



**Building a Europe  
for and with children**  
**Construire une Europe  
pour et avec les enfants**



## **Ending all Forms of Violence against Children by 2030: The Council of Europe's contribution to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals**

### **Information Note - September 2016**

*The following constitutes a brief overview of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in relation to ending violence against children as well as an illustration of the many ways in which the Council of Europe's work contributes to the 2030 Agenda and the realisation of these goals.*

#### **What are the Sustainable Development Goals?**

On 1 January 2016, the World began implementing the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, an ambitious and universal vision, based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as 169 associated targets, which are all integrated, indivisible and interlinked.

This agenda, adopted on 25 September 2015, seeks to put an end to poverty, and facilitate sustainable development, by the year 2030. Building on the success of the Millennium Development Goals, it addresses the three pillars of sustainable development, namely the social, economic and environmental, in an integrated and crosscutting manner. The Goals are the end-result of a process that involved input from Governments, civil society, private sector and citizens, including children. They apply to all countries, which need to build the SDGs into their national policies and plans in order to achieve them. Governments have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review, at the national, regional and global levels in relation to the progress made in implementing the Goals and targets over the coming 15 years.

Efforts to work in partnership and with stakeholders for their implementation are at the forefront of the Agenda. Political leadership, guidance, follow-up, review of progress of the SDGs' implementation at the global level is ensured through the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The Forum will focus on “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world” in 2017 (Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17); “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies” in 2018 (Goals 6,7,11, 12, 15 and 17) and “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality” in 2019 (Goals 4,8,10,13, 16 and 17).

#### **Ending Violence against Children**

The 2030 Agenda includes a specific target to end all forms of violence against children (16.2). Abuse, neglect and exploitation of children are also mainstreamed across several other targets. In the spirit of an integrated approach, it is vital to tackle violence against children through broader efforts, such as the promotion of high-quality education, and gender equality. The following goals and targets are particularly relevant for eradicating violence against children:



#### **Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all**

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation for cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

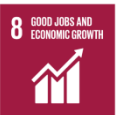
4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.



#### **Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and in private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation.



#### **Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all forms.



#### **Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**

11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children (...) and persons with disabilities.



#### **Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice to all.

16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.

16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence



#### **Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development**

## The Council of Europe's contribution to the 2030 Agenda and SDGs' targets to end violence against children

The Council of Europe is the European continent's leading human rights organisation. Its action focuses on the promotion and protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law and, as such, it entails the promotion and protection of the rights of over 150 million children in Europe. Recognising the intrinsic links between sustainable development and the protection of human rights, the Council of Europe is committed to working with and supporting its 47 member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda through a wide range of actions:

- Fostering relevant changes to national legal frameworks and adoption of policies, through **standards and norms** applicable at pan-European level or wider, which may also act as benchmarks for monitoring State's progress,
- Providing **guidance and support** for the implementation of these standards, through recommendations, guidelines and resolutions of its various mechanisms and bodies,
- Ascertaining States' level of implementation and compliance through **monitoring bodies and committees**,
- **Constituting a platform for fostering co-operation** in and between member States at all levels, as well as the exchange of good practice,
- Assisting in the **collection of data, information and good practice** for the promotion and progress reviews of the SDGs,
- **Funding projects and activities** whose results bring along the necessary outcomes at national or regional level, in line with the SDGs, including with the involvement of children as well as other national and international stakeholders.

The Council of Europe is actively engaged in the eradication of all forms of violence against children at pan-European level. "A life free from violence" is one of the five key priority areas of its third Strategy for the Rights of the Child for the period 2016-2021, which was adopted in 2016.

The Council of Europe Policy Guidelines on Integrated National Strategies for the Protection of Children from Violence aim to be a source of inspiration for States striving to adopt a holistic approach to violence against children and to guarantee their children a childhood free from violence. The guidelines contain detailed proposals on how to develop an integrated national strategy on the rights of the child and the eradication of violence against children. The strategy is defined as a multidisciplinary and systematic framework integrated into the national planning process, rooted in the UNCRC and bringing together all stakeholders.

