



**Marian College**  
Excellence in Education

**Human Rights Council**  
**Universal Periodic Review (UPR)**  
**53<sup>rd</sup> Session (2026)**

**Joint Stakeholder' submission on:**  
**Human Rights in Ireland**

**Submitted by:**

**Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI)**

**Edmund Rice International Limited (ERI)**

NGOs with special consultative status with ECOSOC

And

**Marian College**

**Marist Brothers Schools Ireland**

Geneva, April 2026

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. This stakeholders' report is a submission of the above-mentioned organization. The report highlights key concerns related to **children's rights** in Ireland, particularly: **the right to mental health services and healthcare; the right to quality and inclusive education; the right to name, identity and origins; child protection; and the right to adequate shelter and housing**. Each section presents recommendations to the Irish Government.
2. **Marist International Solidarity Foundation (FMSI)**<sup>1</sup> is an international organization promoted by the Marist Brothers, present in 80 countries. FMSI has more than 15 years of experience working in the field of international solidarity, advocating for children's rights especially in the field of education. It works at the international level, participating in the UN human rights mechanisms in collaboration with other organizations with similar interests. It has been accredited by ECOSOC since 2011.
3. **Edmund Rice International Limited (ERI)**<sup>2</sup> is an international non-governmental organization, founded in 2005 and with Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC since 2012. ERI is supported by two Catholic Religious Congregations, the Christian Brothers and the Presentation Brothers. It works with networks of like-minded organizations and in the countries where the two Congregations are present. ERI has a special interest in the rights of the child, the right to education and in eco-justice.
4. **Marian College**<sup>3</sup> is a Marist Brothers School situated in the centre of Dublin. The school enrollment is 350 students, with an age range of 13 to 18. The Marist Brothers have three secondary schools in Ireland.
5. **The Marist Brothers School Ireland** came to Ireland in 1862 and set up the first school in Sligo. At present there are three Marist Brothers Secondary schools. Two located in Dublin, Moyle Park College and Marian College, and one in the centre of Ireland, Marist College Athlone. They are part of the District of West Central Europe, an administrative unit linked to the Province of L'Hermitage of the Marist Brothers Institute.<sup>4</sup>
6. The data and information obtained for this submission came from various sources and include information from children, youth, teachers, educators, and other civil society actors living and working in Ireland. Consultations were conducted with groups of secondary school students, Transition Year (TY) pupils, and civil society actors. All information concerned the period from November 2021 to March 2026.

## II. GENERAL REMARKS AND COOPERATION WITH THE UPR MECHANISM

7. Ireland was reviewed in November 2021 at the 39th Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review. This NGO welcomes the constructive participation of Ireland in

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. <https://fmsi.ngo/en/>

<sup>2</sup> Cf. <https://www.edmundriceinternational.org/>

<sup>3</sup> Cf. <https://mariancollege.ie/>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. <https://champagnat.org/en/marist-institute/our-presence/>

the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). On this occasion, Ireland received 481 recommendations and supported 260 recommendations while noting 221 recommendations<sup>5</sup>. The present submission represents the follow-up to the UPR recommendations accepted by the State in 2021.

8. We thank the Government of Ireland for its commitment to the UN human rights system and for the opportunity to submit this stakeholder report. We also acknowledge the significant legislative progress made since the previous review, notably the enactment of the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022<sup>6</sup>, and the ongoing expansion of the Hot School Meals Programme to all primary schools<sup>7</sup>. These are important steps that reflect commitments made during the previous UPR cycle.
9. We welcome the many recommendations adopted at the previous UPR, as well as Ireland's efforts to implement them. At the same time, we are deeply concerned by persistent and in some areas worsening gaps in the protection of children's rights — particularly in relation to mental health services, housing, and the right to identity. We encourage the Government to ensure that implementation of recommendations is carried out in meaningful consultation with civil society and, in particular, with children and young people themselves.
10. We also welcome the adoption of many recommendations that are connected to the Sustainable Development Goals<sup>8</sup> such as: 3: Good Health and Well-Being (4%); 5: Gender Equality (12%); 8: Decent work and economic growth (12%); 10: Reduced inequalities (26%); 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions (33%).

