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Strengthening civil society participation in the implementation and monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention

Conference Report

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Table of Abbreviations

CoE	Council of Europe
Conference	International Conference on Strengthening civil society participation in the implementation and monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention, 8-9 April 2019, Strasbourg, France
Child rights IT guidelines	Council of Europe Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment
CSEA	Child sexual exploitation and abuse
CSOs	Civil society organisations
ECHR	European Convention of Human Rights
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
Lanzarote Committee	Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse
Lanzarote Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse
OCSEA	Online child sexual exploitation and abuse
The Strategy	Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021)

Strengthening civil society participation in the implementation and monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention: Conference Report

Introduction

Ending all forms of violence against Children, including sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children is a priority area for action under [the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child \(2016-2021\)](#). To this end, the Council of Europe will promote, monitor and support the implementation of the [Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#) (the Lanzarote Convention). The Lanzarote Convention is the most ambitious and comprehensive international legal instrument for the protection of children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The Lanzarote Convention entered into force in July 2010 and requires Parties to criminalise all forms of sexual offences against children and adopt specific legislation and policies to **prevent** sexual violence, **protect** victims and **prosecute** perpetrators. It also **promotes** national and international cooperation in these areas.

The [Committee of the Parties to the Lanzarote Convention](#) (Lanzarote Committee) monitors the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention in thematic monitoring rounds in which all state Parties to the Lanzarote Convention are monitored at the same time. The Lanzarote Committee adopts recommendations specific to some state parties or applicable to all Parties. [The first monitoring round \(2013-2017\)](#) was dedicated to the protection of children against sexual abuse in the circle of trust. [The second monitoring round \(2017-on-going\)](#) focuses on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs). In addition, the Lanzarote Committee also engages in capacity building, facilitation of collection and exchange of information and good practices. CSO engagement and action to prevent and combat child sexual exploitation and abuse is crucial. The Lanzarote Convention explicitly recognises the role of CSO actors in this respect.¹

This report contains a summary of the promising practices and strategies identified during an international conference that took place in Strasbourg on 8-9 April 2019. The aims of the conference were to:

- familiarise participants with the Council of Europe child rights strategic agenda and work, including the Lanzarote Convention and its monitoring process;
- discuss strategies and ways civil society actors can strengthen the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention at local and national level and develop or deepen their engagement with the Lanzarote Committee; and
- provide opportunities to share experiences, promising practices and lessons learnt with peers at pan European level.

The conference gathered representatives from over 35 organisations, active in 20 member states and was organised in the framework of the following Council of Europe projects:

- [Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Republic of Moldova](#);
- [Responding to Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Georgia-phase I](#);
- [End online child sexual exploitation and abuse @Europe](#);² and
- Protecting children against violence, including sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

¹ For more information see: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/civil-society>

² The Council of Europe gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided for this programme by the Fund to End Violence Against Children.

The Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021)

The [Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child \(2016-2021\)](#), identifies priority areas for action including children's rights in the digital environment and combatting violence against children, several groups are identified as being among the most vulnerable including: children with disabilities, children in alternative care, children affected by migration and children belonging to minority groups. Member States bear the main responsibility to implement the Strategy and uphold the rights of the child but CSOs also play a key role often working at the forefront of activities to raise awareness and provide support to children to realise their rights. As such CSOs can provide valuable insight into the realities faced by children in member states, including in the areas of prevention of and protection from sexual abuse and exploitation.

Participants highlighted that a growing resistance to children's rights, including the right to participation, freedom from corporal punishment, access to sex education and concerning questions of gender had been observed in some member States. Barriers in access to justice for child victims of CSEA had also been observed in several member states, often attributable to lack of knowledge and understanding among law enforcement agencies, judges and prosecutors, as well as a lack of specialisation among these actors. Lack of legal standing for CSOs was also identified as a barrier in access to justice, in particularly for child-victims of CSEA where the parent or legal guardian does not consent to a complaint being registered.

