



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

### List of issues in relation to the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Iceland\*

The State party is requested to submit in writing additional, updated information (10,700 words maximum), if possible before 15 June 2021. The Committee may take up all aspects of children's rights set out in the Convention during the dialogue with the State party.

#### Part I

1. Please provide information about: (a) the four-year action plan defining the State party's policy, vision and goals in matters concerning children, including the allocated human, financial and technical resources, the implementation strategy, and coordination with municipalities and civil society at the local level (CRC/C/ISL/5-6, para. 12); (b) the administrative relationship between the Ministry of Social Affairs and Children and the Government Agency for Child Protection, as well as the Agency's role and mandate; and (c) the measures taken to ensure the protection of the rights of children in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and to mitigate the adverse impacts of the pandemic.
2. Please provide information on the reasons for not establishing a comprehensive mechanism for the collection, processing and assessment of data on the implementation of all areas of the Convention (CRC/C/ISL/5-6, para. 24). Please inform the Committee how the State party will ensure effective and efficient coordination on data collection concerning children's rights between Statistics Iceland, the Ombudsperson for Children and the Directorate of Health.
3. Please inform the Committee about: (a) the measures taken to overcome the challenges faced by the Local Authorities Equalization Fund to equalize resources throughout the territory of the State party; (b) the measures taken to ensure the quality of services provided to children at the municipal level, in order to avoid discrimination based on residence; and (c) whether a foreign child born in the State party and with continuous residency in its territory may be expelled.
4. Please provide information about:
  - (a) The assembly on child matters, of 2019, including the participation of children and how their views were taken into consideration in preparing the assessment of the implementation of the Convention (CRC/C/ISL/5-6, para. 7);
  - (b) The proportion of each age range of children in the municipal youth councils, the advisory group to the Ombudsperson for Children, the youth council of the Directorate

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\* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group on 8 October 2020.



of Education, and the special youth council on the Sustainable Development Goals established by the Prime Minister;

(c) The adoption of regulations governing the functioning, role and mandate of youth councils.

5. Please provide information about:

(a) The main areas concerning child protection in the national action plan against violence 2019–2022;

(b) The implementation of the memorandum of cooperation between the Minister of Education, Science and Culture, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Social Affairs, signed in 2017, and particularly about the measures to address violence against children;

(c) The measures taken to promote reporting of cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation and to ensure effective and prompt investigations, prosecutions and sanctions;

(d) Whether there is evidence of an increase in sexual violence against children by their peers, and the measures taken in this regard;

(e) The measures taken to raise awareness on the practice of circumcision;

(f) How the obligation to seek mediation before a verdict is implemented in practice when there is domestic violence, and how the best interests of the child are implemented as a primary consideration;

(g) The measures taken to address the increased workload of child protection committees.

6. Please provide information about the measures taken to address the long waiting lists for rulings in family matters and to provide counselling support to parents at the local level. Please also provide information on the study on the integration and success rate of children after leaving alternative care settings, as recommended by the Committee in 2011 (CRC/C/ISL/3-4).

7. Please clarify how law No. 23/2019 on sterilization, allowing for sterilization of children, ensures their right to be heard and that their best interests are a primary consideration. Please provide information on the measures taken to address the decline in children's mental health through the timely provision of professional services at the local level, including in compulsory and upper secondary schools. Please provide information about the increased prescribing of medicines to children, including for sleeping, depression, anxiety, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Please explain the reason for retaining an age limit for children's access to sexual and reproductive health services.

8. Please provide information on the main findings of the report on the standards of living and poverty among children for the period 2004–2016 (CRC/C/ISL/5-6, para. 52), and the measures taken to address them. Please clarify why "it is a great challenge to make the child benefit system better focused on low-income families and improve the economic situation of the lowest-income families with children" (CRC/C/ISL/5-6, para. 106).

9. Please provide information about:

(a) The measures taken to reduce school avoidance and discontinuance at the secondary level, including for children of foreign origin;

(b) The measures taken to provide adequate training to school staff on inclusive education;

(c) The actions taken to improve results for literacy and mathematical and scientific understanding;

(d) How the national curricula of compulsory school, through their information technology education, incorporate protection of children from online violence, including bullying and sexual abuse and exploitation.