### **III. METHODOLOGY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE TOPIC**

#### **Methodology:**

11. A central and defining element of this report is the direct participation of children and young people in the data collection process. For this submission, we conducted consultation with several groups of students, aged between 14 and 18, from Marian College, Dublin. The total number of students involved was 30. These young people engaged with international human rights frameworks and were invited to reflect on the major challenges they see affecting children and teens in Ireland today. Their voices are reflected throughout this report, particularly in the section on direct voices.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. "Matrix of Recommendations — Ireland (39th Session)" available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/ie-index>

<sup>6</sup> Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022, signed into law 30 June 2022. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-children-disability-and-equality/publications/accessing-personal-information-under-the-birth-information-and-tracing-act-2022/>

<sup>7</sup> Department of Social Protection (Ireland), Parliamentary Question No. 292, 1 October 2024: Hot School Meals Scheme extended to all remaining primary schools in 2025. Available at: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2024-10-01/292/>

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Infographic [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Infographic\\_Ireland.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/Infographic_Ireland.pdf)

## Overview:

12. **Mental health and healthcare:** children and young people expressed serious concern about access to mental health services, including long waiting lists and a lack of school counsellors. They also raised concerns about general healthcare access for families, particularly for those in vulnerable situations.
13. **Education:** young people spoke of the need for better-quality education, greater access to free schooling at all levels, and stronger anti-bullying measures. They also raised questions about diversity and inclusion in schools, and the importance of being heard by those who make decisions about their lives.
14. **Name and identity:** a group of students focused specifically on the right to name, nationality, and identity as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child. They connected this to broader concerns about discrimination, including on the basis of LGBTQ+ identity, and to historical issues related to adopted children's access to information about their origins.
15. **Child protection:** children raised concerns about abuse, neglect, exploitation, and online harm, calling for stronger protection and better enforcement of existing laws.
16. **Shelter and housing:** the housing crisis was identified as one of the most pressing issues, with children calling for more homes to be built and for families in emergency accommodation to receive adequate support.
17. In addition, children and young people from Ireland are increasingly concerned about other issues that directly affect them and their families. Many aspects of human rights are interconnected so that when one fails, other rights are also threatened. Therefore, other concerns can be heard in the voices of children and young people that are less developed in this report.
18. Ireland protects with laws and public policies the human rights. We are aware that some of the challenges facing the government are not easy to work on, so we appreciate the efforts to improve them, now and in the future.

## IV. MENTAL HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE

19. Access to mental health services for children and young people in Ireland is in a state of serious and worsening crisis. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the specialist mental health service for those aged up to 18 with moderate to severe mental health disorders, is consistently unable to meet demand. According to data provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE) to parliamentary representatives in early 2025<sup>9</sup>, there were over 4,200 children and adolescents on CAMHS waiting lists at the end of December 2024,

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<sup>9</sup> The Irish Times, "Hundreds of children waiting more than a year to access mental health services," 18 February 2025. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/health/2025/02/18/hundreds-of-children-waiting-more-than-a-year-to-access-mental-health-services/>; Irish Examiner, "More than 300 children added to mental health service waiting lists in two months," 23 January 2026. Available at: <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-41781092.html>

up from 3,759 at the end of 2023. Among those waiting, 408 young people had been waiting between 39 and 52 weeks, and 699 between 26 and 39 weeks.

20. The crisis extends beyond specialist CAMHS services. As of late 2025, over 28,000 children were waiting to access primary care psychology services — the first point of access for children with mental health needs before CAMHS referral<sup>10</sup>. Of these, over 15,000 had been waiting for more than a year. In some parts of the country, children have been waiting as long as 10 to 13 years for an appointment. Medical professionals have described the situation as CAMHS services reaching “breaking point,” as unmet need in primary care psychology pushes an ever-growing number of cases toward specialist services.<sup>11</sup>
21. The Inspector of Mental Health Services stated in July 2023 that she could not provide assurance that children have access to safe mental health services<sup>12</sup>. Families’ advocacy groups have reported that 44% of families require multiple referrals before being accepted into CAMHS, and that some young people wait over a year after referral before being seen.<sup>13</sup>
22. **To address the mental health crisis affecting children and young people, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Ireland:**
  - a. **Develop and implement a comprehensive action plan to eliminate waiting lists for CAMHS, with clear targets, timelines, and dedicated funding, in line with recommendation 157.171 (Portugal).**
  - b. **Urgently invest in primary care psychology services to prevent children from waiting years for early intervention, including by lifting the HSE recruitment embargo and committing to sufficient staffing levels.**
  - c. **Ensure that school counsellors and psychologists are available in all schools, prioritizing areas of greatest deprivation, and reduce the ratio of students to counsellors to internationally recommended levels.**
  - d. **Publish and implement the National Standards for CAMHS, and move toward a regulated, community-based model of child and adolescent mental health care.**

