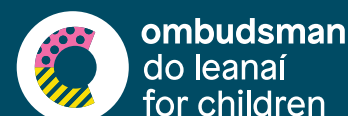


# Strategic Plan



2019  
–  
2021



## Message from Ombudsman for Children

Ensuring that children in Ireland live safe, happy and fulfilling everyday lives has been my vision for this Office since taking on the role of Ombudsman for Children in 2015. In putting together our Strategic Plan 2019-2021, myself and my team, have set out our objectives to help us continue to work towards that vision.

In this, my second Strategic Plan, I want to build on the very positive work that has taken place over the past three years. We will continue to work to raise awareness of the rights of children and young people; we will support public organisations in taking a more child centred approach and we will use our powers to hold organisations to account. I am committed to supporting my staff and developing the Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) as we deliver on these objectives.

My thanks are due to all those who helped us shape this Plan and a special thanks to the many children and young people who have engaged with us over the last 3 years. The wisdom and insightfulness of children and young people continues to impress and inspire all of us in this Office.

At the OCO we are keen to work with others to ensure that all children and young people in Ireland can enjoy their rights and fulfil their individual potential. We will monitor our progress as we proceed and ensure that the experiences and perspectives of children and young people inform our work.

**Niall Muldoon**  
Ombudsman for Children



## Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO)

The Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) is an independent office. The OCO was set up under a law called the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002.

Under this law, the Ombudsman for Children has two main roles:

to deal with complaints made by or for children and young people about the actions of public organisations.

to promote the rights and welfare of children and young people under 18 years old living in Ireland.

## The OCO's work to promote children's rights and welfare includes:

- finding out what children and young people are concerned about and highlighting their opinions to the Government and other people who make decisions that affect them;
- supporting people, including children and young people, to find out about children's rights and how those rights can be respected, protected and made real;
- giving advice to the Government and others to help make sure laws and plans affecting children and young people respect children's rights;
- encouraging public organisations to work in ways that promote children and young people's rights and welfare; and
- carrying out or commissioning research to get a better understanding of issues that are important in children and young people's lives.

More information about the OCO's work is on our website, [www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie)

## Three-Year Strategic Plan 2019–2021

This plan outlines our 4 main objectives and the key areas of activity we will pursue to achieve them. In holding public organisations to account we will use the powers we have in law and utilise EU and UN mechanisms as appropriate.

### Vision

We want to see an Ireland where children's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled and where

**Compassionate** – we care about children and young people and want to see their lives improved.

**Accessible** – we are open to listening to children and young people and the adults who care and work with them.

**Innovative** – we are creative thinkers and are interested in promoting new ways of working with and for children and young people.

This means that as an Office we are committed to providing a high quality professional service and will, at all times treat you politely, respectfully and with dignity.



all children and young people are actively heard and respected so that they experience safe, fulfilling and happy everyday lives. We will use our independence and powers to the fullest extent to bring this about.

### Values

These are the things that drive us as a team and make us who we are:

**Independent** – our independence is important so we can say the things that need to be said and hold public organisations to account.

**Authoritative** – when we speak out on behalf of children and young people we do so in a confident way informed by our research and backed up by the law that created the OCO.

**Transparent** – we want everything we do to be open and easily understood so we can be held to account for the work we do.

## Objectives and Actions:

1

### Objective 1

We will increase awareness of children and young people's rights, the UNCRC and the OCO.

#### Actions

**1.1** We will continue to develop and implement initiatives to increase awareness among public and other organisations, members of the public and children and young people of children's rights and the OCO, including our role as a redress mechanism. We will focus in particular on engaging with groups who may find the OCO harder to reach.

**1.2** We will work on thematic issues, including issues children and young people are concerned about, in order to promote children and young people's rights and support learning by public and other organisations.

2

### Objective 2

We will work to strengthen capacity among public organisations whose work impacts on children and young people to take a child-centred approach to their practice.

#### Actions

**2.1** We will encourage a child-centred and transparent approach to decision-making through all our engagements with public organisations.

**2.2** We will support capacity building among relevant public organisations to implement policies, procedures and practices that are consistent with child-centred public administration, including with regard to complaints handling.

3

### Objective 3

We will hold public organisations to account for their actions and decisions affecting children and young people.

