GIVING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE A VOICE
The experience of the sample survey on children and young people in Italy

CINZIA CONTI, LUCIANO FANFONI, GABRIELLA FAZZI
“Countries should include children in regular data collection, including child focused surveys, to ensure that the main national statistical reports highlight the situation and needs of child and youth in all relevant policy areas”

Statistics on children. Spotlight on children exposed to violence, in alternative care, and with disabilities
UNECE, 2022, p.19
The survey on Behaviours, attitudes and future plans of children and young people

Field period: from 2 October to 20 December 2023

Target: a statistically representative sample of residents aged between 11 and 19 years (Italian and foreign citizens)

Method: online questionnaire planned to minimize the statistical burden for young respondents and designed to be comfortably filled out even on a smartphone.

Response: approximately 40 thousand residents directly interviewed

Large sample: information about the 5 most numerous citizenships

Dissagregation by sex, age, migration status, educational level, geographic location, etc.
“Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have **the right to express views freely** in all matters affecting them and that the views of the child must be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. Efforts should therefore be made to **include children in data collection activities** and to ensure that their voices are reflected in statistics” (Unece, 2021, p.81)
The voice of children

- Information about different dimensions of young people’s everyday life: school life, social relationships, use of social networks, leisure time, sport, future projects, etc…
- Vulnerabilities such as bullying, cyberbullying and educational poverty.
- Efforts to use a simply and clear language
Innovations

For the first time, a QR code for direct and personalized access to the questionnaire was experimented

Two access modes:

A. Using the link https://survey.istat.it/ragazzi, and entering the access code

B. Scanning the QR code, without the need to enter the code access
Ethical issues

- Questionnaire - completion time: **23 minutes**
- Longer for respondents that used a PC
- Informed consent of the parents
- Special attention to layout and readability of informative letters
Ethical issues

- Proxy respondents not allowed (only in cases of disabilities).
- Privacy and confidentiality: high protection
- Long process with the Italian Data Protection Authority
“Specialized methods may be required to target and include the most vulnerable groups of children including very young children. In general, data should capture the children most at risk of social exclusion.…”

Statistics on children. Spotlight on children exposed to violence, in alternative care, and with disabilities
UNECE, 2022, p.19
Innovations: the target of foreigners

- Informative letter available in 11 languages: Albanian, Arabic, Chinese, French, English, Italian, Romanian, Russian, Slovenian, Spanish and German.

- Questionnaire translated into 9 other languages.
Innovations: the target of foreigners

Children and youths: behaviours, attitudes, and future plans - Yea

User code: STUD0001001
Questionnaires filled out by foreigners in languages other than Italian (absolute numbers)
Access by PC or smartphone/tablet (percentages)
3. Statistics on children: following the guidelines

“Increase and **promote the visibility of data** on children and youth through: (....) The development of user-friendly approaches to disseminating data on and to children and youth, including the use of interactive platforms, infographics, videos, and social media. Children and youth should be consulted on the design of dissemination products aimed at them”

*Statistics on children*

*Spotlight on children exposed to violence, in alternative care, and with disabilities,*

*UNECE, 2022, p.19*
Innovations: a special communication campaign

✓ Using social networks to raise awareness and encourage participation in the survey
✓ Stressing out the importance of hearing their voice!
“Further work in required to **promote a structured collaboration** between international organizations producing statistics on children and youth to harmonize methods, increase efficiencies, identify data gaps to be addressed at national and international levels, and recognize collaborative opportunities.”

**Statistics on children**

**Spotlight on children exposed to violence, in alternative care, and with disabilities,**

UNECE, 2022, p.19
Cooperation

- The survey has been supported by other institutions: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Department for youth policy (on their websites and using their mailing lists)

- The same strategies for data dissemination
Thank you!