

# CODING PROCEEDINGS – CHILDREN IN CONSTITUTIONS PROJECT

The Children in Constitutions project focuses on the incorporation of children and young people in the constitutional texts of 193 countries. The selection of countries, as well as the data for the research, came from the [Constitute website](#) (Elkins *et al.*, 2013). Developed by the Comparative Constitutions Project at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Chicago, the website allows free and unlimited access to the full text of the world's active Constitutions in English, Arabic and Spanish, being a reliable and highly complete database for our research. In Figure 1 below an overview of six steps described here is presented.

*(Step 1):* On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, a search was conducted in the Constitute's base, with the filter by status selecting “in force” and “draft” to locate all Constitutions translated to English. Among the 202 results found in the search, we reviewed the 9 draft Constitutions to check if any of its countries (Chile, Cuba, Gambia, Iceland, Libya, Syria, and Yemen) had no Constitutions in force available on the website. Since all of them did, the draft Constitutions were suppressed, resulting in the utilized database of 193 Constitutions in force<sup>1</sup> *(Step 2)*, all of which were downloaded in portable document format (PDF) *(Step 3)*.

Then, it was created an Excel file for the research, and in its first sheet (named “Constitutional Information”) name of each country<sup>2</sup> was included, the year of each Constitution's implementation or reinstatement<sup>3</sup>, the year of its last revision by the Constitute's team<sup>4</sup>, and the identification if there was a subsequent amendment that hadn't been translated by the Constitute's team yet<sup>5</sup> *(Step 4)*.

After that, three other searches on the Constitute's website were conducted, each one applying a different filter by topic among the Constitutions in force. The first one aimed to find Constitutions that had articles about the “Rights of children” (which resulted in 135 (70%) constitutions including this term)<sup>6</sup>, the second focused on articles about “State support for children” (117 findings)<sup>7</sup>, and the third concerned with articles about “Limits on employment of children” (82 findings)<sup>8</sup> *(Step 5)*.

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<sup>1</sup> From Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestinian National Authority, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Korea, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Therefore, the website does not include the constitutional texts of Cook Islands, Guinea, Mali, Niue, San Marino, Vatican City, and Western Sahara.

<sup>2</sup> First column (A).

<sup>3</sup> Second column (B).

<sup>4</sup> Third column (C): filling in the year or ‘N/P’ if not informed.

<sup>5</sup> Fourth column (D): filling in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

<sup>6</sup> Sixth column (F): if the Constitution has articles about children's rights, filling in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

Seventh column (G): if yes, which articles, filling in the article's numbers or ‘N/A’ if not applicable.

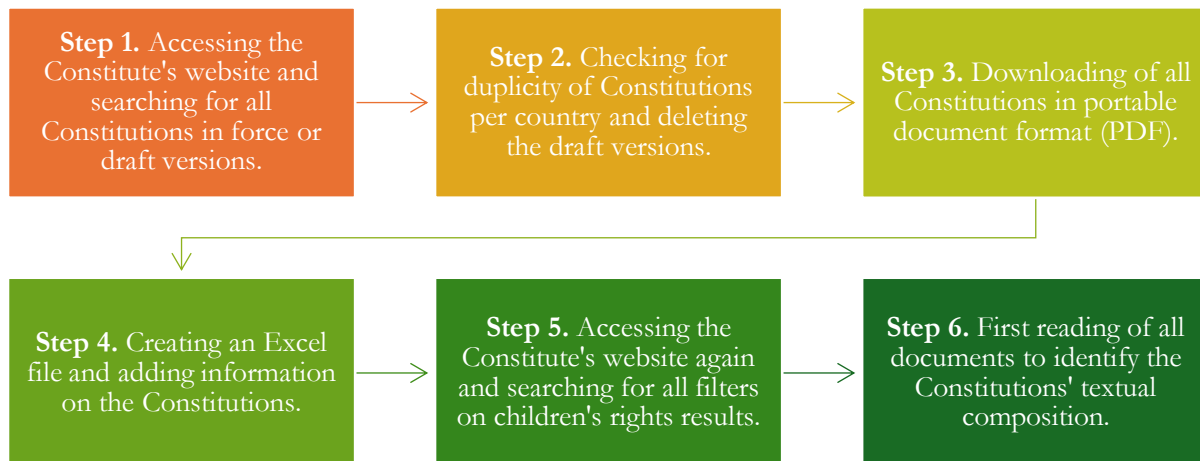
<sup>7</sup> Eighth column (H): if the Constitution has articles mentioning State support for children, filling in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

