

# Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)

First  
implementation  
report of the Council  
of Europe Strategy  
for the Rights of  
the Child

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for and with children



# **Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)**

First implementation report  
of the Council of Europe Strategy  
for the Rights of the Child

Prepared by:  
The Secretariat of the  
Steering Committee for the  
Rights of the Child (CDENF)

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*Premier rapport de mise en œuvre  
sur la Stratégie du Conseil de l'Europe  
pour les droits de l'enfant (2022-2027)*

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## Executive summary

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On 23 February 2022, the Committee of Ministers adopted the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) (hereinafter “the Strategy” or “the Rome Strategy”), renewing its commitment to protect and promote the rights of the child in line with international and European standards.

The Strategy, which was formally launched during a High-Level Conference in April 2022, sets out an ambitious agenda combining both “innovative and implementing objectives”, organised under six main Strategic Objectives:

1. Freedom from violence for all children
2. Equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children
3. Access to and safe use of technologies for all children
4. Child-friendly justice for all children
5. Giving a voice to every child
6. Children’s rights in crisis and emergency situations

This first implementation report gives an overview of the Organisation’s activities, developments and achievements under each thematic area, from the Strategy’s adoption date up to October 2023.

Important progress has been achieved in each of the six Strategic Objectives of the Strategy, through the continuous engagement with member states, the strategic partnerships with other regional and international organisations and civil society, as well as by involving and consulting children. Actions illustrate the transversality of this Strategy, and the impact of the co-ordination and mainstreaming efforts both within the Organisation and in member states, under the leadership of the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF).

In terms of member states’ action, preliminary results show a satisfactory implementation rate. Member states use the Strategy as a reference whenever relevant to develop national legislation, strategies, policies, action plans and programmes consistent with other relevant Council of Europe, EU and international instruments to advance children’s rights. It further provides useful technical guidance for the effective implementation of priority actions, especially in the areas of protection of children from violence, child participation, and equal opportunities and social inclusion. Overall, respondent member states conclude to an improvement of the situation of children under every pillar of the strategy, especially in the areas of child participation, child-friendly justice and safe use of technologies.

The report sets out a number of challenges that lie ahead in each of the priority areas, as well as specific topics where action should be stepped up to ensure the full implementation of the Strategy, intending to give an opportunity to examine what could be done to further protect, respect and promote the rights of the child in Council of Europe member states, in line with the priorities set out under the Strategy, and as complemented by other Council of Europe thematic action plans. Progress remains to be made in translating and disseminating the Strategy at the national level and in overcoming challenges caused by crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic and Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine.

## List of acronyms

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<b>ACFC</b>	Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
<b>ADI-ROM</b>	Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (subordinate body of CDADI)
<b>CBSS</b>	Council of Baltic Sea States
<b>CDADI</b>	Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion
<b>CDBIO</b>	Steering Committee for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health
<b>CDCJ</b>	European Committee on Legal Co-operation
<b>CDENF</b>	Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child
<b>CEPEJ</b>	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice
<b>CGU</b>	Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine
<b>CJ/ENF-ISE</b>	Committee of Experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (subordinate body of CDCJ and CDENF)
<b>CLRAE</b>	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
<b>CSGIV</b>	Child self-generated sexual images and/or videos
<b>DPAER</b>	Directorate of Political Affairs and External Relations
<b>ECRI</b>	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
<b>ECtHR</b>	European Court of Human Rights
<b>EPAS</b>	Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport
<b>ENF-VAE</b>	Committee of Experts on the prevention of violence (subordinate body of CDENF)
<b>FCNM</b>	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
<b>GREVIO</b>	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
<b>GT-ADI-SOGI</b>	Working Group on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics (subordinate body of CDADI)
<b>Istanbul Convention</b>	Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
<b>Lanzarote Committee</b>	Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
<b>Lanzarote Convention</b>	Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
<b>OCSEA</b>	Online child exploitation and abuse
<b>PACE</b>	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
<b>Pompidou Group</b>	Council of Europe International Cooperation Group on Drugs and Addictions
<b>SOGI</b>	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
<b>SRSR</b>	Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees
<b>UNCRC</b>	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund

# I. Introduction

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## **a) Introduction to the Strategy**

On 23 February 2022, the Committee of Ministers adopted the [Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child \(2022-2027\)](#) (hereinafter “the Strategy” or “the Rome Strategy”). Being the fourth of its kind, the Council of Europe has again renewed its commitment to protect and promote the rights of the child in line with international and European standards.

The Strategy was formally launched during the High-Level Conference “[Beyond the horizon: a new era for the rights of the child](#)” in Rome, on 7-8 April 2022. The Rome Strategy has set out an ambitious agenda combining both “innovative and implementing objectives”, organised under six main Strategic Objectives:

1. Freedom from violence for all children
2. Equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children
3. Access to and safe use of technologies for all children
4. Child-friendly justice for all children
5. Giving a voice to every child
6. Children’s rights in crisis and emergency situations

The Strategy also includes three cross-cutting issues: child participation, gender equality, and anti-discrimination. of the implementation report

Following previous practice by the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF), the implementation of the Strategy is reviewed every two years, both at Council of Europe and national levels, to take stock of progress made and make recommendations for the further implementation of the Strategy. This is the first implementation report of the Strategy, covering the period 2022-2023.

Right after this introduction, **Section II** focuses on “Delivering the Strategy”, giving a general account of the Strategy implementation level by the Council of Europe (in terms of standard-setting, monitoring and co-operation activities) and by member states.

**Section III** evaluates the results achieved under each Strategic Objective, again both at the level of the Council of Europe and at member state level. This section includes tables listing resources, activities and publications developed by the Council of Europe and member states. Only finalised activities are listed, and on-going projects will be included in future implementation reports.

The last part of the report, **Section IV**, includes a brief recognition to the Council of Europe external partners that have been key in triggering the implementation of the Strategy during this first implementation period, including children themselves.

Finally, **Section V** (conclusion) summarises the progress made and looks towards the challenges and considerations beyond 2023, in order to fully and successfully implement the Strategy until its completion in 2027; while reflecting on lessons learned through this first implementation period.

The implementation report also includes an **Appendix** with a list of case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) on children’s rights for the period of 2022 and 2023.

## **b) Methodology and sources of information**

In order to obtain information for the development of this implementation report, an online questionnaire was circulated through CDENF delegations over the summer months of 2023. Member states were invited to respond by describing overall progress made in the implementation of the Strategy as well as specific legal and policy reforms and activities undertaken under each of the Strategic Objectives. A total of 23 responses

were received.<sup>1</sup> The replies by member states have been analysed and systematised by an external consultant.

The report has also benefited from input by the members of the Council of Europe Inter-Secretariat Task Force on the Rights of the Child. Various Council of Europe bodies have contributed to an Action Plan Table listing all on-going and finalised activities under the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027), which have now been reflected in this implementation report.

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<sup>1</sup> Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.



## II. Delivering the Strategy

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### **a) Overall implementation rate**

Action taken by the Council of Europe under the Strategy has been developed fully in line with the key values of the Council of Europe – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – and the “strategic triangle” of international co-operation, including standard-setting, monitoring and co-operation. The co-ordination and standard-setting activities on the rights of the child have been led by the CDENF, although corresponding to the mainstreaming responsibility assigned to the CDENF via its terms of reference, the rights of the child have also been promoted by other Council of Europe sectors and bodies, for example in their thematic and country-based monitoring processes and through their policy instruments. Finally, the Children’s Rights Division of the Council of Europe is implementing numerous co-operation projects aimed at supporting member states in the protection of the rights of the child nationally.

When looking at the action taken by member states, although, by the time of completion of this survey, only half of the year 2023 was completed, preliminary results show a satisfactory implementation rate. Despite being in its initial phase, the Strategy is having a positive impact on legal, policy and strategic action at national level. For instance, most respondent member states (17 out of 23, 74%) report using the Strategy in their respective countries to inspire, review or update a national or regional strategy or action plan to protect or promote children’s rights. Moreover, over the past two years, the vast majority (between 80% and 100%) of respondent member states have passed legislation or taken policy initiatives at national, regional, or local level to improve children’s rights under the six objectives of the Strategy.

### **b) Council of Europe level - From implementation to innovation: where do we stand?**

In the moment this First Implementation Report is drafted, barely one and a half years have passed since the launching of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) in Rome, in April 2022. Notwithstanding this short reporting period, the Council of Europe has already made important progress in the implementation of the Strategy. Although there has been a higher emphasis placed on Strategic Objective 1 (Freedom from violence for all children), 4 (Child-friendly justice for all children) and 6 (Children’s rights in crisis and emergency situations), action has also been initiated with regards the other priority areas. For a specific account of activities undertaken by different Council of Europe bodies under each of the Strategic Objectives, please refer to Section III of this report.

#### ***Standard-setting initiatives***

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The standard-setting work in the field of the rights of the child in the Council of Europe is led by the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF), complemented by the work of other Council of Europe intergovernmental committees. During this first two years of Strategy implementation (2022-2023), the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers has adopted eight **new standards** relevant for the rights of the child, namely:

1. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)16](#) on combating hate speech,
2. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)17](#) on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls,
3. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)20](#) on human rights and the protection of the environment,
4. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)22](#) on human rights principles and guidelines on age assessment in the context of migration,
5. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)2](#) on rights, services and support for victims of crime,
6. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)4](#) on Roma youth participation,

7. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)8](#) on strengthening reporting systems on violence against children, and
8. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)9](#) on the active political participation of national minority youth.

Moreover, the [Explanatory Memorandum](#) to Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on Effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration has also been published. Other standards which are under preparation by different Council of Europe intergovernmental committees, are referred to under each Strategic Objective below (Section III).

Existing standards and recommendations have also been translated and disseminated further, and the CDENF is currently reviewing the national implementation of Recommendations [CM/Rec\(2019\)11](#) on Effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration and [CM/Rec\(2009\)10](#) on Integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence.