Key challenges identified:

- Growing resistance at society level to uphold the rights of the child to participate and to freedom from discrimination;
- Limited awareness about children's rights in general, the rights of children with particular vulnerability characteristics and CSEA at all levels of society, including among law enforcement agencies, judges and prosecutors;
- Lack of awareness raising activities specifically targeting parliamentarians in order for them to support legislative reform and address subsisting "taboos" in society;
- Lack of or limited training for law enforcement agencies, judges and prosecutors on child-friendly justice and on CSEA to reduce barriers in access to justice.

The Lanzarote Convention: How can CSOs engage in the implementation and the monitoring process?

State Parties to the Lanzarote Convention bear the primary responsibility to implement and then monitor the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention. The Lanzarote Committee is formed of representatives from State Parties (Members) and Observers made up of member States of the Council of Europe that have not yet ratified the Lanzarote Convention, observer States and INGOs that have observer status. Observers participate on an equal basis with State Parties and make a valuable contribution to the work of the Lanzarote Committee including by proposing amendments to recommendations and fully participating in reporting mechanisms.

CSOs can directly contribute to the monitoring process by submitting reports to the Lanzarote Committee, providing comments on progress made for the implementation of recommendations made during previous monitoring rounds and providing information on promising practices identified. Several participants highlighted the importance of an effective co-operation mechanism at national level to ensure the effective implementation of the Lanzarote Convention. Effective co-operation at national level can be facilitated with specific assignation of responsibility to an agency or body charged with monitoring the Lanzarote Convention.

Participation in the monitoring activities of the Lanzarote Committee can be achieved by CSOs submitting reports individually, jointly as part of a CSO coalition or jointly with other stakeholders. Such reports and contributions may be kept confidential upon request from the CSO. Contributions to the monitoring activities can continue beyond simply reporting to the Lanzarote Committee by raising awareness about the Lanzarote Committee recommendations and to share information with the Lanzarote Committee regarding the implementation of recommendations during monitoring rounds and follow-up.

Key challenges to CSO engagement in the monitoring process:

- Insufficient or lack of co-operation for reporting and monitoring activities where no multi-stakeholder body exists at national level;
- Limited or lack of awareness among CSOs on how to contribute to the monitoring process of the Lanzarote Committee;

Promising practices

ECPAT International holds observer status at the Lanzarote Committee. As an Observer, ECPAT International actively contributes to the monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention and can bring issues raised by its member organisations to the attention of the Lanzarote Committee.

More information: <https://www.ecpat.org/>

Prosecution: Sexual offences against children

The Lanzarote Convention criminalises both offline and online child sexual exploitation and abuse. Given the unprecedented numbers of reports being processed by hotlines and helplines it is urgent to improve awareness and understanding surrounding such forms of exploitation and abuse. According to the Internet Watch Foundation recent trends show that victims of online child sexual exploitation and abuse are largely girls aged 11-13, although boys and girls of all ages are victims of this crime each year. Live streaming, self-produced images and grooming were identified as among the key issues for policy makers and law enforcement due to the fact that they can raise evidential and definitional challenges. The lack of digital traceability of live streaming and difficulties determining when a behaviour goes beyond standard social interaction and becomes grooming demonstrate the difficulties faced by all actors involved to identify instances of this crime and initiate investigations with a view to prosecuting perpetrators. These challenges can be accentuated by conflicting interests between the right to privacy and the right to protection.

The Lanzarote Convention provides comprehensive definitions of behaviours and activities constitutive of CSEA, for example where child prostitution is concerned, simply promising a child in exchange for sexual favours is sufficient for the crime to be constituted. Many of the crimes defined in the Lanzarote Convention are crimes of intention but this is not always reflected in national law.

