

CRIAs – Child Rights Impact Assessment – lessons from *Building Children’s Futures* project



Dr Danielle Kennan, UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, University of Galway



Ciaran O'Donnell, Partnerships and Programmes Coordinator, Eurochild

#BuildingChildrensFutures

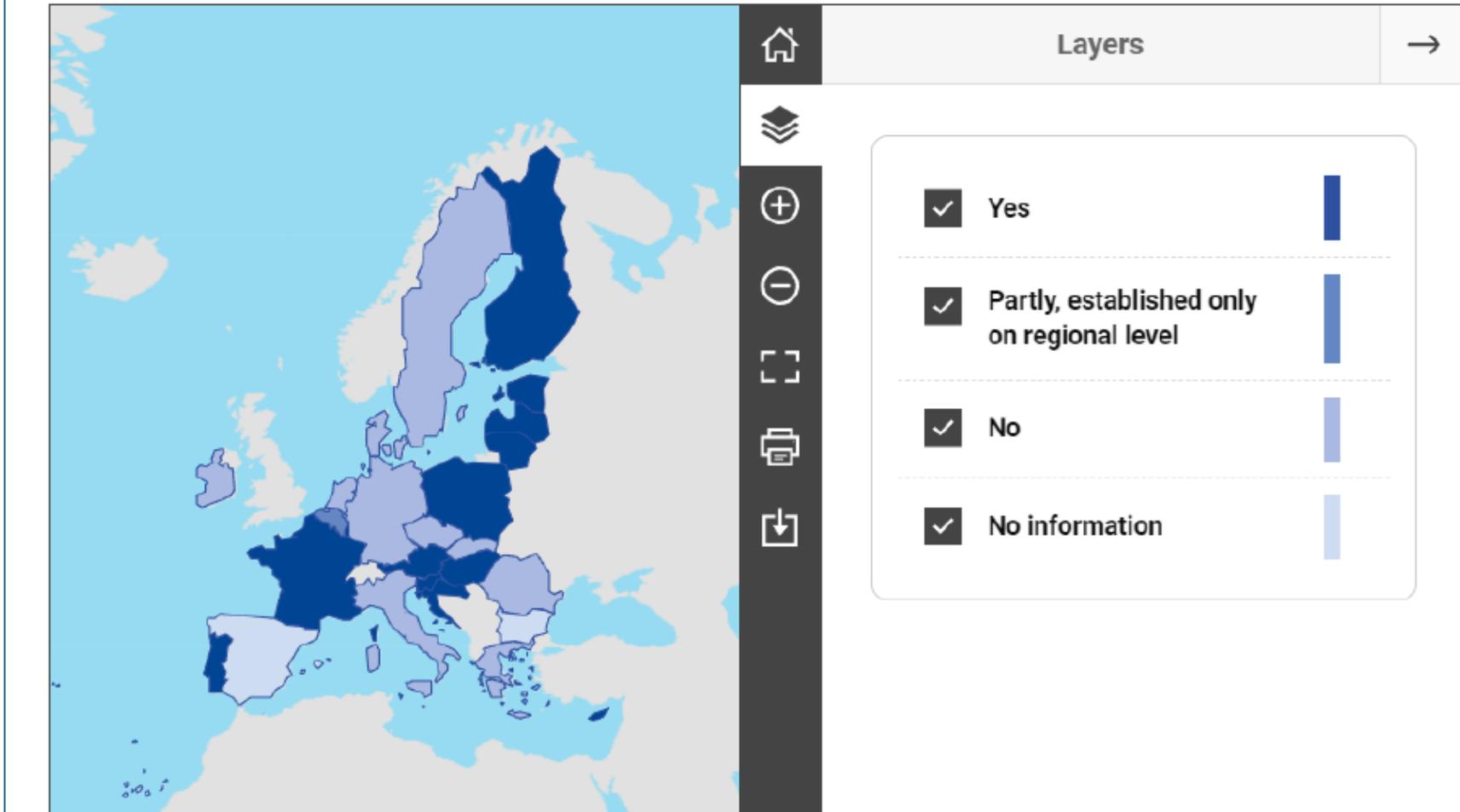
Child Rights Impact Assessments

- **The What:** A CRIA is a decision-making framework that measures the impact of a proposal on the rights, the needs and the interests of children. Practically, it involves an analysis and a report. Grounded in UNCRC.
- **The Why:** CRIAs offer a proactive approach to upholding children's rights by considering children's rights as part of the decision-making process and support the mainstreaming of international children's rights principles and standards into national and local planning, service design and delivery.
- **The How:** An analysis is carried out using a toolkit to guide the assessment through step-by-step questions. The communicated findings of this analysis are the CRIA. Irish example shared today.



CRIAs across Europe – policymaker perspective