### ***Monitoring of Council of Europe standards***

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Various monitoring bodies (i.e. Lanzarote Committee, ECRI, GREVIO, ACFC, GRETA) are following the situation of children in Council of Europe member states, and in particular the situation of migrant children under the [Action Plan](#) on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe (2021-2025).

The [Lanzarote Committee](#) (i.e. the Committee of the Parties to the [Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#)) has continued promoting, monitoring and supporting the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention. During the reporting period, the work of the Lanzarote Committee has been focusing on diverse topics, including:

- the “Protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs): addressing the challenges raised by child self-generated sexual images and/or videos”, with an [implementation report](#) adopted on 10 March 2022;
- the protection of children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse resulting from the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, adopting a [Statement](#) and addressing specific [questions](#) to the Russian Federation in this regard;
- the protection of children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, adopting five [compliance reports](#), as well as developing practical tools to support professionals; and
- the statutes of limitations in respect of sexual offences against children and the legal age for sexual activities in the State Parties to the Lanzarote Convention, by celebrating a [public event](#) and adopting studies on both issues.

The **Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** ([GREVIO](#)), which is the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence ([Istanbul Convention](#)), follows the situation in member states with regards children being victims or witnesses of domestic violence, as well as victims of gender-based violence. In its monitoring work over 2022 and 2023, GREVIO has covered many topics related to the protection of children in its [country reports](#). In particular, the Group of Experts has addressed early marriages in the context of forced marriages, has recommended to incorporate gender equality and violence prevention issues in the education curricula, promoted the Barnahus model to provide holistic services to child victims and witnesses of violence and assessed the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in disputes concerning custody and visitation.

As regards trafficking of children, the second evaluation round of the Council of Europe’s **Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings** ([GRETA](#)) paid particular attention to measures taken by States Parties to address the vulnerability of children to trafficking, whereas the third evaluation round also covers child-sensitive procedures for obtaining access to justice and remedies. GRETA’s [country monitoring reports](#) contain specific sections on measures to prevent of trafficking in children (examining awareness-raising and

education programmes, training of relevant professionals, measures to ensure the registration of all children at birth, etc.) and the identification and assistance to child victims of trafficking. They refer inter alia, to the appointment of legal guardians, age assessment procedures, the availability of safe accommodation and services designed to assist the reintegration of child victims of trafficking.

Further, the **European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)**, has been addressing hate speech and hate crime against children through its monitoring work. Other ECRI activities have focused on inclusive education, preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against [LGBTI persons](#), including LGBTI children and families, and on preventing and combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma and Travellers, including in the education and health system.

Finally, the **Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC)** has continued to focus on the social inclusion of children belonging to national minorities, especially through the education system, in its [monitoring work](#).

### ***Capacity building through co-operation projects***

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During the reporting period, capacity-building efforts through co-operation projects in Council of Europe member states to promote the rights of the child have seen a significant increase. The Council of Europe Children's Rights Division has provided technical assistance and support to member states with regards to the implementation of the Strategy specifically on:

- Combating violence against children in the [Republic of Moldova](#) (Strategic Objective 1, 3);
- Ending Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse@Europe Plus ([EndOCSEA@Europe+](#)), with particular focus on Georgia, Montenegro and the Republic of Moldova (Strategic Objective 1, 3);
- Supporting the coordination and implementation of Barnahus in Croatia, [Finland](#), [Ireland](#), Montenegro, [Slovenia](#), and [Spain](#) (Strategic Objective 1,4);
- Development of a National Action Plan for Children and Adolescents in [Andorra](#) (all Strategic Objectives);
- Improving the juvenile justice system and strengthening the education and training of penitentiary staff in [Slovenia](#) (Strategic Objective 4);
- Ensuring the best interests of the child in civil court proceedings in Slovenia (Strategic Objective 4);
- Strengthening National Child Participation Frameworks and Action in Europe ([CP4Europe](#)), in five partner countries: the Czech Republic, Finland, Iceland, Portugal and Slovenia (Strategic Objective 5); and
- Protecting the rights of Ukrainian children during and in post-war context in [Ukraine](#) (Strategic Objective 1, 6).

### ***Awareness-raising and knowledge-sharing***

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A wide range of promotional and awareness-raising activities have been undertaken by the Council of Europe and jointly with member states to raise awareness of children's rights among all stakeholders. Efforts have been put into producing and disseminating awareness-raising materials, such as videoclips and child-friendly leaflets, across a range of sectors and projects. A [promotional video](#) and a [child-friendly version](#) of the Strategy have been developed. Meanwhile, the website [www.coe.int/children](http://www.coe.int/children) has continued serving as a "European communication hub", thanks to regular news items, links to all event-related resources and an immediate upload of new publications. The Children's Rights Division is also regularly producing and disseminating a quarterly newsletter to communicate about developments in the area of children's rights and upcoming events. Communication is also actively done via social media.

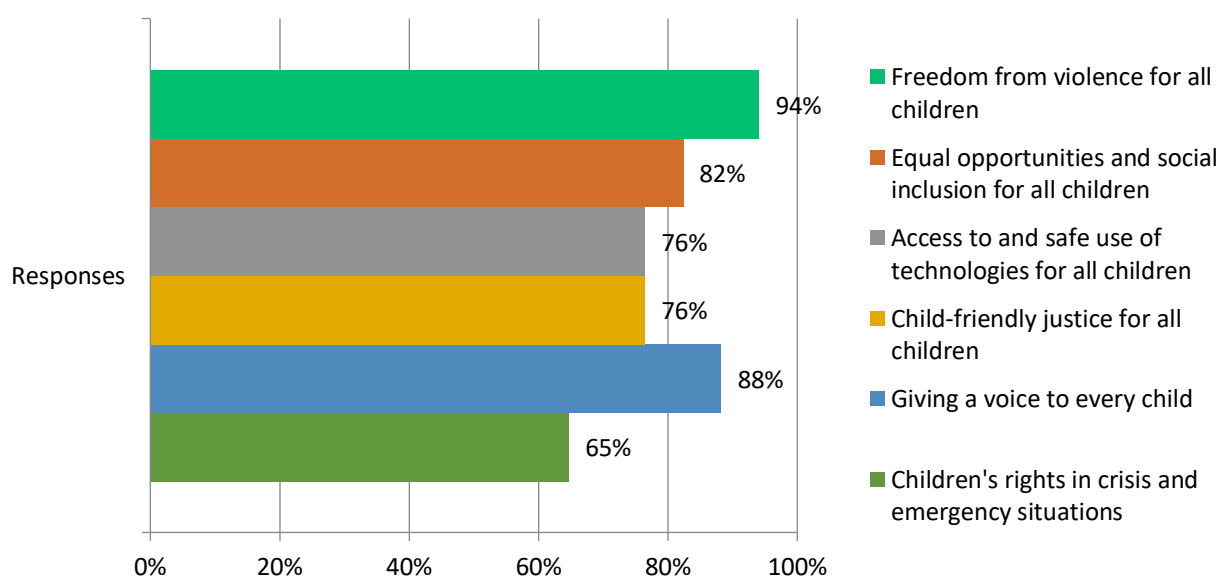
### c) National level

#### Overall implementation of the Strategy

Most respondent member states (17 out of 23, 74%) report using the Strategy in their respective countries to inspire, review or update a national or regional strategy or action plan to protect or promote children’s rights.

They further report that the Strategy has had the greatest impact in the areas of protection of children from violence, child participation, and equal opportunities and social inclusion (Strategic Objectives 1, 5 and 2, respectively). In addition, the Strategy has primarily provided guidance (including for national handbooks, publications, legal opinions, amicus curiae, etc.) and supported capacity-building projects and activities (including trainings, study visits) in at least 19 member states. It has also facilitated the implementation of Council of Europe monitoring bodies’ decisions or recommendations on children’s rights as well as awareness raising activities in 23 and 22 member states respectively.

Are there areas where the impact of the Strategy has been particularly positive and where objectives have been implemented? (N=17)



#### National strategic documents on children’s rights

Most respondent member states (14 out of 19) report having specific national or regional strategy or action to protect or promote children's rights.

Over 40% of them (8) further indicate using the [Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child \(2022-2027\)](#) as a reference to inspire, review or update such national strategic documents. Other reference documents often include the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and related Observations or Recommendations, as well as the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and other relevant EU standards, which overall are consistent with the Council of Europe Strategy.

	Member State	National strategy or action plan on children’s rights
1	Armenia	The upcoming Law on “Implementing Amendments and Additions to the law on the Rights of the Child” foresees a comprehensive child rights program, the implementation of which will be guided by the Council of Europe Strategy.