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<sup>10</sup> RTE News, "Children waiting up to 13 years to see psychologist," 10 November 2025. Available at: <https://www.rte.ie/news/health/2025/1110/1543052-child-psychologist-services/>

<sup>11</sup> 157.171 Implement human rights-based mental health policies aligned with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and provide community-based mental-health services with a view to eliminating stigma, discrimination and coercion in mental health (Portugal); 157.176 Continue its efforts in ensuring equal access to the Internet and the technologies necessary for remote learning, as well as taking care of children’s mental health (Lithuania); 157.168 Take the steps necessary to provide sufficient resources for the health-care system by ensuring the availability of adequate infrastructure, funding and medical workers (Indonesia).

<sup>12</sup> RTE News, "Young people facing long wait for mental health support," 28 January 2026. Available at: <https://www.rte.ie/news/ireland/2026/0128/1555528-camhs-services/>

<sup>13</sup> Families for Reform of CAMHS, cited in RTE News, op. cit., 28 January 2026.

## V. EDUCATION

23. Ireland has a strong tradition of valuing education, and the Government has made significant investments in school infrastructure and programmes in recent years. The expansion of the Hot School Meals Programme is particularly noteworthy: as of Budget 2025, the scheme has been extended to all primary schools in Ireland, meaning up to 550,000 children across approximately 3,200 schools are eligible for a free hot meal each school day<sup>14</sup>. This programme directly addresses the nutritional needs of children, particularly those from disadvantaged families, and is widely recognized as a positive step toward reducing educational inequality.
24. Despite this progress, significant challenges remain. Children and young people consulted for this report raised several concerns about the quality and inclusiveness of education. One group called for “funding for excellent quality education from an early age,” for scholarships and bursaries to be expanded, and for bullying to be taken more seriously. Another group called specifically for “no one to have to pay for university,” and for buildings and school infrastructure to be renovated more regularly.
25. The question of school patronage and multi-denominational access remains a live issue. Ireland’s primary school system is still predominantly under Catholic patronage, and the Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity process, while a positive development, has produced limited results to date<sup>15</sup>.
26. Children also raised the need for their voices to be heard in decisions that affect them — in education and more broadly. One participant called for governments to “encourage children and young people to participate in decision-making processes, recognizing their voices and needs.”
27. **To improve education for all children and young people in Ireland, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Ireland:**
  - a. **Sustain and fully resource the Hot School Meals Programme across all primary schools, and explore its extension to secondary schools, particularly those in DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) bands.**
  - b. **Accelerate the Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity process to ensure that all families have a genuine and practical choice between denominational and multi-denominational schooling.**
  - c. **Introduce legislative guarantees for free primary and secondary education, covering all associated costs including books, uniforms, and activities.**<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Department of Social Protection (Ireland), Parliamentary Question No. 292, 1 October 2024, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> 157.129 Improve the system providing children and their parents a real opportunity to choose from among religious, multi-denominational or non-denominational types of schooling and curricula (Czechia).

<sup>16</sup> 157.174 Consider introducing a legislative guarantee of free primary and secondary education (Ukraine).

- d. **Establish meaningful mechanisms for children and young people to participate in decisions about their education, including through student councils with real influence and age-appropriate consultation processes.**
- e. **Develop and implement a comprehensive anti-bullying strategy for schools, including guidance on online harassment and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.**

## **VI. NAME, IDENTITY, AND THE RIGHT TO KNOW ONE'S ORIGINS**

28. The right to name, nationality, and identity from birth is enshrined in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and was one of the issues selected for focus by one of the student groups that participated in our consultations for this report. Students connected this right both to formal legal identity — including access to birth certificates and information about one's origins — and to the broader right to be recognized and respected for who one is, including with regard to gender identity and sexual orientation.
29. In Ireland, the right to identity has been most acutely litigated in the context of adoption, illegal birth registration, and the mother and baby homes system. The enactment of the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 represents a landmark step forward: for the first time in Irish history, adopted persons, those who were boarded out, those who were the subject of illegal birth registration, and those who spent time in mother and baby homes have a legally guaranteed right to access their birth certificates, and their early life, care and medical information<sup>17</sup>. In the first year of implementation, the Adoption Authority received over 3,800 applications for birth information and the Contact Preference Register grew to over 17,000 records.<sup>18</sup>
30. While the enactment and implementation of this legislation is sincerely welcomed, the submitting stakeholders note that recommendation 157.147<sup>19</sup> has now been substantially implemented, while related recommendations concerning accountability for past abuses<sup>20</sup> remain outstanding.

