



**ombudsman
do leanaí
for children**

Invitation to Tender

Secondary Analysis of Survey and Focus Group Data

on

**Children's Views and Experiences of Mental Health Supports and Services in
Ireland**

11th August 2022

ITT publication date: **Thursday, 11th August 2022**

Closing date for submission of tenders: **Monday, 29th August at 12.00 noon**

1. Introduction

1.1. Ombudsman for Children's Office

The Ombudsman for Children's Office (OCO) is an independent statutory body, which was established in 2004 under primary legislation, the Ombudsman for Children Act 2002. The Ombudsman for Children has two overall statutory functions:

- to deal with complaints made by or for children and young people about the administrative actions of public bodies that have, or may have, adversely affected a child;
- to promote the rights and welfare of children and young people under 18 years of age living in Ireland.

The Ombudsman for Children is independent and directly accountable to the Oireachtas in relation to the exercise of these statutory functions.

The OCO is commissioning the current research in accordance with section 7(3) of the 2002 Act, which provides that the Ombudsman for Children may undertake, promote or publish research into any matter relating to children's rights and welfare.

Further information about the OCO and our work is available at www.oco.ie.

1.2. Context for the Research

The right to express a view and have this considered

Article 12(1) of the UNCRC provides children, who have the capacity of form a view, with the right to express that view in relation to matters that affect them. Further, Article 12(2) states that children's views must be given due consideration and weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Under Section 7 of the Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002, the Ombudsman for Children has an obligation and remit to consult with children on matters that affect them and to give due weight to these views in accordance with the age and understanding of the child. Furthermore, this section states that the Ombudsman for Children can also highlight issues of concern to children.

The right to the highest possible attainable standard of health and health care services

Article 24(1) of the UNCRC states that:

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

This right encompasses mental health and mental health services.

The OCO Strategic Plan, 2022-2024

The OCO's Strategic Plan, 2022-2024 identifies children's right to the highest attainable standard of mental health as one of its core goals. In the context of this research, objective 1.3 is of particular relevance. This states that:

Using the knowledge we have gained from our work, the OCO will identify priorities and continue to advocate for the increased provision of mental health supports, including therapeutic services, in schools and other educational settings.

The Data

In 2001 and 2022, the OCO conducted a two-fold consultation with children about life in Ireland in order to produce a Children's Report for submission to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. The OCO will submit this Children's Report to the UN Committee in August 2022 as part of the Committee's examination of Ireland's implementation of the UNCRC.

Online Survey

The first element of this consultation involved an online survey that posed the following three question:

- What is good about being a child in Ireland?
- What is not so good about being a child in Ireland
- What would you change about life in Ireland?

A market research company managed this survey. In total, 5,515 children aged 2 to 17 years responded to this survey. The responses were divided into those from children aged under 12 and those aged 12 and over. The market research company entered the responses to each question from children in these age groups into an Excel Workbook.

The market research company identified initial high-level themes emerging in the survey responses. We used these themes to inform the second element of the consultation (focus groups – see below).

In addition, the OCO used key word searches to identify further themes and quotes from children. This analysis is included in the Children's Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Focus Groups

The OCO facilitated or supported 23 focus groups with children to discuss a number of key themes emerging from the survey. These themes were:

- Education
- Services that support children

- Community and leisure
- Equality and discrimination
- Voice
- Children in need of extra protection

In total, 200 children took part in these focus groups. Most of these focus groups were recorded and the recordings were transcribed. In the remaining focus groups, the organisations that facilitated these returned notes, writing and artwork. The OCO, along with the members of our Youth Advisory Panel (YAP), undertook an initial thematic analysis of the focus group data. As with the analysis of the survey data, this is included in the Children’s Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

1.3. Requirements of the Research

In order to inform and support the achievement of the above strategic goal and objective and to maximise the use of the data collected, the OCO is seeking tenders for desk-based analysis of the data arising from the survey and focus groups outlined above. The resulting report will constitute a more detailed analysis or ‘deep dive’ into the children’s views and experiences of mental health and mental health services and supports. From our initial analysis, we anticipate that the research will:

- Provide more detailed overview of the extent to which children identified mental health and mental health supports and services as key themes in both the survey and the focus groups.
- Identify and detail the main sub-themes emerging in relation to mental health and mental health services and supports (possibilities include, for example, issues for specific groups of children, the location of services and supports, CAMHS services etc.)
- Provide detailed analysis of data under these sub-themes in terms of children’s experiences and views and the potential solutions or changes that children wish to see to mental health services and supports.
- Identify key issues arising for the OCO in the context of ensuring that the right under Article 24 of the UNCRC as it applies to mental health is informed by the children’s views.

1.4. Further information and query handling

All requests for clarification must be submitted to ocotenders@oco.ie and be clearly marked “**RTN Research Queries**”. These must be received by close of business on **18th August 2022**. A written response to all requests for clarification received on or before this date will be sent to all tenderers, without identifying the source of the query. The OCO may, in our absolute discretion, respond to requests for clarification received after the deadline for clarification.

1.5. Ownership and publication of research report(s) and other outputs

Ownership of the research report(s) and other outputs produced under this contract rests with the OCO as the commissioning body.

Prospective tenderers should also note that decision-making on whether or not to publish any report(s) and other output(s) produced under this contract will rest with the OCO.

1.6. Timescale

As indicated at 1.4 above, all requests for clarification in relation to this invitation to tender must be received by close of business on **Thursday, 18th August 2022**.

The deadline for receipt of tenders is **Monday, 29th August 2022 at 12 noon**. **All tenders must be returned by email to ocotenders@oco.ie.**

It is anticipated that the work will begin in the week beginning **12th September 2022** and be completed by **30 November, 2022**.