2	<b>Austria</b>	Many national actions plans and strategies pertaining to children’s rights including but not limited to the Austrian Youth Strategy and the “Vienna Children and Youth Strategy”.
3	<b>Azerbaijan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for Children 2020-2030</li> <li>- Action Plan on Implementation of the Strategy for Children 2020-2025</li> </ul>
4	<b>Bulgaria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft National Strategy for the Child (2022), expected to be adopted in 2023</li> <li>- National Programme for the Prevention of Violence and Child Abuse (2022-2026), with a corresponding Action Plan for 2022-2024</li> </ul> <p>Both based on the Council of Europe Strategy.</p>
5	<b>Cyprus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “National Strategy and Action Plan for Combating Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation and Child Pornography”, based on the Council of Europe Strategy</li> <li>- the “National Strategy or the Prevention and Management of Violence at School” based on the Council of Europe Strategy</li> </ul>
6	<b>Croatia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Plan for Children's Rights 2022 – 2026,</li> <li>- Action plan for children's rights for the period 2022 - 2024 will be revised, based on result-assessment and the Council of Europe Strategy</li> </ul>
7	<b>Germany</b>	Reported using the Strategy to inspire, review or update a national or regional strategy or action to protect or promote children's Rights, but did not specify.
8	<b>Greece</b>	<p>The Council of Europe Strategy has been a core reference for many recent legal initiatives regarding children’s rights as well for the drafting and the content of the measures/actions under various action plans regarding children, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upcoming National Action Plan for the Rights of the Child (2024-2027)</li> <li>- National Action Plan for the European Child Guarantee</li> <li>- National Action for Children’s rights</li> <li>- National Action Plan for the prevention of child molestation and exploitation (2022-2027)</li> <li>- National Action Plan for the social inclusion of ROMA (2021 -2030)</li> <li>- National Strategy for the employment of young people</li> <li>- National Strategy for social inclusion and poverty reduction</li> </ul>
9	<b>Hungary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hungarian Action Plan on the Child Guarantee 2030 regarding equitable and inclusive public education</li> <li>- Public Education Strategy 2030</li> </ul>
10	<b>Iceland</b>	Child Friendly Iceland, National Strategy and Action plan to implement the CRC Act in integrated services in the interest of children’s prosperity
11	<b>Ireland</b>	Upcoming National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, based on the Council of Europe Strategy (among others).
12	<b>Luxembourg</b>	Reported using the Strategy to inspire, review or update a national or regional strategy or action to protect or promote children's Rights, but did not specify.
13	<b>Monaco</b>	Reported using the Strategy to inspire, review or update a national or regional strategy or action to protect or promote children's Rights, but did not specify.
14	<b>Norway</b>	Reported that the Council of Europe Strategy is not used in a systematic way, but indirectly by using the objectives in the Strategy when developing measures.
15	<b>Portugal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2021-2024</li> <li>- 2 biennial Action Plans (2021-22 and 2023-24)</li> </ul> <p>Based on reference documents and applicable international guidelines, including the previous and current Council of Europe Strategies.</p>
16	<b>Slovak Republic</b>	National Strategy Childhood 2023-2028 and 2 corresponding three-year Action Plans, where the strategic objectives largely match the strategic objectives of the Council of Europe Strategy.
17	<b>Slovenia</b>	Programme for Children 2020-2025, notably based on the previous Council of Europe Strategy.

### ***Challenges on the implementation of the Strategy***

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The main identified challenge on the implementation of the Strategy is its dissemination. Currently, the Strategy is available in national languages in only 36% of respondent member states, i.e. in nine member states only.

Four countries stated that they have not used the Council of Europe to inspire, review or update a national strategic document meant to protect or promote children's rights.

Nevertheless, none of them reported any particular challenges to overcome or gaps to fill to increase the impact of the Strategy. While they may not have used the Council of Europe strategy directly or specifically, they have used other relevant reference standards (UN, EU) which are consistent with it.

### III. Review of progress made on each strategic objective

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#### **Strategic Objective 1 – Freedom from violence for all children**

##### **a) Action taken by the Council of Europe**

The first strategic objective of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) aims at eliminating all forms of violence against children. This is a continuation of the Council of Europe's work in promoting an integrated and strategic approach to addressing violence against children and contributing to the elimination of all forms of violence in all settings.

In this first implementation period (2022-2023), the Committee of Ministers has adopted four new **standards** related to the protection of children from violence:

1. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)8](#) on strengthening reporting systems on violence against children and [Explanatory Memorandum](#), which aims to strengthen national systems for professionals and volunteers for reporting all forms of violence against children, as essential elements of national strategies to combat and prevent violence against children. It reminds that member states should provide for clear rules establishing the responsibilities to report violence and in responding to such reports and their follow-up;
2. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)2](#) on rights, services and support for victims of crime, which calls for applying a child-sensitive approach when member states assist child victims of crime, including the provision of specialised training for staff working with child victims.
3. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)17](#) on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls with a special focus on the protection of girls from violence; and
4. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)16](#) on combating hate speech, which includes reference to educational and awareness-raising initiatives, programmes and user tools for children and young people, parents and carers, educators, youth workers and volunteers working with children that enable them to understand and deal with hate speech. It calls upon member states to ensure that children and young people are able to participate effectively in the elaboration of such initiatives, programmes and tools.

In 2023, a new **Committee of Experts on the prevention of violence (ENF-VAE)** was set up, with the mandate to prepare a feasibility study and a non-binding instrument on age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education as a tool to prevent and combat violence against and among children. ENF-VAE will also undertake an implementation review of Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2009\)10](#) containing Policy guidelines on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence.

The **Lanzarote Committee** has continued promoting, monitoring and supporting the implementation of the [Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#), in particular through the completion of its second monitoring round (Protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs): addressing the challenges raised by child self-generated sexual images and/or videos) and its continuous roles as a platform for capacity-building and collection of good practices.

The **European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse** has been marked to highlight the need to act against child sexual abuse, under the following themes: "Getting it right: ensuring child-friendly justice through Barnahus structures in Europe" (2022) and "Engaging with survivors of childhood sexual violence" (2023).

Various sectors and bodies have pursued work to fight and prevent **different forms of violence against children** (such as sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, violence against children belonging to minority

groups, and early/forced marriages), **in various settings** (including the online environment, in armed conflicts and in the context of sports). The Council of Europe has also provided technical assistance and support to member states in the development of integrated responses to violence against children through [co-operation projects](#), including in Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, and Ukraine.

CoE entity (in alphabetical order)	Activity/product
Children’s Rights Division	Gap Analysis Report on Child Exploitation and Abuse in Georgia, presenting the main challenges regarding the awareness of teachers, children, and the general public on child sexual exploitation and abuse, including online.
Children’s Rights CoE office in Chisinau	Activity in the framework of the co-operation project “Combating violence against children in the Republic of Moldova”: Guidelines for independent monitoring of Children’s Right to Protection from Violence and Abuse
Children’s Rights CoE office in Kyiv	Activities in the framework of the co-operation project “Protecting the rights of Ukrainian children during and in post-war context”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Guidelines</a> on Monitoring the rights of children in the context of the Russian Federation’s aggression on Ukraine</li> <li>- <a href="#">Training of Trainers for Programme on Prevention of child sexual abuse “Kiko and the Hand”</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Strengthening knowledge of child identification and protection measures concerning children victims or at risk of violence.</a></li> </ul>
Co-operation in Police and Deprivation of Liberty	Policy and Standard Operating Procedures on combating the spread of the phenomenon of criminal subculture in the Detention Centre for Minors and Young People in the Republic of Moldova, as well as training for prison staff.
Advisory Committee on the FCNM	The Committee assesses the protection of children belonging to national minorities from violence and hostility. In particular, the Committee looks at early and forced marriages (see Opinion on <a href="#">Armenia</a> ) and relations between law enforcement and children belonging to indigenous people (see Opinion on <a href="#">Norway</a> ) and national minorities.
Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)	“ <a href="#">Start to Talk</a> ” project: development of a roadmap for the implementation of child safeguarding in sport policy in Bulgaria.
ECRI	Addressing hate speech and hate crime against children through the <a href="#">country monitoring</a> work of ECRI.
Gender Equality Division	Publication: <a href="#">Working with Victims of Sexual Violence during Armed Conflict</a> : A manual for Ukrainian mental health and emergency response professionals.
Gender Equality Division	Support to <a href="#">four Ukrainian women’s rights NGOs</a> to protect and promote the rights of women and girls in the context of armed conflict. The grants awarded were used for information campaigns, training, collection of data, and development of studies and recommendations to state authorities.
Gender Equality Division	Awareness raising materials on violence against women and girls. <a href="#">Videos, brochures and infographics</a> on the importance of the Istanbul Convention in Ukraine to protect women and girls during conflict. An <a href="#">easy-to-read version</a> of the Istanbul Convention was translated into Ukrainian.
Lanzarote Committee	2 <sup>nd</sup> <a href="#">Implementation report</a> : The protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs): addressing the challenges raised by child self-generated sexual images and/or videos (CSGIV)
Lanzarote Committee Secretariat together with ECPAT International	<a href="#">Finland Country Overview</a> and <a href="#">Republic of Moldova Country Overview</a> – Ending child sexual abuse and exploitation, state-of-play in light of the Lanzarote Convention
Lanzarote Committee Secretariat	<a href="#">Comparative study of the statutes of limitations in respect of sexual offences against children in the State Parties to the Lanzarote Convention</a> , and



	<a href="#">Comparative study of the legal age for sexual activities in the State Parties to the Lanzarote Convention</a> , as well as <a href="#">Public seminars</a> on the statutes of limitations and the legal age for sexual activities.
Lanzarote Committee Secretariat	<a href="#">European Day 2023</a> engaging with survivors of childhood sexual violence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Panel of examples of survivor’s councils</li> <li>- Development of guidelines for survivor engagement</li> <li>- Reverse debate on the fight against sexual violence against children</li> </ul>
PACE	Short new film <a href="#">“The Stadium”</a> , which aims to raise awareness of sexual violence against children in sport.
PACE	<a href="#">Report</a> “For an assessment of the means and provisions to combat children’s exposure to pornographic content”, <a href="#">Recommendation 2225 (2002)</a> and <a href="#">Resolution 2429 (2022)</a> .
Violence against Women Division – Secretariat of GREVIO	Monitoring work of GREVIO addressing early marriages in the context of forced marriages. See the baseline evaluation reports on <a href="#">Georgia</a> and <a href="#">Romania</a> .
Violence against Women Division – Secretariat of GREVIO	In its baseline evaluation reports, GREVIO recommended the states parties to incorporate gender equality and violence prevention issues into the curricula of education institutions at all levels. See the baseline evaluation reports on <a href="#">Bosnia and Herzegovina</a> , <a href="#">Switzerland</a> , <a href="#">Georgia</a> , <a href="#">Cyprus</a> , <a href="#">Norway</a> , <a href="#">Estonia</a> and <a href="#">Romania</a>
Violence against Women Division – Secretariat of GREVIO	<a href="#">GREVIO’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Activity Report</a> covering the period 2021-2022 had a dedicated section looking at the linkages between domestic violence and child custody and visitation arrangements.

