

Using children's rights to recover from the global pandemic

Hybrid conference on the importance of child rights impact assessments in public policy decision-making

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Using children's rights to recover from the global pandemic



Mieke Schuurman, Director of Child Rights and Capacity Building, Eurochild



Her Excellency Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Eurochild and Former President of Malta

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For in-person concerns, contact **Khalil Cambron**,
Eurochild Child Participation Coordinator – Khalil.Cambron@eurochild.org
For online attendees, contact **Lenia Kriki**,
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Presentations of the development of child rights impact assessments in Ireland: Key results from the Building Children's Futures project



Moderated by Mieke Schuurman, Director of Children's Rights and Capacity Building, Eurochild



Rayaa, Eurochild Children Council and Building Children's Futures Child and Youth Advisory Group, supported by Foróige



Dr Danielle Kennan, UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at the University of Galway



Karla Charles, EU Programmes and Know Your Rights Project Manager, Children's Rights Alliance



Linda O'Sullivan, Child Rights Policy Unit, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth, Government of Ireland

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UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



The Impact of Covid-19 on Children - Learning for Child Rights Impact Assessments

Dr. Danielle Kennan (PI)
Dr. Natasha Daniels

University
ofGalway.ie

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The Children's Report



Natasha Daniels and Danielle Kennan



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Research Purpose

To understand how Covid-19 impacted children and young people's lives and how government decision-making structures operated at this time.

Research Methodology



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Consultations with children and young people (aged 8-17) from socially disadvantaged groups in Ireland (n=50).

- Impact of Covid-19 restrictions on their lives
- Children's views on communication and decision-making regarding public health measures.

Research interviews with public officials core to the Government's and National Public Health Emergency Team's response to Covid-19

- Decision-making processes during Covid-19 and consideration given to children's rights
- Engagement with children's participation structures

Consultation Findings

The children identified the following rights as being most impacted by the pandemic:

- Right to to education
- Right to play, recreation and leisure
- Right to health and access to healthcare
- Right to family.

Children did not have a say regarding the public health restrictions but believed that they should have had an input.



Interview Findings

- Decision-making was a challenging exercise in balancing children's rights and risks
- Keeping a focus on children's rights was aided by:
 - Social impact reports and media monitoring
 - Parents, advocacy groups and children advocating for their rights
 - Children's champions in senior advisory roles
- Alternative measures taken to achieve children's rights, within public health parameters.
- Some consultations with children, but government evidence-based strategy informing public health decisions not informed by children's views.

Learning for Child Rights Impact Assessments



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- Research reiterated the importance of child rights impact assessments.
- Assessment must be underpinned by evidence, informed by the views of children and young people.
- The data informing an evidence-based approach should be disaggregated to take account of the impact or likely impact on children and young people experiencing disadvantage.
- Professionals with an expertise in children should be strategically positioned within the decision-making structures informing the government's response.
- When the curtailment of children's rights is necessary, measures that can be implemented to mitigate impact must be a core consideration.

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CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ALLIANCE

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 - Fourth level
 - Fifth level

Uniting Voices For Children



UNCRC and Child Rights Impact Assessments

Ireland examined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2023.

Concluding Observations – recommended that Ireland develop CRIA

CRIA is a framework

Helps decision makers understand how children's rights, needs, and best interests may be affected by a proposal, law, policy or decision.

Background

Covid-19 Pandemic impacted every aspect of society, and every person

Vulnerable children

Restrictions = Impacts

Protections vs human rights / children's rights

Priority?

Proportionate?

Subjective

Transparency indecision making

Decisions and inequalities

Enquiries – learning?

CRIA?

Child Wellbeing

Covid-19 Pandemic Recovery Strategies

Systems for Emergencies

Crisis Lawmaking

Necessary

Gather and analyse data – effect

Human Rights and Child Rights not a priority: UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Best Practice Examples

Key Roles played by NGOs / Ombudsman for Children – Children's Commissioners

Use of CRIA / CRIWA

Children's Social / Physical activity

Mental Health

School Meals

Devices

Schools open for some / disability / local solutions

Central information hub to guide and support teachers and promote good practice

National Broadcasting Companies

Consultations with children during Covid-19 Pandemic

Role of CRIA – promote / safeguard rights

What is needed?

