

**THE PARTICIPATION RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN THE EU:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON THE INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-
MAKING OF CHILDREN AT HOME, SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY**



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Preface

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INTRODUCTION

Children, if you dare to think
Of the greatness, rareness, muchness,
Fewness of this precious only
Endless world in which you say
You live. - *Robert Graves (1895–1985)*

As Robert Graves (1983) attempts to make clear in the quote above, children are precious miracles, each unique. Graves is provoking children to stand up for their own right, persuading them to take action. This quote by Graves raises questions: can children stand up for their own right? Do they have competences and to what extent can children express their views and participate in civil society? The answer in general to all of these questions would be a confident “yes” as children can express their views and stand in their own right since the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has been drawn up in 1989. Since its entry into force in 1990, nearly twenty years ago, the discussion on the rights of children in general and the participation rights of children in particular are still omnipresent.

But is this “yes” as confident as it appears to be? I argue it cannot be that simplistically stated. The weakness of the CRC is that the child is seen as a universal child, detached from specific backgrounds and cultures. However, as can be justified by Powell & Smith (2009), “there is a diversity of childhoods not a universal child” (pp. 125). In line with this, I believe that children from the EU, with an overall substantial better educational background than in other parts of the world, can participate in society and be involved in decision-making because they have some intellectual baggage that can be valued very much in understanding children’s participation rights. Hence, attention needs to be drawn not to how parents, governments and practitioners apprehend children’s participation rights yet how children themselves perceive their participation rights. Children should not merely be the object of research however they should also participate themselves in research. It must be agreed upon that if information is collected on the extent to which children can participate, most valuable information can be retrieved when the child itself is being heard. Therefore, I have examined by means of a survey how children themselves perceive their rights to participation at home, school and

the community. The aim of the research is then to analyze if the documents drawn up for children on both the international and European level are of significance in view of the outcomes of my research. I argue that children think it is extremely relevant for them to have a say in matters that affect them. As a consequence, the research question is: “Do children want to participate in decision-making at home, school and the community? What in this respect is the difference between Dutch children and children of other EU Member States?”¹ To add luster, it will be scrutinized if children know what rights are as such and if they know the limits of their competences.

In order to answer the research question and subsequent sub questions, the first chapter will address the conceptual considerations of the caretaker and child liberationist discussion as well as the extent to which children have competences and what participation rights for children are. Against this conceptual backlight, a basis will be provided in comprehending that participation rights are by no means black and white yet children do have the capability and the willingness to participate as will become clear in the comparative case study which I have conducted. The second chapter will analyze how children’s rights are secured on both the international and European level. In this respect, the CRC will be examined closely as well as efforts made by the European Commission and the Council of Europe respectively. Additionally, in the third chapter I will enthusiastically present my comparative case study, which will outline the extent to which children can participate at home, school and the community. The chapters contribute in answering the research question in such a way that it is understood well that children’s participation rights and competences are not easy to grasp yet of tremendous significance, being one of the core principles at both the international and European level. Yet as the comparative case study will show, it is most vital to understand that with regard to efforts made already at the international and European level, children want to participate themselves in matters affecting them.

¹ The primary schools in which I have conducted my questionnaires are the St. Aloysius Primary School in Maastricht and the Joppenhof International Department in Heer, Maastricht.

1. CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS ON CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION RIGHTS

1.1. Main theoretical discussion

As has been mentioned in the introduction, children's rights are not as simple as they might appear to be. Different opinions exist which can lead to different outcomes in terms of creating conventions, documents and treaties that are in the best interest of the child. In line with this paper several disputes will be taken into consideration. The discussion between the child liberationists and the child caretakers will be passed in review while subsequently examining the extent to which children are argued to have competences. Finally, in order to comprehend the second chapter, attention will be paid to how participation rights for children can be defined as well as what their role is in modern society.

1.1.1. Child liberationists vs. child caretakers

Firstly, the emphasis will be on child liberationists. Finding a starting point in the 1970s when it was argued that children were "one of the major oppressed groups in Western societies", children should be given rights of self-determination and freedom. They viewed the family and school neither as a safe harbor for children to play in nor as a niche to express their views. Rather, these places were viewed as a catalyst for children's oppression. The world as it is today is a world in which "segregation is accompanied and reinforced by a false ideology of 'childishness'" (Archard, 1993, p. 46). Children should be bestowed with rights that do not so much set them apart from adults which ultimately leads to the realization of Holt and Farson, who are vivid proponents of the child liberationist view, that children are in no sense incompetent (p. 48). According to them it cannot be justified that for the sake of being a child, a child needs specific rights. This consequently implies that children are regarded to be human beings that are vulnerable and in need of help, which in reality is an "ideological construct which helps to support the denial of their proper rights" (p. 49). Children should have rights just like adults because they are argued to be sufficiently competent to vote as they can make "informed choices" (p. 50). In addition, the same applies to work: children are capable of working as

this offers a way in which adults can teach them something that is vital for their further future development. In short, it is obvious that the child liberationist's aim is to release the child from the prison it lives in. The child has a very important role in decision-making processes regardless of age since "the rights, privileges, duties, responsibilities of adult citizens [should] be made available to any young person...who wants to make use of them" (Holt, 1975, p. 15).

Secondly, in contrast to the child liberationist point of view there are advocates of the caretaker thesis. The caretakers' view is that children are not capable of self-determination and therefore they need to be nurtured. Other people, such as children's parents, guardians or people with an administrative or legal function should decide on behalf of the child which leads to the fact that children cannot make autonomous decisions. Since self-determination is a significant value not to be underestimated, it is stressed to be "too important to be left to children" (Archard, 1993, p. 52). The idea that children cannot make decisions on their own and that they consequently need to be guided by parents or other forms of authority is not a new idea. In fact, John Locke argued in 1821 in his book *Two Treatises on Government* that people "are all born infants, weak and helpless, without knowledge or understanding" and that "all parents [are] under an obligation to preserve, nourish and educate the children" (p. 233). The caretaker view is also paternalistic in nature since full autonomy cannot be granted to children and they need to be protected. Indeed, guidance by parents is needed in order for the child to develop itself to the best possible extent as by overriding the child's current wishes and demands, their "future independence" can be guaranteed (Franklin, 1995, p. 13). As is noted in Roche (1999), from a caretaker point of view then, "children are not seen as fully rational beings and as lacking in wisdom. In a critical sense they cannot know their best interests [due to their] 'not-yet-fully-formedness'" (476-477).

Interestingly, if having this information in mind when referring to the survey, children might on the one hand agree with the liberationist point of view, i.e. proclaiming it can deal with all aspects of life on its own. On the other hand, they might feel more comfortable with a caretaker approach, thus acknowledging the need for parents in order for them to grow up to become wise and mature human beings. Hence, although debates are important for comprehending the dichotomies that exist within the field of children's

rights, it will become clear in the third section that children are very capable to assess on their own their limits of their rights, to determine to what extent they can be involved in decision-making and if they need any guidance from adults either by their parents at home, teachers at school and in terms of being a citizen of the community.

1.1.2. The question of competence – are children competent?

Drawing on the previous section, the main issue here is about children having competences. Competences can differ from child to child depending on social as well as cultural factors yet also on age. The latter raises considerable dust due to the problem that there is “no chronological age when all children achieve the same level of competence” (Burr, Montgomery, 2003, p. 149). Competences are thus highly dependent on the capabilities on behalf of the child in terms of emotion, intellect and physical abilities. The issue of competence is even taken to a further level by Archard who links arbitrariness to incompetence. He stresses that it is unjust to associate incompetence with some specific age (arbitrariness argument) and that rights bestowed upon a person depends on competence or incompetence rather than age (“preferability of a competence test”) (1993, p. 59). However, since the competence test is an idea carefully taken into consideration by Archard, he argues that since the competence test has many disadvantages, “[age] remains, in principle, an acceptable basis on which to distribute rights” (p. 64). Archard’s argumentation is in accordance with what is laid down in Article 12(1) CRC: “the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”, which will be discussed extensively in the subsequent chapter. First a close look will be taken at what participation rights entail.

1.1.3. Definition participation rights

Since its introduction with the CRC, not one definition has been agreed upon as to what participation rights for children are. Lansdown (2001, p. 1.) argues that it constitutes that we, adults, should be active listeners to what children have to say and to take their opinion into account with all due respect because we need “to recognize the value of their own experience, views and concerns”. It also implies that children are “to be heard, to have their views given serious consideration, and to play an active role in promoting their

own best interests” (World Youth Report, 2003, p. 272). In addition, children are not merely “objects of concern” and thus do not have a passive role but a very active role in society (Smith, 2007, pp. 148). Indeed, children are as much human being as adults, which consequently implies that they should have the same amount of dignity, value and respect awarded to them as to adults. Subsequently, participation rights are a way of actively seeking expression to the child’s views since adults can and will have to learn from children to lend an ear to the purposes of why the CRC has been drawn up as a widely ratified document, namely to concede children, and to protect and preserve their rights. Within this inclination, the following quote by UNICEF is of particular importance:

Participation is an underlying value that needs to guide the way in which each individual’s right is ensured and respected; a criterion to assess progress in the implementation process of children’s rights; and an additional dimension to the universally recognized freedom of expression...” (UNICEF, 2008, p. 1).

