

# NEWSLETTER

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## FROM INSIGHT TO IMPACT: EMBARCING CHILD-CENTRED APPROACH IN RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN



In recent decades, the view of childhood and children has changed in the way that children's role in society and their agency have been acknowledged to a greater extent. Within the child-centred perspective children have been recognised as relevant social actors, (co)creators of their own and social lives as well as agentic individuals whose perceptions should be integral to research, activities and interpretations that affect them. Within this framework, child-centred research is a research approach that places children at the centre of research, valuing their perspectives, experiences, and voices, and recognizing them as active participants, often engaging them in the research process. This approach aims to gain a deeper understanding of children's lives, needs, concerns, and aspirations, and to inform policies, programs, and interventions that promote their well-being and rights. It also reveals perspectives that remain hidden in traditional adult-centred approaches.

[Institute for Social Studies](#) from Science and Research Centre Koper organized free online webinar on 28 February 2024, devoted to presenting and discussing the use of child-centered approach in the research. The webinar was aimed at PhD students, researchers, policy makers and practitioners and organized as part of [COORDINATE](#) project, which brings together community of researchers working to improve child wellbeing. COORDINATE project demonstrates that it is feasible to engage children meaningfully in large, complex projects and research infrastructures. It highlights the importance of active engagement of children and young people, both as research participants and research advisors.

## SPEAKERS AND SHORT ABSTRACTS OF THEIR PRESENTATIONS

### **URSZULA MARKOWSKA-MANISTA** (Faculty of Education, University of Warsaw): Adulthood in research with children

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In her presentation author explores the sensitive contexts of research with children conducted by adult its emphasis on subjectivity, individuality, and the equality/equivalence of children's experience. Korczak involving and with children. She refers to the visible and invisible challenges encountered in this type of research by adult researchers. As a matrix for her reflections, she uses Janusz Korczak's children's rights approach, which 100 years ago opened up a new perspective on adult-child relationships, with researchers. She addresses the need to position the child at the centre of adult practice in research emphasised and cultivated respect towards the child as a human being, which became the key child-centred motto in his manifesto The Child's Right to Respect. Given that power and representation are integral to any research with children, she reflects on the issues of adulthood in research with and about discourse and then how and why we perceive their and our situation, role and rights in research practice.

### **DEIRDRE HORGAN** (School of Applied Social Studies, University College Cork): Experiences of co-creation: a participatory and inclusive method with Children and Young People's Advisory Groups

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Presentation focuses on the role of Children's Research Advisory Groups to ensure policy grounded in children's realities and produce more responsive policy and services through children and young people's active involvement and influence on the research. It discusses the challenges along with the significant potential of such Children and Young People's Advisory Groups across all stages of the research process. One such group was established at the beginning of IMMERSE (an EU Horizon funded project). It was comprised of 18 migrant and refugee children resident in Ireland and acted as an expert group, to reflect on the experiences of migrant children and represent their peers in this research process. Some reflections based on the authors experiences of working with children's research advisory groups generally are offered along with concluding thoughts about where they fit in the range of co-creation possibilities.

## **HARIDHAN GOSWAMI** (Department of Sociology, Manchester Metropolitan University): Growing up in a survey: A child-centred approach to longitudinal data collection

Child wellbeing continues to be a political priority for policymakers dealing with migrants and non-migrants. In this regard, longitudinal surveys adopting a child-centred approach can provide data that can help policymakers understand the processes that are associated with the factors that promote or reduce wellbeing through the life course. When surveying children and young people (CYP), it is important to recognise their rights, consult them as active agents, and prepare a child-centred survey to allow their maximum level of participation. The presentation examines advances that have been made in the methodologies of surveying children by looking at child wellbeing research. It identifies research gaps in CYP's wellbeing, including the specific experiences of migrant children. It discusses the importance of and challenges in robustly including children and young people in the research design of longitudinal surveys.

Discussion and Q&A session followed and was moderated by Mateja Sedmak.

The recording of the webinar is available on the [COORDINATE YouTube channel](#).