2. Required Format for Submissions

2.1. General information

Responses to this invitation to tender must include the following general information:

- agency/institution name (if applicable) and the name, address, email address and telephone number of the person responsible for the tender;
- name of person(s) who will be responsible for carrying out the research;
- name and contact details for any third party involved in the tender.

2.2. Research proposal

Tenderers must provide a proposal for the research detailing the following:

- a demonstration of relevant professional research experience, which in light of the nature of this research project will include:
- demonstrated knowledge and expertise in the areas of international rights standards, law and public policy in Ireland that are relevant and related to the research;
- demonstrated experience of secondary data analysis;
- proposed approach to the work;
- a statement of availability in the period required and capacity to complete the project in accordance with the timeline outlined above;
- the number of days required to complete the research;
- the total cost of the research, exclusive of VAT;
- confirmation that the tenderer understands that, if successful, they will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement with the OCO.

2.4. Costs

Given our expectation that the successful tenderer will have existing knowledge and expertise in the relevant areas as set out above, it is anticipated that the number of days required to carry out this research and deliver the final report will not exceed 20 days.

The maximum budget available for this work is €10,000, exclusive of VAT.

The total cost of undertaking this work should be provided. All costs must be quoted in Euro, exclusive of VAT (any VAT applicable should be indicated separately).

Travel and subsistence costs, if applicable, should be **excluded** from the quoted fee for this work. Such costs will be agreed in advance with the OCO, will be subject to Public Service conditions and paid on a vouched basis.

The Ombudsman for Children's Office will not be responsible for any errors in the calculation of costs provided in response to this invitation to tender. It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that the costs quoted are correct and calculated properly.

The OCO will not be liable for any costs incurred by tenderers in the preparation of tenders or any associated work effort. It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that they are fully aware and understand the requirements as laid down in the request for tender document. Tenderers will be responsible for any costs incurred by them in the event of their being required to attend clarification or other meetings.

Payment of costs will be on foot of submission of appropriate invoices. Invoicing arrangements will be agreed with the successful tenderer following the award of the contract. If applicable, all fees will be subject to Professional Services Withholding Tax currently at a rate of 20%.

3. Selection / award criteria

Evaluation of tenders will be based on the following award criteria:

- previous relevant research experience and expertise of the tenderer;
- understanding of the brief and proposed approach to the research;
- evidence of ability to manage and deliver similar research in a timely manner; and
- cost effectiveness.

4. General Conditions

Tenders should be prepared in English and are subject to the following:

4.1 This Request for Tender (RFT) shall form part of the contract documents. This RFT and all submissions/tenders shall be governed and constructed in accordance with the laws of Ireland and the work carried out pursuant to the RFT shall be deemed to be carried out in Ireland.

4.2 The Ombudsman for Children's Office will use its best efforts to hold confidential any information provided by tenderers subject to their obligations under law, including the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2014. Tenderers should indicate when tendering, what parts of their tenders are commercially sensitive and which they consider should be kept confidential should an FOI request be received. The Ombudsman for Children's Office will consult with tenderers about any such sensitive information before making a decision on any FOI request received. Similarly, the Ombudsman for Children's Office requires that all information provided pursuant to this invitation to tender will be treated in strict confidence by tenderers. The successful tenderer may be required to enter into a confidentiality agreement in respect of any confidential information provided to it.

4.3 Tenderers should be aware that national legislation applies in other matters such as Official Secrets, Data Protection and Health and Safety.

4.4 Tenderers must have regard to statutory terms relating to minimum pay and to legally binding industrial or sectoral agreements in preparing tenders.

4.5 Information supplied by tenderers will be treated as contractually binding. However, the Ombudsman for Children's Office reserves the right to seek clarification or verification of any such information. Failure to provide a satisfactory response may lead to that tenderer's exclusion from the process. The Ombudsman for Children's Office reserves the right to check all information for accuracy. Statements which are subsequently found to be incorrect or incapable of fulfilment may be found by the Ombudsman for Children's Office as a reason to exclude that tenderer from the process. The appropriate course of action to be taken in any event shall be decided by the Ombudsman for Children's Office in its absolute discretion.

4.6 Any conflicts of interest involving a tenderer must be fully disclosed to the Ombudsman for Children's Office particularly where there is a conflict of interest in relation to any recommendations or proposals put forward by the tenderer.

4.7 Before a contract is awarded the successful tenderer (and agent, where appropriate) will be required to promptly produce a Tax Clearance Certificate, or in the case of a non-resident tenderer, a statement from the Revenue Commissioners confirming suitability on tax grounds.

4.8 Tenderers should note that the Ombudsman for Children's Office will require sight of Tax Clearance Certificates for any subcontractor where payments exceed €10,000 per annum. Where a Tax Clearance Certificate expires within the course of the contract, the Ombudsman for Children's Office reserves the right to seek a renewed certificate. All payments under the contract will be conditional on the contractor(s) being in possession of a valid certificate at all times.

4.9 In the event of a group of respondents jointly submitting an acceptable offer, the contract will be awarded by the Ombudsman for Children's Office to one contractor who acts as the agreed prime contractor. The prime contractor is responsible for the delivery of all services provided for under the terms of the contract and shall assume all the duties, responsibilities and costs associated with the position of prime contractor.

4.10 The successful tenderer shall be responsible for the delivery of all services provided for within the contract on the basis of the costs quoted. Prices quoted in the tender cannot be increased during the duration of the contract. Similarly, terms and conditions cannot be altered.

4.11 The Ombudsman for Children's Office retains the right to terminate the contract and to withhold payment where a contractor has failed to meet his/her contractual obligations in relation to the delivery of the required services.

4.12 The Ombudsman for Children's Office will not be liable in respect of any cost or expenses incurred by tenderers in the preparation of tenders or any associated work effort, including preparing and presenting their proposals.