KISS principle

Knowledge

Training - project toolkit and video developed as part of this project

Data – available / missing

Publish CRIA for reference

Established participation

Research on views of CYP

Online hub

Why use a CRIA?

Improves policy making for children and young people

Helps mainstream international children's rights

Helps identify impacts (+ / -) early on

Helps identify gaps in evidence / data or showcase good data

Rights / evidence based approach to decision making

Independent, transparent, accountable decision making

Better understanding, questioning, justification to wider society of changes in terms of cyp

Involves cyp / voice of cyp

Creates champions for children's rights

Thank you

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Reflecting on a Pathway to Child Rights Impact Assessment in Ireland

Dr Linda O'Sullivan



Young Ireland: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028



An Ireland which fully respects and realises the rights of children and young people

- Ireland ratified UNCRC in 1992
- *National Children's Strategy 2000-2010*
- The previous policy framework for children and young people, *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*, identified 5 National Outcomes for children and young people
- *Young Ireland* also includes supports for young people up to age 24 in the transition to adulthood.



Development of Young Ireland

- Current issues impacting children and young people and the current policy landscape
- Informed by extensive consultation with children and young people
- Children and Young People's Indicator Set, Census and other data sources
- EU Child Guarantee
- UN Concluding Observations



Five National Outcomes

- 1 ACTIVE AND HEALTHY**
- 2 ACHIEVING IN LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**
- 3 SAFE AND PROTECTED FROM HARM**
- 4 ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY**
- 5 CONNECTED, RESPECTED AND CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR WORLD**





Spotlights





Enabling Environment





Key Enabling Action in Young Ireland:

*Collaborate with partners on the development of the prototype CRIA
and roll out across Government*



Child and Youth Impact Assessments

- A tool to examine policy or draft legislation through a child rights lens
- Designed to help key decision-makers identify, research, analyse, and record the predicted impact of a proposed decision on children's rights
- A measure of implementation of the UNCRC



Why should we have Child Rights Impact Assessments?

- Article 4 of the UNCRC requires governments
“to undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognised in the UNCRC”
- CRIA helps predict both positive and negative impacts of policy decisions.
- CRIA can highlight potential negative impacts of policy decisions so that mitigating or protective factors can be put in place



Pathway to Child Rights Impact Assessment



Ambition:

- To have real impact on the consideration of child rights in government decision making processes
- To pilot with a wide range of policy makers
- To provide adequate supports for its rollout – training, guidelines, support etc.
- To integrate with other impact assessments such as equality impact and public sector duty
- To develop an instrument that is workable within the context of government decision making processes