Ninth column (I): if yes, which articles, filling in the article's numbers or ‘N/A’ if not applicable.

<sup>8</sup> Tenth column (J): if the Constitution has articles about legal limits on the employment of children, filling in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

The first time each document was reviewed<sup>9</sup> the purpose was to identify if the constitutional text was composed of a single unified document, a main document supplemented by subsequent others, or several complementary documents<sup>10</sup> (*Step 6*). Such information is important to recognize the distinct formats in which constitutional texts can be organised, as well as understand how and where the constitutional provisions of children and young people are mentioned, if so.

**Figure 1: Data collection steps**



## Content Analysis

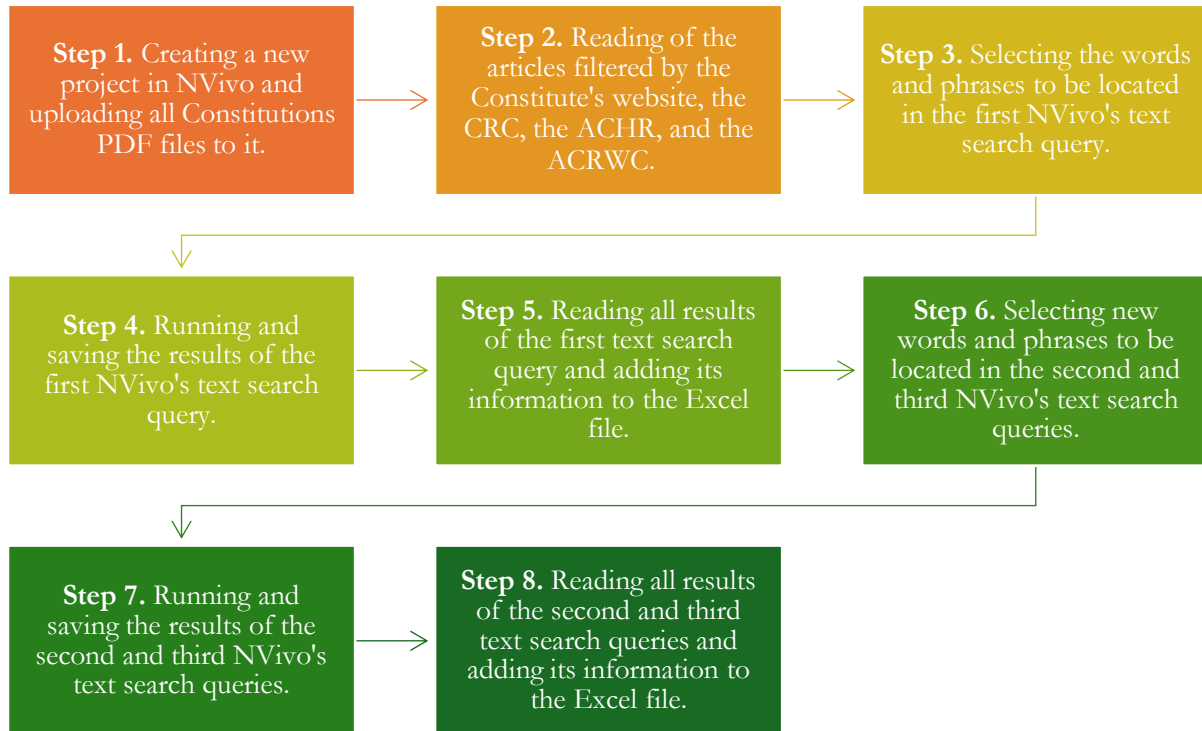
Once all the main data and complementary information were gathered and saved, an inductive content analysis of the entirety of the 193 constitutional texts in English was initiated. This methodology was chosen since the search entailed the systematic inspection of specific words and phrases. In Figure 2 below an overview of the steps taken is presented:

Eleventh column (K): if yes, which articles, filling in the article's numbers or 'N/A' if not applicable.