Ultimately, children can express their views although it is not an obligation on the child to participate. It may do so voluntarily however if the child wishes to be silent the child stands in its own right.

Children’s participation rights have been hotly debated, especially providing that participation rights are “an end in itself [or] a means to an end” (Lansdown, 2001). This paper believes that these specific rights are a means to an end since giving children the opportunity to have their views expressed in matters concerning them as young people yet also for the world as a whole, is of immense significance. If children’s decisions are taken into account and more importantly are being valued, positive contributions can be made at school, in local communities and governing institutions the like. Exclusion of children should be banned totally since inclusion leads to solutions, active decision-making and the awareness that children can improve policies in many areas. As can be justified by Smith (2007), “participation rights support a sense of belonging and inclusion but more importantly teach children how they can bring about change” (pp. 149). Notwithstanding this approach to appear quite idealistic at first sight, this is the expected approach to come to the foreground in the pragmatic comparative study which I have conducted.

Having discussed the different outlooks that exist in view of children's rights and in defining children's participation rights, safeguarding the rights of the child is of extreme relevance because "children are citizens...and share the same fundamental rights to participate as others" (Sinclair, 2004, pp. 108). To add luster to the previous conceptual consideration, the second chapter will scrutinize the usefulness of the CRC as well as actions taken on EU level with regard to children's rights. Against this background a foundation is constructed which enhances one's understanding of the particular salience of implementing children's rights in the international and European society, by which the comparative study provides a realistic outlook that emphasizes that children need to be involved in decision-making due to their willingness to participate as well as the conscious awareness that they have in determining what their competences are.

2. CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION RIGHTS AT THE INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL

2.1. The Convention on the Rights of the Child: a useful tool at both the international and European level?

The entry into force of the CRC in 1990 was a profound milestone because it was the first legally binding document upon States Parties. The aim of the Convention was "to establish an internationally agreed minimum set of rights for children and [to] secure individual governments' compliance with them" (Franklin, 1995, p. 4). Hence, it should encompass rights for all children across the world. In this part of the thesis, I will examine if this document addresses carefully the rights of the universal child by means of elaborating on the contents, monitoring and participation rights of the CRC. In addition, since significance is placed especially on participation rights of children in the EU, actions taken by the European Commission and the Council of Europe as well as comparisons of those actions with the CRC will be examined. This should ultimately lead to a comprehension of why children –by means of participation- can benefit society. By means of this theoretical analysis, a basis is provided in order to encourage what the

meaning of participation rights is for children in reality, as is investigated in the comparative study.

2.1.1. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): what is its value?

Simultaneous with an inherent feeling of the 1980s to increase the “interest and concern with children’s moral and political status, as well as their social and welfare needs”, the CRC was adopted in 1989 and came into force in 1990 (Franklin, 1995, p. 5-6). Since its entry into force all countries but two – Somalia and the USA – have ratified this document².

When elaborating on the contents of the Convention, the rights of children are defined in 54 Articles. Several topics are passed in review. The topics are general principles; civil rights and freedoms; family environment and alternative care; basic health and welfare; education, leisure and cultural activities; special protection measures (Fottrell, 2000, p. 11). However and more importantly, the CRC is characterized by four main principles which serve as indicators to what States Parties³ should adhere to. They include the principle of non-discrimination (Article 2), the principle of the best interest of the child (Article 3), the right to life, survival and development (Article 6) and the right for a child’s opinion (Article 12), the latter principle to be discussed extensively in the next chapter. Additionally, the CRC does not only focus on rights such as political, civil, economic and social rights for children; the CRC also pays attention to three ‘P-s’ that gives the rights stipulated in the CRC an extra and clear body. These are the provision, protection and participation rights, of which the rights for a child’s opinion (Article 12) fall under the latter category.

The four principles guide States Parties in adhering to the articles laid down by the CRC. Serious misconduct or maltreatment in violating one or all of these core principles would cause serious errors in terms of ensuring the well-being of children in the respective countries. As a consequence, the CRC is monitored by the Committee on

²The rationale behind Somalia and the USA for not having ratified the CRC is that Somalia does not have a standing government and the USA has chosen to merely sign the Treaty and not to ratify it (Signs of Our Times, 2008).

³ States Parties is the official name used in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to refer to nation-states that have ratified the CRC and are therefore obliged to submit their reports to the Committee for review.

the Rights of the Child. In recent years notwithstanding, the Committee and the States Parties have been criticized in dealing with monitoring the correct implementation of the CRC. States Parties repudiate handing in their reports in time which consequently leads to a postponement on the Committee's behalf to examine and value the reports submitted by the States Parties. Thus, a huge work backlog makes it rather difficult to qualify if States Parties abide by the rules of the CRC. The prolonged implementation process can be justified by Fottrell who argues that the CRC has "a relatively weak implementation system" which leads to States Parties not fulfilling their legal obligation although they should "feel a certain pressure to submit reports on time and carry out the reviews of domestic laws and practices that such reports entail" (Fottrell, 2000, p.6-12). This pressing problem of submission neglect has consequently and obviously a negative impact. Without being able to analyze if States Parties adhere to the rules, a possible risk exists that it is discovered rather late if children are being protected, being heard and can participate in civil society.

Hence, despite the fact that the CRC has been created in order to explicitly assign rights to children, its proper functioning can only be safeguarded if States Parties reports are being handed in, evaluated in time and taken care of properly. Turning back to one of the core principles, which is the right to participation as the central point of focus to this paper, it deserves careful attention. In addition to the discussion of children's participation rights in the first chapter, participation as taken up in the CRC should be scrutinized closely. Understanding this significant concept is vital for understanding this topic as well as in comprehending the pragmatic side of the paper because, as will become clear in the comparative study, participation is a right that children value, not only in making one's voice heard in the domestic area, yet also at school and the community as a whole. While knowing their competences and more importantly what the limits of their competences are, children are capable human beings. As is illustrated by Badham (2002) which is very much in line with what I want to clarify: "Participation is the keystone of the arch that is the UNCRC. Without the active participation of children...in the promotion of their rights to a good childhood, none will be achieved effectively"(Badham as quoted in Willow, p. vi). In the next subchapter the participation rights as addressed in the CRC will be elaborated on extensively.

2.1.2. Participation Rights for Children as enshrined in the CRC

Participation rights of the CRC encompass a wide range of different interpretations and definitions, being one of the main central points of attention within this Convention. As is addressed in Article 12 CRC,

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

This Article, in fact, is the embodiment of a child's right to participation and "makes it clear that participation is a substantive right of all children" (World Youth Report, 2003, p. 271). In administrative and judicial hearings a child should have the possibility to voice its own opinion. This principle of participation is not only promoted in the public sphere such as in court rooms yet also in the domestic sphere such as at school and in everyday family life. Participation of children is an inextricably important principle yet also capable of boundary crossing since it presumably gives children quite some competences.

Also, this Article is linked to Article 3 which emphasizes the best interest of the child. As being part of a larger pact of provisions namely the participatory rights under Articles 12 until 17, this Article is often seen as "extreme and radical in its application to children" as discontents was fostered by these Articles due to a fear that these rights of the child would be promoted "at the expense of parents and the family" (Fottrell, 2000, p. 5). A question that can be raised as a consequence here, which has been explained in the first chapter, is to what extent children have competences. As is noted correctly by Sorens (2001), the difficulty rests in the dichotomy between "attributing rights and obligations to beings that cannot understand them" or if we should treat children as "hypothetical adults" (pp. 2). Also, is age a good indicator in this respect? Article 12 in itself is relatively general in nature yet it does address issues that are disputable. Its reference in

paragraph one to giving children's views "due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child" can be contested. Nevertheless, it is of relevance to this paper: although age is reckoned to be a good indicator, children between the age of 8 and 12 are very capable of making decision as the comparative study has investigated by means of taking into consideration what their competences are in certain areas of life that are of particular relevance to children, namely home, school and the community.

Yet before going into depth in the interesting research I have conducted, it is necessary – in order to understand why I examine that children want to and can participate – to pay attention to actions that have been undertaken at the European level.

2.2. Children's Rights in the EU: what does it have children to offer?

Hitherto it has been reasserted on the one hand that the CRC is a document of major significance not only for children yet also for the community as a whole. On the other hand, light has been thrown on the participation rights of children by means of showing that participation gives expression to the acknowledgment that children are capable of voicing an opinion. To what extent they can do so, is still being questioned. After all, different arguments concerning the competences of children exist. One thing in general does seem to be clear which is that children have rights, which also means the right to participation. The CRC has been implemented into national law of all the Member States of the EU. This document drawn by the United Nations is fundamental for children since it gives them a special protected place in society. As an international organization, United Nations is *de facto* contributing towards what is in the best interest of the child. As an international institution, this paper believes that it is of tremendous importance that the EU – as a conglomeration of powers – does everything in its capacity to look after rights for children in Europe. Although their rights derive from the intergovernmental and worldwide organization United Nations, it is interesting to examine if rights for children have been secured in the institutions of the EU and to what degree. In this respect, a closer look will be taken at the rights for European children, which provides useful information to the research, the latter which consists of a comparative study of the participation rights of children in the EU.