Figure 17 – Provisions requiring a child rights impact assessment



Source: FRA EU
Child Protection
Mapping 2023



SCAN ME



CRIAs across Europe – CSO perspective

Findings related to CRIAs (27 countries):

- Most countries do not routinely use Child Rights Impact Assessments (CRIAs) to assess the effects of policies on children.
- 5 countries have CRIAs: FI IE SK UK-W UK-S. 1 optional: UK-NI. 4 don't have CRIAs, but something similar: BE, DE, ES, RO.



Source: Eurochild
2024 report



Building Children's Futures Project

Work Packages

WP2: Research on impact of Covid-19 and how decision-making structures operated

WP3: Identifying best practice in mainstreaming children's rights in decision-making in Europe



Project Outcomes

Development of a CRIA prototype with a focus on times of emergency



European wide dissemination and training



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHĒ
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY



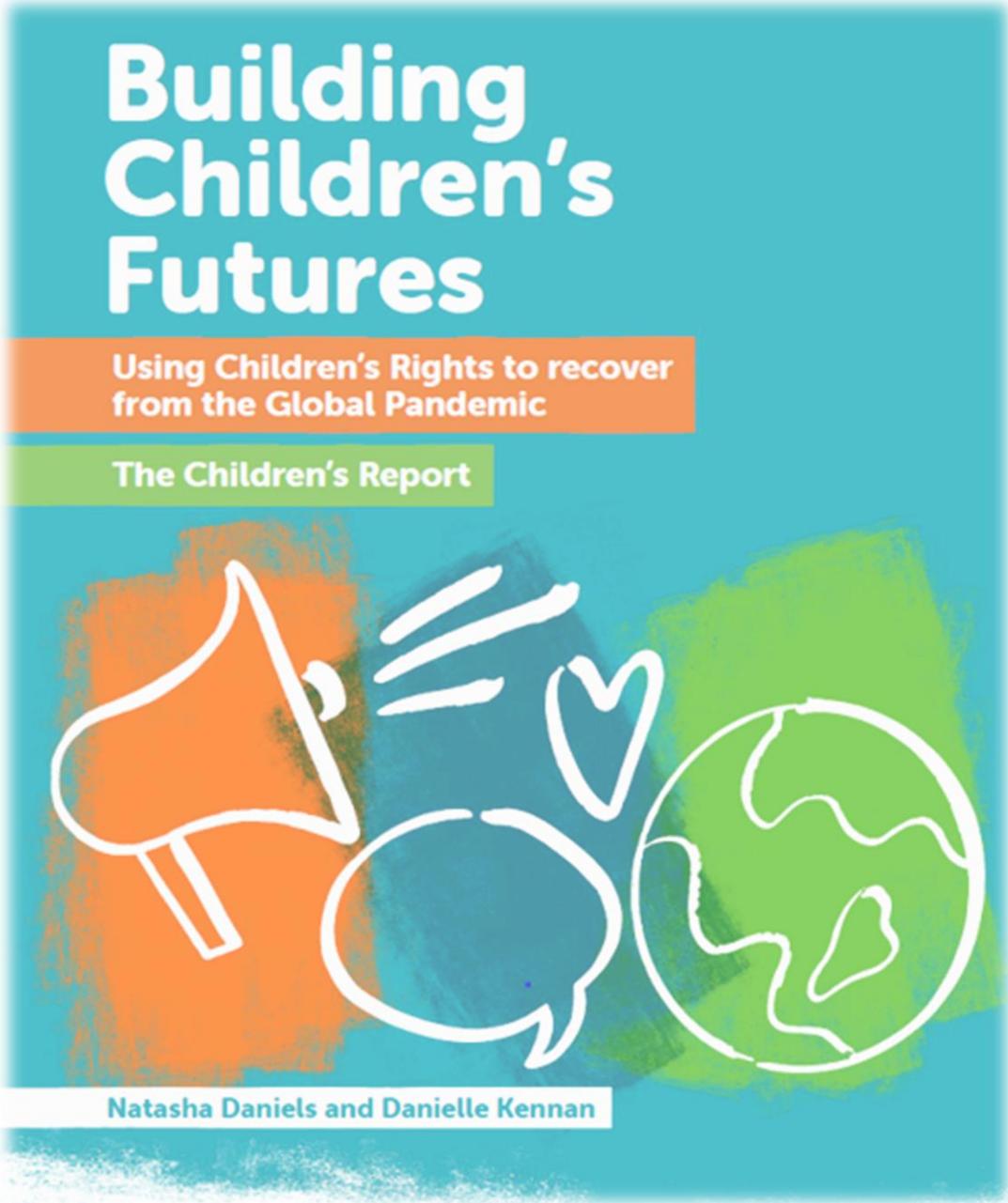
WP2: Research on impact of Covid-19 and how decision-making structures operated



