



# Building a Europe for and with children

July 2016

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME

NEWS FROM THE LANZAROTE COMMITTEE

## Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2016-2021

The [Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child \(2016-2021\)](#) is the third children's rights Strategy of the Council of Europe. Bearing in mind the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the European Convention on Human Rights, and other Council of Europe legal standards, this new plan identifies five priorities for all 47 member States to guarantee the rights of the child.

### Equal opportunities

Children have the right to an equal standard of living and to appropriate social and economic protection.

### Participation

Children have the right to be heard and participate in decision affecting them. Their views should be given due respect in the development, implementation and evaluation of child-related laws, policies and actions.

### A life free from violence

States must guarantee that children are protected against all forms of violence, including sexual abuse and exploitation. The Council of Europe is a pioneer in setting

standards for protecting children against violence.

### Child-friendly justice

Many children come into contact with the justice system in one way or another. Sadly, justice systems in Europe are still ill-adapted to the specific needs of children. The Strategy calls on member States to implement the Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly justice, to ensure that primary consideration is given to the child's best interest, and to use deprivation of liberty only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time.

### Children's rights in the digital environment

Internet has become an integral part of children's lives. They have the right to learn, play and communicate online – and to be protected from bullying, hate speech, radicalization, sexual abuse, and other risks.



## Protecting children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

- On 16 June 2016, the Lanzarote Committee adopted a [Declaration](#) showing deep concern about web addresses which self-evidently advertise or promote child sexual abuse material.
- Due to the urgency of the situation, the Lanzarote Committee adopted on 17 June 2016 a [focused questionnaire](#) on the protection of children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Parties to the Convention and any other stakeholders are asked to reply by 15 September 2016.
- The [2<sup>nd</sup> Activity Report of the Lanzarote Committee](#) is now available. It covers the period 11 September 2014 – 17 March 2016.





The conference gathered more than 300 participants, including the President of the Republic of Bulgaria and the President of Malta.

## Reaching the heights for the rights of the child

The Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child was launched at the high-level conference "[Reaching the Heights for the Rights of the Child](#)", organised within the framework of the Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, and hosted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the State Agency for Child Protection of Bulgaria. The conference provided a platform for representatives of member States and other stakeholders to find new ways to co-operate in implementing the Strategy over the years to come.

The conference gathered more than 300 participants, including the President of the Republic of Bulgaria and the President of Malta. A total of 17 Ministers and Deputy Ministers as well as high-level representatives of other international organisations expressed their commitments to the rights of the child. There were delegations from 44 Council of Europe member States, ombudspersons for children, NGOs, academic experts, and – very importantly – 10 young delegates. These were between 14 and 17 years old and actively participated in the entire conference alongside the adult participants. Their clear and focused messages were highly appreciated by all participants. For more information and to consult all conference documents, please [click here](#).

### FAST FACTS

# 92%

The evaluation of the conference showed that 92% of the respondents rated the overall organisation "excellent" or "very good".

## Ad-hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child

A new intergovernmental committee will guide the Council of Europe's work in the area of the rights of the child. The [Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child](#) (CAHENF) will oversee the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child, promote mainstreaming of children's rights, develop standards and/or policy guidance on priority areas (ie. guardianship and age determination, statelessness, children's rights in the digital environment) and facilitate exchanges of knowledge and good practices. The first meeting of the CAHENF takes place on 28-29 September 2016 in Strasbourg.

## White Paper: The future of an integrated child protection system in Albania

The [White Paper](#) includes guidance on the development of an integrated, comprehensive and effective child protection system in Albania, by establishing accountable governance mechanisms with well-defined roles and responsibilities in the child protection system, developing effective mechanisms and measures to prevent and respond to violence against children, and ensuring that all children have access to child-friendly services.

This paper was developed in the context of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child in order to assist and guide the Albanian authorities in their efforts to strengthen their domestic child protection system.

## New Council of Europe publications

- [The best interests of the child – A dialogue between theory and practice](#)
- [Children's Rights and Social Services](#)
- [Challenges to children's rights today – what do children think?](#)
- [Child participation assessment tool \(revised\)](#)



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### RECENT COUNCIL OF EUROPE REPORT

## State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law - A Security Imperative for Europe

[Report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe – 2016](#)

This is the third annual report of the Secretary General on the state of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe, highlighting the standards of the Council of Europe on important topical areas related to recent developments. The report assesses the extent to which the Council of Europe's 47 member States are able to make the five building blocks of democratic security a reality.

# Other Council of Europe bodies focusing on the Rights of the Child



## World Humanitarian Summit: Protection of the Rights of the Child at the Heart of the Council of Europe Commitment

Attending the [World Humanitarian Summit](#) in Istanbul, Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland made a commitment on behalf of the Council of Europe which aims at prioritising the protection of the rights of refugees and asylum seekers across the Council of Europe's 47 member States.



## Commissioner for Human Rights' 1st Quarterly Activity Report for 2016

The protection of the rights of children is high on the agenda of the Commissioner for Human Rights. He regularly visits care institutions, schools, facilities where children are detained, places where children live in precarious conditions, and organisations providing services to children. He addresses [recommendations](#) to national authorities on how they could improve their records on children's rights.

He has identified three areas of concern to which he devotes specific attention: 1) the persisting problem of statelessness among children in various member States; 2) the still widespread practice of placing some groups of children, including Roma and children with disabilities, in segregated educational settings; and 3) the human rights situation of migrant children, especially unaccompanied minor migrants.