## Examples of relevant frameworks and actions to end violence against children



### Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe's Resolution Towards a framework of competences for democratic citizenship stressed the need for quality education in democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural dialogue.

In April 2016, Ministers of Education of the member states have asked the Council of Europe to take a regional role in measuring progress towards common long-term objectives on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education, in line with global efforts to make progress towards Target 4.7 of SDG 4. The Council of Europe has developed a Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which has been followed up by educational games aimed at pupils, as well as lesson plans and teaching materials. It has also agreed upon a Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture.



### Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

The Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) requires States to condemn all forms of discrimination and violence against women, including girls under the age of 18, and to take the necessary legislative and other measures to prevent it. It requires States to take steps to include teaching materials on matters of gender-equality (Article 4(1)). Follow-up on the implementation of the Convention is ensured by its monitoring bodies, GREVIO and the Committee of the Parties.

The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-17 has as its central goal the empowerment of women and girls, and hence the effective realisation of gender equality. In particular one of its five strategic objectives is preventing and combating violence against women and girls. Additionally, the exchange of good practices on gender equality education is promoted by the Gender Equality Commission through its Compilation of good practices.

The Council of Europe is engaged in the elimination of harmful practices, such as child early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation, the latter being addressed specifically under the Istanbul convention and on-going work of the Steering Committee for Human Rights. Female genital mutilation is considered a form of torture under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and thus subject to the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights.



### Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

The European Social Charter sets a minimum age of employment for occupations that are considered dangerous or unhealthy (Article 7(2)). Its compliance is monitored on a regular basis by the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR).

Forced labour is forbidden under Article 4(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The often closely-related phenomenon of human trafficking is also encompassed by Article 4, as well as by the set of measures set out in the Convention on action against trafficking in human beings. The

latter makes particular reference to children's vulnerability in trafficking, and requires States to take special account of their need for special protection and assistance. Its implementation is monitored by an independent body, GRETA and a Committee of the Parties.



## **Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

The right to life is protected under Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights, while freedom from torture and inhuman and degrading treatment is encompassed by Article 3. These rights are enjoyed by adults and children alike, and protect them against violence. The European Social Charter, moreover, makes particular mention of the need to protect children and young persons against violence or exploitation (Article 17(1)(b)).

The Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Lanzarote Convention) sets out specific measures to protect children and young people against sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The Lanzarote Committee issues regular reports on the implementation of the Convention by the State Parties and facilitates the collection, analysis and exchange of information and good practice to build States' capacity against such abuses.

The Council of Europe has undertaken several highly successful awareness-raising initiatives, such as the ONE in FIVE campaign, with the active involvement of the Parliamentary Assembly, or the "Underwear Rule" campaign, focusing on children and parents. The 18<sup>th</sup> of November marks the annual European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, which aims to raise awareness, facilitate open discussion, and promote the Lanzarote Convention.

The Council of Europe has consistently supported a ban on corporal punishment in the resolutions of both the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly. The campaign "Raise your hand against smacking" aimed at raising awareness of the matter. Putting an end to corporal punishment remains a priority within the 2016-21 Strategy.

The digital era, in particular, presents new risks in terms of children's exposure to violence. The Budapest Convention on Cybercrime can act as a key tool here, through the work of the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY). The Council has also initiated a No Hate Speech Campaign, which continues to this day, while a Parliamentary Assembly Resolution on Preventing the radicalisation of children and young people by fighting the root causes, recognised firmly that children subject to radicalisation were victims of violence. The Council has also done work to raise children's awareness of their rights and risks online; it will continue to do so as a key priority under the 2016-21 Strategy.

Equal access to justice is promoted through the Council of Europe's Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice, while the Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies (2016-2019) provides an impetus for human rights-centred education, combating stereotypes, and effective integration measures.

### **Further Information**

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/children>

<https://www.endviolenceagainstchildren.org/>

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>