<sup>9</sup> During this first reading, it was noticed that, for some reason, the files of Papua New Guinea's and Poland's Constitutions were unable of being completely downloaded, so the mapping had to be done manually directly on the Constitute's website.

<sup>10</sup> Fifth column (E): filling in 'Unified Document', 'Main and Complementary Documents' or 'Compilation of Various Documents'.

**Figure 2: Content analysis steps**



The first part of the analysis was executed in NVivo Pro, a qualitative data analysis software produced by QSR International, where a specific project was created, and all Constitutions PDF files were uploaded to it (*Step 1*). Aiming to locate, among the 193 documents, all mentions of children and young people so that, subsequently, they could lead to the identification of their rights, a software's text search query function was applied

The selection of the words and phrases to be located in an initial text search query came from the reading of the articles labelled regarding the rights of children, State support for children, and limits on employment of children by the Constitute's website, as well as from the readings of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the European Convention on Human Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Based on the terms found, a first text search query was run (see Table 1) and manual searches on Papua New Guinea's and Poland's Constitutions were conducted, which resulted in 3,157 references among 182 Constitutions (*Step 4*).

**Table 1: First text search query criteria**

Item	Option Selected
Search in	All files
Search for	child* OR youth OR young OR adolescen* OR infant OR minor OR minors
Find	Exact matches
Spread to	None

Subsequently, each result was read in two levels – first, a thorough examination of the article in which it appears; followed by a quick inspection of the section (chapter, part and/or title) it is in –, to better understand their place in the constitutional text<sup>11</sup> (*Step 5*).

The reading of all articles led to the discovery of new words and phrases related to children and young people that could be located in a second and third search (*Step 6*) - (see Tables 2 and 3) - and resulted, respectively, in 359 references among 114 Constitutions and 402 references in 137 Constitutions (*Step 7*). Once again, the results were read in two levels and added to the Excel file<sup>12</sup> (*Step 8*).

**Table 2: Second text search query criteria**

Item	Option Selected
Search in	All files
Search for	juvenile* OR teenage* OR youths OR infants OR orphan* OR boy* OR girl* OR son OR sons OR daughter OR daughters OR foundling OR foundlings
Find	Exact matches
Spread to	None

**Table 3: Third text search query criteria**

Item	Option Selected
Search in	All files
Search for	“under eighteen years of age” OR “under seventeen years of age” OR “under sixteen years of age” OR “under fifteen years of age” OR “under fourteen years of age” OR “under the age of eighteen years” OR “under the age of seventeen years” OR “under the age of sixteen years” OR “under the age of fifteen years” OR “under the age of fourteen years” OR “those less than eighteen years old” OR “those less than seventeen years old” OR “those less than sixteen years old” OR “those less than fifteen years old” OR “those less than fourteen years old” OR “18 years” OR “17 years” OR “16 years” OR “15 years” OR “14 years”
Find	Exact matches
Spread to	None

<sup>11</sup> Twelfth column (L): if the Constitution has articles with the searched terms, filling in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

If yes, the specific which articles, filling in the section (if applicable), articles' number and content or ‘N/A’ if not applicable.

<sup>12</sup> Thirteenth column (M): if the Constitution has articles with the searched terms, filling in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

Fourteenth column (N): if the Constitution has articles with the searched terms, filling in ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

Fifteenth column (O): if yes, which articles, including the section (if applicable), articles' number and content.