### **b) Action taken by member states**

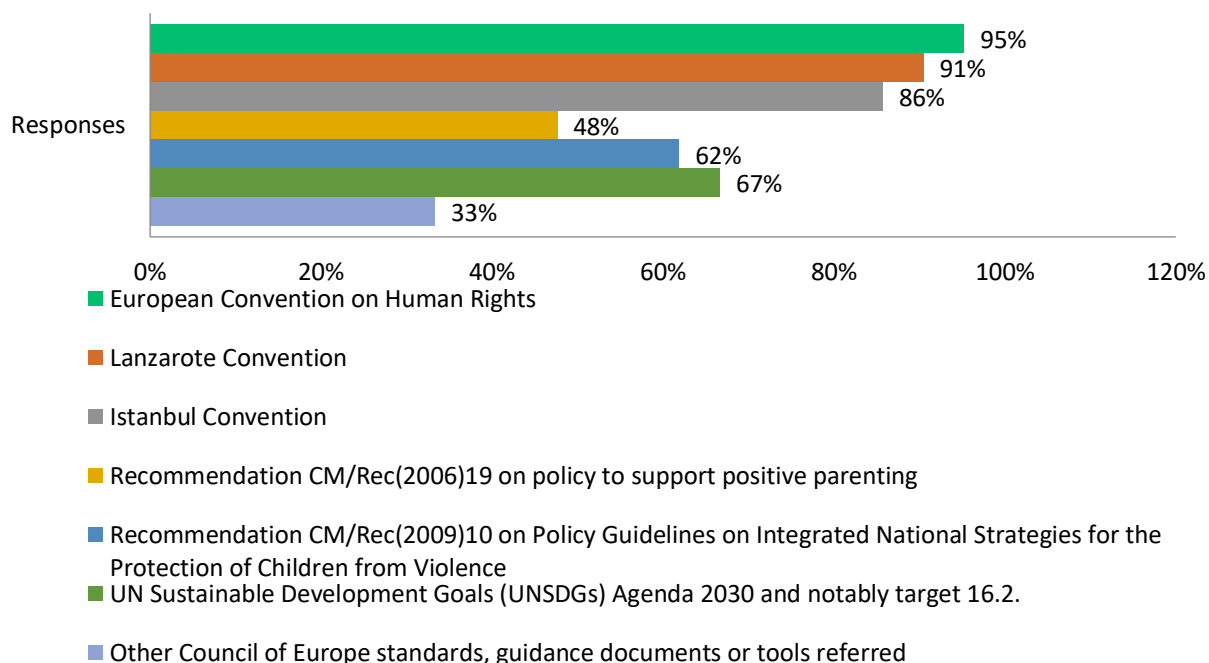
Over the past two years, the vast majority (95%) of member states have passed legislation or policies to protect children from violence. Primary focus has been placed on legislation and policies meant to enhance the prevention of violence in general, and more targeted instruments and actions primarily in the areas of child sexual abuse and exploitation, early warning and reporting mechanisms for professionals working with children, as well as bullying and peer violence online or in the school environment.

Topic	Member states indicating that initiatives had been taken	
	2022	2023
Fight child sexual exploitation and abuse	22	22
Raise awareness on the need to protect children against child sexual exploitation and abuse	21	21
Strengthen reporting mechanisms for professionals detecting signs of violence against children	19	18
Adopt child protection policies in areas where professionals or volunteers work with or for children	19	16
End gender-based violence against girls	16	16
End violence against children in vulnerable situations	18	17
End cyberbullying and grooming	14	18
End hate crime or hate speech in relation to children	15	15
End bullying or peer violence between children themselves	18	17
Develop strategies to prevent violence against children more generally	20	16
Promote campaigns to change mentalities about violence against children, including in a family and institutional context (including in care settings)	16	16

National promising practices	
Member State	Promising practice
Belgium	<b>Addressing female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriage and crime of honour.</b> Training of community relays and translators in social interpreting on sexism and violence against women and girls include components on FGM, early marriage and crime of honour.
Croatia	<b>Awards.</b> Luka ritz award to role-model students for promoting tolerance and violence-free schools.
Iceland	<b>Child rights dashboard.</b> Iceland is setting up a child prosperity and child rights dashboard that entails 5 dimensions, each one with a strong connection to the UNCR. One is dedicated to violence and protection. It entails a number of data points to have an overview of violence against children in Iceland and the methods used by local and national authorities to protect and support children. The data also includes national survey data about experiences of children of violence; domestic and sexual abuse, bullying and neglect by caretakers. The Dashboard has a crucial role in monitoring the situation as well as implementing necessary actions and policies created to support and protect children from violence. It will be used as a compass to monitor if national and local government's actions are sufficient.
Portugal	<b>Seals.</b> School without Bullying /School without Violence Seal

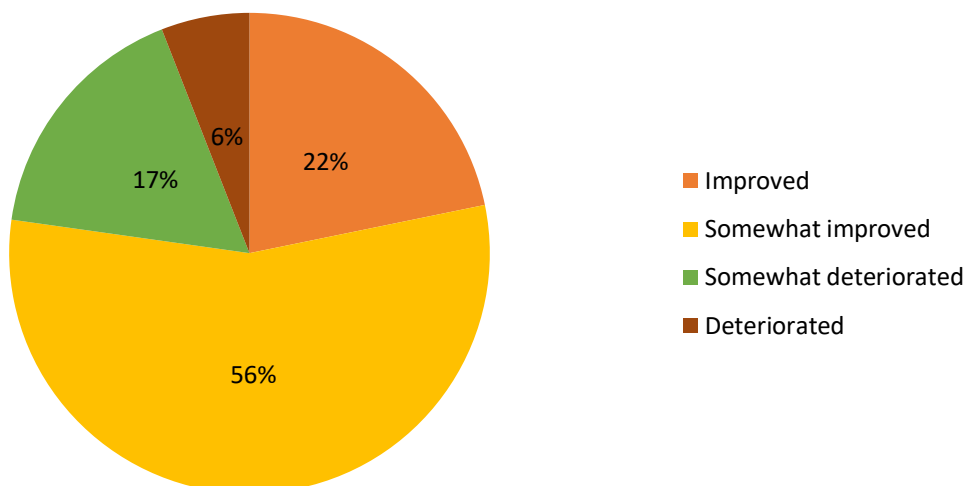
Respondent member states indicate that the European Convention on Human Rights, the Lanzarote Convention, and the Istanbul Convention are the main standards referred to or considered when preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at preventing or fighting violence against children.

In preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at preventing or fighting violence against children, did you refer to or take into account the following standards and documents? (N=22)



Most respondent member states (14 out of 18) consider that the overall situation of children regarding the prevalence of violence in different forms and settings has (somewhat) improved.

Over the past two years, has the overall situation of children in your country regarding the prevalence of violence in different forms and settings...? (N=18)



## **Strategic Objective 2 – Equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children**

### **a) Action taken by the Council of Europe**

The reporting period has seen the adoption of four **new standards** related to the provision of equal opportunities to migrant children:

1. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)17](#) on protecting the right of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls, which deals with issues of discrimination and integration of migrant girls, covering the areas of justice, access to rights, education, health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights;
2. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)22](#) on human rights principles and guidelines on age assessment in the context of migration, with its [Explanatory Memorandum](#);
3. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)4](#) on Roma youth participation; and
4. Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)9](#) on the active political participation of national minority youth.

Other recommendations linked to the provision of equal opportunities for all children are underway, including on equality for Roma and Traveller women and girls and on equal rights for intersex people.

The **activities undertaken by the Council of Europe** have been dedicated to the protection of children belonging to national minorities, Roma and Traveller children, refugee and migrant children,<sup>2</sup> children left behind by migrating parents, children whose parents use drugs, as well as LGBTI children and families. Action was also dedicated to ensuring access to education for all children, promoting gender equality, fighting child poverty, child begging, antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma and Travellers. However, less attention has been paid to the protection of children in alternative care and children with disabilities.

Finally, the CDENF, jointly with CD-BIO, has prepared a Guide of good practice for the participation of children in decision making processes on matters relating to their **health**.

<sup>2</sup> Actions developed in the field of protection of refugee and migrant children will be reflected under Strategic Objective 6.

CoE entity (in alphabetical order)	Activity/product
ADI-ROM/CDADI	<a href="#">Thematic report on legislation and policies related to begging, with special focus on children</a> (2022)
Children’s Rights Division	<a href="#">Andorra National Action Plan for Children and Adolescents</a> : Development of the National Action Plan with strategic objectives, peer-reviewed by international experts and with high child participation.
Division of National Minorities and Minority Languages – Advisory Committee on the FCNM	The Advisory Committee focuses in its monitoring on the social inclusion of children belonging to national minorities, especially through the education system. See for example the opinions on <a href="#">the UK</a> , <a href="#">Armenia</a> , and <a href="#">Italy</a> .
Advisory Committee on the FCNM and Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages	Monitoring of the FCNM and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages include interviewing children and young people belonging to national minorities during country visits – in schools, youth centres, etc. The two committees visit schools and speak to children and young people belonging to national minorities.
ECRI	<a href="#">General Policy Recommendation (GPR) No. 17</a> on preventing and combating intolerance and discrimination against LGBTI persons, which contains recommendations to address challenges faced by LGBTI children and families.  <a href="#">Factsheet</a> on preventing and combating antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma and Travellers, which lists key recommendations for tackling antigypsyism and discrimination against Roma and Travellers, including in the education sector.
Education Department	Guidelines and tools for offering language support to refugee and migrant children.
Gender Equality Commission	<a href="#">Guidelines on the place of men and boys in gender equality policies and in policies to combat violence against women</a> . The Guidelines detail the range of measures member States should take: focusing on men and boys as agents of change and on countering resistance to gender equality, and for the promotion of gender equality in care; to reduce the negative impact of sexism, social norms and gender stereotypes on men and boys; and to strengthen the role of men and boys in action to prevent and combat violence against women. The Guidelines were developed on the basis of <a href="#">a study</a> on the roles of men and boys in gender equality policies.
PACE	<a href="#">Report</a> on “Eradicating extreme child poverty in Europe: an international obligation and a moral duty”, <a href="#">Recommendation 2234(2002)</a> and <a href="#">Resolution 2442(2002)</a> .
Pompidou Group	<a href="#">Children and families affected by parental drug use series</a> comprises 4 volumes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Volume I Children whose parents use drugs - Promising practices and recommendations ;</li> <li>- Volume II We are warriors - Women who use drugs reflect on parental drug use, their paths of consumption and access to services ;</li> <li>- Volume III Listen to the silence of the child - Children share their experiences and proposals on the impact of drug use in the family ;</li> <li>- Volume IV Children and parents affected by drug use - An Overview of programmes and actions for comprehensive and non stigmatising services and care.</li> </ul>
Roma and Travellers Team	<a href="#">13<sup>th</sup> Council of Europe Dialogue meeting</a> with the Roma and Travellers Civil Society on “Defending the rights of Roma and Traveller children”