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<sup>17</sup> Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022, op. cit. See also: Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, "Information and Tracing Services under the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 open," 3 October 2022. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-children-disability-and-equality/press-releases/information-and-tracing-services-under-the-birth-information-and-tracing-act-2022-open/>

<sup>18</sup> Adoption Authority of Ireland, "The Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022 - One Year On," 3 October 2023. Available at: <https://aai.gov.ie/en/component/content/article/517-the-birth-information-and-tracing-act-2022-%E2%80%93-one-year-on.html>

<sup>19</sup> 157.147 Bring into force the Birth Information and Tracing Bill and the necessary framework to tackle the legacy issues of people who were in institutional care (Romania).

<sup>20</sup> 157.221 Fulfil its obligation to ensure truth, justice and reparation for all survivors of human rights violations and abuses in the mother and baby homes, among others, through a State investigation and the prosecution of perpetrators (Panama); 157.222 Provide an apology for the serious violations suffered by mixed-race children in institutions or unsuitable families and provide them with fair reparations (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela).

31. Beyond formal legal identity, the students also raised the importance of protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. One participant stated: “You should not be discriminated against if you are part of LGBTQ.”<sup>21</sup>
32. **To strengthen the right to identity and protect against related forms of discrimination, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Ireland:**
  - a. **Continue to ensure full and effective implementation of the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022, including adequate resourcing of the Adoption Authority of Ireland and Tusla, and provision of free counselling and support for all those accessing their information.**
  - b. **Enact comprehensive legislative protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in all life areas, including education, employment and healthcare.**
  - c. **Enact legislation prohibiting conversion therapies in line with recommendation and develop public education campaigns aimed at eliminating stigma and discrimination against LGBTQ+ young people in schools and communities.**<sup>22</sup>

## VII. CHILD PROTECTION

33. The protection of children from abuse, exploitation, neglect, trafficking, and online harm is a cornerstone of Ireland’s obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was incorporated into Irish domestic policy through the Children First Act 2015 and related legislation. Ireland has made significant progress in this area, including through the implementation of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017 and its 2019 amendment.
34. However, significant challenges remain. The children who participated in our consultations called specifically for an end to paedophilia and child sexual abuse, for stronger legal protections against exploitation and trafficking, and for greater attention to online safety. Several participants spoke of children feeling unsafe, and of the need for more cameras and surveillance in public spaces, as well as greater police presence.
35. In the area of child trafficking, the submitting stakeholders note that while Ireland has strengthened anti-trafficking legislation, the national action plan on human trafficking has lapsed and has not been renewed with adequate resourcing.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> 157.67 Develop a new comprehensive strategy and action plan to eliminate all kinds of discrimination on the basis of race, religion and gender identity, and ensure non-discriminatory treatment of all minority communities within its territory (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea); 157.80 Expand protections against discrimination directed towards persons based on their gender identity, expression, sexual characteristics or sexual orientation (United States of America).

<sup>22</sup> 157.79 Enact legislation to prohibit “conversion therapies” (Israel).

<sup>23</sup> 157.137 Strengthen measures to identify and assist victims of human trafficking, in particular child victims (India); 157.139 Enhance efforts to combat human trafficking by vigorously investigating and, as appropriate, prosecuting and convicting traffickers; addressing systemic deficiencies in victim identification, referral and assistance; and providing specialized accommodation for victims (United States of America).

