**Country: Spain**

**Committe: JR UNICEF**

**Agenda Item: Impact of COVID-19 on children**

Spain is a European state in southwestern Europe, with isles in the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. Madrid the capital of Spain, and its largest city. Spain's population number is 47 million and it occupies an area of 504.000.000 km². Spain is the second largest country by population in Western Europe and the fourth largest country in the European continent Spain's average height is 650 m above sea level, which makes it the fifth biggest mountainous country. Tourism, industry and farming became the main pillars of the country’s economy. Spain is currently considered the fourth largest economy in the euro area.

Spain has always had a busy lifestyle with its many museums, ancient cities, history and parks until the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly %80–90 of school-age youth could not physically attend school in more than 160 countries during the first wave of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. In Spain, one of the first measures implemented when cases started increasing was to close all schools and impose a strict home confinement. During the first period of the lockdown (March 14th–April 27th of 2020), referred as “strict lockdown” here in after, only essential activities were allowed, and children were compelled to stay home except for emergency situations. From April 28th to June 21st, children were progressively allowed to leave the household in a very controlled manner and for a limited period per day with no close interactions), during what became referred as the “relaxed lockdown.” Schools remained closed and pupils attended online lectures whenever possible. Children did not return to face-to-face learning until September 2020. Home confinement measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which were particularly stringent for children, may have had harmful effects on the physical and mental health of this particularly sensitive age group. Here in, we aimed to understand the perceived impact of lockdown measures on the mental health and well-being of minors, as reported by parents, but also adolescents and children themselves. We focused on risk perception and attitudes toward lockdown, perceptions of schooling, emotional responses, changes in psychical activity, sleep and eating attitudes, and screen time. COVID-19 crisis can be expected to cause psychological trauma, and steps are needed to address this issue proactively. Digital technologies can be used to enhance social support and facilitate resilience to the detrimental mental health effects of the pandemic; they may also offer an efficient and cost-effective way to provide easy access to mental health care.

The real, lived experiences of children and teenagers must be acknowledged, listened to, and taken seriously by the adults in their lives. That begins with open, honest conversations with parents and teachers about issues that have been avoided for far too long. It means providing parents and caregivers support and equipping schools with resources to identify and help young people in need. It also relies on gathering solid data to understand the extent of the problem. It demands the partnership and commitment of governments everywhere to protect every child so they might live, grow, and learn safely and happily. We need to work together to overcome this issue.