



UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
electronically via Child Right Connect-online system

IOK/53/2022

30 June 2022

ANNEX

Compilation of recommendations from the Finnish Human Rights Centre/NHRI for the consideration of State Report – Finland – 93rd Pre-sessional WG

Climate change and children

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Assess carefully** human rights **impacts** especially on children and youth, including indigenous Sámi children and youth when enacting and implementing legislation and adaptation measures relating to environment and climate change.
- **Enable** meaningful and effective **participation** of children and youth in climate change related discussions.

I. General measures

Human Rights Structures

2. RECOMMENDATION:

- Strengthen the existing actors in **Finnish human rights structures**, including the Ombudsman for Children, instead of setting up new actors. Any consideration of new actors or functions should be based on a careful and holistic analysis of the existing structures and on a needs assessment.

Independent monitoring

3. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Strengthen** further the **independence** of special ombudsmen (including Ombudsman for Children) from the Ministry of Justice by considering alternatives for the result management of the Ministry.
- Include all provisions affecting the **independence of the Ombudsman for Children** in the Act on the Ombudsman for Children.

National Child Strategy

4. RECOMMENDATION:

- Ensure that the **four principles of the CRC** (non-discrimination, best interests of the child, the right to survival and development and the views of the child) are respected in the implementation of the national child strategy and the development of the implementation plans also by the future Governments.

National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights and Indicators

5. RECOMMENDATION:

- Develop further **disaggregated national statistics** and other objective data to enable additional themes to be included in the indicator framework of the national action plan on fundamental and human rights.

Impact assessment

6. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Enhance the **knowledge base for legislative drafting** and other decision making by
 - supporting research related to topical fundamental and human rights questions from the Government's research funds,
 - developing dialogue and increasing participation of different population groups, including children
 - ensuring that vulnerable groups and people, including children, are included and can participate effectively.
- Improve the **human rights impact assessment** of the legislation, Government programs, action plans as well as state and municipal budgets. Pay special attention to the possible accumulation of any negative effects. Continue to improve the impact assessments as regards the rights of the child.

Rights of the child and the business sector

7. RECOMMENDATION:

- Finalise the **national corporate responsibility legislation** and other measures to strengthen the human rights performance of Finnish companies and to prevent child labour, considering the previous recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. At the same time, take into account the rights of the child more broadly, not just in relation to child labour.

II. General principles

(Non-)Discrimination and Roma

8. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Include information on the **Roma culture** and rights in teacher's education and in school curriculums.
- Ensure that schools have clear processes on how to **address discrimination and racism** that Roma children and youth face in schools.

(Non-)Discrimination and LGBTI Children and youth

9. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Improve the well-being** of LGBTI youth, ensure a safe learning environment and provide low threshold services for those experiencing violence and suffering from mental health problems.
- Complete the **reform of the Trans Act** as soon as possible and ensure the right to self-determination for transgender children.
- Introduce a legal **ban on medically unnecessary procedures** on intersex children without their free and informed prior consent.
- Guarantee equal access to **treatment for intersex people** by preparing national guidelines for medical professionals.

IV. Violence against children

Violence against girls

10. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- In all policies and legislation aimed at protecting children from violence, as well as their implementation, pay **special attention to safeguarding** in an inclusive manner the children with disabilities, children belonging to various ethnic, linguistic and cultural minorities, children in out-of-home placements and children belonging to sexual and gender (LGBTIQ+) minorities.
- Increase **human-rights-based training on recognising domestic violence** and violence against girls and how to help the victims or children witnessing violation. Focus general training of attitudes on men and boys in particular.
- In the implementation of regional and international obligations addressing violence against girls, ensure **coordination between authorities**, cooperation with NGOs and engagement of local and regional level, especially in the development of service structures.
- Secure sufficient, multi-professional, individually tailored and geographically distributed **services for child victims** of domestic violence.

Bullying, harassment and violence against children with disabilities

11. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Educate professionals on how to **protect children with disabilities** from bullying and how to teach security skills to children with disabilities.
- Ensure protection to children with disabilities against **sexual violence and abuse**, also in institutional settings, as well as in private residences.
- Secure **individually tailored and accessible services** for disabled child (and women) victims of domestic violence.

V. Family environment and alternative care

Children deprived of family environment

12. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Increase the **supervision of the residential homes** and ensure that the competences and respect for human rights of the children and young people by professionals in specialised foster care are on appropriate level.
- Grant sufficient resources to necessary **amendments of the Child Welfare Act** and to its effective implementation.

