WEBINAR:
Children’s Participation in Public Decision-making

#EurochildConf
Welcome by Mieke Schuurman, Moderator of the Webinar
Welcome and Introduction to Speakers and Agenda and technical details – Mieke Schuurman (Moderator, Eurochild)

Introduction to Eurochild and the conference – Mieke Schuurman

Video – What to expect at the Eurochild Conference

Presentation of Background Report ’Children’s Participation in public decision-making – a review of practice in Europe’ – Anne Crowley (policy and research consultant)

Questions & Answers

Teaser of two conference workshops:
- Netherlands Youth Institute: “Help, suddenly I’m 18’ Who Cares?”
- Network for Children’s Rights in Greece: “The Young Journalists”

Questions & Answers

Concluding and Registration Details for Conference
Introduction to Eurochild

- Eurochild is a network of organisations advocating for children’s rights and well-being to be at the heart of policy making.
- Eurochild’s vision: a society where children grow up happy, healthy, confident and respected as individuals in their own right.
- 171 members
- Eurochild Child Participation Strategy and Child Protection Policy

www.eurochild.org
Introduction to the Eurochild Conference

• High level and inspiring speakers from heads of state to children’s mayor; young advocates and royal champions of child participation

• Discover local practice and policy: over 10 study visits in and around Opatija

• 13 workshop topics will offer participants a chance to learn by doing

• 1/3 of the participants will be under 18 years of age! The Eurochild conference is co-designed and co-delivered with children. Children will bring their own ideas and perspectives to support their engagement in public decision-making.

• Interaction with participants of different ages and experiences! Participants will be invited to share their stories at the Human Library and engage with each other in small ‘home’ groups!
What to expect at the Eurochild conference?
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
ON EUROCHILD CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Eurochild Conference 2018
Building a better Europe with children: All aboard!
Under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Croatia
29–31 October; Opatija, Croatia
#EurochildConf
Children's participation in government decision-making - a review of practice in Europe

PRESENTATION BY ANNE CROWLEY
What is children’s participation in public decision-making and why is it important?

Policy and practice in Europe

Lessons learned

Next steps
Children’s participation in public decision-making

What?

• Child’s right to be heard (Article 12 of the UNCRC)

• PUBLIC decision-making – decisions on state or government policies, budgets, services ‘Voice’ and ‘Space’ but also ‘Audience and Influence’

• ALL children on ALL matters at ALL stages
Why?

• It’s a child’s right

• To ensure policies are in the best interests of children

• Leads to better services

• Opportunity for children to learn about their rights
Our Survey

European Policy

Positive examples in practice

Analysis of Concluding Observations indicates ‘more work to be done’ across the majority of European countries
How do children participate in public decision-making?

- Consultations on laws, guidance and action plans
- Inquiries and Debates
- Monitoring and asking challenging questions
- Joining Government Committees and Meetings
- Campaigns and awareness raising
- Surveys and Participatory Action Research
- Groups of children involved in ALL of these activities
- Budgets
Examples

- IRELAND – Standards for School-age Childcare
- SPAIN – promoting Roma inclusion
- CROATIA – child friendly city
Survey Results: Most effective ways to increase inclusion

- Evaluate activities, to check that they are accessible, 86%
- Train staff and young people to develop skills to engage with all children, 84%
- Use a variety of communication methods, 83%
- Ask children about how best to include other children, 82%
- Monitor who was included, 80%
- Have contacts who help access disadvantaged children, 80%
Achieving Influence: helps and hinders

It HELPS if you:

- Create supportive contexts
- Develop good understanding
- Gather support
- Create interpersonal processes of influence
- Have a strong message and communicate clearly
- Represent all children - challenge discrimination and remove barriers
- Establish many different ways to participate
- Think about time and understand participation as a process
- Follow up and get feedback
- Evaluate and reflect

It HINDERS if you:

- Have low commitment. Resourcing is short term or insufficient.
- Do not prepare and/or have, limited skills/capacity/low confidence.
- Do not create opportunities for children to meet with other citizens affected.
- There are no or limited opportunities for the children and the decision-makers to meet.
- Nobody is clear what they want or what’s up for change.
- The status quo is never challenged and there is a resistance to change.
- There is only one recognised way of doing children’s participation
- There are only one-off opportunities for children to participate.
- There is a lack of follow up and feedback to children.
- Things are done in the same way every time.
NEXT STEPS
Rights

- Is children’s right to participate in government decision-making written into law, and is there a strategy on implementing this?
- Are government decision makers required to demonstrate how they have taken children’s views into account?
- Can children access complaints mechanisms if those rights are not realized?

Resources

- Is money and time allocated for child participation in government decision making?
- Have disadvantaged children been consulted about how to reach out to them, and is funding available to support this?
- Do all children have access to information and training on child participation and government decision making?
- Do all policy makers and professionals have access to information and training on child participation?

Relationships

- Are there a range of spaces in which children can influence and take part in decision making and having their say?
- Are there mechanisms for feeding children’s views into government decision making and through which children will receive feedback?
- Have links been made between government decision makers and the NGOs and Ombudspersons working with vulnerable children?
- Can children access support for their concerns from their politicians, Ombudsman, NGOs, communities, families and older young people?

Review

- Is monitoring, evaluation and review written into a participation strategy, and are children involved in this?
- What is going well and what are the challenges?
- How can we learn from this to improve our approach?
Building blocks

• Measures to protect the right to participate
• Measures to promote the right to participate
• Measures to create spaces for participation
• Measures to ensure inclusion
• Measures to promote accountability
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
ON BACKGROUND PAPER ‘CHILDREN’S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC DECISION-MAKING – A REVIEW OF PRACTICE IN EUROPE’
TEASER CONFERENCE WORKSHOP: 
“Help, suddenly I’m 18’ Who Cares?”

The Netherlands Youth Institute works with local governments to include voices of young people in policy making

Workshop co-delivered with 2 young people – experienced experts

Methodology used: Experience Theatre
Network for Children’s Rights Greece

• Workshop **co-delivered with children aged 14-18 years old** together with a facilitator/ animator/journalist

• Outputs from the workshop: a newspaper issue and a radio show dedicated to the Eurochild conference
Video: "The Young Journalists"
Register Now!

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INFO: www.eurochild.org/events/eurochild-conference-2018/