#### Actions

**3.1** We will use our statutory independence and powers to encourage public organisations to fulfil their obligations to realise children's rights. We will question where this does not occur and recognise good practice when it is evident.

**3.2** We will continue to pursue the progressive realisation of rights of vulnerable groups of children and young people, in particular children with disabilities, children experiencing mental health and homeless children. We will also pay particular attention to children in Direct Provision and those in the Traveller and Roma communities.

**3.3** We will support international and European monitoring mechanisms in their work to hold the State to account for its actions and decisions concerning children's rights.

4

### Objective 4

We will continue to develop the OCO as a well-functioning and effective independent statutory body.

#### Actions

**4.1** We will continue to foster a positive and encouraging work environment within the OCO, including by supporting the continued professional development of staff.

**4.2** We will continue to develop, implement and review our legislation, organisational policies and procedures.

**4.3** We will strive to improve our accessibility and inclusivity to all.

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Website: [www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie)  
For information about making a complaint:  
Freephone: 1800 20 20 40  
Email: [ococomplaint@oco.ie](mailto:ococomplaint@oco.ie)  
Visit our website for more information on the type of complaints we can help with:  
[www.oco.ie/complaints/](http://www.oco.ie/complaints/)  
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# Plean Straitéiseach



2019  
–  
2021



ombudsman  
do leanaí  
for children

## Teachtaireacht ón Ombudsman do Leanáí

Is í an fhís atá agam don Oifig seo ó ghlac mé leis an ról mar Ombudsman do Leanáí in 2015 ná a chinntiú go bhfuil saol laethúil sábháilte, sona agus sásúil ag gach leanbh in Éirinn. Le linn ár bPlean Straitéiseach 2019-2021 a chur le chéile, tá ár gcuspóirí leagtha amach agam féin agus ag m'fhoireann chun cabhrú linn leanúint ag obair i dtreo na fise sin.

Sa dara Plean Straitéiseach seo de mo chuid, ba mhaith liom tógáil ar an obair dhearfach a rinneadh le trí bliana anuas. Leanfaimid orainn ag obair chun feasacht ar chearta leanaí agus daoine óga a ardú; tacóimid le heagraíochtaí poiblí cur chuige atá níos dírithe ar an leanbh a ghlacadh agus bainfidimid úsáid as ár gcumhachtaí chun eagraíochtaí a thabhairt chun cuntais. Táim tiomanta i leith tacaíocht a thabhairt do m'fhoireann agus Oifig an Ombudsman do Leanáí (OCO) a fhorbairt agus muid ag seachadadh na gcuspóirí seo.

Táim buíoch dóibh siúd go léir a chabhraigh linn cruth a chur ar an bPlean seo agus gabhaim buíochas speisialta leis na leanaí agus leis na ndaoine óga a bhí rannpháirteach linn le trí bliana anuas. Cuireann críonnacht agus tuiscint na leanaí agus na ndaoine óga iontas ar gach duine againn san Oifig seo agus spreagann siad muid.

Ag an OCO, táimid ar bís le tosú ag obair le daoine eile lena chinntiú go bhféadfaidh gach leanbh agus duine óg in Éirinn a gcearta a bhaint amach agus a gcumas aonair a chomhlíonadh. Déanfaimid monatóireacht ar ár ndul chun cinn de réir mar a théimid ar aghaidh agus cinnteoidimid go gcuirfidh taithí agus dearcadh leanaí agus daoine óga eolas ar fáil don obair a dhéanaimid.

**Niall Muldoon**  
An tOmbudsman do Leanáí



## Oifig an Ombudsman do Leanáí (OCO)

Is oifig neamhspleách í Oifig an Ombudsman do Leanáí (OCO). Bunaíodh an OCO faoi dhlí ar a dtugtar an tAcht um Ombudsman do Leanáí 2002.

Faoin dlí seo, tá dhá phríomhról ag an Ombudsman do Leanáí:

cearta agus leas leanaí agus daoine óga atá faoi bhun 18 mbliana d'aois a bhfuil cónaí orthu in Éirinn a chur chun cinn.

déileáil le gearáin arna ndéanamh ag leanaí agus daoine óga nó thar a gceann faoi ghníomhaíochtaí eagraíochtaí poiblí.