Key challenges to strengthen prosecution

- Lack of clarity in national law and policy regarding the types of activities and behaviours that constitute sexual exploitation and abuse of a child can lead to the criminalisation of behaviours that are simply harmful but not constitutive of a crime – this is particularly acute where self-produced images are concerned;
- Lack of training among professionals, including law enforcement officers, results in limited knowledge and understanding of the definitions applicable to CSEA;
- Lack of coherent and consistent terminology to ensure results in inconsistent or arbitrary application of criminal law across member states;
- Legislative lacuna preventing reporting on OCSEA and the initiation of proceedings by a CSO on the child's behalf where the parent is not consenting;
- Inaccurate reporting leads to high numbers of reports being passed to law enforcement with a risk that law enforcement capacities to investigate are simply saturated.
- Where the child is under 18 but over the age of sexual consent, defining and demonstrating lack of consent can be a challenge, especially in cases of child marriage or children with disabilities.

Promising practice

Internet Watch Foundation provides a range of services to contribute to the removal of child sexual abuse material from the internet through the provision of reporting mechanisms, co-operating with Governments and Industry to improve standards and by co-ordinating with law enforcement agencies. The Internet Watch Foundation also holds observer status at the Lanzarote Committee.

More information: <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>

Protection: Upholding the rights of the child-victim

The Lanzarote Convention provides for protective measures and victim assistance, including during investigation and prosecution. Specific training, sufficient resources and adequate law and policies can be identified as three key pillars to ensure holistic responses. Innovative provisions of the Lanzarote Convention include mandatory reporting of instances of CSEA by professionals, provision of reporting mechanisms and obligations to remove the perpetrator from the child's circle to prevent re-victimisation. Child-friendly procedures identified in the Lanzarote Convention include guidelines on interactions with prosecutors including limiting the number of interviews. One illustration of how mandatory reporting could be implemented in practice would be to require health care professionals to refer a child to child protection services for a risk assessment in case of child pregnancy.

Providing safety to the child-victim must be the foremost priority in all actions taken. Particular difficulties arise where the child is removed from the home as a provisional measure of protection, given that a high number of children suffer abuse and exploitation in institutional settings. Other barriers in access to protection include lack of confidentiality of complaints, resulting in a risk of exposure and re-victimisation of the child-victim and their family.

To determine the appropriate professional behaviours and protective measures to be taken, stakeholders must take account of the emotional trauma experienced by the child, particularly where the perpetrator was a person of trust for the child. Investigators and prosecutors should also bear in mind that sexual abuse is often not penetrative and there will often be no physical trace of the abuse on the child's body. Memory gaps and evasive memories are common responses to such trauma, as the child and the perpetrator may have been the only witnesses of the abuse. It is also not uncommon for a child to revise or revoke their testimony, therefore it is important to take testimony promptly according to a proper methodology to maintain the evidential value of the testimony and avoid repetitive questioning of the child. Forensic interviews and therapy should therefore be given separately to ensure the reliability of the evidence gathered through the interview and the integrity of the victim-support.

Key challenges the protection of child victims:

- Repetitive questioning of the child can result in re-traumatization of the child having to relive the trauma each time they recount it.
- Lack of standardised procedures results in arbitrary practices in evidence gathering and increases the risk that the child will withdraw or change their testimony;
- Lack of co-operation between CSOs and state authorities resulting in fractured service provision to the child, the absence of adequate state services often means the child can only rely on support from CSO run services which may not be sustainable or well resourced;
- Limited training and awareness among teachers and other professionals involved in child-protection can result in signs of victimisation going un-noticed and unreported;
- Lack of confidentiality during proceedings can result in the re-traumatization of the child-victim due to disclosure of their identity and personal data.

Promising practices

Reliable Future Youth NGO runs a Social Rehabilitation Centre for Children & Youth – victims of violence and crime (the Centre). The centre is specialised to focus on children in rural and urban areas who suffer from simple or multiple traumas such as psychological or sexual abuse, traumatic events as well as the loss of parents, other relatives, or peer pressure. The Centre is made up of a multi-disciplinary team including psychologists, social workers, educators and lawyers. The Organisation also runs a child helpline to provide advice and referrals to children and parents.