2.2.1. General efforts on EU level

First it must be acknowledged that the EU can in no sense be regarded to be an equivalent of the UN albeit more on a regional scale instead of operating on a worldwide scale. One of the major challenges of the EU is enlargement. As a result of enlargement, especially with regard to children's rights, "many children in the new Member States...experience high levels of poverty, discrimination and exploitation" (Ruxton, 2005, p. 8). Hence, every Member State has a specific approach depending on social status, demographic changes and economic outlooks that need to be adopted and adapted in accordance with what the EU values to be most important in terms of what is in the best interest of the child. Nevertheless, this paper believes that problems can be combated when careful attention and consideration is giving to pressing situations while tackling problems in such a manner that it fulfills the needs of most Member States to the best extent possible.

The creation of specific programs for children's rights within the EU institutions is characterized by a slow and long process. The first achievements derive from 1996, when the European Social Charter was implemented. The rights of children are written down in terms of protection only (Article 7 and 17). More important efforts concerning children's participation were made in 2000, when the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights was adopted. In Article 24 it is stipulated that:

1. Children shall have the right to such protection and care as is necessary for their well-being. They may express their views freely. Such views shall be taken into consideration on matters which concern them in accordance with their age and maturity.
2. In all actions relating to children, whether taken by public authorities or private institutions, the child's best interests must be a primary consideration.
3. Every child shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis a personal relationship and direct contact with both his or her parents, unless that is contrary to his or her interests.

As becomes clear from Article 24(1), this coincides very much with the contents of Article 12(1) of the CRC. In other words, in the EU, children have the opportunity to express their views freely. One detail however should not be overlooked: unfortunately, this Charter has been created on a non-binding basis. Efforts have been made to

transform this Charter into a legally binding document in the suggested EU Constitution nevertheless the establishment thereof has become an utopia due to the reluctance on behalf of the French and Dutch population to accept the EU Constitution in a referendum. New success is expected to occur when the Lisbon Treaty will be accepted. This will be dealt with in the subsequent sub chapter. Apart from these charters, it is also helpful to take a look at two institutions of the EU, namely the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Both have undertaken action in order to ensure the protection of children's rights in the EU.

2.2.2. The European Commission: "Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child"

Children's rights are still far from being generally respected, and their basic needs are sometimes not being met. The European Union can and should bring essential and fundamental added value in the field of children's rights – Vice-President Frattini of the European Commission (2006)

The quote above draws attention to the particular salience of children's rights. These were the very words of Vice- President Frattini of the European Commission after it had adopted its Communication "Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child" in 2006. This Communication aimed at creating a comprehensive approach in term of both internal and external policies which cover many pressing issues, such as child trafficking, violence against children, discrimination and social exclusion (European Commission, 2006). In order to achieve these goals, the Commission places emphasis on effective coordination and consultation mechanisms as well as “enhancing capacity and expertise on children's rights” (European Commission, 2006). The Communication has been established in an attempt by the Commission to create awareness of children's rights to such an extent that this Communication will eventually lead to the first legal base in children's rights preferably in the Lisbon Treaty. One of the two major contributions of the Communication was the creation of the telephone number 116000 which is especially reserved for urgent calls concerning missing children (European Commission, 2007). Also, with the creation of the Communication, the “European Forum on the Rights of the Child” was set up, which provides a platform for NGOs and Member States representatives amongst others to give advice, exchange information and aims at

establishing a place where children's opinions can be heard (European Commission, 2008). The last forum was held in December 2008.

Notwithstanding the significance of this Communication, two critical notes must be touched upon, particularly in light of children's participation rights, which is essential to this paper. Firstly, the latest development with regard to the contents as well as the enhancement of the Communication derive from February 2007, which consequently means that during a period of more than two years, actions on behalf of the Commission have diminished, not to say ceased. The latest Forum took place in December 2008. Although it is a good initiative, its added value can be questioned. Understandably, the forum is important in such a way that the Commission is supported in creating a view on children which is investigated carefully by institutions that have adequate knowledge about children as well as their opinion. However, why do not children themselves participate in such a forum? Would it not be an exquisite opportunity to give children the opportunity to speak alongside institutions that speak for them? In this respect, it can be argued that by means of children's involvement, the best results can be achieved since a win-win situation is being created when both parties –institutions and children – can express their views.

When making up the balance and despite the uttered critique, the development of the Communication by the Commission is highly positive. It gives children a place in the EU as well as that it offers children protection against horrible situations such as abuse, sexual harassment and violence. The role of child's participation however is strongly advised to be enhanced. Regardless the Commission which has taken steps in the area of children's rights, it is not the only EU institution that has proved to pay attention to this vulnerable group. In the next section the efforts on behalf of the Council of Europe will be scrutinized.

2.2.3. The Council of Europe: Strategy for “Building a Europe for and with children”

Simultaneous with actions taken by the European Commission, the Council of Europe also designed its own program for children in 2006. This was called the “Building a Europe for and with children” program, which had a two-fold approach. On the one hand,

emphasis had been put on promoting the rights of children in general and on the other hand the protection of children from violence was a key pillar (Council of Europe, 2006). The program has been very effective. The initial plans were to run the program from 2006 until 2008 yet due to positive responses and adequate action taken by both the Council of Europe as well as by the EU, NGOs and organizations that promote children's rights, a new strategy had been adopted in November 2008 for the period from 2009 until 2011.

Unlike efforts made by the European Commission, the Council of Europe (2009) is very effective in promoting the rights of children on a progressive and continuous base. According to the Council of Europe (2009), “[we have] gained in impact, coherence and visibility”. The reason for the program's success can be attributed to the program outline which is underpinned by continuous activities such as effective coordination and mainstreaming as well as monitoring, communication, education and training (Council of Europe, 2009).

When going more into detail in children's participation, the Strategy for 2009-2011 has clearly an eye for participation. At least, the heading of the Strategy makes this clear: “Provision, Protection and Participation for Children in Europe”. As has been enshrined in the CRC, the three Ps are salient when it comes to understanding in what specific areas attention should be paid to children. The Strategy attributes significance to participation through one of its strategic objectives being “democracy”. Within this sphere, children have the opportunity to experience what good governance entails. In addition, the Council of Europe has drawn attention to the promotion of children's access to information on human rights and their rights; creating awareness on the important right for children to participate in decision-making; adapting, improving and drawing up recommendations concerning children's participation and their influence in society.

As a consequence, after careful examination of the activities undertaken by the Council of Europe in terms of children's rights in general and participation in particular, it can be concluded that the Council of Europe pays a lot of attention to all aspects and dimensions of children's rights. The fact that they act upon the needs of children at present however also in the future shows that the Council of Europe is actively and effectively engaged.

2.2.4. The EU and the future on children's rights

Only by means of continuous efforts and engagement of the EU as a whole with additional supervision of NGOs that have at heart what is in the best interest of the child, the future looks bright. The developments on behalf of both the Commission and the Council of Europe are very positive. Naturally, the projects discussed above are not the only efforts however they are the most preponderate. In addition, many recommendations and resolutions have been drafted over the years yet the projects mentioned above are of particular importance in highlighting where participation of children comes most explicitly to the foreground.

Notwithstanding these efforts, the Lisbon Treaty – when signed in a few years time hopefully – will provide a milestone in the area of children's rights. In the draft Treaty an explicit reference will be made to children: The Union “shall contribute to peace, security,..., solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child...” (Lisbon Treaty, 2007, Article 2). If this will be realized, the EU has paved a secure way for safeguarding the rights of the child on EU level, which is a very welcome development.

As has been illustrated despite many very good and progressive efforts both on the international and European level, a child contributing to society complements the importance of participation since governments, institutions and parents alone cannot do this. Children should have more and better opportunities to participate. The help of the children is needed to find out what is best for them. With this in mind, the research that I have conducted will only reaffirm the arguments in favor of child participation. In addition, having clearly explained that children should be engaged actively in decision-making, its relevance in society as a whole will be outlined subsequently. By means of elaborating on the role of children in society, it will become clear why participation is so important, why it should be intrinsically anchored in our day-to-day lives and why I believe that, based on my research, children should not be denied to voice their opinion.

2.3. How do children's participation rights benefit society?

By means of making children heard, proper action can be taken such as making children's interests more visible, enhancing "overall policy leadership, direction and coordination" as well as creating a future society in which opportunities for children's participation are ubiquitously present (Ruxton, 2005, p. 29).

Firstly, participation contributes to making informed decisions and outcomes. By means of listening to children their views can be taken into account since "children have a body of experience and knowledge that is unique to their situation" (Lansdown, 2001, p. 4). Policies drawn up by governments in many cases have a profound impact on children however these policies are still being implemented widely without taken the lives of children on a day-to-day basis into consideration. Therefore, when adequate attention is paid to children's opinions, policies and decision-making can be improved, not merely at an international, more general and superficial level yet also at school, family and community level.

Secondly, if children can participate actively, their allover prosperity and development will *de facto* be enhanced. If a child can express its views, valuable social skills can be developed as well as that children will have confidence and can advance their competences, preparing them step by step for adult life. As is stated by the World Youth Report (2003, p. 275) "the more opportunities a young person has for meaningful participation, the more experienced and competent he or she becomes".

Thirdly, participation "strengthens a commitment to, and understanding of, democracy" (Lansdown, 2001, p. 6). Democratic decision-making is inextricably linked to a profound respect for human rights. If children are aware of what their freedoms are and how their freedom is limited by rights of others, they can respect rights of others as well as develop the capacity and eagerness to listen and "so begin to understand the processes and value of democracy" (p. 6).

