



Overview of Strategic Plan - 2007 to 2011

Vision

The Alliance's Vision is one whose sentiment it shares with many of its member organisations – that:

Ireland will be one of the best places in the world to be a child

Mission

To realise the rights of children in Ireland through securing the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Alliance will have succeeded in its Mission, when there is:

An Ireland that has given full effect to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which will mean that children's rights are:

- Integrated into our mindsets
- Protected by our laws
- Reflected in our policies
- Evidenced in wider society

Children's Rights Alliance

The Children's Rights Alliance is a coalition of over 80 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working to secure the rights and needs of children in Ireland, by campaigning for the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It aims to improve the lives of all children under 18, through securing the necessary changes in Ireland's laws, policies and services.

The Alliance was formally established in March 1995. Many of its member organisations are prominent in the children's sector – working directly with children on a daily basis across the country. The Alliance's policies, projects and activities are developed through ongoing collaboration and consultation with its member organisations.

Context

In Ireland, there is a widely held view that, as a nation, we value *all* children. However, the evidence would suggest otherwise. While childhood is a happy and secure reality for most children, for many it is not. The evidence for this is compelling and provides the Alliance with a strong case for securing key reforms:

- Over 110,000 children (one in nine) live in consistent poverty; 240,000 (nearly one in four) are at risk of poverty (relative poverty).
- Child Protection – there are no statutory guidelines on reporting child abuse.
- One child in five leaves school before completing their Leaving Certificate (the final State examination).
- 50,000 children are on the waiting list for social housing – and, by implication, are currently in overcrowded or inappropriate or emergency accommodation.
- In early childhood services there is no statutory requirement for staff to have any qualification.
- Since 2001, over 250 separated children seeking asylum have gone missing from their care placement.
- Children are detained in adult prisons – approximately 50 at any one time.
- Children have no entitlement to be heard in their own right in court and administrative hearings that directly affect them.
- 2,000 Traveller children within 750 families live in caravans on the roadside without basic facilities such as water, electricity, refuse or toilets.



AIM 1: Bringing about a shared vision that will realise and protect children's rights in Ireland

The Alliance will have realised this Aim when: The Government, government departments, political parties, statutory agencies and other key bodies frame and implement policies in relation to children on the basis of a rights-based approach.

Targets 2007–2011

During the period of this Plan, the Alliance's targets are that:

- The Government, key government departments and statutory agencies will adopt a rights-based approach to children's issues in their strategy statements, policies and practices.
- Political parties have adopted policies on children, and used a rights-based approach, in their election manifestos and policy statements.
- The instruments of Social Partnership adopt a rights-based approach.
- The Alliance's member organisations are active agents in promoting its shared vision.
- Other NGOs understand the benefits of rights-based approach.

Plans 2007–2011

During the period of this Plan, the Alliance is committed to the following initiatives:

- Organise biennial international symposium
- Demonstrate the need for a rights-based National Children's Strategy
- Build international relationships and networks
- Create knowledge bank of rights-based approaches to children's issues
- Toolkit for key influencers
- 'Patrons'



AIM 2: Securing legislative and policy changes to give meaningful effect to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Alliance will have realised this Aim when: Policy positions advocated by the Alliance are reflected in legislative change, national strategy documents and Government policy.

Targets 2007– 2011

During the period of this Plan, the Alliance's targets are that:

- The Government will give a commitment to implement the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child following its examination of Ireland's Second Report in September 2006.
- The Programme for Government following the next general election will include commitments to policies and services that will enhance the lives of children.
- The Alliance will have developed comprehensive policy proposals and secured significant policy change by Government in four specific areas.
- The National Children's Strategy 2010–2020 will include explicit commitments in relation to the policy areas affecting children that are of key concern to the Alliance.
- The National Action Plan by the Irish Government under the proposed EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child will contain commitments advocated by the Alliance.

Plans 2007–2011

During the period of this Plan, the Alliance is committed to the following initiatives:

- Conference on recommendations of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Advocacy in Relation to Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Development of EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child
- Engagement with political parties
- Campaigns strategy
- Involvement of members
- Policy development in key areas
- National Children's Strategy 2010–2020
- Strengthening the evidence base

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ALLIANCE STRATEGIC PLAN

