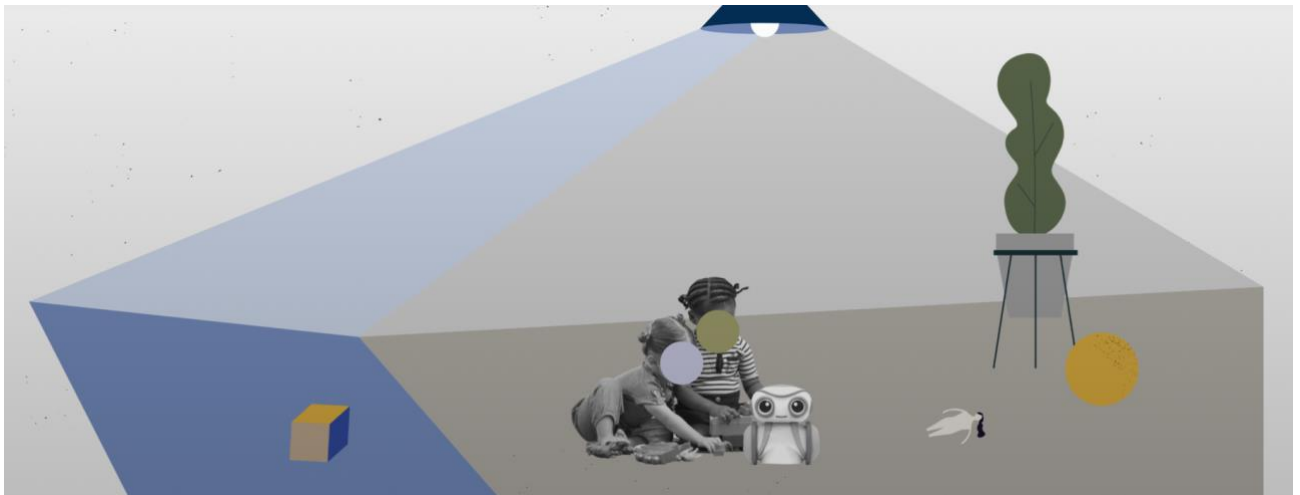


MOOC “Children’s Rights and Technology in the Digital Age”

Report



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I have a 1.5 year old son and I have the need to understand, fight and advocate the right that he has in this digital era.
(participant)

I have a keen interest in working on children and adolescence rights in context of gender-based violence and discrimination. This course is deeply related as many human rights violations occur in the digital world which is now in every child routine.
(participant, Ecuadorian lawyer)

I never really considered the repercussions that technology can have on the minds and lives of children, until I came across this course.

(participant)

I work for a company that regulates the ICT sector and my main focus is child online protection. This course will enable me to contribute to the recently launched National Child online protection Strategy.
(participant)





Executive summary

Key information

Dates:

1 March 2021 – 11 April 2021 (6 weeks)

Estimated effort:

5+ h/week

Access:

[edX platform](#)

Presentation & promotion:

[Dedicated page](#) on the GC website, [video-teaser](#) and social media campaign

Features:

21 experts from 5 regions; 21 video lectures (5 webinars); introductions; readings

Engagement & evaluation:

5 discussions, 5 quizzes
2 polls, 4 surveys
1 roundtable discussion



Highlights

- MOOC proposal designed in cooperation with the Right Livelihood Foundation by 3 Academic Coordinators: Wiebke Lamer (former GC EMA Director), Meredith Veit & Laura Thomi (EMA alumnae), very inspiring 'guides' as acknowledged by the participants
- One of the highest rated GC MOOCs; participants' comments were full of praise
- Top-notch lecturers, including Edward Snowden (Right Livelihood Laureate)
- Many participants enrolled in both their professional and parental capacity
- Interview with an enthusiastic high-school participant



Statistics

Enrolment:

2503 participants (target: 1500)

Age & gender:

Mainly 25-34 (37%), with 3% under 18; female (73%), male (24%), other (3%)

Country of origin:

All 7 GC regions + North America (see p.4)

Professional profile:

Student/researcher (29%), NGO/human rights professional (13%); teacher (13%), parents/caretaker (2%), tech expert (3%)

Surveys:

786 (welcome); 318 (participant-experience); relationship with technology before the MOOC: 766; after: 410