36. Children also raised concerns about online harm and digital safety. The question of regulating online content harmful to children, including the availability of platforms facilitating exploitation and grooming, remains urgent.<sup>24</sup>
37. Beyond legislative frameworks, the children themselves pointed to emotional and relational protection. One participant stated: “Love and emotional support from a guardian or parent” is something that “every child” needs. The mental health crisis described in Section IV, combined with housing instability described in Section VIII, creates conditions in which children’s emotional safety is acutely endangered.
38. **To strengthen child protection in Ireland, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Ireland:**
- a. **Develop and implement a multi-stakeholder national action plan to prevent and address all forms of violence against children, including sexual abuse, trafficking, domestic violence and online exploitation, with adequate funding, clear targets and timelines.**
  - b. **Strengthen the national framework for identifying and supporting child victims of trafficking, including by reinstating a dedicated anti-trafficking unit within An Garda Síochána and ensuring that specialized accommodation is available for young victims.**
  - c. **Ensure that all children receive age-appropriate education on online safety and digital rights, as part of the formal school curriculum, and invest in enforcement mechanisms to protect children from online exploitation.**
  - d. **Continue to implement the Children First Act 2015 and related frameworks in a fully resourced manner, ensuring that Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, has sufficient staffing and funding to respond effectively to all child protection referrals.**

## **VIII. SHELTER AND HOUSING**

39. Ireland is experiencing a severe and prolonged housing and homelessness crisis that is having a devastating impact on children and families. According to the Department of Housing’s official statistics<sup>25</sup>, by February 2026, over 17,000 people were living in emergency accommodation in Ireland — a new record high. Critically, 5,319 of those were children, representing a 15.6% annual increase from January 2025 and the highest number of homeless children ever recorded in the State. There were 2,555 families in emergency accommodation, an increase of 18% year-on-year.

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<sup>24</sup> 157.213 Ensure that children receive training on the dangers of online spaces and incorporate international legal frameworks on the sexual abuse of children online (Costa Rica).

<sup>25</sup> Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Ireland), Monthly Homeless Report, February 2026, cited in: The Irish Times, “Record high of over 17,000 people homeless, including 5,319 children,” 27 February 2026. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/housing-planning/2026/02/27/record-high-of-over-17000-people-homeless-including-5319-children/>

40. The figures have broken records repeatedly throughout the review period. Focus Ireland, Ireland's largest non-governmental organization working with homeless families, described the situation as "disgraceful" and "heartbreaking," noting that for many of the 5,321 children counted at the start of 2026, this was their second or third new year spent in emergency accommodation<sup>26</sup>. The Children's Rights Alliance has warned that even a single experience of homelessness has "an extremely destabilising effect on a child, often for the rest of their lives."<sup>27</sup>
41. Children who participated in our consultations spoke directly to this reality. One student stated: "The kids and teens' biggest problem and challenge is that some kids have to live in hotels or on the street." Another called for the government to "get more houses built for kids and teens and the family." Several groups of young people raised the lack of housing as one of the most important issues affecting their peers — calling for more affordable housing, better support for families without homes, and more free public spaces for children to play.
42. The situation in Ireland has continued to worsen since the previous review, with homelessness rising virtually every month for three years. Charities have called on successive governments to implement the recommendations of the Housing Commission and to make a radical shift in housing policy.<sup>28</sup>
43. **To address the housing and homelessness crisis and protect the rights of children and families, the submitting stakeholders recommend that the Government of Ireland:**
  - a. **Treat child homelessness as a national emergency, and adopt a dedicated plan with clear, time-bound targets for reducing the number of children in emergency accommodation, with specific measures to support families who have been homeless for more than a year.**
  - b. **Significantly accelerate the delivery of social and affordable housing, prioritizing families with children, and ensure that children in emergency accommodation receive dedicated support workers and are not disadvantaged in their access to education, healthcare, or social services.**
  - c. **Ensure that all emergency accommodation meets minimum standards for families with children, including access to cooking facilities, study space, and safe outdoor areas.**

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<sup>26</sup> Focus Ireland, cited in: The Irish Times, "New record high of almost 17,000 homeless, including 5,321 children," 2 January 2026. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/social-affairs/2026/01/02/new-record-high-of-almost-17000-homeless-including-5321-children/>

<sup>27</sup> Children's Rights Alliance, cited in: The Irish Times, "Homeless figures hit new record with more than 4,000 children in emergency accommodation," 5 January 2024. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/social-affairs/2024/01/05/number-of-people-in-emergency-accommodation-hits-new-high-of-13514/>

<sup>28</sup> 157.149 Step up efforts to address homelessness and shortcomings in access to adequate housing, particularly for Travellers and Roma communities (Austria); 157.154 Intensify efforts to ensure the realization of the right to adequate housing, especially for children and persons in vulnerable situations (Poland); 157.153 Step up efforts to provide additional support to families in a situation of homelessness, in line with Sustainable Development Goals 1, 3, 8 and 11 (Paraguay); 157.155 Continue to make efforts to tackle homelessness (Portugal); 157.156 Continue tackling homelessness with unrelenting vigour (Slovakia).

