

7. December 2021

Dear distinguished panel

My name is Þóra Jónsdóttir, a project manager of domestic programs for Barnaheill – Save the Children Iceland.

On behalf of the Icelandic coalition of CSO's, I share the following with the distinguished panel of the 40th UPR pre-session, about children's rights in Iceland at present., following on and building on our UPR CSO report from July. Too many children in Iceland live in poor conditions, financially and socially. Iceland is a rich country with a generally high-quality standard living conditions and well-being and no child should have to live in poverty in Iceland. There is a pressing need for a strategy to eradicate poverty, and in a recent report published by Barnaheill – Save the Children, ending child poverty and social exclusion is stated to be a priority for all EU member states, Iceland amongst them. The CSO coalition supports and seconds Save the Children's report and urges the Icelandic state to take a comprehensive approach to tackle child poverty through a variety of short term and long term social protection measures that will support present and future generations of children. There has been an interesting development in the last two years where the ministry of Children has been on the forefront of creating a new system for raising the happiness and prosperity for all children in Iceland, where there is a focus on early intervention and higher standards in services for children, connecting everyone working for an individual child and having them coordinate actions and services provided to the child, where the child should be the focus point and center of and participant of the conversation along with its parents. The coalition urges the parliament and ministries to implement this new strategy in the coming parliamentary term. There is a pressing need to ensure capital to finance the actions planned within the strategy. The government needs to invest in children and prevention measures today as it is the best investment for society into the future. Furthermore, educating children, parents and everyone connected to children, about children's rights, their right to protection from violence, their rights to participation and their right not to be discriminated against is of high importance and there should be an emphasis on the creation and development of children's rights educational materials.

Thank you.