Certificates issued:

338 (14% of enrolment; target: 10%)

Top viewed videos:

Tech through human rights' lenses (E. Day)

Hyper-surveillance (E. Snowden)

Tech at the border (J. Gonzalez)

*edx, youtube, surveys



Recommendations from participants

- Very intensive course: allow for extra time (especially for parents!)
- More case studies/lectures from developing countries; speakers from public authorities
- Offer videos as podcasts as well (allow for more flexible fruition)
- Chat room among participants
- Increased publicity well before the start of the MOOC





A snapshot



Joe Cannataci



Emma Day



Andrew McStay



Nkatha Murungi



Marianne Díaz Hernández



Bertalan Meskó

4. Child influencers

The main risks for children who have a presence online as "influencers" are:

- stimulating child consumerism
- decreased school performance
- harassment by bullies or predators
- stress and overload of activities
- all of the above

SUBMIT

1. Right to erasure

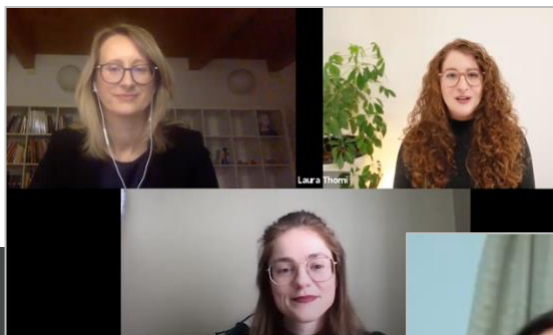
Please select the statement that you most agree with:

Results

- The right to erasure (or right to be forgotten) for children should be absolute. **61%**
- The right to erasure for a child should be determined by their legal guardian. **22%**
- The right to erasure for children should be no different than adults. **12%**
- The right to erasure should not be regulated by governments. **6%**

Quizzes & Polls

Some of our lecturers



Video samples: MOOC Academic Coordinators; Edward Snowden; Neha Gauchan & Swasti Karmacharya



A very motivated audience

As for all GC MOOCs, the audience is varied and, to a large extent, committed. The specific features of this course – unique, responsive to actual needs, and timely because of the pandemic-related lockdowns - clearly provide an explanation for this motivation. Not only participants stated they were first-time MOOCers, but almost 70% of them had never taken a GC online course.

In addition, we have observed a new facet: many participants took this MOOC with a double or even triple role (parent, professional, activist/volunteer/'active citizen'), which makes this audience possibly one of the most committed ever. Furthermore, many indicated their willingness – almost the need – to raise awareness and educate peers, colleagues, stakeholders, thus multiplying impact.

Professionally, I litigate domestic child protection cases. I also am the parent of a 4 year old, so personally want to ensure I'm aware of the topic to protect her interests as well.
(participant)

Three additional remarks need to be made:

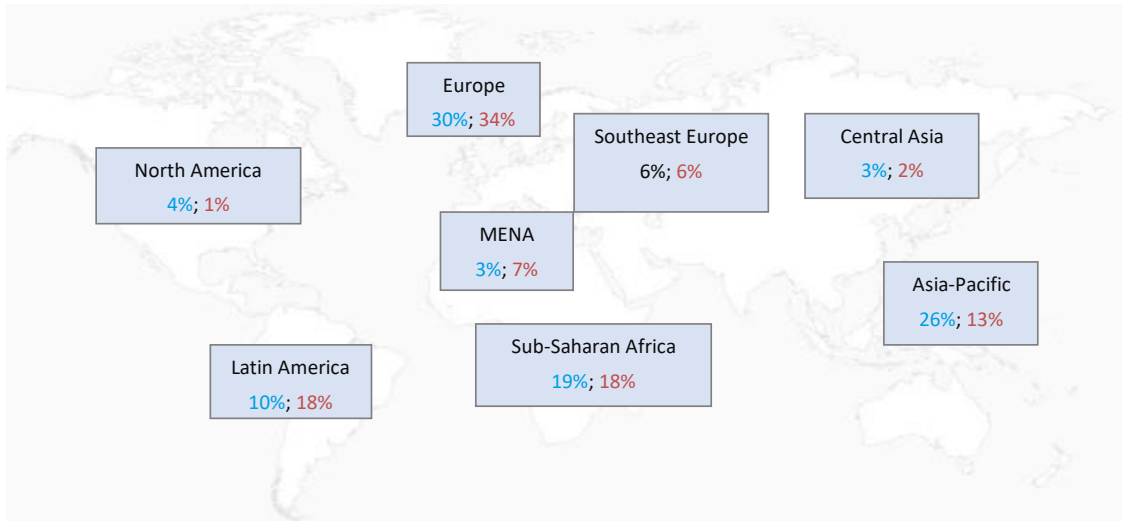
- This is yet another MOOC that manages to attract new audiences outside the 'usual suspects' e.g., IT/EdTech professionals, product designers, data scientists, consumer protection professionals, many of them interested in an international perspective. This proves that GC open online education plays a crucial role in mainstreaming human rights.
- High-school students were actively engaged in the MOOC. This is not a new audience for the GC, but the course's topic and the possibility of obtaining a free certificate (that could give credits) increased the size of this group.
- Researchers (including many PhD students) stated the usefulness of the MOOC for their projects. This is not a new discovery, but data shows that the number of enrolled researchers was higher than usual; this proves how the MOOC's topic is cutting-edge also at research-level. It is remarkable how the course managed to attract both newbies and professionals / scholars who are already working on this topic.