More information: <http://www.reliablefuture.org/>

NGO Children Support Center aims to ensure the psychological well-being of children by providing professional comprehensive assistance to children and families. In 2015, the Center launched a campaign "*Protect and Respect Me*", focused on preventing sexual abuse in schools. The aim of the program was to train teachers and other school specialists to notice the early signs of sexual abuse, to create an intervention plan and, in collaboration with outside specialists, to ensure that necessary help would be provided to the child concerned. Over 18 schools have participated in the campaign. The center also offers an e-learning platform for parents and specialists on child sexual abuse prevention through which 200 parents and specialists have been trained.

More information: <http://www.pvc.it/it/>

International Children's Center (ICC) was set up to promote the physical, mental and social well-being of children of all ages. ICC provides training to health care professionals to help them recognise the signs of sexual abuse among children (e.g. in cases of child pregnancy). Other training activities include training for lawyers on international law provisions. In addition, ICC runs a project to sensitise companies and businesses working in the Tourism Industry to promote child-friendly tourism and fight sexual abuse in Tourism. ICC also runs an online reporting channel, provides victim support through co-operation with the bar association and implements strategic litigation to highlight gaps in national law.

More information: http://www.icc.org.tr/index_eng.php

Prevention: Awareness raising and other measures

Member States are not only obliged to protect child-victims and prosecute perpetrators of CSEA, they are also obliged to implement preventive measures. Such measures include awareness raising among all levels of society and education and training among children and adults including parents and professionals.

In order to prevent victimisation, awareness-raising and educational activities should start in early childhood before the child is exposed to risks of CSEA. Lack of data and research on prevalence were identified as a challenge to effective action to prevent certain crimes and behaviours. From the available data increases in online CSEA were identified as a growing trend including instances of blackmail, extortion and “sexting”. Preventive measures should therefore seek to address these specific forms of CSEA. Sources suggest that children are more likely to make a disclosure to their peers than to their parents, therefore awareness raising among peer groups about CSEA and where to seek help in case of victimisation was identified as vital.

Co-operation with private sector actors, including internet service providers, telecoms providers, and cinemas were identified as promising practices for awareness raising. Interactive tools for parents and children to learn about internet safety and designing awareness raising tools for and with children were also identified as promising practices. To fight institutionalised or societal victim-blaming, knowledge and understanding of what constitutes CSEA must be improved among parents and professionals. Ways of achieving this are to adopt standard operating procedures or protocols for victim identification and referral, by encouraging dialogue between parents/teachers and children to reduce the taboos surrounding sexuality that may prevent a disclosure and to avoid victim-blaming in both private and institutional settings.

Key challenges to the prevention of CSEA

- Increasing trends in unhealthy and harmful behaviours both offline and online among children which in turn increase the risks of victimisation and reduce resilience to recognise exploitative situation;
- Lack of understanding about children and adolescent’s behaviour among parents and professionals can result in criminalisation and blaming of a child for a behaviour that is, in reality, child sexual abuse or exploitation;
- Lack of awareness among parents, teachers and other professionals about the signs and symptoms of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation can result in the child-victim not being referred to support services and a lack of reporting.

Promising practices

eSlovensko initiated a project called *Sheeplive* in 2007. Since the start of the project, 24 Fairy tales have been developed to raise awareness among children about online dangers such as grooming, photo abuse, misuse of personal data, photos, sexting, harassment and many more. The project focuses on children and youth aged between 5 and 12 years old. All videos are available on a dedicated internet portal which includes videos in many different language versions.

More information: www.sheeplive.eu

La Strada Moldova launched a campaign in 2017 entitled “What is Child sexual abuse online?”. Through his campaign, La Strada Moldova has developed short videos to raise awareness about the risk of sexting and sextortion. It also contributes to research in the area of Children’s Behaviour Online.

