



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



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English

VC1840/EndOCSEA@Europe PS2

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Title	End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @ Europe
Budget	849,041€
Implementation	Children's Rights Division
Duration	01/07/2018 – 31/12/2020 (30 months)
Beneficiaries	All 47 Council of Europe member states Focus countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine



**End Violence
Against Children**

THE FUND

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

New information and communication technologies (ICTs) provide an environment for children to enjoy and exercise their rights. At the same time, the use of ICTs expose children to risks to their safety, security and privacy, particularly risks of online child sexual exploitation and abuse (hereinafter OCSEA).

The [Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child \(2016-2021\)](#) identifies the rights of the child in the digital environment as a priority area for action by Council of Europe bodies and committees as well as by member states, supporting an improved implementation of global and European regional standards to end OCSEA.

Numerous challenges have been identified in this area, including the need for:

- a comprehensive and up to date understanding of OCSEA among decision-makers and competent authorities among Council of Europe member States;
- policy and legislative reforms to address OCSEA and the specific risks through the development of a comprehensive legal framework to investigate offences and ensure the protection of children, developed with child participation, in accordance with the WeProtect Model National Response;
- strengthened interagency cooperation between competent authorities at national level;
- effective capacity building for law enforcement and judiciary;
- integrated services to ensure effective investigation, prosecution and support to child victims; and
- efficient networking and international cooperation against OCSEA at pan-European level.

The available evidence shows that the production and distribution of child sexual abuse material transcends national boundaries meaning that an international co-ordinated response to this crime is necessary.¹ Perpetrators are constantly adapting their use of networking sites and Darknet technologies to seek to avoid detection, reporting and prosecution. The Committee of the Parties to the Convention for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Committee) and international law enforcement agencies have identified online solicitation, sexual extortion, sexting and self-generated content amongst the most worrying trends of OCSEA today. Interagency responses and global initiatives such as the WeProtect Global Alliance become all the more crucial to prevent and combat OCSEA.

OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The project will address the contextual challenges identified at pan-European and country level in beneficiary countries by promoting, facilitating and supporting national efforts and actions to prevent and combat child sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs. Actions will support global efforts in this area, the implementation of relevant international and European standards, in particular the Council of Europe [Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#) (Lanzarote Convention), and 8 of the capabilities identified in the [WePROTECT Model National Response](#).²

The project includes 3 mutually reinforcing components, each aimed at:

- 1) setting up enabling environments for cross-sector, multidisciplinary collaboration at national and regional levels, through strengthening national governance structures

¹ NCMEC and Thorn Research Report: *Production and Active Trading of Child Sexual Exploitation Images Depicting Identified Victims* (2018)

² Capability 1 – Leadership, Capability 2 - Research, Analysis and Monitoring, Capability 3 Legislation , Capability 4 Dedicated Law Enforcement, Capability 5 - Judiciary and Prosecutors, Capability 8 End-to-end Support, Capability 13 Education Programme Capability 14 – child participation

- and conducting situation analysis of OCSEA risks and responses in national and pan-European contexts;
- 2) supporting legislative and procedural reforms, training and improved capacities of law enforcement officials, judiciary and prosecutors and promoting multi-disciplinary interagency cooperation for end-to-end support for victims;
 - 3) addressing societal capabilities with emphasis on awareness-raising, education of key target groups³ and empowerment of children.

Project Impact	The rights of children are protected through effective multi-national, interdisciplinary and cross-sectorial cooperation and child-friendly measures to prevent and combat child sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs (OCSEA) at pan-European level
Intermediate and immediate outcomes	<p>Countries have robust national tools to prosecute perpetrators of violence and maintain and restore survivors rights; Communities protect children from violence and respond to the needs of survivors by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthened action to combat OCSEA through improved cooperation, policy and strategy development at national and regional level <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Decision-makers are aware of OCSEA threats and the implications for the rule of law/Human rights and identify strategic priorities; 1.2 Interagency and multi-stakeholder cooperation, policies and strategies are developed, strengthened and promoted in focus countries, experiences are shared at pan-European level; 1.3 Policy dialogue and cooperation is strengthened at international and European level through collaboration within existing Council of Europe structures and cooperation between and with international and regional organisations. 2. Enhanced knowledge, skills and capacities for effective and successful investigation, prosecution and conviction of OCSEA <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Law enforcement capacities to lead, support and coordinate OCSEA investigations are improved; 2.2 Criminal justice capabilities regarding OCSEA cases are improved; 2.3 Interagency cooperation for the protection of victims is improved by sensitizing relevant stakeholders and through sharing of promising practices. 3. Increased awareness and capacities to prevent OCSEA <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Children, parents, professionals and parliamentarians have an improved understanding of OCSEA and actions taken to prevent and report OSCEA 3.2 Capacities of civil society organisations to prevent and combat OCSEA are strengthened.
Key activities	<p><i>Mappings, reviews and research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baseline mapping of COE member states to identify current



