

# #THE REAL CHALLENGE

## EXPLAINER

### #THEREALCHALLENGE, EU-UNICEF GLOBAL CAMPAIGN ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

#### WHY IS THE CAMPAIGN BEING LAUNCHED NOW?

The 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - the most widely ratified human rights treaty: 196 states are parties to this Convention. This anniversary creates an opportunity to speak about children's rights as a consensual and non-political issue, as well as to raise awareness about the need to further protect and promote children's rights. Even if these rights are universal, they cannot be taken for granted.

This universal coverage has helped to advance key rights, and promote the Convention's general principles: non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, survival and development and the right to be heard. Despite the progress made, many challenges remain for children across the planet. Some are forced to leave their homes, some are recruited as soldiers, some are victims of child labour and of bullying, online and offline, and inequalities persist in many forms. Children are being torn from their families against their will and best interest.

This is why the European Union and UNICEF are joining forces and launching a global campaign called [#TheRealChallenge](#).

#### WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE CAMPAIGN?

The campaign will raise awareness of the treaty's provisions among those who are its main beneficiaries: children.

The objective is to engage with children by empowering them to speak up in a way that is universal and relatable to global youth. It is to capture the public's imagination, grab their attention and encourage them to get involved, so there needs to be a focus on active participation, and not just communication. This is crucial for the cause-led campaign we are aiming at.

It is also to reaffirm the EU and UN commitment to protect and promote the rights of the child in line with the UNCRC and its Optional Protocols.

The campaign is global. The aim is to choose a few globally relevant rights, especially those that are not promoted widely and constitute a real global challenge. The global aspect of the campaign should be easily adapted to the local circumstances.

The target audience are mainly children and youth as well as duty-bearers.

The campaign should pursue engagement and encourage the audience, mainly children and youth, to take action and to share the message. Advancing on children rights is not possible without children's participation. And this is what the campaign aims to do.

## HOW WILL IT WORK?

We want children and adolescents to express their views on their own rights, in their own languages, so we will reach out to them where they are most present and active.

TikTok, which is largely video based, increases opportunities for interaction. During 2018, it was the fourth-most downloaded app in the world, available in 150 countries and 75 languages. The app allows users to create 15-second videos, which often take the form of lip-synching or 'challenge' videos where the user challenges others to copy their movements.

**#TheRealChallenge campaign** will be triggered by four such video challenges. In each one, a child acts out a choreographed series of movements to a pop-music soundtrack. These movements are fun to do and easy to replicate. But by the end of the videos, these seemingly innocent movements are linked to violations of children's rights, confronting the viewer with the real challenges that many children face each day.

With the help of influencers, millions of TikTok users will share, 'duet' or view each challenge, helping to amplify the message in all parts of the globe. This will show audiences that children and their rights need more attention, and that it is a global challenge to ensure that their rights are respected. No-one can be a better advocate for their rights than children themselves.

The campaign will begin on 25<sup>th</sup> October and will run at least until 20 November, which is the anniversary of the Convention. The videos will have an emotional and personal style and convey the message that children's rights are universal yet they cannot be taken for granted.

## WHAT IS THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD?

The text sets out the minimum standards for protecting and promoting the rights of children. It is regarded as a landmark achievement because it recognised the role of children as social, economic, political, civil and cultural actors.

Among the main stipulations of the UNCRC is to oblige state parties, without discrimination in any form, to safeguard:

- Access to services, including quality education and healthcare.
- Freedom to develop their personalities, abilities and talents to the fullest potential.
- Ability to grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding.
- Access to information about their rights.
- And much more.

UNICEF, which helped draft the convention, is named in the document as a source of expertise.

## WHY IS THE EU INVOLVED?

The EU has a long-standing commitment to protect the rights of children, both inside the bloc and outside. The EU developed its own **guidelines** for children's rights in 2007, updated in 2017, which use the UNCRC as their baseline. The EU's commitment was also enshrined in the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, which states:

*'The Union shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child.'* (Article 3)

## CONTACTS

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## MORE ON THE CAMPAIGN AND CONVENTION

### UNICEF

<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>  
<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/frequently-asked-questions>

### EU

[https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/67794/every-single-child-should-get-every-single-right\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/67794/every-single-child-should-get-every-single-right_en)