More information: <http://lastrada.md/>

Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, in partnership with the three largest telecoms providers in Croatia, established “The Charter on Protection of Children on Internet”. The charter includes an agreement to promote awareness, finance a safer internet centre and run an online education platform for professionals. The online education materials include: peer to peer webinars for professionals, an online survey for parents and three “internet detective” modules for children to learn about OCSEA, how to recognize and report it. These modules are taught to children in co-operation with law enforcement.

More information: <https://www.icmec.org/>

Child Rights Centre Albania (CRCA) runs an online reporting portal in the form of a National Platform for Safer Internet for Children. Reports received by the platform concern cases of child pornography, violence or inappropriate content. CRCA works in co-operation with internet service providers to secure the freezing of content and also with law enforcement agencies to register reports of abuse. The platform also provides awareness raising and educational resources for children, parents, teachers, child protection officers. With this website, the CRCA also provides videos to raise children’s awareness about the dangers on the internet. ACEC also supervised a report about child online safety called “Crimes Without Punishment?”. The data reported and collected came from its own platform.

More information: <https://www.crca.al/en>

Reporting portal: www.ISIGURT.al

Empowering children to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse through child participation

Article 9 1) of the Lanzarote Convention provides that states shall encourage child participation in the development and implementation of policies and other initiatives to prevent and combat CSEA. Therefore, child participation in the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention should be encouraged. [Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec\(2012\)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18](#) highlights that member states should provide the means, the space, the opportunity and, where necessary, the support for children to participate in decision making on matters affecting them. CSOs can promote and facilitate child participation in the monitoring of the Lanzarote convention by holding child consultations and submitting reports to the Lanzarote Convention.

Child participation is also a key tool to facilitate awareness raising among children in a safe and constructive environment. By informing children about their rights, the consequences in cases of violations of their rights and empowering them to express their views, child participation also demonstrates to children that they can be actors of change. Child consultations can provide important opportunities for children to make a disclosure, particularly where the consultation or workshop is the first time the child has the knowledge and understanding of CSEA in order to identify it in their own or a peer's life.

Challenges to effective child-participation in the monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention encountered include difficulties for children to understand abstract concepts such as the "Council of Europe" or the "Lanzarote Convention". Ensuring representative participation among girls, boys and children belonging to minorities was also identified as a challenge. Relevant information and messages was also highlighted as important: children reportedly seek to have more discussion about the risks associated to self-generated content and the ways to resolve un-wanted sharing or exploitation of such images.

Key challenges to child participation

- Difficulties explaining abstract concepts to children such as what the Council of Europe and the Lanzarote Convention are and how they are relevant to children;
- Ensuring a gender balance in child consultations due to misconceptions particularly among boys that they cannot be victims of this crime;
- Lack of awareness raising in schools as an integrated part of the curriculum, meaning that awareness raising by teachers is often provided in reaction to an incident;
- Lack of understanding and digital literacy among parents can result in them creating social media accounts on behalf of their underage children without fully appreciating the risks or how to protect their child on these platforms;
- Lack of involvement of children the development of awareness raising materials often results in them being ill-adapted, addressing out of date trends in behaviour and sometimes targeting the wrong age group.

Promising practices

Child Rights Information Centre (CRIC) prepared a report entitled "Children's report on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the online environment" in contribution to the Lanzarote Committee monitoring round. This report was prepared with the participation of 20 girls and 3 boys aged between 13-17 years old from 14 regions in the Republic of Moldova. The report covers two main themes: "*Prevention based on education / national curriculum*" and "*Prevention campaigns on sexual exploitation in the online environment*".

More information: <http://drepturilecopilului.md/index.php/en/>

Public Health Foundation ran consultations with children on the risks of the digital environment to contribute to the Lanzarote Committee monitoring round. In this context, 29 children from 9 schools in Tbilisi participated. Child participants were familiarised with the Lanzarote Convention and discussed specific risks on the Internet with a psychologist or teacher and completed a questionnaire. According to the report, children are generally informed about the risks of bullying, but not about other forms of online abuse. Cases of abuse in schools are still not taken into account.