## Áirítear ar obair an OCO chun cearta agus leas leanaí a chur chun cinn:

– a fháil amach cad atá ag déanamh imní do leanaí agus do dhaoine óga agus a gcuid tuairimí a chur faoi bhráid an Rialtais agus daoine eile a dhéanann cinntí a théann i bhfeidhm orthu;

– tacú le daoine, lena n-áirítear leanaí agus daoine óga, chun a fháil amach faoi chearta leanaí agus ar conas is féidir na cearta sin a urramú, a chosaint agus a bhaint amach;

– comhairle a thabhairt don Rialtas agus do dhaoine eile chun cabhrú leo a chinntiú go bhfuil meas ag na dlíthe agus ag na pleannanna a mbíonn tionchar acu ar leanaí agus ar dhaoine óga maidir le cearta leanaí;

– spreagadh a thabhairt d'eagraíochtaí poiblí oibriú ar bhealaí a chuireann cearta agus leas leanaí agus daoine óga chun cinn; agus

– taighde a dhéanamh nó a choimisiúint chun tuiscint níos fearr a fháil ar shaincheisteanna atá tábhachtach i saol leanaí agus daoine óga.

Tá tuilleadh eolais maidir le hobair an OCO le fáil ar ár láithreán gréasáin, [www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie)

## Plean Straitéiseach Trí Bhlíana 2019–2021

Leagtar amach sa phlean seo ár 4 phríomhchuspóir agus na príomhréimsí gníomhaíochta a leanfaimid chun iad a bhaint amach. Agus eagraíochtaí poiblí á dtabhairt chun cuntais againn bainfidimid úsáid as na cumhachtaí atá againn sa dlí agus bainfidimid úsáid as meicníochtaí an AE agus na Náisiún Aontaithe de réir mar is cuí.

**Fís**  
Is éard atá uainn ná tír ina ndéantar cearta leanaí a urramú, a chosaint

**Tuiscianach** – tá luí againn leis na leanaí agus daoine óga agus teastaíonn uainn an saol atá acu a fheabhsú.

**Inrochtana** – éistimid le leanaí agus le daoine óga agus leis na daoine fásta a thugann aire dóibh agus a bhíonn ag obair leo.

**Nuálaíoch** – is smaointeoirí cruthaitheacha muid agus tá spéis againn bealaí nua a chur chun cinn le bheith ag obair le leanaí agus daoine óga agus thar a gceann.

Ciallaíonn sé sin go bhfuilimid, mar Oifig, tiomanta i leith seirbhís ghairmiúil ardchaighdeán a sholáthar agus go gcaithfidimid leat, i gcónaí, ar bhealach múinte agus le dínit.



agus a bhaint amach agus tír ina n-éistear go gníomhach le leanaí agus daoine óga agus ina dtugtar meas dóibh ionas gur féidir leo saol laethúil sábháilte, sona agus sásúil a bheith acu. Bainfidimid úsáid as ár neamhspleáchas agus ár gcumhachtaí a mhéid is atáimid in ann chun é sin a bhaint amach.

**Luachanna**  
Seo a leanas na tréithe atá againn a thugann spreagadh dúinn:

**Neamhspleách** – tá ár neamhspleáchas tábhachtach ionas gur féidir linn an méid is gá a rá agus eagraíochtaí poiblí a thabhairt chun cuntais.

**Údarásach** – nuair a labhraímid amach thar ceann leanaí agus daoine óga, déanaimid é ar bhealach muiníneach atá treoraithe agus tacaíte ag an dlí a chruthaigh an OCO.

**Trédhearcach** – ba mhaith linn gach a dhéanaimid a bheith oscailte agus éasca le tuiscint ionas gur féidir linn míniú a thabhairt ar an obair a dhéanaimid.

## Cuspóirí agus Gníomhaíochtaí:

1

**Cuspóir 1**  
Méadóimid feasacht ar chearta leanaí agus daoine óga, an UNCRC agus an OCO.

**Gníomhaíochtaí**

**1.1** Leanfaimid orainn ag forbairt agus ag cur tionscnamh i bhfeidhm chun feasacht a mhéadú i measc eagraíochtaí poiblí agus eagraíochtaí eile, baill den phobal agus leanaí agus daoine óga maidir le cearta leanaí agus an OCO, lena n-áirítear ár ról mar mheicníocht sásaímh. Direoidimid go háirithe ar a bheith rannpháirteach le grúpaí a mheasann go bhfuil sé níos deacra teacht ar an OCO.