## ECRI Recommends Governments to Ensure that all Practices Affecting Irregularly Present Migrants are Developed in the Light of the Obligation to Respect Children's Rights

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) issued in May 2016 a new set of policy [recommendations](#) to States to support them in addressing a pressing issue of discrimination against individuals – women, men and children - who do not, or no longer, fulfill the conditions under national law for entry or stay in a member State of the Council of Europe.

ECRI calls on States to comply with their specific obligations in relation to irregularly present migrant children and guarantee them access to education, immunisation, paediatric care and adequate shelter.

## European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT)

[Report](#) by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture on juveniles deprived of liberty in Albania.

## 2015 Conclusions of the European Committee of Social Rights

The European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) published its [annual conclusions](#) for 2015 showing 277 violations of the European Social Charter. "Social rights are suffering in this difficult economic and political climate. States have an obligation to protect vulnerable persons including elderly people, children, people with disabilities and migrants. The Social Charter is the Social Constitution for Europe and an essential component of our human rights architecture. I call on our member States to respect the Charter standards and findings", said Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Council of Europe Conference of directors of prison and probation services

The conference addressed the rights of approximately 2 million children in Europe who have parents in prison. Find out more [here](#).

### HIGHLIGHTS



## Children's rights in the refugee crisis

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe has issued a [document](#) setting out immediate actions to better ensure the safety and proper treatment of migrant and asylum-seeking children. Those involve action by Council of Europe member States but also by CoE different bodies and committees. Priority actions focus on:

- Preventing migrant and asylum-seeking children from falling victims to violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking;
- Making every effort to end the placement of children in immigration detention facilities;
- Improving age assessment procedures
- Ensure a gender dimension in dealing with migrant and asylum seeking children;
- Ensure access to education.

[Ambassador Tomáš Boček](#), the Secretary General's Special Representative on Migration and Refugees, collects information on the human rights situation of migrants and refugees in Europe. He conducted fact-finding missions to [Greece and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"](#) as well as [Turkey](#) to assess the situation of refugees and migrants and identify areas where the Council of Europe could be of concrete assistance, particularly in respect of children and unaccompanied minors.

The [5th activity report](#) of the Council of Europe's monitoring body on trafficking in human beings – GRETA - outlines findings with respect to the identification and protection of victims of trafficking among asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, and highlights the risks faced by unaccompanied minors and separated children.

The Commissioner for Human Rights has issued an issue Paper entitled ["Time for Europe to get migrant integration right"](#), covering family reunification and migrant children's access to residence rights and quality education.



# Information and news from other actors in Europe protecting and promoting the Rights of the Child

## Global Study Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism

The [Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism](#) is an initiative by ECPAT International and partners to provide an updated picture of the issue and recommendations to end this heinous crime.

## The Sixth European Regional Consultation and Second Policy Dialogue for Child Helplines

The final report of Child Helplines International Sixth European Regional Consultation and Second Policy Dialogue, which was held in Strasbourg on 9-10 November 2015, is [now available](#).

## Internet Watch Foundation 2015 Annual Report

This [Report](#) contains IWF's latest trends and statistics on online child sexual abuse imagery.

Here are a few headlines from the report:

- 417% increase in reports of child sexual abuse images and video since 2013.
- 941 web pages actioned in a single record breaking day.
- 68,092 confirmed as child sexual abuse URLs: 118% increase on 2014.
- 69% of victims assessed as 10 years or under.

## Eurochild: What did the children's rights network achieve in 2015?

Eurochild released its [Annual Report](#) for the year 2015 with highlights of its achievements in four strategic areas:

- Putting the child at the heart of policy making;
- Building a community of professionals;
- Giving a voice to children and young people;
- Developing the Eurochild network.

## Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children

Special progress report 2016: [Childhoods free from corporal punishment – prohibiting and eliminating all violent punishment of children](#).

The special progress report was prepared for the [high-level intergovernmental conference](#) hosted by the Austrian Government in Vienna in June 2016, and it marks the 10th anniversary of the UN Study on Violence against Children.

## Children of Prisoners Europe

Across the Council of Europe, an estimated 2.1 million children are separated from an imprisoned parent on any given day.

Find out more about the COPE's 7th annual pan-European campaign "[Not my crime, still my sentence](#)".

## UNIVERSITE DE GENEVE - New cycle of the Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights

[The Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights \(MCR\)](#) is a part-time two-year postgraduate programme in children's rights. The MCR is an interdisciplinary and international master, which attracts a large range of graduate students from all over the world. The 8th cycle of the MCR will begin on 6 February 2017 and the deadline for online applications is 1 November 2016.

## Interagency Working Group adopts terminology guidelines

An Interagency Working Group composed of the UN Special Representative to the Secretary General on Violence against Children, the UN Special Rapporteur on Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, ECPAT International and 13 other international organisations and agencies active in the field of children's rights adopted [new global terminology guidelines](#) relating to the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.



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### HIGHLIGHTS FROM MEMBER STATES

#### Recent ratifications of the Lanzarote Convention

- Czech Republic on 2 May 2016
- Slovak Republic on 1 March 2016

#### Promoting the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child

**Croatia** – On 4 May 2016, a thematic session on the Strategy for the Rights of the Child took place in the Croatian Parliament. The meeting gathered relevant stakeholders, including children, members of numerous institutions, civil society organisations, academics and experts.

**Hungary** – On 10 May 2016, a discussion of the new Strategy for the Rights of the Child took place at the European Youth Centre in Budapest. The aim of the event was to raise the awareness of Hungarian stakeholders, including the national authorities and civil society, on what the Strategy entails and what could be done to reach its objectives.



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