Building on Ireland's Work on Participation





The Child Summit





The Child Summit



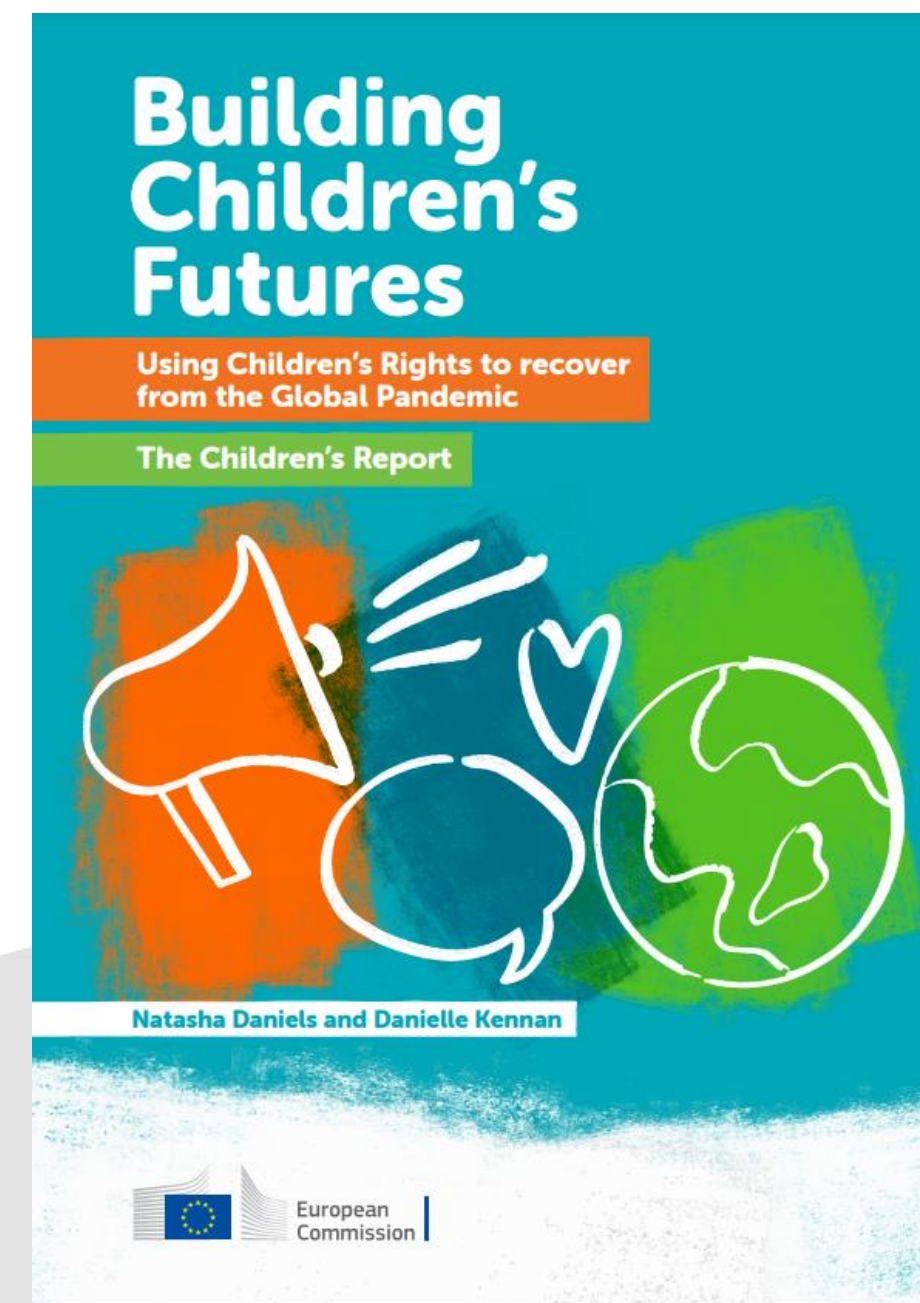


Building Children's Futures

Building Children's Futures Child Rights Impact Assessment Training



Building Children's Futures Child Rights Impact Assessment Training Toolkit





Workshop with Policy Makers





Next Steps:

- Continued engagement and learning from international models
- Next stage of consultation with wider range of policy makers
- When and how it should be used, barriers, capacity building requirements
- Piloting of instrument
- Training and other capacity building



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Thank you

Reflections on the role child rights impact assessments can play in the EU



Marie-Cécile Rouillon, Coordinator on the Rights of the Child for the European Commission

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Expert perspectives and reflections on the role of child rights impact assessments across Europe



Moderated by Julie Ahern, Director of Legal, Policy and Services, Children's Rights Alliance Ireland



Colma Nic Lughadha, National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People's Services Committees, Tusla Child and Family Agency in Ireland



Professor Cath Larkins, University of Central Lancashire



Professor Bruce Adamson, University of Glasgow, and former Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland



Véronique Lerch, Independent Human Rights Consultant

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Discussion and reflection time



What can support the use of CRIsAs on the ground across Europe and what are the difficulties that we will need to overcome?

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Concluding remarks



Julie Ahern, Director of Legal, Policy and Services,
Children's Rights Alliance Ireland

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