Roma and Travellers Team	<p>Activities on children left behind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Report on Children left behind: between labour migration, institutional standards, and extended family – Bulgaria, and Public Discussion</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Online exhibition on children left behind by parents working abroad in Romania</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Living without them- Children left behind labour migrants</a></li> <li>- Short video: <a href="#">"Children left behind: between labour migration, institutional standards and extended family"</a></li> </ul>
Roma and Travellers Team	<p><a href="#">ROMACT Joint Programme</a> - Bulgaria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training on reinforcing the local partnerships for more effective practical implementation of children's rights and the protection of children at risk.</li> <li>- 9 grants supported activities promoting equal access to school and combating school drop out</li> </ul>
SOGI Unit/GT-ADI-SOGI/CDADI	<p><a href="#">Thematic Report on Legal Gender Recognition in Europe</a> (2022), which covers and recommends making self-determination-based Legal Gender Recognition accessible to children centred on the principle of the best interests of the child.</p>

### **b) Action taken by member states**

Over the past two years, the vast majority (between 90 and 95%) of respondent member states have passed legislation or taken policy initiatives at national, regional, or local level to improve equal opportunities or strengthen the social inclusion of children.

Primary focus has been placed on:

- Analysing and addressing new challenges for children emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Strengthening the participation and involvement of children in vulnerable situations;
- Protecting children on the move, including migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking children; and
- Fostering children's access to mental health care.

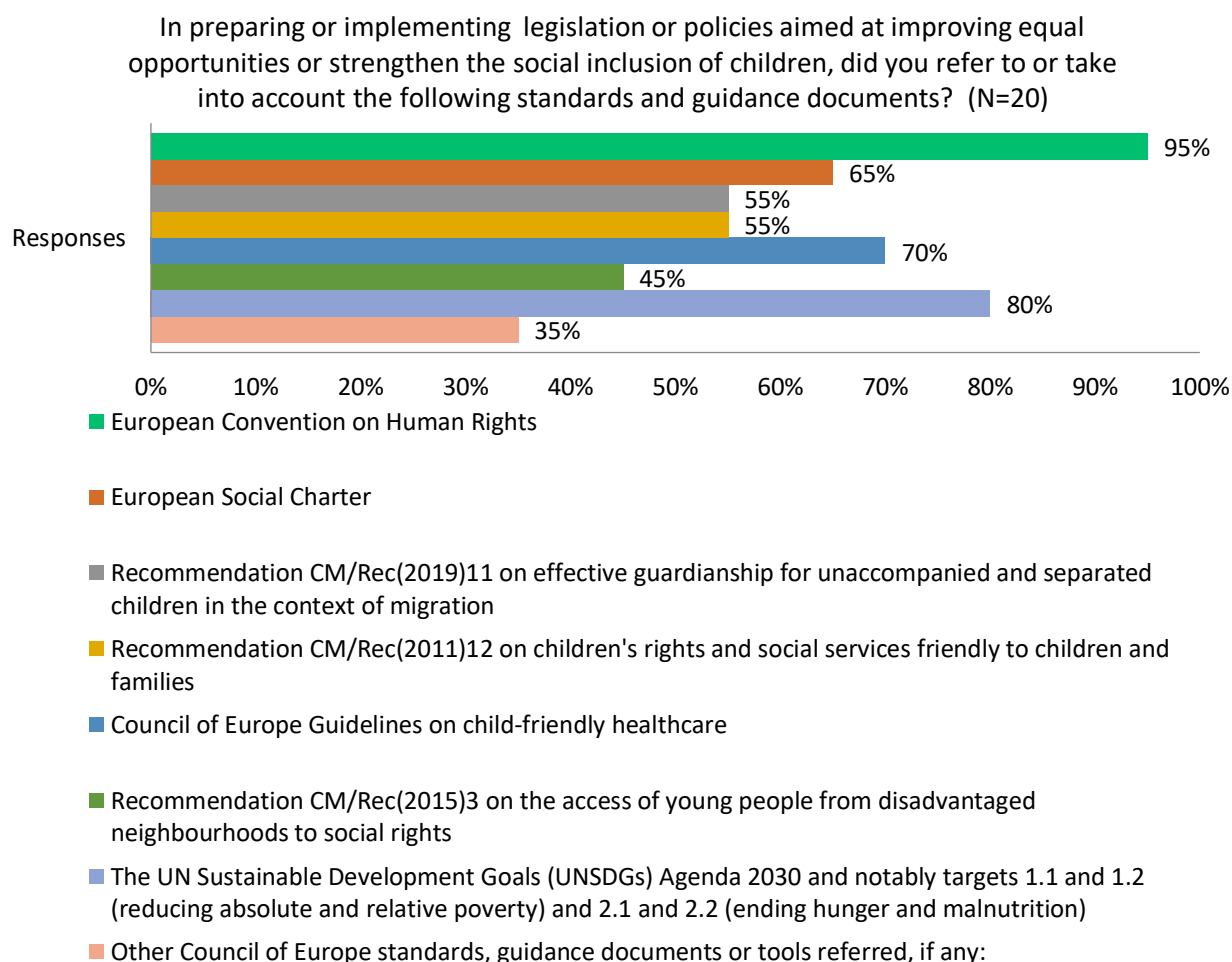
In 2023, new strategic documents mainly concerned promoting the inclusion and participation of children with disabilities, inclusive education, and institutional attention to poverty and social inclusion.

Topic	Member states indicating that initiatives had been taken	
	2022	2023
Guarantee children's social rights	16	15
Fight discrimination against children	18	18
Ensure access to justice for children in vulnerable situations	16	16
Promote inclusive education	17	17
Boost education programmes on citizenship and human rights education	16	15
Strengthen the participation and involvement of children in vulnerable situations	20	19
Protect children without parental care or in alternative care	17	17
Support the transition of children in vulnerable situations into adulthood	15	15
Protect children on the move, including migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking children	18	19
Protect children with disabilities and ensure their participation	17	18
Reduce child poverty	17	17
Make institutions and services more attentive to situations of poverty and social exclusion	13	17
Improve gender disaggregated data collection with relation to children	13	16

Analyse and address new challenges for children emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic	21	18
Tackle the exclusion of Roma and Traveller children	14	17
Combat trafficking of children	16	17
Protect LGBTI children and families	13	13
Foster children's access to mental health care	18	20

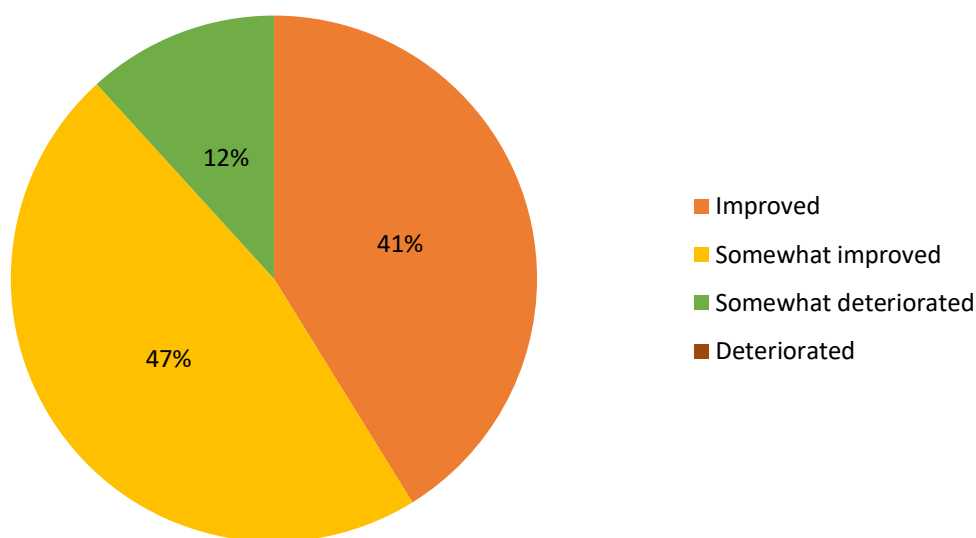
National promising practices	
Member State	Promising practice
<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>Cesta von (The way out).</b> Work aims at overcoming generational poverty, especially in Roma communities. It includes training mothers who help other mothers in the community take care of their children, learn with them, cook and raise them. It therefore employs women from the excluded community who acquire work skills but also self-confidence, and these women are accepted in the ranks of their own people. It is done by the municipalities themselves, such as Spišský Hrhov, where unemployment rapidly decreased and the settlement (slum) was transformed into a village with brick houses.

