



The Wales UNCRC Monitoring Group is a national alliance of non-governmental and academic members with the common purpose of monitoring and promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Wales

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW

The Universal Periodic Review is a peer review mechanism of the United Nations which scrutinises states on progress made in implementing their obligations under human rights treaties.

On 3rd May 2017, the UK Government headed delegation, which included representatives from the Welsh and other devolved Governments, were examined by the UN in Geneva. The Welsh Government were represented by Paul Dear, Head of Equality. The review was informed by the State Party Report, submitted in February, as well as reports from civil society (more below)

The Examination can be viewed [here](#)

On the 8th May 2017, the report from the review was published and can be accessed [here](#)

The Report sets out 226 Recommendations, of which, a **quarter are focused on children.**

The Recommendations to the UK and devolved governments include the following points:

- Integrate fully the UNCRC into domestic law
- Ensure there is no weakening of human rights protection from any future changes in national legislation, and that human rights achievements are preserved in the context of the withdrawal from the EU
- Increase efforts to eliminate child poverty; develop clear national strategies; undertake an assessment of the impact of welfare reform on disadvantaged children and bring legislation in line with the CRC

- Ban the corporal punishment of children in all settings, including the family, and repeal all legal defences such as ‘reasonable chastisement’
- Take more measures to tackle the sexual exploitation of children and violence against them, including the negative impact of domestic violence
- Reform the current directive on family reunification
- Review the Immigration Act 2016 and immigration laws, and ensure their compatibility with the CRC
- Ensure that migrant children are not subject to detention
- Raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility
- Reinforce measures to combat all forms of discrimination, including tackling hate crime
- Abolish life sentences for children
- Strengthen measures to combat trafficking, including protecting children
- More targeted social policies to help families and in particular, children
- Forbid children from taking part in armed conflict and hostilities
- Ratify the 3rd Optional Protocol to the CRC
- Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, and the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

The UNCRC Monitoring Group is delighted to see that as a result of our engagement and lobbying, that the UN has given due consideration to the need to strengthen the rights of children and have identified and presented a comprehensive set of Recommendations which reflect many of our issues and concerns.

THE ROLE OF THE UNCRC MONITORING GROUP

The UNCRC Monitoring Group have again been active in seeking to influence change.

In September 2016, the Monitoring Group collaborated with the Children’s Rights Alliance England (CRAE) and Together, the Scottish Alliance for Children’s Right, and submitted a joint GB civil society report to inform the review. This report drew on our recommendations outlined in our Wales NGO civil society report to the UN CRC, as well as the UN Committee’s CRC Concluding Observations published in June 2016.

In October, the Monitoring Group were represented by Children in Wales at a Stakeholder event with the Ministry of Justice in London, and later that

month, attended the workshop convened by Welsh Government which focused on devolved matters.

The GB collaboration has again been active this year with the publication and submission of 9 Briefing papers ahead of the UK Pre-Session in Geneva on 7th April which CRAE attended and made representation to the UN on behalf of the 3 nations.

Next steps: We now call on the UK and Welsh Government to welcome the Recommendations and respond favourably by addressing the issues and concerns which the UN have raised. Further engagement work will be planned

Notes

Further details on the UPR can be found on the UN website at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/BasicFacts.aspx>

ABOUT THE WALES UNCRC MONITORING GROUP

The Wales UNCRC Monitoring Group is a national alliance of non-governmental and academic agencies, tasked with monitoring and promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in Wales. The UNCRC Monitoring Group was established in 2002 and is presently facilitated by Children in Wales, the national umbrella organisation. Since 2002, the Group has worked with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and submitted civil society reports to inform successive UK State Party Examinations.

Members of the Monitoring Group are representatives of, and nominated by, non-governmental organisations and academics which are as follows - Barnardo's Cymru, Centre for Welsh legal Affairs- Aberystwyth University, Children in Wales, Children's Commissioner for Wales (observers), NSPCC Wales/Cymru, Play Wales, Save the Children Wales, UNICEF (observers), Wales Observatory on Human Rights of Children and Young People and the Welsh Local Government Association (observers)

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