Finally, the above mentioned three ways in which children's participation can be beneficial can to a great extent be attributed to a child's willingness to participate, as has been so vividly and frequently been denoted throughout this paper. Children want to participate. As is noted by Dyer (2001), "[children] are doers, their minds are always going, and they want to participate in life rather than watch it go by" (p. 357). This is

expressed very clearly in special assemblies and research set up for and with children. One example is the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in 2002, in which children discussed items relevant to them (Ruxton, 2005, p. 131). As a result, a joint statement had been drawn named “A World Fit for US”, stipulating “key principles and objectives for a global strategy” (p. 131). Subsequently, when children have the opportunity they enjoy participating in discussions and meetings in order to stand up for their own rights and to let the world know on the one hand what their views are on certain issues and on the other hand that they are genuinely capable of expressing their views.

The extent to which children can express their views and give their opinions is widely debated. However it is also widely accepted that children do want to be heard. This is also one of the aims of the conducted comparative study: to give children a voice as they are eager to show their opinions with adults. “Learning by doing” would be a motto that can adequately be employed here.

The next chapter, which discusses the results of my elaborate and contributory research, stresses and confirms that children want to participate in decision-making. In addition, it will show that despite many efforts made at the international and European level with help of NGOs, institutions, governments and parents of which the outcomes are very much in terms of children having competences (liberationist perspective) or not so many competences (caretaker perspective), children are competent to make decisions about matters affecting them according to their capacities and age.

3. RESEARCH ON CHILDREN’S PARTICIPATION RIGHTS

3.1. Analyzing the participation in decision-making of children at home, school and the community: a comparative study

In the previous chapters I have elaborated extensively on the various definitions, aspects and dimension of children’s participation rights at the international and European level. The outlined theories as well as documents that have been drawn are based on ensuring that the best interests of the child are safeguarded to the best of the abilities possible of parents, organizations and governments the like. Ideas in addition have been developed by means of how children’s rights come to the foreground in practice. There is always

more one can do. I therefore believe that the contemporary thoughts, theories, conventions, documents and recommendations that exist in terms of highlighting children's rights of which the most important ones have been outlined in chapter one and two, only have value when the opinion of children themselves are taken carefully into consideration. As a consequence, theories are only contributory and a realistic reflection, if it is based on or at least supplemented by practice. With this thought in mind, I have designed my own research. As must be justified, "the key to sustainable child participation is the creation of structures that empower children within their families and communities" (Tearfind Roots Resources, 2004, pp. 1). The research is essential since it supplements the discussion about participation rights and the extent to which children can participate and have competences in such a way as to provide a realistic outlook of how children themselves perceive their capabilities in decision-making. Therefore, in this chapter the participation of children in decision-making at home, school and the community will be discussed.

3.1.1. Background information

This paper draws on four different sets of data. I have conducted my research on the one hand at the Aloysius Primary School in Maastricht and on the other hand at the Joppenhof Primary School in Heer. The study has been done in classes 6 and 7 at both schools, which gives an idea of how children ranging from 8 to 12 years old perceive what their rights are and to what extent they are involved in decision-making and participation. The Aloysius Primary School is situated in the city centre and is in Maastricht commonly known for achieving school results that are above the average national prestige level. According to the *Onderwijsinspectie*⁴, the Aloysius Primary School scores well (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2009). The *Onderwijsinspectie* investigates the amount of newcomers, school leavers, exam results as well as complaints in the media and financial reports on which it bases the quality of the school (idem). The Joppenhof in contrast has a national as well as an international department. The research

⁴ The *Onderwijsinspectie* is an investigation institution that controls the quality at schools in the Netherlands. When the *Onderwijsinspectie* conducted research in the Aloysius and the Joppenhof Primary School, they did so unnoticed, in order to examine at best if school abide to the general rules of quality, hygiene and safety.

has been conducted at the latter department. According to the *Onderwijsinspectie*, the Joppenhof also scores well. Children with different backgrounds go to school at the Joppenhof however some of the children have only been going to school in the Netherlands since August and still struggle to express themselves clearly in a language that is different from their mother tongue. These children in general have parents who are assigned jobs in the Netherlands either for a longer or shorter period of time. The language of instruction is English however the children are also educated in basic Dutch.

3.1.2. Research design

I have created a research design that fulfills both the needs of what I want to research and what makes it interesting for children to think about. Children want to be heard and their view on their rights can, according to Melton and Limber (1992), “be useful in the design and procedures for implementation of their rights in a manner that is most protective of children’s dignity” (p. 168). The research question therefore is presented as follows:

*Do children want to participate in decision-making at home, school and the community?
What in this respect is the difference between Dutch children and children of other EU
Member States?*

The first question appears to be rather simplistically stated since one can answer either ‘yes’ or ‘no’ however the extent to which this question is scrutinized leads to the accumulation of interesting information. Participation is namely examined in the areas of home, school and the community. This multidimensional approach therefore provides qualitative information which ultimately means that the answers can be useful in practice. The second question on the other hand differentiates between two groups of children based on nationality. In this respect, I sought to give the research some overall depth by not focusing only on participation in general of both Dutch children and children of other EU Member States yet also to examine what the results are when they are analyzed separately. Also, several hypotheses have been created of which the purpose is to pay attention to the differences between children – albeit existent or non-existent – in their

opportunity to participate. Subsequently, I have formed a number of working hypotheses to guide me through the research process. These are as follows:

1. Children in the Netherlands are more likely to elaborate on what rights entail than children in other EU Member States.
2. Children in the Netherlands are more likely to have heard of the CRC than children in other EU member states.
3. In other EU Member States, children can decide on more in terms of what time to go to bed, how to dress and what they want to eat than Dutch children
4. In the Netherlands, parents are more likely to listen to what their children have to say than children in other EU member states.
5. The older children are, the more likely they think they can make an important decision at school.
6. Older children are more likely to be involved in decision-making at school than younger children.
7. Dutch children are more likely than children of other EU Member States to argue they can participate in politics and things that matter to all people.
8. Children think they are more likely to be capable to vote because they are smart than to argue that they have rights.

3.1.3. Sampling method, possible pitfalls and outline of the research

The data have been collected in March and April 2009 and a total of 111 children have participated in the questionnaire, of which 57 class 6 children and 54 class 7 children. The children were informed that they were to participate in a questionnaire that allows conducting an adequate research in analyzing the participation rights of children in the European Union. As has been mentioned in the previous section, not only participation rights in general were examined, yet also differences in nationality. In addition, I have paid attention to differentiating in both gender and age. Below an overview is presented of the nationality, gender and age of the respondents.

What is your nationality?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Dutch children	55	49,5	49,5	49,5
Children of other EU Member States	37	33,3	33,3	82,9
Non-EU children	13	11,7	11,7	94,6
Double EU nationality	2	1,8	1,8	96,4
Half EU/Half TCN nationality	4	3,6	3,6	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What is your gender?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	59	53,2	53,2	53,2
Female	52	46,8	46,8	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What is your age?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 8	1	,9	,9	,9
9	18	16,2	16,2	17,1
10	55	49,5	49,5	66,7
11	32	28,8	28,8	95,5
12	5	4,5	4,5	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

The aim of this paper is if children can and want to participate and also if differences exist in the rights of participation of children in the EU, in the latter case making a comparison between Dutch children and children of other EU Member States. The first question was investigated by means of univariate analysis. Concerning the second question however, it must be noted here that despite the different hypotheses of which I expected interesting results would appear, no significant differences have occurred between the two control groups. In other words, bivariate analysis in terms of nationality does not provide very interesting results. As a consequence, I have also

conducted bivariate analyses by means of using age and on the one hand and gender on the other hand, hence attempting to come up with results which are of significance. However, the results were not significant.

Therefore, I have submitted all data to univariate analyses, which did lead to interesting findings. This paper does suggest that children can provide very useful information in analyzing that firstly children are very capable and competent human beings and that they value participation and decision-making in every aspect of life. Also, it can be concluded that children do not attribute a lot of power to themselves since they believe that their autonomy is limited. Guidance of parents therefore is very much welcomed. However, they do reckon it is extremely important to be included and to be able to express their views.

The participation rights have been divided into separate sections, namely rights in general (Section 1), domestic rights (Section 2), rights at school (Section 3) and community rights (Section 4). In each section the significant answers resulting from univariate analysis are elaborated on extensively yet also the hypotheses are scrutinized by either falsifying or validating them. The questions incorporated in the questionnaire are for the greater part open-ended in order to provide an incentive for children to think for themselves. Instead of asking “Do you know what rights are?”, the question was “What are rights?”.

3.2. The results

Section 1: What are rights?