**1.2** Oibreoidimid ar shaincheisteanna téamacha, lena n-áirítear ceisteanna a bhfuil imní ar leanaí agus ar dhaoine óga mar gheall orthu, d'fhonn cearta leanaí agus daoine óga a chur chun cinn agus tacaíocht a thabhairt d'fhoghlaim ag eagraíochtaí poiblí agus eagraíochtaí eile.

2

**Cuspóir 2**  
Oibreoidimid chun cumas a neartú i measc eagraíochtaí poiblí a mbíonn tionchar ag a gcuid oibre ar leanaí agus ar dhaoine óga cur chuige atá dírithe ar an leanbh a ghlacadh maidir lena gcleachtas.

**Gníomhaíochtaí**

**2.1** Spreagfaimid cur chuige atá dírithe ar leanaí agus atá trédhearcach maidir le cinnteoireacht trinár rannpháirtíocht go léir le heagraíochtaí poiblí.

**2.2** Tabharfaimid tacaíocht d'fhorbairt cumais i measc eagraíochtaí poiblí ábhartha chun beartais, nósanna imeachta agus cleachtais a chur i bhfeidhm atá comhsheasmhach le riarachán chun cinn agus tacaíocht a thabhairt d'fhoghlaim ag eagraíochtaí poiblí agus eagraíochtaí eile.

3

**Cuspóir 3**  
Tabharfaimid eagraíochtaí poiblí chun cuntais as a gcuid gníomhaíochtaí agus cinntí a mbíonn tionchar acu ar leanaí agus ar dhaoine óga.

**Gníomhaíochtaí**

**3.1** Bainfidimid úsáid as ár neamhspleáchas agus ár gcumhachtaí reachtúla chun spreagadh a thabhairt d'eagraíochtaí poiblí a gcuid oibleagáidí a chomhlíonadh maidir le cearta leanaí a bhaint amach. Cuirfidimid ceisteanna sa chás nach dtarlódh sé seo agus aithneoidimid dea-cheachtas nuair a bhíonn sé soiléir.

**3.2** Leanfaimid orainn le cearta grúpaí leanaí agus daoine óga leochaileacha a bhaint amach, go háirithe leanaí faoi mhíchumas, leanaí a bhfuil fadhbanna meabhairshláinte acu agus leanaí gan dídean. Leagfaimid áird ar leith ar leanaí i Soláthar Díreach agus leanaí ón Lucht Siúil.

**3.3** Tabharfaimid tacaíocht do mheicníochtaí monatóireachta idirnáisiúnta agus Eorpacha ina gcuid oibre chun an Stát a thabhairt chun cuntais as a ghníomhaíochtaí agus a chinntí a bhaineann le cearta leanaí.

4

**Cuspóir 4**  
Leanfaimid orainn leis an OCO a fhorbairt mar chomhlacht reachtúil neamhspleách atá éifeachtúil agus éifeachtach.

**Gníomhaíochtaí**

**4.1** Leanfaimid orainn le timpeallacht oibre dearfach agus spreagúil a chothú laistigh den OCO, lena n-áirítear trí thacú le forbairt ghairmiúil leanúnach na gcomhaltaí foirne.

**4.2** Leanfaimid orainn lenár reachtaíocht, beartais agus nósanna imeachta a fhorbairt, a chur i bhfeidhm agus a athbhreithniú.

**4.3** Déanfaimid ár ndícheall ar n-inrochtaineacht agus ar n-uileghabhálacht a fheabhsú do gach duine.

Oifig an Ombudsman do Leanáí  
Teach na Mílaoise  
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Má theastaíonn eolas uait maidir le gearán a dhéanamh:  
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Rphost: [ococomplaint@oco.ie](mailto:ococomplaint@oco.ie)  
Téigh chuig ár láithreán gréasáin chun tuilleadh eolais a fháil maidir leis an gcineál gearán is féidir linn cabhrú leis: [www.oco.ie/complaints/](http://www.oco.ie/complaints/)  
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