

How does the NGO community in Finland participate in the CRC reporting?

- an example by the Central Union for Child Welfare

Maarit Kuikka, senior advisor

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LASTENSUOJELUN KESKUSLIITTO

Armfeltintie 1, 00150 Helsinki

Puh. (09) 329 6011

toimisto@lskl.fi | www.lskl.fi

Overview on CUCW

- founded in 1937
- non-governmental umbrella organisation in the field of child welfare in Finland
- around 130 members; child welfare NGOs and municipalities
- ~30 employees
- independent of the Government
- core and project funding from
 - Lasten päivän säätiö (the Children's Day Foundation)
 - Raha-automaattiyhdistys (the Finnish Slot Machine Association)



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What is our mission?

- to speak in the best interests of the child - EXPERT
- to influence child policy - LOBBYIST
- to bring together different actors and organisations in the field of child welfare
- PARTNER, LINK, COLLABORATOR
- to show responsibility for the development of the field of child welfare
- DEVELOPER



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What do we do?

- Advocacy, lobbying
- Communications
- Library and information service
- Lapsen Maailma - journal
- Consultation services
- Annual seminars, training courses, discussion forums
 - advisory boards, (working committees)
- International activities
- Partnership in projects
- Fundraising



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Advocacy Work & Awareness Raising

- **Proactive**

- carrying out opinion polls, surveys, campaigns, launching own initiatives

- **Active**

- Participation in working committees

- **Reactive**

- preparing position papers < request from the Ministry
- attending hearings < request from the Parliament



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Which themes do we promote?

1. **Protecting the child in the family**

- Alternative care
- Physical integrity of the child
- Substance and drug abuse in a family

2. **Preventive child welfare**

- Early childhood education, EDUCARE
- Youth issues
- Health care
- Eroneuvo-project: provides support and information in the initial phase of a divorce on how to protect the child when divorce happens.

3. **Children's rights and international child welfare**

- UNCRC, CoE, EU
- Immigrant children (unaccompanied minors)
- Co-operation in the neighbouring areas (Karelia)



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We promote children's rights!

By

- making the Convention of the Rights of the Child known to children, adults and decision-& policy-makers at all levels of decision-making (including EU!)
- monitoring the implementation of the CRC
- **participation in the process of reporting to the Committee on CRC**
- the best interests of the child as a guiding principle



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Who is who in the UNCRC reporting process? The Finnish example

In Geneva

The UN Committee on the CRC
- Secretariat

NGO Group on the UNCRC

In Finland

Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- involves other ministries

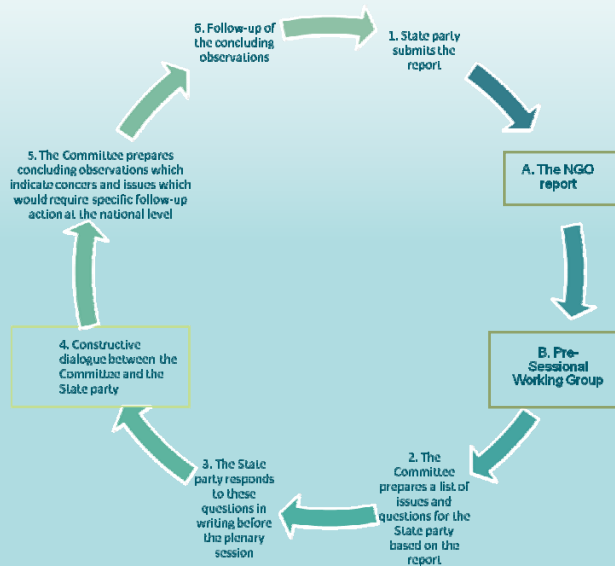
Central Union for Child Welfare
- involves its members and other partners, including UNICEF Finland

Ombudsperson for children, other independent HR institutions



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CRC reporting process



CRC Reporting Process in Finland during the 4th periodic review process

1. Early 2008: the state party starts to prepare its report; deadline November 2008
 - Consults the NGO community and organises a hearing
2. NGO Group informs CUCW about the arrival of the state report and advises the NGO community to start working on its report
 - Preparations of the NGO Supplementary report starts

October 2009	Preliminary meeting
November 2009	Feedback from member organisations
	Steering group meeting
December 2009	Consultation (1 st draft)
February 2010	Feedback from member organisations
	Steering group meeting
March 2010	Consultation (2 nd draft)
May 2010	Supplementary report completed for translation and proof reading
November 2010 (Nov 1, 2010)	Supplementary report to Geneva



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Supplementary NGO report to Finland's 4th periodic report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Positive facts presented in the Report (October 2010)

1. New Child Welfare Act improved children's rights in Finland
2. Child-friendly policies introduced in the State administration
3. Awareness of the UN CRC increased and the National Communications Strategy on children's rights was finalised



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Supplementary NGO report to Finland's 4th periodic report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Issues of concern

1. The state supervision system is insufficient
2. The best interests of the child is not sufficiently implemented
3. A part of young are facing problems
4. Adults' heavy substance abuse complicates the lives of children
5. The financial situation of families with children has deteriorated
6. Integration of immigrants has not been successful
7. Teaching childrens' rights has not been done in schools



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CRC Reporting Process in Finland during the 4th periodic review process

3. Setting up the NGO delegation for Geneva (Feb 8, 2011)
 - 8 members nominated by the CUCW board
 - Division of work and themes
 - 2 meetings
 - Preparation of the Introductory Statement
4. Pre-sessional working group with the UNCRC Committee
 - Joint press releases



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CRC Reporting Process in Finland during the 4th periodic review process

5. Children's consultation

- Organised in Finland (May 11, 2011)
- Co-operation with the ombudsperson for children and UNICEF Finland
- Inviting the state rapporteur from the UNCRC Committee
- Inviting children: contact persons/group
- Preparing child-friendly material
- Meeting organised with an interpreter
- Total of 20 children and young persons representing the Roma, the Sami, Finnish Children's Parliament, the Survivors group, a regional youth council and the young advisors of the ombudsperson for children



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CRC Reporting Process in Finland during the 4th periodic review process

5. The State party session (June 9, 2011)

- Observers

6. Concluding observations (June 20, 2011)

- Joint press release
- Dissemination of information to members

7. Keeping discussion and advocacy work alive (next state report in 2017!)

- New government programme (June 17)
- Universal Periodic Review, UPR (Finland in May 2012)
- Activities of Advisory Boards in CUCW
- Continuous link to advocacy work
- Training



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Thank you



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