Building Children's Future : The Children's Report



University
ofGalway.i
e





Research Focus

Using Ireland as a Case Study, understand how Covid-19 public health measures impacted children and young people's rights and how government decision-making structures operated at this time.

Research Purpose

To generate learning to inform the development of a child rights impact assessment (CRIA) tool and to understand how child rights impact assessments can be embedded in decision-making, particularly in times of emergency.

Research Methodology



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Consultations with children and young people (aged 8-17) from socially disadvantaged groups in Ireland (n=50), focused on:

- Impact of Covid-19 restrictions on their lives
- Children's views on communication and decision-making regarding public health measures.

Research interviews with public officials core to the Government's and National Public Health Emergency Team's response to Covid-19, focused on:

- Decision-making processes during Covid-19 and consideration given to children's rights
- Engagement with children's participation structures

A Participatory Approach

- A Children and Young People's Advisory Group (CYPAG) were actively involved in advising on all aspects of the research.
- Five CYPAG members were trained as youth researchers to collaborate in conducting research interviews.



Consultation Findings

The children identified the following rights as being most impacted by the public health measures during the pandemic:

- Right to to education
- Right to play, recreation and leisure
- Right to health and access to healthcare
- Right to family
- Right to information.



Consultation Findings

Children reported that they did not have a say regarding the public health restrictions but believed that they should have had an input.

"If they asked children we may have been able to help in some ways" (girl, 13).

They suggested that access could have been achieved via schools, sports clubs, social media or public broadcasting.

Providing them with an opportunity to vote to communicate their views was a common suggestion, via:

- online survey
- social media poster
- Broadcast media



Interview Findings

- Decision-making related to public health measures was a challenging exercise in balancing children's rights and risks - no systematic approach to assessing impact on children's rights.
- Keeping a focus on children's rights was aided by:
 - Social impact reports and media monitoring
 - Parents, advocacy groups and children advocating for their rights
 - Children's champions in senior advisory roles
- When the curtailment of children's rights was necessary, some efforts were made to put mitigating measures in place.
- Limited consultations with children and government evidence-based strategy informing public health decisions not informed by children's views.

