

Persisting and emerging challenges in protecting children's rights in Europe – as seen by the Committee on the Rights of the Child

Kirsten Sandberg, Chairperson

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Some challenges

- Coordination within states
- Complaints mechanism
- Real participation
- Violence in all forms
- Deprivation of family environment
- Inclusive education

Coordination of efforts to implement

Coordination needed across sectors and between national, regional and local levels.

Challenges:

- Carried out by various agencies, not one body
- Coordinating body with insufficient authority
- Lack of clear and specific mandate for national coordination of all activities
- Human and financial resources are not adequate for effective coordination

Complaints mechanism

Children should have a national complaints mechanism, child-sensitive and expeditious.

Challenges:

- Various complaints mechanisms
- Children do not know about them
- Not easily accessible
- Varying whether children can go to court
- May need support of parent
- Good national mechanism important in light of the OPIC!

Real participation

- Children's Parliaments or local children's councils in many states, but not functioning effectively or not sustainable
- Or not taken seriously as part of democratic decision making
- Children's views not taken into account in education policy-making and schools
- Children not adequately heard and listened to in legal proceedings and in health and welfare decisions

Children in alternative care

- Low number of foster families and family based placements of children, and still widespread use of institutionalization
- Lack of data to ensure the quality control of institutions and family type alternative care
- Insufficient resources to ensure the effective functioning of the alternative care system
- Lack of regular review of the children's situation
- Placing children with behavioural problems into foster care in other countries of the EU without proper supervision and evaluation

Inclusive education – children with disabilities

- No adapted curricula or systematic training of all teachers on an inclusive approach to education
- The need for individual support and reasonable accommodation is not recognized
- Some children with mental disabilities are considered “ineducable” and denied any kind of stimulation
- Many children with disabilities who live in care institutions and rural areas, do not receive formal education
- Parents decide whether the child should attend a special school, which may conflict with the best interests of the child

Children's use of the internet

- Empowerment and protection
- «emerging issues should be addressed»
- Committee's Day of General Discussion,
Geneva 12 Sept