



Building a Europe
for and with children

Construire une Europe
pour et avec les enfants



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by the Chairpersons of the Lanzarote Committee and of the PACE Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Environment

1 in 5 girls and 1 in 7 boys globally will become a [victim](#) of child sexual abuse or exploitation before they turn 18. These figures are striking, but our knowledge about the nature of this phenomenon or how to address it is still very limited. As Chairpersons of the Committee of Parties to the Lanzarote Convention and the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Environment of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, we recognise the urgent need for comprehensive, evidence-based policy making and robust data collection in the fight against child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

The development of laws, policies, and practices to prevent and respond to child sexual exploitation and abuse must be rooted in solid evidence-based decision-making. While we have made progress in raising awareness and strengthening legal frameworks, the lack of consistent and comprehensive data remains a major barrier to improving protection and support for victims and survivors.

Evidence-based policy making ensures that strategies are not only responsive to emerging challenges but also tailored to the specific needs of children and communities. It helps to assess the effectiveness of current measures and identify gaps in services or areas where children are at increased risk.

We urge States to prioritise the collection of accurate, comprehensive, and disaggregated data on child sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes data on the nature and scope of the crime, trends over time, the demographics of both victims and perpetrators, as well as the response of law enforcement, social services, and judicial systems.

Key to this effort is the establishment of centralised data collection systems that are aligned with international standards. We highlight the importance of fostering better coordination between governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations, and international institutions to ensure data is consistent, comprehensive, and used effectively.

Given the cross-border nature of child sexual exploitation and abuse, especially in the digital age when so many sexual offences against children are committed online where territorial jurisdiction is not always easily determined, it is imperative that countries work together. We encourage States to engage in international cooperation to facilitate the exchange of information and harmonise data collection methodologies.

It is critical that ongoing research efforts into child sexual exploitation and abuse are adequately funded and supported. We encourage States to invest in independent research that evaluates the effectiveness of prevention and intervention strategies.

As we continue our efforts to combat child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, we must remain steadfast in our commitment to data-driven, child-centred policies. Together, we can build a world that is safer for all children.