What are rights?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid something a person must have and the right to food and education	21	18,9	18,9	18,9
something a person must have, can't have or can have	59	53,2	53,2	72,1
right to food, education, freedom and no war	18	16,2	16,2	88,3
something you can decide for yourself	3	2,7	2,7	91,0
rules people need to obey to	9	8,1	8,1	99,1
no answer	1	,9	,9	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What do you think that are your rights? What do you think you can do?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid eat, play, education	52	46,8	46,8	46,8
eat, play, education, medicines, safety, warm house, clean water	12	10,8	10,8	57,7
more holiday	1	,9	,9	58,6
less homework	5	4,5	4,5	63,1
no answer	17	15,3	15,3	78,4
I can do a lot of stuff	17	15,3	15,3	93,7
watch TV and receive pocket money	7	6,3	6,3	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What do you think are your rights? What do you think you can't do?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid no fighting, no bullying	13	11,7	11,7	11,7
no right to drive a car	6	5,4	5,4	17,1
no smoking	1	,9	,9	18,0
doing as you please at school and/or home	7	6,3	6,3	24,3
no answer	77	69,4	69,4	93,7
I cannot arrive somewhere late	1	,9	,9	94,6
I cannot go alone somewhere	5	4,5	4,5	99,1
I cannot lie	1	,9	,9	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

Are you aware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	19	17,1	17,1	17,1
No	90	81,1	81,1	98,2
Don't know	2	1,8	1,8	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What is your nationality? * What are rights?

		What are rights?						Total
		something a person must have and the right to food and education	something a person must have, can't have or can have	right to food, education, freedom and no war	something you can decide for yourself	rules people need to obey to	no answer	
What is your	Dutch children	13	23	10	2	6	1	55

nationality?							
Children of other EU Member States	6	24	4	1	2	0	37
Non-EU children	2	7	4	0	0	0	13
Double EU nationality	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Half EU/Half TCN nationality	0	3	0	0	1	0	4
Total	21	59	18	3	9	1	111

What is your nationality? * Are you aware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child?

		Are you aware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child?			Total
		Yes	No	Don't know	
What is your nationality?	Dutch children	7	47	1	55
	Children of other EU Member States	6	30	1	37
	Non-EU children	4	9	0	13
	Double EU nationality	1	1	0	2
	Half EU/Half TCN nationality	1	3	0	4
Total		19	90	2	111

Data from section 1 are drawn from investigation into if children know what rights are and what these rights entail. The concepts of rights was at first not explained to them however occasionally the teacher in class or myself helped them with some simple examples, such as “do you think you can go outside and play with your friends?”, to pave the way for the children. Overall, 53% of the children argue that their rights are “something a person must have, can’t have or can have” while 16.2% believes it entails “the right to food, education, freedom and no war”, against 18.9% that is more elaborate on what rights are by stating that it entails both “something a person must have, can’t have or can have” and “the right to food, education, freedom and no war”. Of the latter group, 24% of Dutch children gave an elaborate answer which is more than the 16% of children of other EU Member States. Hence, it can be said that the first hypothesis “Children in the Netherlands are more likely to elaborate on what rights entail than children in other EU Member States” can be validated however it is not very significant.

Children argued that the question concerning what rights are was difficult, since rights are hard to define. However, they are capable of at least differentiating between what is allowed and what is not allowed. In addition to rights meaning a right to food, education and freedom, some children (10.8%) discussed the importance of “safety, a warm house and clean water” while others expressed their view that “I can do a lot of stuff” is important and that a right to “less homework” should also be a right not be underestimated. When was being asked what they cannot do, children were reluctant in answering this question. Some however pointed out that “fighting and bullying” (11.7%) is not allowed while others emphasized children cannot “drive a car” (5.4%), “doing as they please at school or home” (6.3%) or “go alone somewhere” (4.5%). Clearly, children do recognize the limits of their rights and competences and can hence give their opinion accordingly.

After having elaborated extensively on the particular salience of the CRC and the therein enshrined participation rights, I believed it to be necessarily interesting to examine if children themselves are aware of this Convention. Regrettably, an astonishing 81.1% of the respondents do not know the Convention against 17.1% that has heard of it. Here no difference has occurred between Dutch children and children of other EU Member States. Hence, the second hypothesis which states that “children in the Netherlands are more likely to have heard of the CRC than children in other EU member states” is falsified. Children were nevertheless eager to know what kind of document the Convention is and after I had given them a brief explanation, they understood that it has been designed specifically for them while simultaneously grasping the idea why I wanted to examine if they can define what rights are.

As a consequence, three points of criticism have come to the foreground in this section. Firstly, children recognize their limits, they know what competences they have and in addition they can indicate what their rights entail. However, as shows from the results, children cannot be lumped together on either the liberationist or caretaker side. They are both competent and non-competent, which is very interestingly recognized as such by the children themselves. Secondly, the results indicate that in addition to the claim I have made that the CRC has a weakness in terms of addressing the universal child, it is shocking that children do not know the Convention. As a result, this is a clear

indication that the CRC has not been brought under the attention to the target group of the Convention: children! Clearly, the CRC has been drawn by adults that have not so much taken into consideration the opinion of the child, otherwise I believe that it would have been ubiquitously known. It is there for children, and should have been created *with* children. I argue this to be a worrying factor. Thirdly, although competences of children increase as they mature, which is understandable as children receive more information and education as they become older, it can be said from the results that children between the age of 8 and 12 years, regardless of their nationality or gender, have the same general perception of what rights are. Hence, from this first section it follows that the opinion of children should not be taken too lightly. In fact, they should be taken very seriously in order to improve the promotion of the awareness of the CRC among children as well as to understand that children are very rational and capable human beings that do have an opinion that needs to be valued.

How their rights come to the foreground in specific areas where they belong to, at first a closer look will be taken at the place of convenience and security where children's participation rights are being evolved: home

Section 2: To what extent can children make decisions at home?

What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning food?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I can decide what to eat only during weekends	2	1,8	1,8	1,8
	I cannot decide what to eat	16	14,4	14,4	16,2
	I can always decide what to eat	28	25,2	25,2	41,4
	I can decide for breakfast and lunch but not for dinner	9	8,1	8,1	49,5
	No answer	37	33,3	33,3	82,9
	Sometimes I can decide	19	17,1	17,1	100,0
	Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning bed time?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I can decide only during weekends	13	11,7	11,7	11,7
	I cannot decide	35	31,5	31,5	43,2
	No answer	46	41,4	41,4	84,7
	I can decide myself	15	13,5	13,5	98,2
	I decide with my parents	2	1,8	1,8	100,0
	Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning the clothes you wear?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I can decide what to wear	78	70,3	70,3	70,3
	I cannot decide	9	8,1	8,1	78,4
	No answer	16	14,4	14,4	92,8
	Sometimes	8	7,2	7,2	100,0
	Total	111	100,0	100,0	

Can you decide enough at home?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I want to decide less	2	1,8	1,8	1,8
	I decide on enough	72	64,9	64,9	66,7
	I want to decide more	31	27,9	27,9	94,6
	No answer	6	5,4	5,4	100,0
	Total	111	100,0	100,0	

Are you involved in decisions/do your parents listen to what you have to say?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	48	43,2	43,2	43,2
	No	6	5,4	5,4	48,6
	Sometimes yes sometimes no	52	46,8	46,8	95,5
	No answer	5	4,5	4,5	100,0
	Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What is your nationality? * What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning food?

		What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning food?						Total
		I can decide what to eat only during weekends	I cannot decide what to eat	I can always decide what to eat	I can decide for breakfast and lunch but not for dinner	No answer	Sometimes I can decide	
What is your nationality?	Dutch children	1	8	11	4	21	10	55
	Children of other EU Member States	0	7	12	4	7	7	37
	Non-EU children	0	0	4	1	6	2	13
	Double EU nationality	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
	Half EU/Half TCN nationality	0	1	1	0	2	0	4
Total		2	16	28	9	37	19	111

What is your nationality? * What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning bed time?

		What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning bed time?					Total
		I can decide only during weekends	I cannot decide	No answer	I can decide myself	I decide with my parents	
What is your nationality?	Dutch children	7	13	31	3	1	55
	Children of other EU Member States	5	19	5	8	0	37
	Non-EU children	1	2	7	3	0	13
	Double EU nationality	0	0	1	1	0	2
	Half EU/Half TCN nationality	0	1	2	0	1	4
Total		13	35	46	15	2	111

What is your nationality? * What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning the clothes you wear?

		What decisions are you allowed making at home concerning the clothes you wear?				Total
		I can decide what to wear	I cannot decide	No answer	Sometimes	
What is your nationality?	Dutch children	35	5	7	8	55
	Children of other EU Member States	28	4	5	0	37
	Non-EU children	12	0	1	0	13
	Double EU nationality	1	0	1	0	2
	Half EU/Half TCN nationality	2	0	2	0	4
Total		78	9	16	8	111

What is your nationality? * Are you involved in decisions/do your parents listen to what you have to say?

		Are you involved in decisions/do your parents listen to what you have to say?				Total
		Yes	No	Sometimes yes sometimes no	No answer	
What is your nationality?	Dutch children	23	4	27	1	55
	Children of other EU Member States	15	2	16	4	37
	Non-EU children	8	0	5	0	13
	Double EU nationality	1	0	1	0	2
	Half EU/Half TCN nationality	1	0	3	0	4
Total		48	6	52	5	111

Since their birth, children are taught at home by their parents what they can and cannot do. Their advice aims at teaching children where the limits of their rights are as well as to show them that they need some authority in decision-making processes which should contribute to what is in the best interest of the child. This is not at all black and white since the value that is attached to rights differs from family to family. Therefore, I noted that examining decision-making at home in terms of choosing one’s clothing; deciding what to eat and when to go to bed; the contentment with decision-making at home and being listened to, would give a good impression of the extent to which children can participate at home in actions that concern themselves.