Respondent member states indicate that the European Convention on Human Rights, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) Agenda 2030 (notably targets 1.1 and 1.2 on reducing absolute and relative poverty and 2.1 and 2.2 on ending hunger and malnutrition), as well as the Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly healthcare are the main standards referred to or considered when preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at improving equal opportunities or strengthening the social inclusion of children.



Most respondent Member States (15 out of 17) consider that the overall situation of children regarding equal opportunities and social inclusion has (somewhat) improved.

Over the past two years, has the overall situation of children in your country regarding equal opportunities and social inclusion has...? (N=17)



### Strategic Objective 3 – Access to and safe use of technologies for all children

#### a) Action taken by the Council of Europe

During the reporting period (2022-2023), the Council of Europe has paid specific attention to the **human rights issues raised by Artificial Intelligence (AI)** systems, both in terms of benefits and risks. The Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI) has been mandated by the Committee of Ministers to elaborate a [framework] Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. This is expected to be complemented by sector-specific work throughout the Organisation, including on the rights of the child. In particular, the CDENF is working towards the adoption of a Report on the rights of the child and artificial intelligence.

As already mentioned under the Strategic Objective 2, the Lanzarote Committee has dedicated its 2<sup>nd</sup> monitoring round to the “**Protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs)**: addressing the challenges raised by child self-generated sexual images and/or videos”, leading to the adoption of an [implementation report](#). A new [co-operation project](#) to End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse@Europe Plus (EndOCSEA@Europe+) has just been launched. Other co-operation projects dedicated to combatting violence against children include activities dedicated to the fight against violence perpetrated online (see above under Strategic Objective 1).

Although attention is being paid to protecting children online and to ensure that their use of technologies is safe, less action has been developed towards ensuring an equal access to technologies for all children as well as providing digital education during this reporting period.

CoE entity (in alphabetical order)	Activity/product
Children’s Rights CoE office in Chisinau	Activities in the framework of the co-operation project “Combating violence against children in the Republic of Moldova”: - <a href="#">Training</a> for specialists in preventing and combating online child exploitation and abuse (OCSEA)

	- Gap analysis of online child exploitation and abuse frameworks (legislation, policies, practices) for prevention, identification, reporting and removal of online child sexual exploitation and abuse materials
Lanzarote Committee Secretariat	Different documents have been produced based on the Lanzarote Committee's 2 <sup>nd</sup> implementation report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Key findings factsheets</a> – key monitoring findings,</li> <li>- <a href="#">Thematic factsheets</a> – monitoring findings by chapter, and</li> <li>- <a href="#">Country factsheets</a> – monitoring findings by State party.</li> </ul>

### **b) Action taken by member states**

Over the past two years, the vast majority (between 90 and 95%) of respondent member states have passed legislation or taken policy initiatives at national, regional, or local level to improve the access and safe use of technologies for children.

Primary focus has been placed on:

- Protecting children online;
- Supporting children's environment and children themselves to prevent cases of cyberbullying and online hate speech;
- Raising awareness about sexist misuse of social media and online threats for children (including sexual exploitation and abuse); and
- Tackling the use of internet and social media for spreading disinformation, hate speech and violent ideas including for the purpose of terrorism among children and their radicalisation.

In 2023, additional attention has been paid particularly to:

- Enhancing reporting and prosecution of cases of online child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse; and
- Exploring new issues impacting children's well-being online.

Topic	Member states indicating that initiatives had been taken	
	2022	2023
Protect children online, e.g. from violence, grooming, sexual and peer violence and cybersexism, exposure to pornographic or other harmful content, cyberbullying, online hate speech or interference with children's right to privacy and personal data protection	23	21
Raise awareness about sexist misuse of social media and online threats for children (including sexual exploitation and abuse)	21	20
Ensure that cases of online child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are reported, investigated and prosecuted promptly, efficiently and appropriately	19	20
Support families, teachers and other professionals, volunteers as well as children, to prevent cases of cyberbullying and online hate speech	21	21
Provide digital citizenship education for children	16	16
Provide positive digital parenting support	16	16
Fight digital exclusion and ensure an equal access to the digital environment, including for children with disabilities, children in the context of migration and children belonging to national minorities, in particular Roma and Traveller children	13	13
Make sure that businesses and industry fulfil their responsibilities towards children, including by undertaking child impact assessments, ensuring the participation of children in the assessment stages, as well as involving them in the design of digital services and products	8	11

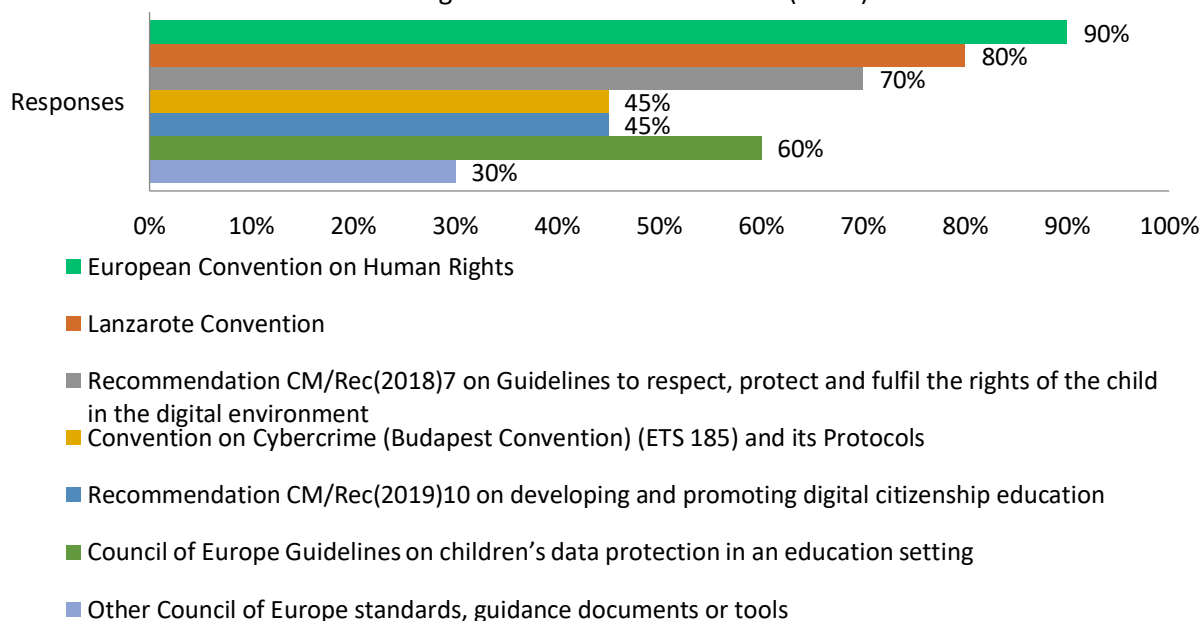


Tackle the use of internet and social media for spreading disinformation, hate speech and violent radical ideas including for the purpose of terrorism among children	20	19
Build capacities for professionals and volunteers working with children on the rights of the child and technologies, including the provision of digital citizenship education	16	16
Engage children in the development and delivery of capacity-building and digital education for teachers and other professionals or volunteers	10	11
Enhance child participation through technologies and in decisions related to the digital environment	10	12
Address the risks posed by and possibilities to benefit from the use of artificial intelligence in relation to children	10	12
Promote safe and enabling spaces for children to freely search for information and express their views online	14	14
Explore new issues impacting children’s well-being, i.e. online gaming, online marketing and online influencing	18	20
Ensure the rights of children to online play, leisure and association	13	14

National promising practices	
Member State	Promising practice
<b>Slovakia</b>	Launch of a school competition on Safe Internet Day, with the theme of “How to feel safe online”. A Digital youth forum for young people was organised, where this competition was evaluated. Children could listen to several lectures about technology and try out technologies such as virtual reality, and technical programs.
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Biennial Technology in Schools survey (TiSS) to capture up-to-date data which enables to understand the current state, use and spread of technology within primary and secondary schools in England. This will support various strands of current policy commitments and inform future interventions

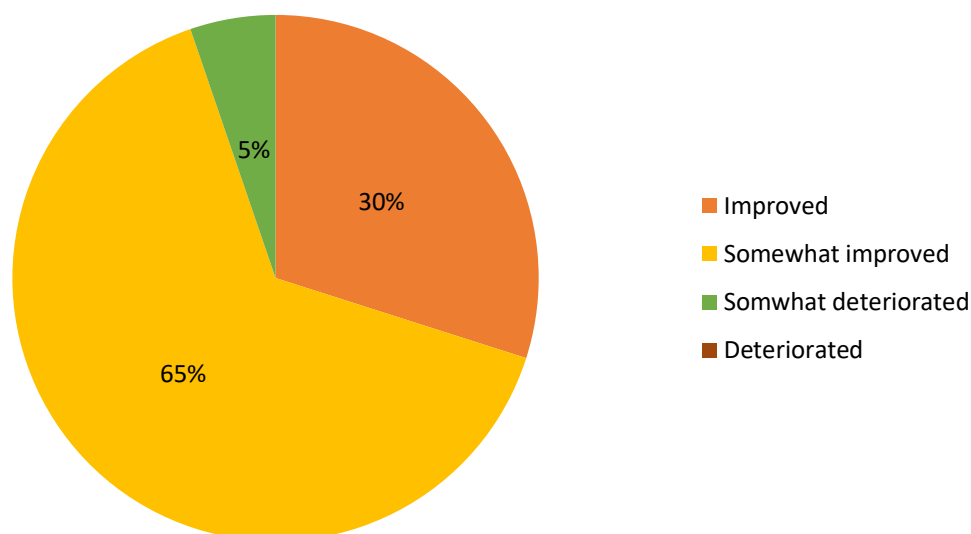
Respondent member states indicated that the European Convention on Human Rights, the Lanzarote Convention, and the Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)7 on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment are the main standards referred to or considered when preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at promoting the access and safe use of technologies for children.

In preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at ensuring access and safe use of technologies for all children, did you refer to or take into account the following standards and documents? (N=20)



Most of the respondent member states (19 out of 20) consider that the overall situation of children regarding the access to and safe use of technologies has (somewhat) improved.

Over the past two years, has the overall situation of children in your country regarding the access to and safe use of technologies ...? (N=20)



#### **Strategic Objective 4 – Child-friendly justice for all children**

##### **a) Action taken by the Council of Europe**

Since the adoption of the Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly justice, the Council of Europe has been supporting states in their efforts to adapt justice systems to the needs of child victims, witnesses and offenders, and in ensuring children’s access to, appropriate treatment in and participation in civil, administrative and criminal proceedings. Following this trend, the **Committee of Experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE)** is preparing a Draft Recommendation on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation situations as well as a Draft Recommendation on the rights and the best interests of the child in care proceedings, under the supervision of the CDENF and the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ).

The current implementation period has also seen the adoption of [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2023\)2](#) on rights, services and support for victims of crime, which calls for applying a child-sensitive approach when providing services to child victims, including through the provision of specialised training to staff working with child victims.

A boost in the support provided by the Council of Europe to member states to implement **Barnahus** (Children’s House) , a multidisciplinary and interagency child-friendly justice model responding to violence against children, has also taken place during the past two years. 2022 saw the successful completion of the project [“Supporting the implementation of Barnahus in Slovenia”](#), with the first Barnahus for child victims of sexual abuse being launched in Slovenia. Other five co-operation projects are on-going to support member states in their implementation of Barnahus in Croatia, Finland, Ireland, Montenegro and Spain. In the same vein, a Mapping study on multidisciplinary and interagency child-friendly justice models responding to violence against children in Council of Europe member States: [“Barnahus: a European Journey”](#) has just been published. The 2022 edition of the European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse focused on “Getting it right: ensuring child-friendly justice through Barnahus structures in Europe” (2022).

CoE entity (in alphabetical order)	Activity/product
Children's Rights Division	" <a href="#">Barnahus: a European Journey</a> " Mapping study on multi-disciplinary and inter-agency child-friendly justice models responding to violence against children in Council of Europe member States. Launched through a public <a href="#">event</a> .
Children's Rights Division	Promotional <a href="#">video</a> on the Barnahus model.
Children's Rights Division, including the <a href="#">Lanzarote Committee</a> , jointly with CBSS	"Towards Barnahus in All European States; Ensuring the Rights of Every Child" - <a href="#">High-level event</a> organised on the occasion of the European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
Children's Rights Division	Several activities in the framework of the co-operation project " <a href="#">Support the implementation of the Barnahus project in Ireland</a> ", including a legal and policy analysis on child sexual abuse in Ireland, with a focus on data protection and information sharing and a training gap analysis.
Children's Rights Division	Several activities in the framework of the co-operation project " <a href="#">Strengthening child-friendly justice through effective co-operation and coordination among different Barnahus-type services in the regions of Spain</a> ", including a legal and policy mapping, a study on training needs, a <a href="#">study visit to Tarragona Barnahus unit</a> (exchange of good practices) and a <a href="#">Barnahus Conference</a> (awareness raising event).
Children's Rights Division	Several activities in the framework of the co-operation project " <a href="#">Ensuring child-friendly justice through the effective operation of the Barnahus-units in Finland</a> ", including <a href="#">Legal review analysis</a> of Finnish legislation concerning child sexual exploitation and abuse cases, <a href="#">Analysis of current practices and identification of training gaps and needs of target groups</a> , provision of training and a study on the perceptions of children.
Children's Rights Division jointly with UNICEF	<a href="#">Feasibility study for Barnahus in Montenegro</a> , presented at a <a href="#">Webinar</a>
Children's Rights Division	Several activities in the framework of the co-operation project " <a href="#">Improving the juvenile justice system and strengthening the education and training of penitentiary staff in Slovenia</a> ", including a <a href="#">Research and Gap Analysis report</a> to identify existing challenges and gaps of the existing national legal and policy framework related to juvenile justice, as well as other studies and reports on case law, European standards and promising practices.
Children's Rights CoE Office in Chisinau	Several activities in the framework of the co-operation project " <a href="#">Combating violence against children in the Republic of Moldova</a> ", including <a href="#">Enhancing knowledge and capacities of staff in correctional facilities in the Republic of Moldova</a> on child-friendly procedures.
Children's Rights CoE Office in Kyiv	Several activities in the framework of the co-operation project " <a href="#">Protecting the rights of Ukrainian children during and in post-war context</a> ", including expert analysis of draft laws and trainings for interagency cooperation in criminal proceedings involving children.
CEPEJ	The 2022 <a href="#">Evaluation Report</a> on European Judicial systems includes information on the protection of children in judicial proceedings.
Co-operation in Police and Deprivation of Liberty	Provision of training to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Georgian police staff on the legal and psychological aspects of the investigations of offenses involving juvenile victims and offenders</li> <li>- Georgian penitentiary staff on Suicide Prevention, with special focus on gender specific-issues and juvenile offenders</li> <li>- Georgian NPM on appropriate monitoring instruments, to properly monitor the treatment of juveniles by police</li> </ul>

Co-operation in Police and Deprivation of Liberty	Specialised curriculum for prison staff working with children and young persons in detention, piloted in the Republic of Moldova. The Curriculum aims at promoting more effective rehabilitation of children and young people in detention, by enhancing the communication and interpersonal skills of prison staff, as well as their mentor and crisis management abilities for maintaining a positive culture in juvenile detention centres.
Violence against Women Division – Secretariat of GREVIO	In its baseline evaluation reports on <a href="#">Norway</a> and <a href="#">Estonia</a> , GREVIO praised the Barnahus model for providing holistic services to child victims and witnesses of violence.
Violence against Women Division – Secretariat of GREVIO	In all baseline evaluation reports adopted in the reporting period, GREVIO assessed the states parties’ compliance with Article 26 of the Istanbul Convention, which aims to ensure that whenever children have witnessed domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment or other forms of violence covered by the convention, the services provided to direct victims are also equipped to address the needs and rights of any children who were present. See <a href="#">Bosnia and Herzegovina</a> , <a href="#">Switzerland</a> , <a href="#">Georgia</a> , <a href="#">Cyprus</a> , <a href="#">Norway</a> , <a href="#">Estonia</a> , <a href="#">Romania</a> and <a href="#">Germany</a> .
Violence against Women Division – Secretariat of GREVIO	In its baseline evaluation reports on <a href="#">Germany</a> , <a href="#">Norway</a> , <a href="#">Estonia</a> , <a href="#">Bosnia and Herzegovina</a> and <a href="#">Switzerland</a> , GREVIO assessed the states parties’ use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in disputes concerning custody and visitation.

### **b) Action taken by member states**

Over the past two years, most (80%) of respondent member states have passed legislation or taken policy initiatives at national, regional, or local level to guarantee and promote child-friendly justice for all children.

Primary focus has been placed on:

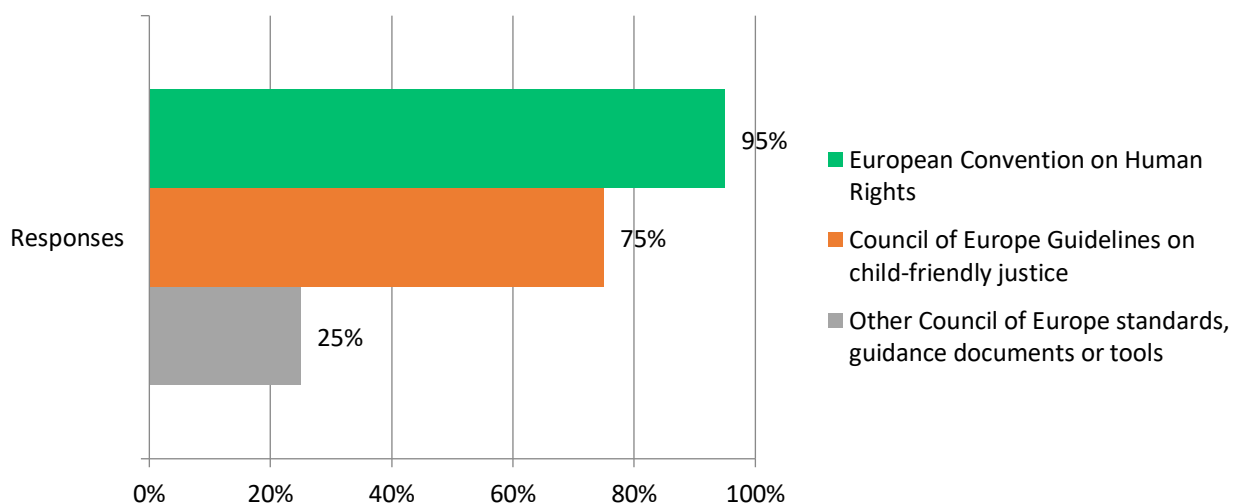
- Monitoring places where children are deprived of liberty;
- Improving access to justice for children in vulnerable situations;
- Ensuring the meaningful participation of children in proceedings concerning them, through the use of child-friendly language and information materials;
- Reviewing or developing standards in the area of family law, on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and care proceedings;
- Promoting child-friendly approaches in migration procedures, including by strengthening access to legal representation and guardianship, information and participation as well as effective remedies; and
- Addressing the needs and challenges of child victims and witnesses of violent crimes within the justice system.