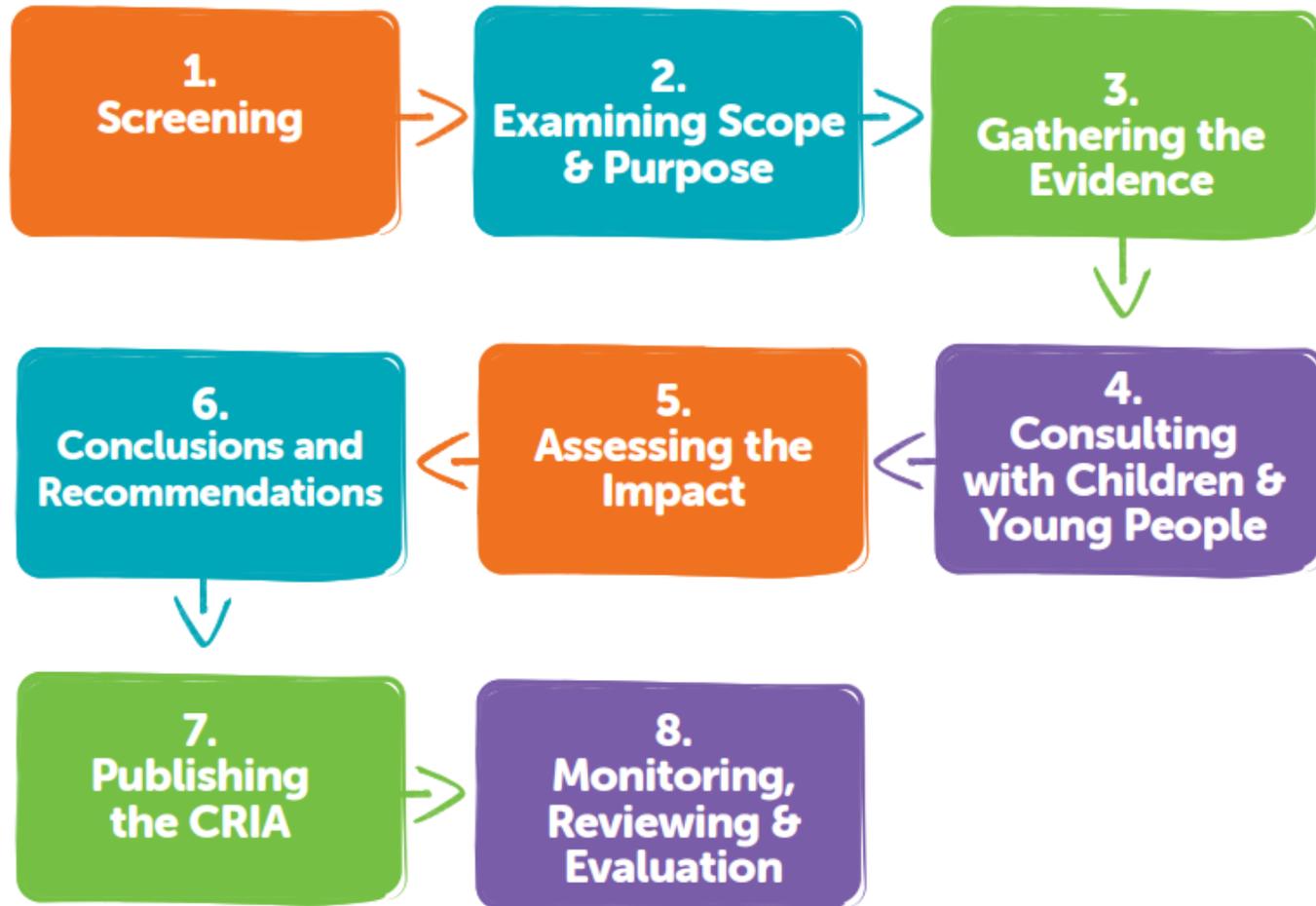
Learning for Child Rights Impact Assessments



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

- Research reiterated the importance of child rights impact assessments – applied consistently, CRIAs can help predict both positive and negative impacts of policy decisions on children’s rights.
- Assessment must be underpinned by good data, informed by the views of children and young people.
- The data informing an evidence-based approach should be disaggregated to take account of the impact or likely impact on children and young people experiencing disadvantage.
- Professionals with an expertise in children should be strategically positioned within key decision-making structures.
- When the curtailment of children’s rights is necessary or a policy decision has the potential to have a negative impact, protective measures to mitigate impact must be a core consideration.

