed measures will have on the fulfillment of the rights of the child, based on a child rights-based approach.

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