More information: <http://phf.org.ge/ka/>

Child Rights Centre together with Children's Club DX and children from school parliaments in 3 schools in Belgrade jointly prepared a report on children's awareness of the risks of sexual abuse and exploitation via internet and protection available in Serbia. The report was prepared on the basis of workshops, implemented in accordance with the methodology provided by the Lanzarote Committee Secretariat. 15 child members of the Club DX and 67 members of pupils' parliaments from three schools in Belgrade were involved. The workshops were adapted to the age of the children (13-17 years) and took especially vulnerable groups into account, including children from Roma and migrant families at high risk of discrimination. Children learnt about the importance of taking a screen shot of messages or disturbing content in order to be able to report the abusive content to the police. Very few children mentioned that they had seen a campaign, video, poster, ad or other awareness raising material on these topics and a considerable number of children said they did not know of any helpline number to call in such situations.

More information: <http://cpd.org.rs/?lang=en>

Women's Consortium facilitated child consultations to contribute to the Lanzarote Committee monitoring round. In this context children were invited to participate through an open announcement. In total, 10 boys and 10 girls aged 13 to 18 participated in the consultations. The children came from 15 different schools from different parts of Ukraine, participation of these different groups of children was made possible through co-operation with the NGO Coalition "Child Rights in Ukraine ". Children were invited to discuss the theme of protecting children from sexual exploitation and online abuse. These discussions raised various issues, such as the fact that the media is not sufficiently protective of the information presented and children. That national education campaigns are rare and do not reach the designated targets and that children are still insufficiently aware of the risks associated with the use of social networks. In addition to these contributions, the children produced various materials and posted them on their respective school websites.

More information: <http://wcu-network.org.ua/>

CSO participation in Council of Europe activities to prevent and combat child sexual exploitation and abuse

The Council of Europe is dedicated to engage and cooperate with civil society to combat all forms of violence against children, and in particular to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and abuse both online and offline. As well as participating in the monitoring and implementation of the Lanzarote Convention, CSOs can take part in awareness raising campaigns such as the campaign *Start to Talk* focused on preventing sexual violence in sport and the campaign *Free to Speak: Safe to learn* which focuses on democratic schools and education.

In addition, CSO participation and contributions to the annual European Day on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse (18 November) are absolutely central.

The 2019 edition of the European Day will focus on child participation. Other opportunities for civil society participation include in the context of co-operation projects notably:

- [Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Republic of Moldova](#);
- [Responding to Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Georgia-phase I](#);
- [End online child sexual exploitation and abuse @Europe](#); and
- Protecting children against violence, including sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

CSOs can raise awareness among policy makers and institutions at national level through participation and reporting to international monitoring bodies, such as the Lanzarote Convention. Such participation is also an important opportunity to raise awareness at regional and international level of the realities faced on the ground, including by providing a balanced picture of the policies and practices in place to prevent and combat CSEA.

Key challenges

- Lack of or limited availability of awareness raising materials and tools, including tools in national languages, increases challenges faced by CSOs in participating in Council of Europe activities;
- Contributions to Council of Europe activities is limited due to lack of awareness among CSOs on the ways and means to participate and contribute to activities, including contributions to the Lanzarote Committee monitoring activities;
- Precarious or limited funding for CSO activities also raises barriers to participation in Council of Europe activities.

The agenda for future engagement with CSO and next steps

Throughout the conference, participants were invited to identify recommendations and expectations to improve CSO participation in and contribution to the implementation and monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention, These are set out below.

CSO engagement in the implementation and monitoring process

- All members of society, including CSOs should be made aware of CSEA and the provisions of the Lanzarote Convention, including among young children, pre-teens, teenagers, parents and teachers;
- Capacity building opportunities for CSO should be encouraged and developed;
- Co-operation between CSOs should be encouraged to facilitate exchanges of promising practices, useful materials and to mutualise resources for reporting and monitoring the Lanzarote Convention;
- Child-friendly tools and accessible materials to explain the Lanzarote Convention and the role of its monitoring body should be developed to facilitate awareness-raising initiatives, implementation of child consultations and other activities among state and non-state actors;
- CSOs and national authorities should be encouraged to develop specific programs in order to develop and improve knowledge about violence, and specially about the topic of OCSEA.