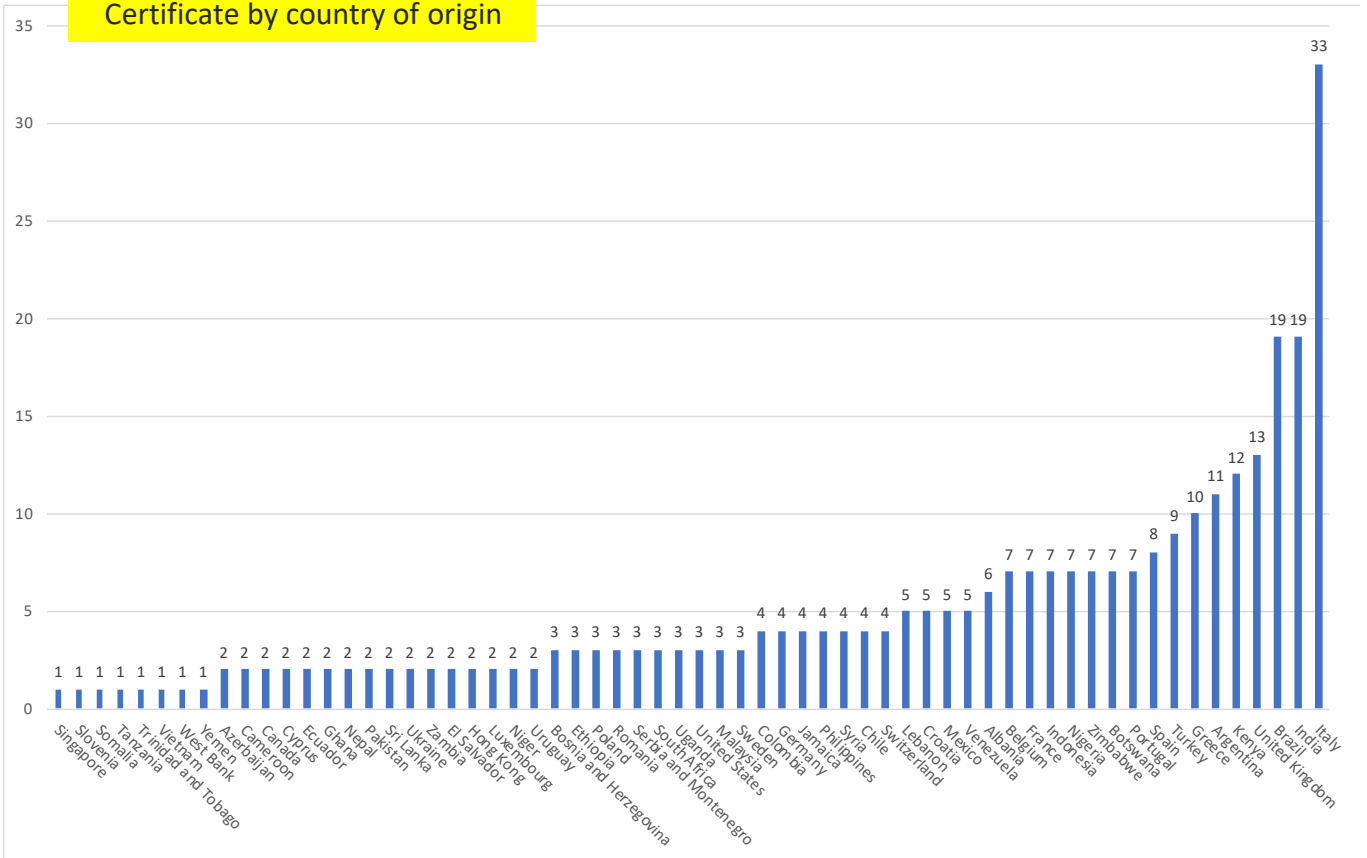
Most frequent keywords in the surveys



Participants' location and issued certificates



Certificate by country of origin

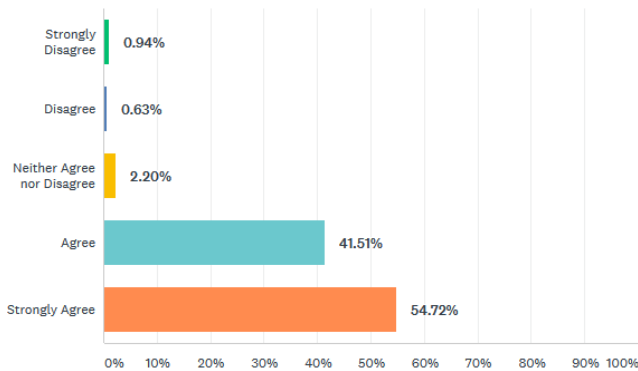




Feedback of participants (318 respondents, 13% of enrolled)

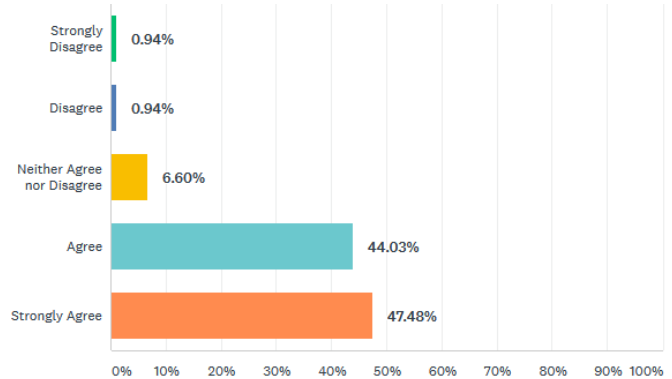
Positive impact of materials: 97% agrees

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The course materials (lectures, videos, documents) have had a positive impact on my learning experience.



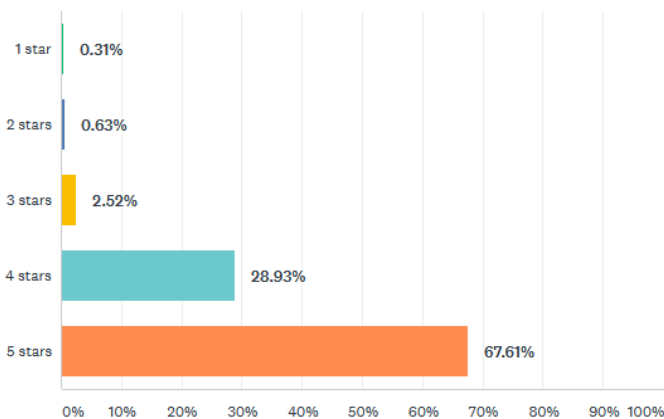
Positive impact of activities: 92 % agrees

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The course activities (discussions, quizzes) have had a positive impact on my learning experience.



