SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

The Choice That Matters: Why children should have the right to vote

Report launch date	9 November 2026, 1.00 pm GMT
Platforms / handles	LinkedIn: @child-rights-international-network-crin Instagram: @crin_org
Hashtags	#RightToVote #ChildRights #Democracy
Links	Report [embargoed until launch] Social media assets

About our report

The arguments used to keep children from voting are nothing new. Claims that some people lack the judgement or maturity to vote were once used to exclude women, the poor, racial and ethnic minorities and colonised people. Today they are used against children.

Under-18s represent almost a third of the world's population, yet only a few countries allow 16-year-olds to vote in national elections, and no country allows anyone younger than 16 to vote. In effect, children are being treated as second-class citizens.

Our latest report brings together a decade of CRIN's research and advocacy on children's suffrage. It sets out why children's right to vote matters now, and how international human rights law can be interpreted to support it. It looks at current legal challenges to voting age limits (and the growing momentum for change), then takes apart the myths used to deny children the vote and explains why lowering the voting age is not enough. Finally, it explores what abolishing the voting age could look like in practice – evaluating models such as voting from birth, while acknowledging the barriers, safeguards and costs of reforming voting systems, as well as the other ways we can strengthen democracy.

Ultimately, CRIN is making the case for removing age limits on voting entirely. We want to encourage a new debate about an issue that's been largely ignored, including by human rights and children's rights organisations.

While the idea of children voting is often met with ridicule or dismissal, it is far less radical than you might think. The voting age has historically been lowered by a couple of years every half century or so. So why wait? Claiming to care about children's views means little unless those views can become decisions with real political value.

As many around the world call for innovation in how we do democracy, will children's right to vote still remain overlooked? After all, if every child could vote, wouldn't this benefit both children *and* democracy?

Key report findings:

- **Voting is a fundamental human right.** No international treaty explicitly grants children the vote, but the major human rights instruments (the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child) guarantee equality, non-discrimination and participation for 'everyone', with no pre-determined age limit.
- **Linking the vote to adulthood is relatively recent.** It only emerged in the early 20th century, when women won the right to vote. The idea that voting requires adult skills is fallible, and easy to disprove.
- **Exclusion has lasting consequences.** Decisions made today on issues like the environmental crisis and public debt will shape children's futures in ways later policy cannot undo.
- **Children *want* to be heard.** Children are voicing their concerns about social and environmental issues such as the climate crisis, inequality and discrimination, education, social media and mental health. Much of this activism is a response to being disenfranchised.
- **Democracy needs its youngest citizens.** During a time when democratic systems are being challenged around the world, giving under-18s the vote could help renew it, alongside other approaches such as participatory and deliberative democracy.

Social media assets and captions

You are welcome to use our illustrations (formatted for LinkedIn, Instagram, X) to accompany the following texts, or your own response / message.

Option 1:

📣We believe that children should have the right to vote.

Children make up almost a third of the world's population, yet most have no say in who makes the rules that govern their lives. And while some countries let 16-year-olds vote, no country allows anyone younger.

@Child Rights International Network's new report, 'The Choice That Matters: Why children should have the right to vote', makes the case for removing age limits on voting entirely, and tackles the myths used to justify children's disenfranchisement.

Do YOU think all children should be able to vote? Why or why not?

Join the conversation at
https://home.crin.org/readlistenwatch/stories/why-children-should-have-the-right-to-vote

#RightToVote #ChildRights #Democracy

Option 2:

While the idea of children voting is often met with ridicule or dismissal, it is far less radical than you might think.

@Child Rights International Network's new report, 'The Choice That Matters', makes the case for removing age limits on voting entirely, and tackles the myths used to justify children's disenfranchisement.

🗳️We're joining their conversation about children's voting rights – and invite you to do the same by reading their report at https://home.crin.org/readlistenwatch/stories/why-children-should-have-the-right-to-vote

Do you think children should have the right to vote? Should there be a minimum voting age at all? Why or why not?

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Option 3:

As democratic systems are being challenged around the world, democracy needs its youngest citizens more than ever.

🗳️This is why we believe that children should have the right to vote.

Learn more about why by reading @Child Rights International Network's latest report, 'The Choice That Matters: Why children should have the right to vote' at https://home.crin.org/readlistenwatch/stories/why-children-should-have-the-right-to-vote

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Option 4:

Children should have the right to vote. We don't think this idea is radical.

➡️Learn why by reading @Child Rights International Network's new report, 'The Choice That Matters' at https://home.crin.org/readlistenwatch/stories/why-children-should-have-the-right-to-vote

#RightToVote #ChildRights #Democracy

Many thanks from all of us in the CRIN team for helping us to spread the word! If you have any questions about the report, please get in touch at info@crin.org.