Prosecution

- Harmful sexual behaviours among children should be dealt with through educational and public health responses, not as criminal behaviours requiring prosecution;
- Children should be supported to participate in the prosecution and investigation, by receiving complete disclosure from a child, law enforcement officers are more likely to identify and remove all copies of abuse online, to end victimisation and help the child start the journey to recovery;
- Awareness raising initiatives should include practical tips to improve investigations and prosecutions such as how to save a screen shot of an offensive images or conversations to pass onto investigators.

Protection

- Action should be taken to strengthen safeguards and ensure the confidentiality of a victim's identity and to ensure children can report abuse even in the absence of parents or legal guardians;
- In the absence of state action, strengthen the co-operation between CSO and state authorities to provide integrated services and victim assistance or to provide of services.

Prevention

- Communication strategies and awareness raising materials for national authorities and CSO should be developed in consultation with children and should include information not only on how to recognise CSEA but also on what to do when a child is a victim of CSEA;
- Awareness raising materials should be evidence based and developed through child participation, including children from vulnerable groups such as children with disabilities;
- Develop tools and information in collaboration with CSOs to adapt materials to geographical specificities;
- Special attention should be given to raise awareness and resilience among children with specific vulnerabilities, including children with disabilities.

Child participation

- Child participation in the implementation and monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention should be encouraged and facilitated;
- Child consultations should take place in a safe environment and involve practical information on how to stay safe online and how to report abusive or harmful content and conversations to appropriate authorities and services;
- Feedback should be provided to children who participate in the monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention especially regarding the impact their participation will have on the overall monitoring report and recommendations.

CSO participation in COE activities

- CSOs should contribute to the European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (18 November) to raise awareness at all levels of society;
- Support should be provided to CSOs to exchange examples of good and promising practices, for example through the creation of an online platform.

Annex 1: Reference Documents

Strengthening civil society participation in the implementation and monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention

- [Conference programme](#)

Council of Europe Conventions and standards and policy tools

- [Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse \(Lanzarote Convention\)](#)
- [Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime \(Cybercrime Convention\)](#)
- [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2018\)07 to member States on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment](#)
- [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2012\)2 of the Committee of Ministers on participation of children and young people under the age of 18](#)
- [Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly justice adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 November 2010](#)

Reports and documents of the Lanzarote Committee

- [1st implementation report on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse \(2015\)](#)
- [2nd implementation report protection of children against sexual abuse in the circle of trust, the strategies \(2018\)](#)
- [Interpretative Opinion on the applicability of the Lanzarote Convention to sexual offences against children facilitated through the use of ICTs](#)
- [Guidelines for Implementation of Child Participation in the 2nd thematic monitoring round of the Lanzarote Convention on “The protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies \(ICTs\)”](#)

Useful guidance, tools and publications

- [WePROTECT Model National Response](#)
- [WePROTECT Global Threat Assessment 2018](#)
- [European Day against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: tools and Materials](#)
- [Protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse: Child-friendly, multidisciplinary and interagency response inspired by the Barnahus model \(2018\)](#)
- [How to convey child-friendly information to children in migration: a handbook for frontline professionals \(2018\)](#)
- [It’s our world: children’s views on how to protect their rights in the digital environment \(2017\)](#)
- [Council of Europe Internet Literacy handbook \(2017\)](#)
- [Council of Europe Child Participation Assessment Tool \(2016\)](#)
- [European day](#)

Council of Europe projects

- [End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @Europe](#)
- [Responding to child sexual exploitation and abuse in Georgia, phase I](#)
- [Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Republic of Moldova](#)
- [Free to speak, Safe to learn campaign](#)
- [Start to talk campaign](#)