When children were exposed to the question “what decisions are you allowed making at home concerning food?”, 74 out of 111 children answered this question. Approximately one quarter answered they can “always decide what to eat” (25.2%), 14.4% cannot decide what to eat, 8.1% can decide for “breakfast and lunch but not for dinner” whereas 17.1% of the respondents said they can “sometimes” decide what to eat. As can be concluded, the results are quite widespread which means that not one answer is dominant. Nationality, gender and age do not play a role here since in the results no significance occurs.

Of the 65 respondents that answered the question if they could decide on bed time, 31.5% could not decide, 13.5% can decide and 11.7% were only allowed to decide

in the weekend when to go to bed. Here the dichotomy between “competent” and “not competent enough” is of importance. Although some children can decide themselves and hence parents argue that they are capable of making this decision themselves, they do recognize they need sleep since some of the children in addition replied that, although deciding for themselves, they would go to bed between 9 and 11 pm because “sleeping is nice” or “I need to sleep because I need to get up early next morning to go to school”. As a consequence which has been mentioned before, children do recognize the limits of their competences and if they are assigned specific rights, they deal with it in a way that they argue to be normal, suitable and in consensus with their age.

In contrast to deciding what to eat and what time to go to bed, children predominantly are allowed to decide what clothing they want to wear. Of the 95 children that had answered the question, 70.3% is allowed to decide what to wear against 8.1% that cannot decide and 7.2% that can sometimes decide what to wear. Interestingly, adults apparently believe that children are very much capable of deciding what to wear and thus rely on their abilities to make right decisions. The results in terms of nationality are equal, meaning that children of both Dutch nationality and another EU nationality can participate in above mentioned decisions more or less to the same extent. Hence, the third hypothesis “in other EU Member States, children can decide on more in terms of what time to go to bed, how to dress and what they want to eat than Dutch children” is falsified.

Although the answers to decisions on food and bed time varied which means that one child can decide more than another child, children by no means feel denied in expressing their views at home as well as the extent to which they actually can make decisions. Out of 105 children, 72 children (64.9%) argue they can decide enough at home, 31 children (27.9%) would like to decide on more and 2 children (1.8%) argue they are paradoxically too much involved and would like to decide less. Children hence are quite satisfied despite 27.9% that believes that they should be able to make more choices in the domestic sphere. An additional question which I asked was if “your parents listen to what you have to say?” This question was initially not quite well understood in both classes 6 and class 7 of the Joppenhof Primary School. By means of giving a rather extreme example, children were able to grasp how to answer the question:

Imagine your parents want to buy a car. They are thinking about buying a shiny, black car that has enough space for the whole family. They are proud of the fact that they have made this choice however they do ask for your opinion before buying the car. You think about it and actually your opinion is that you don't like black cars at all! You actually would like to have a pink car with yellow spots, because you like happy cars and you think that black is boring. Could you say this and would your parents take your opinion seriously?

I had told them that the “happy car” is an exaggerated example but it did contribute in understanding the question. 106 children had given an answer to this question. As a result, 43.2% replied they are being listened to, 46.8% argued that they are sometimes being listened to while 5.4% said they were not listened to. In general, a child's opinion therefore is taken into consideration. The difficulty here rests in differentiating between on the one hand giving children the opportunity to express their views and on the other hand to let children have their say. The example above can here be used to give a clarification. To give children the opportunity to give their opinion on the car, hence that their opinion is being listened to and taken into consideration is different from listening to them and implementing their ideas, thus to let them have their say. The importance for this survey lays in the fact that children are being listened to. Therefore, by means of the example, the 46.8% that argued they can sometimes decide can be interpreted in the two ways mentioned above. Interestingly, Dutch children and other EU children are equally satisfied, which therefore means that the fourth hypothesis “in the Netherlands, parents are more likely to listen to what their children have to say than other in other EU member states” cannot be validated.

In short, children have quite some competences and are satisfied with the extent to which they can make decisions and with the involvement of participating in things that are of concern to them. Similar to the first section, no significant differences have occurred in nationality, age and gender however contentment and discontentment must be expressed. As is stipulated in the CRC as well as in the Council of Europe's Strategy for 2009-2011, the child should be listened to. Children are satisfied with the extent to which they are being listened to and can participate in decision-making. Home can therefore be seen as forum where they can express their views. It is a forum where they feel – as can be concluded from the results – comfortable. Such a forum which generates safety and

comfort should also be created at the international and European level. Adults can learn from the child's own experience since children want to be engaged actively in participation. Hence, the European forum on the Rights of the Child, as was proposed by the European Commission in its Communication "Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child", should focus on involving children as well instead of merely allow institutions, governments and NGOs to participate. It would enhance the value and usefulness of forming an opinion about how to deal with children's rights.

The next section pays attention to children's opinion about the opportunity to participate at school.

Section 3: Involvement in school

Is attention being paid to what you have to say in school?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	75	67,6	67,6	67,6
No	8	7,2	7,2	74,8
Sometimes yes sometimes not	8	7,2	7,2	82,0
No answer	12	10,8	10,8	92,8
Don't know	8	7,2	7,2	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

Are you being listened to when you say something in class?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	79	71,2	71,2	71,2
No	3	2,7	2,7	73,9
No answer	10	9,0	9,0	82,9
Sometimes	19	17,1	17,1	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

If an important decision has to be made at school, are you allowed to and do you want to co-decide with your classmates?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid We are allowed to decide	52	46,8	46,8	46,8
We are not allowed to decide, but I would like to decide	1	,9	,9	47,7
Sometimes	27	24,3	24,3	72,1
I don't like to decide	1	,9	,9	73,0
The school council decides	2	1,8	1,8	74,8
Let the school decide if the decision is not applicable to us	2	1,8	1,8	76,6
Don't know	6	5,4	5,4	82,0
No answer	9	8,1	8,1	90,1
No	11	9,9	9,9	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

What is your age? * Is attention being paid to what you have to say in school? Crosstabulation

	Is attention being paid to what you have to say in school?					Total
	Yes	No	Sometimes yes sometimes not	No answer	Don't know	
What is your age? 8	1	0	0	0	0	1
9	14	1	1	2	0	18
10	37	3	7	4	4	55
11	19	4	0	6	3	32
12	4	0	0	0	1	5
Total	75	8	8	12	8	111

Involvement in decision-making is taught to children at first instance at home yet as soon as they go to school, they are also being shaped and influenced by other people than their family. School is an environment in which children learn to cooperate with other children and people that are initially not familiar to them. Nevertheless, this different environment takes a very significant position in the lives of the children since it contributes in providing children a platform where they can express their opinion as well as participate in day-to-day school life. By means of the questionnaire that I have conducted, I examined firstly if children can express their opinion in school, secondly if they are being

listened to in class and thirdly if an important decision has to be made at school whether they consequently are given the opportunity to co-decide with their classmates.

The results show that 75 out of 103 children (67.6%) do think attention is being paid to what they have to say in school, against 8 children (7.2%) who argue “no” or “sometimes yes, sometimes no” respectively. Hence, school can be said to be a stimulating environment for children to express their views.

Similar to these results, children are also satisfied with the fact that what they have to say is valued: 79 out of 101 respondents (71.2%) replied they are being listened to while 17.1% noted they are sometimes being listened to and merely 3 people (2.7%) believed that their voice is not heard in school.

Finally, I reckoned that it is of importance that children can form a group opinion alongside their own opinion of which these co-decisions should be taken very seriously. Some children perceived this question as rather difficult. As a consequence I reached *ad hoc* the following solution:

You are talking with your classmates about the setting of the tables in the classroom. You all have one neighbor and the tables are all set behind each other. Actually you imagine it would be nice to put 4 tables together so that you have three neighbors and that you can look each other in the eye. Thus, you decide it would be really cool to change the setting of the tables. Would your teacher pay attention to your decision as a group?

As a result, 52 out of 102 children (46.8%) responded that they are allowed to co-decide with their classmates while 24.3% think they can sometimes decide and 9.9% believes they cannot make these decisions. Interestingly, 2 Dutch children argued that the school council should decide, hence leaving such decisions to children who have been chosen to deal with such decisions. In fact, a school council is a very good development within school because it involves children in decision-making processes while stipulating the importance of informed and democratic decision-making. By means of distinguishing between age, no significances have occurred, which ultimately means that children can make important decisions regardless age and that children of all ages are involved in decision-making. Hence, the fifth hypothesis “the older children are, the more likely they think they can make an important decision at school” as well as the sixth hypothesis

“older children are more likely to be involved in decision-making at school than younger children” can both be falsified.

As can be derived from the results, school is an environment where children’s participation is highly stimulated. It is also obvious that children want their voices to be heard. They can engage in discussion with each other. In this way, a sense of group participation can be generated where children learn to listen to each other and learn what their competences are. Therefore, I believe that in creating communications and conventions, children’s thoughts and behaviors ought to be appreciated highly. Although every school has different values depending on cultural background, I do believe that all children should have the same opportunities as children at the Aloysius and Joppenhof Primary School.