CRIA Tool



Example:

Step 5: Assessing the Impact

1. What impact does or will the proposed measure have on children and young people's rights?
2. Will there be different impacts on different groups of children? YES NO
If yes, what are they?
3. If a negative impact is identified, are there options that can mitigate the impact, and what options might exist to modify the impact, or optimize the positive?

Implementation in Ireland



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

- Commitment in Ireland's National Policy Framework Young Ireland:

Collaborate with partners on the development of the prototype CRIA and roll out across Government

- Currently piloting it with a wide range of policy makers
- Adequate supports for its rollout are necessary – training, guidelines, research support etc.
- Need to integrate with other impact assessments such as equality impact and public sector duty.
- Ultimate aim - to develop an instrument that is workable within the context of government decision making processes.

Building Children's Futures: Using children's rights to recover from the global pandemic

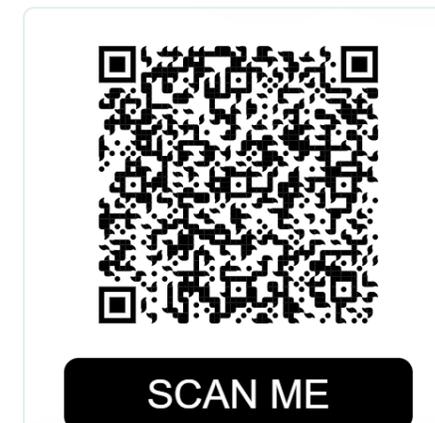
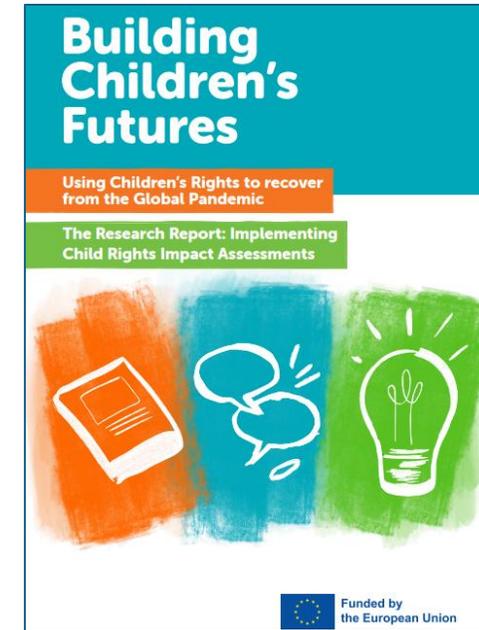
Key resources for implementing Child Rights Impact Assessments

Scan the QR for more information on this project



The Research Report: Implementing CRIAs

- Identified best practice in responding to children's needs in Europe during the Covid-19 pandemic and reviews the use of CRIA across Europe.
- E.g. Scotland: CRIAs have been in place for a number of years. One of the key benefits of CRIAs? They provide a child rights-based approach for strengthening decision-making, which can in turn reduce the likelihood of rights violations and can limit the need for revision further down the line.
- Carried out by Children's Rights Alliance Ireland as part of the Building Children's Futures project.



CRIA training toolkit for decision-makers

- The CRIA Toolkit: A guide on how to use Child Rights Impact Assessments for decision makers
- Includes a Child Rights Impact Assessment Tool that can be used to already start implementing CRIAs.
- Resources piloted with Irish policymakers as part of our project.



Scan for the training toolkit



Scan for the training slides



Scan for the guide for trainers



Final Conference recording

Watch back discussions unpacking the learning of the project & reflecting wider on the role of CRIAs in Europe

Scan the QR code
to access the
recording



#EurochildConf

#BuildingChildrensFutures