10. Please provide information on the measures taken to align the minimum age of employment and the age of ending compulsory education, and the measures taken to protect children from unsafe or harmful working conditions and inappropriate work arrangements.

11. Please provide information on the integration of children's rights in the action plan against human trafficking and on the efforts taken to conduct effective investigations and prosecutions.

12. Please provide information about the measures taken:

(a) To ensure that child victims of exploitation in prostitution are not criminalized;

(b) To ensure that children between 15 and 18 years of age are protected effectively from sexual exploitation;

(c) To ensure that legal persons are liable for offences established in article 3 (1) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

13. With reference to the information provided on pages 31 and 32 of CRC/C/ISL/5-6 regarding applications from children for international protection, please clarify the status of the applications that were neither granted nor denied (tables 3, 4 and 5). Please inform the Committee about the Ministry of Justice's audit on the processing of applications for children seeking international protection and the ensuing measures. Please provide information about the procedures of the Immigration and Asylum Appeals Board regarding children.

14. Please provide information about the measures taken:

(a) To promptly identify and provide support to foreign children affected by armed conflict;

(b) To explicitly prohibit by law the recruitment of children under the age of 18 years into foreign armed forces/groups and their direct participation in hostilities;

(c) To explicitly prohibit by law the violation of the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict;

(d) To establish extraterritorial jurisdiction for crimes under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, when they are committed by or against a person who is a citizen of or has other links with the State party.

## **Part II**

15. The Committee invites the State party to provide a brief update (no more than three pages) on the information presented in its report with regard to:

(a) New bills or laws, and their respective regulations;

(b) New institutions (and their mandates) or institutional reforms;

(c) Recently introduced policies, programmes and action plans and their scope and financing;

(d) Recent ratifications of human rights instruments.

## **Part III**

### **Data, statistics and other information, if available**

16. Please provide consolidated information for the past three years on the budget lines regarding children and social sectors by indicating the percentage of each budget line in terms

of the total national budget and the gross national product. Please also provide information on the geographic allocation of those resources.

17. Please provide, if available, updated statistical data, disaggregated by age, sex, national and ethnic origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on:

- (a) Cases of violence against children, child neglect and child abuse, and the number of investigations and prosecutions carried out and sentences issued;
- (b) The number of circumcisions performed, in medical facilities and otherwise;
- (c) Child victims of sale, trafficking, prostitution and pornography, and the number of investigations and prosecutions carried out and sentences issued.

18. Please provide data, disaggregated by age, sex, national and ethnic origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status, regarding the situation of children deprived of a family environment, for the past three years, on the number of children:

- (a) Separated from their parents;
- (b) Living with relatives;
- (c) Placed in institutions;
- (d) Placed in foster families;
- (e) Adopted domestically or through intercountry adoptions.

19. Please provide data, disaggregated by age, sex, type of disability, national and ethnic origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on the number of children with disabilities:

- (a) Living with their families;
- (b) Living in institutions;
- (c) Attending regular primary schools;
- (d) Attending regular secondary schools;
- (e) Attending special schools;
- (f) Out of school;
- (g) Abandoned by their families.

20. Please provide data, disaggregated by age, sex and national origin, for the past three years, about the number of children affected by deportation decisions, and the number of children deported.

21. Please provide, if available, updated statistical data, disaggregated by age, sex, type of offence, national origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status, for the past three years, on children who have been:

- (a) Arrested;
- (b) Referred to diversion programmes;
- (c) In pretrial detention;
- (d) Serving a sentence in detention, including data on the length of the sentence.

22. Please provide information on how the planning, implementation and monitoring of measures for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals integrate a child rights-based approach, including with regard to child participation and data collection, and how they promote the realization of children's rights under the Convention and its Optional Protocols.

23. Please provide the Committee with an update of any data in the report that may have become outdated by more recent data collected or other new developments.
24. In addition, the State party may list areas affecting children that it considers to be of priority with regard to the implementation of the Convention.

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