- d. **Implement the recommendations of the Housing Commission, including measures to prevent no-fault evictions and to expand Housing First tenancies for the most vulnerable families and individuals.**
- e. **Develop a national housing strategy that addresses racial discrimination and ensures non-discriminatory access to social housing for all communities, including Travellers, Roma, migrants and refugees.**

## **IX. DIRECT VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

- 44. We strongly believe that listening to and considering the direct voices of young people living in Ireland is the best way to provide appropriate responses to their needs. As explained in the methodology, the participation and protagonism of children and young people is at the core of the work carried out for drafting this report, giving them a direct voice.
- 45. The thematically grouped sentences presented below in quotation marks are the result of interacting with and listening to children, adolescents and young people who participated in the consultation process across different regions of Ireland.
- 46. **Mental health and healthcare:**
  - *“I would tell the government to focus on healthcare, specifically children’s healthcare instead of letting kids and teens wait 20 minutes to be seen.”*
  - *“Children should be able to have more free access to healthcare. I also believe that children should have more access to therapy or mental health assistance.”*
  - *“Safe, love-filled family background. Quality education. Accessible health care. Mental health support and school counsellor.”*
  - *“I would use restorative practice and not scold a kid for being late if he is in before his class and missing quality education.”*
- 47. **Education:**
  - *“Funding for excellent quality education from an early age. Expanding initiatives like the Hot School Meals program to all schools so it ensures no child starts their day hungry, allowing them to focus on learning.”*
  - *“No one should have to pay for university. Schools and buildings of institutions should be renovated more often.”*
  - *“Encourage children and young people to participate in decision-making processes, recognizing their voices and needs.”*
  - *“Increasing scholarships. Better education. Avoiding school bullying.”*
- 48. **Name, identity, and non-discrimination:**
  - *“You should not be discriminated against if you are part of LGBTQ.”*
  - *“You shouldn’t be bullied.”*

- *“Name and Nationality: Right to an identity from birth. This includes name, and who you are and having your own identity.”*
- *“Good decision thinking. Be more mature. Listen to adults.”*

**49. Child protection and safety:**

- *“Elimination of pedophilia. More cameras. Hospital development. More attention should be paid to children.”*
- *“No child kidnappers. Donations to poor families. No sexual harassment or abuse. No internet harassment.”*
- *“Children’s opinions are often neglected, which can have a negative effect on their life. This leads to them not being heard and not getting the things they need.”*

**50. Shelter and housing:**

- *“The kids and teens’ biggest problem and challenge is that some kids have to live in hotels or on the street.”*
- *“More access to housing would benefit not only the child but a whole household.”*
- *“I would tell the government to get more houses built for kids and teens and the family, because in Ireland we have a huge problem when it comes to people getting homes.”*
- *“Lack of vital necessities like food, water, and shelter gets in the way of kids and teens not having a good life and being treated fairly.”*

## **X. CONCLUSION**

51. As members of civil society, we thank the Government of Ireland for its engagement with the Universal Periodic Review mechanism and for the significant legislative steps taken since the previous review — most notably the enactment of the Birth Information and Tracing Act 2022, the expansion of the Hot School Meals Programme to all primary schools, and continued investment in child welfare frameworks. These are genuine and meaningful advances that reflect commitments made during the previous UPR cycle.
52. At the same time, the evidence gathered for this report — and above all the voices of the children and young people who participated in our consultations — makes clear that urgent and sustained action is needed on several fronts.
53. The children who spoke with us were clear-eyed about what they need: mental health support, quality education for all, a home, safety, and the right to be who they are without fear of discrimination. These are not exceptional demands. They are the foundations of a dignified childhood, and they are rights — not privileges.
54. We call on the Government of Ireland to take the recommendations in this report seriously, to act on them with urgency, and to ensure that children and young people are meaningfully involved in the design and monitoring of policies that affect their lives. We also call on the Human Rights Council and the Working Group on the UPR to hold Ireland to account for

the commitments made at the previous review, and to issue clear, specific and time-bound recommendations on the issues raised in this submission.

55. We are grateful for the opportunity offered by the United Nations to participate through the UPR mechanism, and particularly for the opportunity to amplify the voices of the children and young people who trusted us to carry their words into this space.