Yet on a smaller scale, at European level, I argue that more can be expected by looking more closely into the rights of the child from an EU perspective, so that “participation becomes embedded as an integral part of our relationship with children” (Sinclair, 2004, pp. 106). One can for example think of creating a school council in every school in the EU, as was noticed by 2 Dutch children in the questionnaire. A school council can provide a stimulating body to children by which it is expected that they participate in the governance of their schools. Such a council should, naturally, be created democratically. In this respect, the whole process of establishing the council and the functioning thereof can be seen as integral parts in learning how children can be involved in decision-making. I argue this to be very effective and it is very much in line with the European Forum on the Rights of the Child which was established by the European Commission. It is a way to enhance the added value of forums as school councils can be an extra ingredient in achieving what is in the best interest for the child.

If this weighs equally in children’s engagement in the community will be analyzed in the next section.

Section 4: Children’s participation in the community

Do you think you can give your opinion about politics and things that matter to all people, such as building houses, the creation of playground areas and the construction of roads and zebra crossings?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	60	54,1	54,1	54,1
No	35	31,5	31,5	85,6
I don't care	3	2,7	2,7	88,3
Only if I am older	2	1,8	1,8	90,1
Parents should do that	1	,9	,9	91,0
No answer	9	8,1	8,1	99,1
7	1	,9	,9	100,0
Total	111	100,0	100,0	

Do you think children should be allowed to vote? Do you think children are capable to vote? Why or why not?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes, because children are smart	15	13,5	13,8	13,8
Yes, because we have rights	27	24,3	24,8	38,5
No, children are too young	24	21,6	22,0	60,6
No	6	5,4	5,5	66,1
No answer	7	6,3	6,4	72,5
Don't know	2	1,8	1,8	74,3
Only of children are a bit older	14	12,6	12,8	87,2
Only if children are educated on what politics is about	4	3,6	3,7	90,8
yes	10	9,0	9,2	100,0
Total	109	98,2	100,0	
Missing System	2	1,8		
Total	111	100,0		

What is your nationality? * Do you think you can give your opinion about politics and things that matter to all people, such as building houses, the creation of playground areas and the construction of roads and zebra crossings?

		Do you think you can give your opinion about politics and things that matter to all people, such as building houses, the creation of playground areas and the construction of roads and zebra crossings?						Total
		Yes	No	I don't care	Only if I am older	Parents should do that	No answer	
What is your nationality?	Dutch children	27	19	2	1	1	5	55
	Children of other EU Member States	24	8	1	0	0	4	37
	Non-EU children	6	6	0	0	0	1	13
	Double EU nationality	2	0	0	0	0	0	2

	Half EU/Half TCN nationality	1	2	0	1	0	0	4
Total		60	35	3	2	1	10	111

In addition to the particular salience of the extent to which children can be involved in decision-making at home and school, importance should be assigned to children expressing their views in a wider context. With regard to community, I mean matters that involve all citizens as well as the possibility to vote. The latter again brings about the discussion concerning children being competent enough to decide on such meaningful events. According to Lansdown (2001), it must be taken into account that children “understand what the project or process is about, what it is for and their role within it” (p. 9). Hence, if any ambiguity exists concerning for example the political process in the Netherlands, children should not be able to vote. Also, concerning projects that are related to their community such as building houses and playground areas, children should be capable of making a contribution based on knowledge since events on community level are too important to leave in the hands of the “unknown”. In order to enhance knowledge-building, children paradoxically should be involved at an early stage already so that they can gradually learn to deal with making the right decisions and comprehend the importance of making informed decisions. Here as well, competences are advanced as children grow older. With this in mind, I have examined if the children at the primary schools “think they can give their opinion about politics and things that matter to all people, such as building houses, the creation of playground areas and the construction of roads and zebra crossing?” and “Do you think children should be allowed to vote? Do you think that children are capable to vote?” With regard to the former question, 60 out of 102 children (54.1%) believed that they can give their opinion whereas 31.5% argued that they cannot do so. Two children argued that they can give their opinion about such things only when they are older. Apparently, children do value that they are being heard in the community as well. During informal chats in class most children believed that for example a zebra crossing could at best be placed near the school since it is “in the general interest for the safety of us”. This actually implies very adequate reasoning. No differences in answers exist between Dutch children and children of other EU Member States however: the seventh hypothesis “Dutch children are more likely than children of

other EU Member States to argue they can participate in politics and things that matter to all people” can therefore be falsified.

Even more so interesting are the results about children’s capability of voting. An overwhelming 109 children responded to this question. 13.5% noted that children can vote “because children are smart”, 24.3% believes children can vote “because we have rights”, 21.6% replied they should not vote because “children are too young” and 12.6% said that children are only capable of voting “if children are a bit older”. The eighth hypothesis “children think they are more likely to be capable to vote because they are smart than to argue that they have rights” can here be falsified. Children argue they are more likely to vote because they have rights.

These results are compelling because children on the one hand recognize that they are too young to vote although others argue they are competent enough to vote. In addition, it is cleverly noted by 27 children that one should be able to vote because children have rights. Apparently, children see it as their right that they should be able to vote. The results can provide very helpful material for both caretakers and child liberationists since the following question comes to mind: to what extent can children participate? The results are rather scattered hence in a way children support on the one hand the caretaker view and on the other hand the liberationist perspective. In addition, the rights to participation as laid down in the CRC in Article 12(1) are alleged here: some children do recognize that their competences increase as they become older.

The outcome of the results display that children recognize their competences as well as non-competences. Based on these findings, would it not be possible to engage children in participation and citizenship? I believe that children “whose share in society is appreciated and stimulated because of the constructive contribution they are able to make”, can be involved (De Winter, 1997, p. 24). Children – being as much member of a community as adults – should receive rights accordingly. Hence, as has been so vividly explained in chapter two concerning the contribution that children make to society, their participation as a citizen has to be valued. Fortunately, the documents created by the EU pay attention to involvement of children in democratic decision-making, most notably in the Council of Europe’s Strategy 2009-2011. Equally, the CRC acknowledges in Article 12 however also in Article 13 that children can express their views, however it is

restricted “by law or when necessary” (CRC, 1990, Article 13). It is not legitimate for children to vote yet based on the results I believe that children should be as much involved as possible in the community so that at a later stage they can make informed decisions, which does not only benefit themselves but the community as a whole.

4. CONCLUSION

In this paper I have given an in-depth analysis of children’s participation rights. By means of defining what children’s participation rights are and drawing attention to the main discussion concerning children’s rights between child liberationists and child caretakers on the one hand, and examining the value and usefulness of the CRC not only at the international level yet also what its impact is for defining participation rights for children in documents at the European level on the other hand, I could be critical in understanding the value of the comparative study which I have conducted. The research question was to examine if children want to participate in decision-making at home, school and the community and what in this respect is the difference between Dutch children and children of other EU Member States. The differentiation between Dutch children and children of other EU Member States led to no significant results however the first part of the research question could be answered very well. Children know what their rights are as has been analyzed in the first section of the research however it is worrying that 81% of the children do not know the CRC. Concerning rights at home, children are satisfied with the extent to which they make decisions and are involved in decision. As a consequence, adults should take domestic decision-making carefully into consideration when creating documents because this safe and comfortable environment can be literally seen as a *niche* where children’s participation rights come to expression very positively. In the third section, children argue that school provides a place where they can voice their opinion and where their opinion is valued. Hence, school is an environment where children’s participation is highly stimulated. What can be drawn from the fourth section is that it is obvious that children know what their competences are in terms of voting and answer very cleverly in this section, by stating that they do have rights.

Together the sections indicate that, in principle, children are very capable human beings. Although some critical notes have been placed by the contents of the CRC as well

as the efforts made by the European Commission and the Council of Europe in terms of children's participation rights, I do argue that these documents are very useful in providing children protection. However, the outcome of the survey suggests that children at the two primary schools where I conducted the research, are very competent and rational human beings that are capable of defining what their competences are and more importantly what the limits of their competences are. This especially becomes visible in the home and community section. As a consequence, a child cannot be put either into the child liberationist or the child caretaker corner. It is rather a mix of both sides that expresses how children perceive their rights: they want to participate, they can participate and they want to be part of society although some decisions should be left to adults. These rights still are not at all that black and white. Therefore it is important that continuous efforts should be made so that children all over the world can participate in an environment that has an attitude as positive as the children of the Aloysius and Joppenhof Primary Schools live in. If we cooperate together at both the international and the European level in an effective way with adequate control in following the rules laid down in the documents, the future looks bright indeed. It is therefore suggested that debates on children's contemporary participation rights are extended within the framework of both the international and European community, because children's participation rights need to be acknowledged across the global, from local through national to global. So children, dare to think of your greatness...

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6.ANNEX



6.1. Questionnaire

Questionnaire Bachelor Thesis CA Geerdink

“Participation Rights of Children in the EU ”

Name: _____

Age: _____

Nationality: _____

Please fill out the questionnaire as good and as honest as possible, and take your time.

Rights

1. What are rights?

2. What can you say about them?

3. Are you aware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child?

4. What do you think that are your rights? What can you or can't you do?

Home

1. What decisions are you allowed making at home? (For example what time you go to bed, what you eat, which clothes you wear?)

2. Do you think that you may make sufficient decisions or would you like to decide more?

3. Are you involved in decision-making/do your parents listen to what you have to say?

School

1. Do you think enough attention is being paid to your opinion at school? (For example if you can say that you like or dislike particular subjects or if the classroom is clean or filthy?) Why?