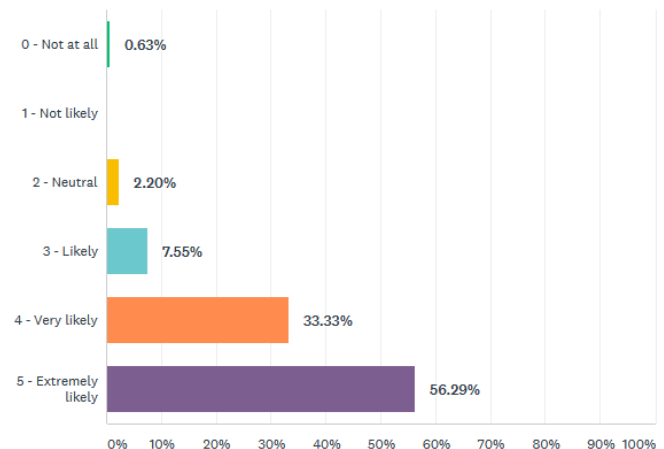
Overall rating: 97% gives 4 - 5 ★

Please give this course an overall rating on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest rating



98 % would recommend it

How likely are you to recommend this course to a friend?



Increased effort in design and engagement of participants

This is another MOOC that devolved in a niche area with tremendous opportunities for impact at micro (families, communities) and macro (government, international organisation) level. The success of this course is related to the fact that, thanks to substantial additional financial and human resources, it was both designed and meticulously moderated by three very motivating coordinators, with weekly video



introductions, very frequent forum exchange, a live wrap-up at the end, community consultations and research-related surveys/polls on participants relationship with technologies. A livelier community dimension ensued, which was taken to a further level when the coordinators created a LinkedIn group (currently operational).

Both an eye-opener and very much needed course

“I had no clue” and “scary” (about the way personal data is handled) are recurring expressions by many participants who had not previously thought about the children’s rights perspective in a digital world, nor had realised the impact that technology has on child development. They feel very grateful to have found an effective way to address their lack of awareness – and not only concerning the children, but themselves as well! More: now, they want to educate others and engage with broader family members, community and volunteer organisations (even au-pairs, scout leaders took the MOOC).

The MOOC also catered to informed participants and practitioners/researchers interested in deepening their knowledge, including child protection professionals working on the development of national COP strategies; individuals in the government and aspiring digital policy makers; field experts in migration, child abuse and modern slavery. Similarly to the above-mentioned audience, they highlighted how important it is to further promote this “excellent” course and reach out to more individuals, teachers, policymakers, children and youth and better prepare them for the challenges and opportunities offered by technology.

As the course was very intense (some working parents stated they stretched themselves to follow the weekly pace, including sleeping less!), the participants appreciated even more the possibility of the continuous access to the materials; many added they will review the resources later, especially because of the richness of practical ones.

Selected comments

INFORMED PARENTING

I am taking this course for my kids, as they are 12 years old. In this digital world I want to be aware of topic like these.

JOINING THE MOVEMENT

It helped me realize there is actually an established pro-privacy/digital rights movement. I feel less lonely and more empowered.

TEACHERS

Digital technology for an older person is a challenge. This course has been an amazing asset for me - not only professionally as I work in the education field but for my own personal experience. I shall always remain grateful for this amazing experience.



MULTIPLE ANGLES

As a mother, personally it will help me be able to monitor my daughter's engagement with digital technology without interfering her privacy to grow as an individual. Professionally, it will help me counsel children digitally wise, impact caretakers with knowledge of how to be engaged in a safe digital technology world and protect their children.

TEENS

As a 17 year old teenager, it helped me to protect myself and use technology more effectively.

RIPPLE EFFECT

I am inspired and empowered! I had the opportunity to present a part of the course to the rest of my colleagues in a staff meeting!

As a trainer of Child Protection Committees this is one of the topics I will include in my trainings.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON CHILDREN

I have become less sceptical towards children in my environment who spend 'too much' time on their lpad or online games. Instead, I am going more into interaction with them and I learn from their experiences and understand also the positive impacts of the use of these technologies.

As a parent I learned in particular to trust my children more, empower them instead of having time restrictions on their devices.

QUALITY OF MOOC

My expectations are very high about this course. Because from my experience GCHR's MOOCs are at the highest level with top lecturers, useful materials.

I really felt the depth and level of expertise on these topics was incredible.

When I first saw the course, I almost dismissed it as "Another marketing ploy/strategy" to sell children toys. Let me be first to admit how wrong I was and how close I came to pass up an opportunity of a life-time. I have not only learned very useful materials from a socio-economic standpoint about the effects of technology on children, but very important facts that I did not know were international laws.

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

I am working on the application of biometrics in humanitarian intervention, so I received better insights on data protection/use of biometrics.