³ Parliamentarians, professionals, civil society and community participants (NGOs, parents, educators, child service providers) and social service providers.

	<p>trends, promising practices and challenges faced including recommendations to strengthen responses to OCSEA at pan-European level;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparative review of existing mechanisms for collective action against OCSEA at pan-European level; - Review of existing training strategies, materials and programmes available for law enforcement agencies, judiciary and prosecutors on OCSEA, child-friendly practices and e-evidence in pilot countries; - Detailed gap analysis reports through fact-finding visits and in-country events to provide technical support in pilot countries. <p><i>Policy and strategy support activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional activities and events to increase awareness of OCSEA threats among decision-makers; - Development/ updating of multi-sectorial policies, protocols and strategies to prevent and prosecute online violence against children and support survivors in at least 2 pilot countries; - Technical support to review capacities of law enforcement agencies, taking into account the need for child-friendly/victim-focused investigations and prosecutions of OCSEA (including through policies, Standard Operating Procedures and capacity building); - Technical support to review training materials for judges and prosecutors to develop and strengthen child-friendly/victim-focused approaches and e-evidence; - Capacity building workshops and provision of technical support to strengthen responses to OCSEA through targeted policy, legislative and procedural reforms and effective protocols and standard procedures to prevent and prosecute online violence against children and support survivors. <p><i>Tools, education and awareness-raising activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of robust national tools and support of pilot training in selected focus countries; - Sensitisation in multiple agencies in pilot countries on prevention, protection, safeguarding and support for child-victims of OCSEA through national workshops and the strengthening/creation of multi-stakeholder bodies, including public and private actors). - Targeted actions through mass media/information/advocacy campaigns about online safety, security and reporting mechanisms, involving the creation of materials and interventions to raise awareness on the risks and vulnerabilities to OCSEA. - In-country or regional workshops for civil society sensitisation, notably on the Lanzarote Convention as well as capacity-building events to raise awareness and implement child participation to prevent and protect children from OCSEA.
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This project also supports the implementation of international conventions, in particular the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), as well as its Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, as well as the [Lanzarote Convention](#) (CETS 201) and [Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime](#) and its additional protocol concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature(CETS 185) and the [Committee of Ministers CM/Rec \(2018\)7 on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment](#). These instruments provide a benchmark for member

states to review domestic legislation, policies and practices, ensure a victim-focused approach and encourage transnational multi-disciplinary and inter-agency co-operation to enhance effective investigations and prosecutions.

The project will also support member states to empower children to exercise their rights in a safe way in the digital environment through awareness raising and prevention activities. Child participation and the involvement of civil society will be cross-cutting throughout the action.

		<p>This project contributes to the landmark commitment by world leaders to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and abuse of children by 2030, as part of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 16.2 (End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children) and SDG 5.2 (Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private sectors).</p>
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IMPLEMENTING ARRANGEMENTS

This project is implemented by the Children’s Rights Division of the Council of Europe, in co-operation with the Cybercrime Office (C-PROC) in Romania. Other participating partners within the Council of Europe include: the Parliamentary Assembly, the Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child, the Lanzarote Committee, the Cybercrime Division, and the Pan-European Network of National Training institutions for Judges and Prosecutors (the HELP Network).

All countries benefiting from project support will be invited to appoint a national coordinator and where necessary, a project team consisting of representatives of the main counterpart beneficiary institutions who will act as the focal point for each focus country. The project steering group will be composed of the focal points of the 10 focus countries and the Secretariat. Steering group meetings will be convened on an annual basis to provide strategic guidance for the successful implementation of the project.

The Council of Europe will also seek partnerships with key institutions and organisations in member states and beyond which have specific experience in matters related to OCSEA and can contribute to the project.

FUNDING

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