Family reunification and the rights of migrant children

13. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ensure that the **best interest of the child** is a primary consideration in all migration decisions concerning children.
- Ensure that **family reunification** is accessible for all beneficiaries of international protection without discrimination.
- Legislate that all children seeking asylum or who have received temporary protection are entitled to participate in **day-care services**.
- Ensure that all **children are heard** in immigration procedures in accordance with their age and maturity and abolish the general age limits of 12 years on hearing.

VI. Disability, basic health care and welfare

COVID-19 – pandemic's impact on children and young people

14. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Take effective steps to **diminish** (also geographical) **inequality** and engage specific measures to **achieve** effective **equality** for all children and young people in the management of coronavirus pandemic and related recovery measures.
- **Ensure** sufficient **resources** for and adequate **support** in the universal and targeted services, including mental health services, for children and young people and services for families in the management of and recovery from the crisis.
- **Ensure** adequate **livelihood** of families with children and young adults, especially during the coronavirus pandemic and its recovery efforts.

- **Strengthen** the effective **participation** of children and young people also in the management of the coronavirus pandemic and in the planning of the recovery measures by using information systematically collected from them in decision making processes.
- Organise **services and activities** for children, young people and families in a child-oriented, youth-oriented and family-oriented manner. Develop further and implement good cooperation practices and practices introduced during the coronavirus pandemic.

Self-determination in social welfare and health care

15. RECOMMENDATION:

- Ensure that child's **right to self-determination** and participation are considered a cross-cutting issue in all areas of social welfare and health care, not only in child welfare. This must include an intersectional understanding of children, considering also the needs of children with disabilities, indigenous children etc.

Sámi-language health and social services

16. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ensure that Sámi children receive health and social services in their own language, including mental health services.
- Improve the education and training of care professionals for Sámi languages and how to take culture into account in special support services.

Child poverty and personal assistance

17. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Explore further support methods for families with disabled children to improve their **financial situation**.
- Support municipalities in developing **new services** for children with disabilities to gain independence from their parents and to support their families.

VII. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Inclusive education

18. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Strengthen the **competence of teachers and educational staff** in inclusive education and its implementation, including needs of children in autism spectrum.
- Provide schools with **sufficient resources** so that they can take adequate support measures to organise inclusive education, and that there's as little turnover as possible.
- Ensure **support for children with disabilities** also outside classroom, so that they have the opportunity to form friendships and be included in the society.
- Raise awareness of the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** and its binding nature.

Sign languages in education

19. RECOMMENDATION:

- Update the Early Education Act to ensure that the children whose first language is sign language have the right to receive **early education in sign language**.

Sámi-languages and education

20. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Support **Sámi-language nests** also in municipalities outside of Sámi homeland.
- Enable access to **basic education in Sámi-languages** for Sámi children living outside Sámi homeland by amending the Basic Education Act.
- Allocate sufficient resources to improve the realization of the right to own language and culture also for **Sámi children with disabilities** and special needs.

Roma children and education

21. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Raise **awareness** of the right to receive Roma language instruction in pre-school education and the difficulties faced by Roma children in the education system (including discrimination).
- Ensure the **right to basic education** for Roma children and youth in Roma language.
- Enhance the efforts to educate and recruit **Romani language teachers**.

Swedish in education

22. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ensure the right to one's language for Swedish-speaking children by enhancing the efforts to educate and recruit **Swedish-speaking educational staff** and securing geographically equal education opportunities.
- Develop the **collection and analysis of data** specifically concerning Swedish-language education and consider the characteristics of Swedish-language education.

Karelian language

23. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Raise **awareness** and take **steps to improve** the education of Karelian language at all levels of education.

Education on human rights and civic education

24. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Develop and publish** accessible information on fundamental and human rights in different languages and in a manner that is compatible with different means, modes and formats of communication, also in child friendly formats.
- **Strengthen teaching** of fundamental and human rights at all levels of education. Pay attention to non-discriminatory information on indigenous people Sámi and minorities and their language and culture.
- Include fundamental and human rights education as a **mandatory subject** in teachers' pre- and in-service training and secure sufficient funding, permanent structures and staff for it.
- **Increase** fundamental and human rights **education and training**, including but not only the rights of the child, at all levels and secure sufficient training on human rights for public servants and different professionals (e.g., health care, social workers etc.).

VIII. Special protection measures

Access to justice

25. RECOMMENDATION:

- Ensure proper and timely **investigation and access to justice** by allocating adequate resources to police, prosecutors and courts and

guaranteeing their possibility to prioritise cases concerning children and other vulnerable victims of crime.

XII. Follow-up and dissemination

26. RECOMMENDATION:

- Ensure the widest possible **distribution and understanding** of the concluding observations in more languages, for example by providing summary analysis and using various means and modes of communications.
