

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES: IMPLEMENTING THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

1-2 JUNE 2011, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

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CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the UNCRC) is the most comprehensive human rights instrument dedicated solely to the promotion and protection of children's rights. As the only United Nations treaty to have achieved almost universal ratification, the UNCRC has attracted extensive attention, not least for its role in explicitly positioning children as active holders of rights rather than mere objects of concern. However existing scholarship indicates that despite such international 'buy-in', children's rights are not always protected or promoted effectively, with some individual children and groups of children experiencing extreme violations of their rights.

This interdisciplinary conference aims to bring together scholars to explore key issues, opportunities and challenges in implementing the UNCRC. In particular we are interested in exploring the gap between children's rights standards as set out by the UNCRC and the active implementation of the UNCRC rights within States Parties. How can we best establish and enforce children's rights in national and international law? To what extent has the UNCRC been used in litigation and individual complaints? Will the proposed communication procedure make a difference? What role does children's rights education play in enabling children to exercise their rights and duty bearers to fulfil their obligations? How can we best monitor implementation of children's rights? How effective is the Committee on the Rights of the Child? What role is played by the independent Ombudsmen? How do children participate in monitoring and implementation processes at national and international levels? What are children's right indicators, how are they developed and what role do indicators play in monitoring implementation of the UNCRC?

This conference is being organised by the Research Forum for the Child at Queen's University Belfast. The Research Forum for the Child was established by Laura Lundy, Professor of Education Law and Children's Rights in 2005 and has over 180 members in twelve disciplines across the University. It aims to promote high quality, interdisciplinary research that provides a better understanding of the issues that affect children and young people in order to improve their life chances and experiences. The Forum's collaborative research activity is promoted through special interest groups (SIGs) working on issues identified as areas of cross-disciplinary interest. A key aspect of the Forum's work centres on children's rights. The Exploring Children's Rights Special Interest Group brings together researchers from a range of disciplines to consider the usefulness and applicability of children's rights standards, and the limitations of their enforceability, in a wide range of contexts.

Scholars from any discipline whose work relates to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and/or children's rights generally are warmly welcomed. Papers are invited under the following themes:

- Monitoring the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Children's Rights Litigation
- Children's Rights Education
- Children's Rights Indicators

A series of publications will be developed from the Conference including a special issue of the journal 'Child Indicators Research' on children's rights.

Conference Speakers:

The conference keynote speaker will be **Professor Michael Freeman**, University College London.

Invited speakers include:

- Professor David Archard, University of Lancaster
- Dr Asher Ben-Arieh, Hebrew University, Jerusalem
- Dr Ursula Kilkelly, University College Cork
- Gerison Lansdown, International Children's Rights Consultant
- Dr Audrey Osler, University of Leeds

Venue:

The conference will be held at [Queen's University Belfast](#), Northern Ireland.

Belfast is now a major tourist destination and is fast becoming established as one of Europe's most captivating city destinations. For more information on location please see www.qub.ac.uk . For more information on Belfast please also visit the official site of the [Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau](#).

Abstracts:

Abstracts of not more than 300 words should be sent to Dr Bronagh Byrne (b.byrne@qub.ac.uk) by **1 March 2011**.

Abstracts should include the proposed title of the presentation, presentation overview, the name(s) of the author(s), affiliation, and email address. Authors of the selected abstracts will be notified by **1 April 2011**.

Conference Registration Fee:

£100

£75 for postgraduates/NGOs

Conference Registration fee includes: conference pack, teas, coffees, lunches, and one conference dinner.

Registration can be completed online by visiting the conference website:

www.qub.ac.uk/child

Travel and Accommodation

Participants are responsible for making their own travel and accommodation arrangements. For information on how to get to the University, please see [here](#) or visit the [conference website](#).

For information on places to stay please visit the [conference website](#). Further information on places to stay can also be found on the [Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau](#) website.

For enquiries, please contact:

Dr Bronagh Byrne (b.byrne@qub.ac.uk). Further details of the conference can be found on the [Research Forum for the Child](#) website.

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