2. Are you being listened to when you say something in class?

3. If an important decision has to be made at school, are you allowed to and do you want co-decide with your classmates?

Community

1. Do you think you can give your opinion about politics and things that matter to all people, such as building houses, the creation of playground areas and the construction of roads and zebra crossings?

2. Do you think children should be allowed to vote? Do you think children are capable to vote? Why or why not?

6.2. Data

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110 :

	Class	Age	Gender What is your age?	Nationality	Defrights	knowCRC	thinkrightsc ando	thinkrightsc annotdo	decisionsho mefood	decisionsho mebedtime	decisionsho meclathing	decisionsho meother	decideenou gh	involvedcrr aking	sayinschoo	listenedtocl ass	codecodecla ssmates	opinionpol	childrenvote	vs
1	7	10	2	2	2	2	6	6	2	2	1	3	2	4	3	3	8	6	7	
2	7	11	1	4	2	2	2	5	1	3	1	4	2	1	1	1	3	1	8	
3	7	11	2	1	2	2	4	5	5	3	1	5	2	1	5	1	3	2	2	
4	7	11	2	3	3	2	1	5	5	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	3	1	4	
5	7	11	2	2	4	2	4	5	5	3	1	3	2	1	5	4	7	1	2	
6	7	11	2	2	2	2	6	5	3	2	1	5	2	1	4	4	8	1	5	
7	7	11	2	2	2	2	6	3	6	1	1	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	
8	7	10	1	1	2	2	1	5	3	4	3	5	2	4	4	1	7	1	7	
9	7	11	1	5	2	1	1	5	3	3	3	3	3	4	2	1	9	2	2	
10	7	10	1	5	5	2	4	5	5	3	3	6	2	1	1	1	1	4	3	
11	7	10	1	3	2	2	2	5	3	3	1	3	2	4	4	1	9	2	7	
12	7	11	1	2	2	2	1	5	4	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	3	2	4	
13	7	11	1	2	2	2	2	5	6	1	1	5	3	5	4	3	8	3	4	
14	7	11	2	1	2	2	7	4	6	3	4	5	2	4	2	1	3	1	7	
15	7	10	2	2	1	2	7	4	3	4	1	2	2	1	1	1	9	1	7	
16	7	11	2	2	2	2	6	5	3	1	1	5	4	4	4	3	8	6	5	
17	7	11	2	5	2	2	7	4	2	5	1	5	2	4	1	1	7	1	7	
18	7	10	1	2	2	1	6	5	2	2	3	5	3	4	1	1	1	1	3	
19	7	11	1	1	2	2	1	5	6	3	1	5	2	4	2	1	9	1	4	
20	7	11	2	2	2	1	7	5	6	2	1	6	4	5	4	3	8	1	5	
21	7	11	2	5	2	2	6	5	5	2	1	3	2	4	1	1	3	2	3	
22	7	11	2	3	2	1	6	7	6	3	1	6	2	4	1	1	1	1	4	
23	7	12	2	2	3	2	1	5	5	4	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	7	
24	7	10	1	4	2	1	7	5	5	4	3	5	3	4	1	1	7	1	4	
25	7	12	1	2	2	2	1	4	3	3	1	3	2	4	1	1	1	2	3	
26	7	11	2	2	5	2	6	5	3	4	1	6	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	
27	7	11	2	2	2	1	1	5	3	4	1	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	
28	7	12	2	2	5	1	6	5	4	4	1	5	2	4	1	1	3	2	2	
29	7	10	2	1	3	2	2	5	3	1	1	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	
30	7	11	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	3	3	4	1	1	1	1	7	
31	7	10	1	1	1	1	1	8	5	5	2	2	2	1	1	1	6	2	3	
32	7	12	1	2	1	2	1	5	2	2	2	1	2	4	1	1	7	1	2	
33	7	11	2	1	2	2	1	5	2	2	1	5	4	2	1	1	6	2	3	
34	7	10	2	1	5	2	2	5	5	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	5	2	7	
35	7	10	1	1	3	2	1	1	5	3	1	5	2	1	1	1	1	2	3	
36	7	11	2	1	2	2	1	5	6	3	1	5	2	1	4	3	8	1	3	
37	7	10	1	1	1	2	2	5	5	3	3	3	2	1	1	4	3	1	2	
38	7	10	2	1	2	2	1	5	6	2	1	5	2	1	3	1	3	2	3	
39	7	10	2	1	3	2	2	5	3	3	1	2	3	4	1	1	4	6	2	
40	7	11	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	4	1	5	2	4	1	4	3	3	3	
41	7	10	1	1	2	2	1	5	4	3	3	5	2	4	1	1	3	1	6	
42	7	11	2	1	1	1	2	5	5	4	1	3	2	1	1	1	3	6	5	
43	7	12	1	1	2	2	1	5	2	2	2	5	3	2	5	1	9	2	2	

Data View Variable View



44 : Class 7 Visible:

	Class	Age What is your age?	Gender	Nationality	Defrights	knowCRC	thinkrights ando	thinkrights annotdo	decisionsh mefood	decisionsh mebedtime	decisionsh meclotting	decisionsh meether	decideenou gh	involvedecr aking	sayinschoo	listenedtoo ass	codecodecl ssmates	opinionpol	childrenvote	var
44	7	11	1	3	1	2	7	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	5	1	9	1	3	
45	7	11	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	
46	7	10	1	1	2	2	2	5	5	3	3	6	2	4	2	4	2	2	2	
47	7	11	1	1	4	2	5	5	5	3	3	3	1	4	1	1	9	2	2	
48	7	10	2	1	1	2	4	5	5	2	4	5	2	1	1	1	3	2	3	
49	7	10	2	1	2	2	4	5	3	3	1	5	2	2	1	1	3	5	3	
50	7	11	2	1	2	2	1	5	6	3	1	5	3	4	1	1	1	3	1	
51	7	11	1	1	1	2	6	5	5	3	1	6	2	4	1	4	3	4	3	
52	7	10	2	1	1	2	2	5	6	3	1	6	2	4	1	1	1	1	2	
53	7	11	2	1	1	2	1	5	5	3	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	
54	7	10	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	3	1	5	2	5	1	1	1	1	1	
55	6	10	1	3	3	2	5	5	4	4	1	5	2	1	1	2	1	6	5	
56	6	10	1	1	3	2	5	1	3	3	1	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	
57	6	10	2	1	5	1	1	5	4	3	1	3	2	1	5	4	1	1	5	
58	6	9	2	1	3	2	5	5	2	2	4	5	3	4	1	2	1	2	7	
59	6	10	2	1	2	2	5	1	5	3	1	5	2	4	1	4	1	1	1	
60	6	10	1	1	3	2	5	5	6	3	1	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	
61	6	8	1	1	5	2	1	5	5	3	1	5	2	4	1	4	1	1	1	
62	6	10	1	1	3	2	6	5	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	4	1	1	9	
63	6	9	2	1	2	2	1	1	6	2	1	5	1	4	2	1	3	1	1	
64	6	10	1	1	5	2	6	5	4	3	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	
65	6	9	1	1	5	2	1	2	5	3	1	5	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	
66	6	10	1	1	2	2	6	5	3	2	1	5	3	4	2	4	1	1	9	
67	6	10	2	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	5	3	4	1	1	1	6	9	
68	6	10	1	1	4	2	5	5	5	1	3	5	2	4	4	1	5	6	5	
69	6	9	2	1	3	2	5	5	4	3	4	5	3	1	4	1	1	1	7	
70	6	10	1	1	3	2	1	5	5	1	1	5	2	1	3	1	3	2	1	
71	6	10	1	1	2	1	1	1	6	3	4	5	2	4	3	1	3	1	2	
72	6	10	1	1	1	2	1	4	5	3	4	5	2	1	2	1	3	1	8	
73	6	10	1	1	2	1	6	5	5	3	1	5	3	4	1	3	1	1	1	
74	6	10	2	1	6	2	5	5	5	1	1	5	3	4	4	3	1	1	6	
75	6	9	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	5	3	1	1	1	1	2	8	
76	6	9	1	1	2	2	5	5	2	2	4	5	2	4	1	4	3	2	3	
77	6	9	1	1	2	2	1	5	2	2	2	5	2	2	1	1	3	2	8	
78	6	10	2	1	1	2	1	5	5	3	4	5	2	1	1	1	9	2	1	
79	6	9	1	1	2	2	1	2	6	1	1	5	3	1	1	2	1	2	9	
80	6	10	1	1	5	2	6	5	2	1	1	5	3	4	5	1	3	2	1	
81	6	9	2	2	2	2	1	7	5	2	1	5	3	4	1	1	1	1	3	
82	6	10	1	3	2	2	1	5	6	2	1	5	2	1	1	1	8	1	3	
83	6	9	2	2	2	2	1	5	3	4	1	5	3	1	1	1	3	2	2	
84	6	10	2	2	2	1	1	5	3	4	1	3	3	4	1	1	3	2	2	
85	6	9	1	2	2	2	3	5	6	2	2	5	4	5	4	3	8	1	3	
86	6	9	2	3	3	1	1	5	5	2	1	5	3	4	3	1	1	1	2	

6.3. Pictures

Pictures of children working on the questionnaire at the Joppenhof Primary School

