

# Challenge Accepted: Web-Portal for children and young people's participation in the CRC monitoring and reporting process in Moldova



Children and Young People's Rights in the Digital Age, 2016  
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## Challenge Accepted: The idea of the Web-Portal

- Web-portal – children and young people's (Reflection Group's) response to main challenges of their involvement in the CRC monitoring and reporting process:
  - Limited opportunities (to take part in decision making processes in general)
  - Negative experience (in general)

## Challenge Accepted: The internet

*“... a potentially huge network of like-minded peers ...  
new critical skills ... alternative deliberative spaces ...  
a virtual public sphere ... interactivity, global scale,  
fast connectivity, unlimited capacity ... democratic ...  
direct communication among citizens ... undermining  
or disintermediating traditional  
gatekeepers....” (Livingstone, 2009:121)*

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## Challenge Accepted: Advantages and limits of the internet

*“Online, people are discovering common interests with a potentially huge network of like-minded peers, developing new critical skills and building alternative deliberative spaces ...” (Livingstone, 2009:121)*

However, the internet seems to be most effective at engaging those already interested in the social and political issues, not at mobilizing those disengaged.  
(see Livingstone, 2009:122-130)

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## Challenge Accepted: Moldovan Context

- 80% urban and 70% rural have regular access
- Various purposes - educational to commercial

*“Over 38 percent of respondents read or watch the news online. Especially boys (39.4%), 16 year olds (50.4%) and children from urban areas (41.7%).” (La Strada, 2014:34)*

## Challenge Accepted: children & young people's participation in general

- “Tokenism.
- *Lack of feedback.*
- *Who is included or excluded.*
- *Consultation but not dialogue.*
- *Lack of sustainability.*
- *Adult processes and structures exclude children and young people.”* (Tisdall, 2015:382)
- *“Rebuke and reprisal”* (see Lundy, 2007:934)

## Challenge Accepted: Concept of the Web-Portal

- CRIC's main strategy remains enabling children and young people to set their agenda:
  - RG members are involved in the creation of the web-portal, both its contents & design.
  - Children and young people (groups or individuals) provided channels to influence content & design.

## Challenge Accepted: Advantages and limits of the internet

Enabling direct communication among participants the internet can *“undermine or disintermediate traditional gatekeepers, both political elites and global media corporations.”* (Livingstone, 2009:121)

- How “direct” is the online communication, how safe is it from influence of predominant discourses?
- How “direct” should it be, given the various risks related to the internet?



# Challenge Accepted: Online Risks

Classification (Livingstone, 2009)	Content: Child as Recipient	Contact: Child as Participant	Conduct: Child as Actor
Commercial	Advertising, spam, sponsorship	Tracking, harvesting personal information	Gambling, illegal downloads, hacking
Aggressive	Violent, gruesome, hateful content	Being bullied, harassed or stalked	Bullying or harassing another
Sexual	Pornographic, harmful sexual content	Meeting strangers, being groomed	Creating, uploading pornographic material [wider sense, not only sexual]
Values	Racist, biased or misleading info/advice (e.g., drugs)	Self-harm, unwelcome persuasion	Providing advice e.g., suicide, pro-anorexia [hate speech]

## Challenge Accepted: Moldovan Context

- Growing awareness of online risks & prevention programmes (see La Strada, 2014; Child Rights Council NAP 2016)
- Mayor issues:
  - Some are at more risks (girls, rural, 12 years old)
  - Giving out personal information that can put them at further risks (e.g., reprisal, (cyber)bullying)

## Challenge Accepted: Dealing with Risks

- Strengthening children and young people's abilities to deal with risks, respect others etc.
- Risk assessment and mitigation strategies
- Developing guides, code of conducts etc.
- Additional channels, including web-links for reporting violence, discrimination etc.

## Challenge Accepted:

- Challenge – maximise opportunities & minimize risks
- On & off-line: similarities & differences
- Web-portal as an example of critical, creative and ethical usage of the internet

# Challenge Accepted: Bibliography

- Child Rights Council of the Republic of Moldova (2016) *National Action Plan 2016*. Chisinau.
- La Strada (2014) *A Study on Children's Safety Online in the Republic of Moldova*. Chisinau.
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Thank you for your attention.



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