

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

(in Serbian)

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The textbook *The Rights of the Child*, co-authored by Prof. dr Nevena Vučković Šahović and Prof. dr Nevena Petrušić, aims to provide a systematic and comprehensive insight into the corpus of children's rights in both international and national legislation. The authors examine children's rights in the context of human rights, pointing to their specific character. The authors indicate that the issues pertaining to the protection of the rights of the child must be given special attention, particularly in terms of envisaging efficient and effective legal mechanisms for the full implementation of ratified international legal documents in this field.

Structurally, the textbook comprises three distinctive parts. Each part included a number of chapters. In the introductory remarks, the authors focus on the importance of childhood as a developmental age, highlighting the different perceptions of childhood in different societies and cultures. Consequently, legal acts regulating this area are largely affected by the social conditions in a particular environment.

The first part of the textbook, titled *Childhood and Children's Rights*, is dedicated to childhood as a developmental period. In the first chapter, the authors provide an overview of the most important actors in the field of children's rights, including primarily the state authorities, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, national human rights organizations, and individuals. In the following chapters, the authors focus on the international legal instruments relevant to the protection of children's rights, with particular reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

The second part of the textbook, titled *Special Rights of the Child*, includes 9 chapters. In the first chapter, the authors discuss the general measures for implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The second and third chapter (respectively) are dedicated to different definitions on the concept of the child, and the general principles underlying the protection of children's rights (the right to protection from discrimination; the best interest of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the child's right to participate and express opinions on matters concerning child's wellbeing). The fourth

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chapter provides an overview of the most important civil rights of the child. In the fifth chapter, the authors point out to the prevalence of violence against children and elaborate on the basic international and national law mechanisms for the prevention and sanctioning of such violence. This section is of particular importance for law students (as prospective legal professionals and holders of judicial offices) because it enables readers to gain a clear insight into the most important legislative acts aimed at preventing violence against children, as well as to become aware that the civil and criminal law protection against violence against children are part of a universal system of human rights' protection. The sixth chapter is devoted to family environment and alternative measures of child care. In the seventh chapter, thematically relying on the content presented in the previous one, the authors provide an extensive analysis of children's health and social protection, with specific reference to the child's right to social security as one of the most important social protection rights. The eighth chapter deals with the child's right to education, whose exercise and implementation is essential in terms of providing opportunities for the child to acquire the necessary social competences and skills which may be an asset in his life in the society.

In the ninth chapter, the authors discuss the special protection measures for specific categories of children (refugee children, children in armed conflicts, children in conflict and in contact with the law, children from minority groups, children with disabilities), with specific reference to the issues concerning the protection of children from all forms of exploitation as well as the reintegration and rehabilitation of victims of such practices.

The third part of the book is titled *Supervision over the exercise and protection of the rights of the child*. In this part of the textbook, the authors present the international and national mechanisms for supervision and control over the protection of children's rights. In that context, the authors focus on the case law related to the rights of the child and judicial proceedings against the Republic of Serbia before the European Court of Human Rights.

In *References*, the authors provide an extensive list of referential literature, which provides an opportunity for all readers to deepen and expand their knowledge in the field of children's rights, as well as a comprehensive list of all international documents on the rights of the child which are binding for the Republic of Serbia.

The textbook *The Rights of the Child*, co-authored by Prof. dr Nevena Vučković Šahović and Prof. dr Nevena Petrušić is primarily intended for law students. The authors have years of experience in the field of children's rights, which has been generously shared with the target readers. This qualitative asset adds value to this textbook. Yet, given the fact that the authors analyzed a number of practical problems that may arise in the process of exercising and protecting children's rights, this book may be highly beneficial to all legal practitioners dealing with child protection issues.