Topic	Member states indicating that initiatives had been taken	
	2022	2023
Promote and develop training programmes or national versions of HELP courses for legal professionals in contact with children	10	10
Improve access to justice for children in vulnerable situations	14	16
Ensure the meaningful participation of children in proceedings concerning them, through the use of child-friendly language and information materials	13	16
Develop diversion measures and alternatives to detention for children in conflict with the law	11	10
Raise the age of criminal responsibility	01	01

Monitor places where children are deprived of liberty	15	14
Ensure children's access to child-friendly complaints mechanisms	12	12
End immigration detention of children	08	07
Further develop the Barnahus model	12	12
Promote child-friendly approaches in migration procedures, including by strengthening access to legal representation and guardianship, information and participation as well as effective remedies	14	13
Take measures to prevent juvenile justice proceedings	11	11
Review or develop standards in the area of family law, on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and care proceedings	14	15
Review or develop standards in the area of family law, on relocation of children	11	11
Develop codes of conduct or equivalent tools to guarantee respect of the rights of the child during judicial proceedings	09	10
Capture and analyse data on the relation of children with the justice system	12	12
Develop restorative justice for children, including for children who display harmful or risky sexual behaviour	07	07
Measuring the impact of emergency measures on children's access to justice, including for children in migration	05	04
Improve access to legal aid and representation for children, including by offering legal aid through legal clinics and strategic litigation	10	10
Uphold the rights and the best interests of donor-conceived children	06	05
Address the needs and challenges of child victims and witnesses of violent crimes within the justice system	14	15
Take measures towards the re-integration and rehabilitation of children affected by terrorism	06	05
Ensure children's access to justice in relation to environmental harm	07	07
Clarify the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in disputes involving children	09	09

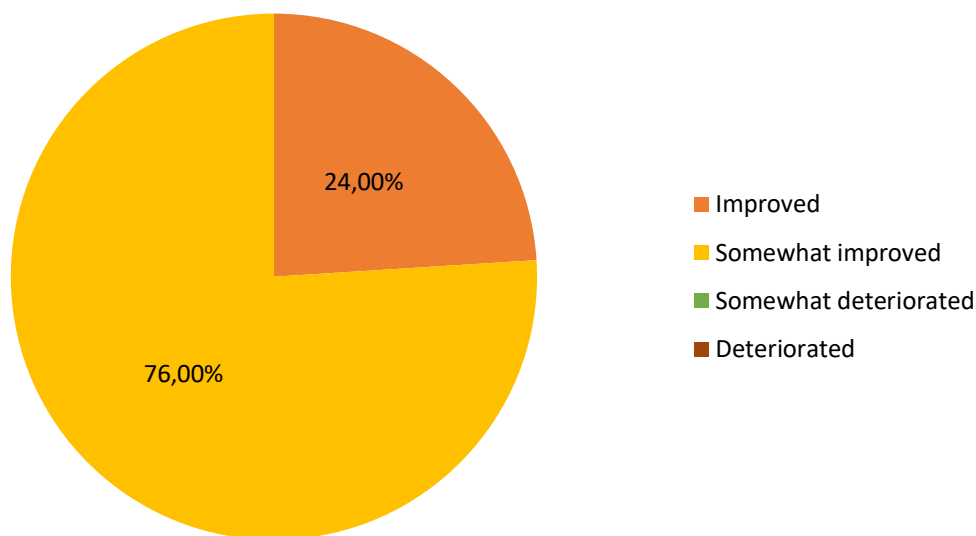
Respondent member states indicate that the European Convention on Human Rights and the Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly justice are the main standards referred to or considered when preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at promoting ensuring child-friendly justice for all children.

In preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at guaranteeing and promoting child-friendly justice, did you refer to or take into account the following standards and documents? (N=20)



All respondent member states (17) consider that the overall situation of children regarding the child-friendliness of the justice system has (somewhat) improved.

Over the past two years, would you say the child-friendliness of the justice system in your country has...? (N=17)



## **Strategic Objective 5 – Giving a voice to every child**

### **a) Action taken by the Council of Europe**

In line with previous action, the Council of Europe has continued supporting member states in embedding child participation in a systematic manner in all contexts relevant for children, based on Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2012\)2](#) on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18. The Organisation has continued **involving children** in its activities, through dedicated child consultations to gather children’s views for informing standard-setting as well as co-operation activities, as well as through **directly inviting children to participate** in various events and conferences (see table below for a detailed account of child consultation and participation activities by the Council of Europe). Through a [resolution](#) adopted in January 2022, the **Parliamentary Assembly** even decided to “consult children [...] in the preparation of the Assembly reports that concern them, in an appropriate way and with due respect for child safeguarding procedures, for example through written consultations, participation in hearings, focus groups and parliamentary networks; give children a voice in the debates on Assembly reports that concern them, for example by inviting a child representative to take the floor”.

In any child participation activities, children are potentially at risk of being unduly exposed, put on the spot or approached in an inappropriate manner. As a mitigating action, the Children’s Rights Division developed in 2019 its own **Child Safeguarding Policy**, which is currently serving as an internal reference for all measures taken to protect children in the context of activities led by the Division; and it also regularly serves to request commitment to child safeguarding from any consultants collaborating under formal contracts. A more comprehensive organisation wide draft policy, accompanied by an Implementation Toolkit is being considered.

Regarding standard-setting activities, in addition to the Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)4](#) on Roma youth participation which aims at ensuring substantive participation, representation and inclusion of young Roma people in public and political life, a Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2023\)9](#) on the active political participation of national minority youth has been adopted. The latter further encompasses guidance for both member states

and stakeholder organisations to respond to obstacles and barriers to participation in political life experienced by national minority youth.

Moving towards the monitoring work, the Lanzarote Committee has recently adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of Child Participation in its activities, setting an example that could be replicated by other monitoring bodies.

To close the strategic triangle, the finalised co-operation project “[CP4EUROPE - Strengthening National Child Participation Frameworks and Action in Europe](#)” (2021-2023) aimed to contribute to the promotion of children’s rights to participation at national and pan-European levels in accordance with Council of Europe standards and tools in this area. Under this project, many activities have been developed in order for children across Europe to find multiple and innovative opportunities to participate in decision-making processes through stronger child participation mechanisms (see table below for a detailed account of activities).

In addition, the CDENF is finalising a Report on **children as defenders of human rights**, which has been informed by member states’ contributions and child consultations. The CDENF, jointly with CDBIO, have prepared a **Guide on Children’s participation in decisions about their health**. Child-friendly versions of Council of Europe standards and documents, as well as booklets for informing children of their rights have also been developed. However, less attention has been paid by the Council of Europe to ensuring participation of all children, including children in vulnerable situations, during the reporting period.

CoE entity (in alphabetical order)	Activity/product
Children’s Rights Division	<a href="#">Guide for children and young people to the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)</a>
Children’s Rights Division	Activities undertaken in the framework of the co-operation project “CP4 Europe – Strengthening National Child Participation Frameworks and Action in Europe”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Child-Friendly Version of the CPAT</a> presenting the Council of Europe’s Child Participation Assessment Tool (CPAT) to children, including a <a href="#">video</a>,</li> <li>- <a href="#">CPAT Outcome Indicators</a> to measure the level of child participation in Member States,</li> <li>- <a href="#">Guidelines for developing a National Children's Participation Strategy</a>,</li> <li>- <a href="#">Let’s decide together</a>: a guide for adults responsible for planning for, and engaging with, children,</li> <li>- <a href="#">Child-friendly campaign package</a> aiming to raise the awareness of national and local authorities on the importance of child participation,</li> <li>- <a href="#">CP4 Europe Web-Platform</a> including all materials, and</li> <li>- <a href="#">Moodle/online training course</a> for professionals working for and with children aimed at strengthening their capacities on implementing meaningful and effective child participation.</li> </ul>
Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CLRAE)	Booklet on the Sustainable Development Goals entitled “ <a href="#">How to make your town a better place</a> ”.
Lanzarote Committee	Guidelines for the Implementation of Child Participation in Lanzarote Committee’s Activities and the European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
PACE	<a href="#">Resolution 2414 (2022)</a> on “The right to be heard – Child participation: a foundation for democratic societies”
PACE	Publication of <a href="#">a child-friendly version of the report on child participation</a> .

<b>Child consultations undertaken by the Council of Europe and child participation in Council of Europe activities</b>	
<b>CoE Body</b>	<b>Consultation topic</b>
CDENF jointly with CDBIO	Child consultations to inform the Guide of good practice for the participation of children in decision making processes on matters relating to their health (underway), in collaboration with the Teddy European Network for Excellency in paediatric research.
Children’s Rights Division	Child consultations to inform the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) – see <a href="#">Report on child consultations</a> , in collaboration with DCI Italy.
Children’s Rights Division	<a href="#">Child-friendly version of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)</a> in English (in collaboration with DCI Italy), French (in collaboration with the European School of Strasbourg), and Italian (in collaboration with the Italian Department for Family Policies).
Children’s Rights Division	<a href="#">Child participation</a> at the <a href="#">High-Level Launching Conference</a> for the Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027), in collaboration with DCI Italy.
Children’s Rights Division	Report on children as defenders of human rights (underway), in collaboration with Child Rights Connect.
Children’s Rights Division	Implementation review report of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on Effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in migration (underway), in collaboration with DCI Italy.
Children’s Rights Division	Participation of children in various activities in the framework of the CP4Europe Project, including its <a href="#">Final Conference</a> .
Children’s Rights Division	In the framework of the co-operation project “Supporting the implementation of Barnahus in Slovenia”, a <a href="#">Roundtable for children</a> was organised. The <a href="#">report</a> summarises how children that had participated in the consultations shared their opinions and experiences on child participation and on the services provided by Barnahus.
Children’s Rights Division	In the framework of the co-operation project “Ensuring child-friendly justice through the effective operation of the Barnahus-units in Finland”, a study and survey on perceptions of children and adolescents on the quality and child-friendliness of judicial services has been prepared.
CJ/ENF-ISE	Child consultation on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and care proceedings – see <a href="#">Summary Report</a> , in collaboration with Hıntalovon Children’s Rights Foundation.
CLRAE	Booklet on the Sustainable Development Goals entitled <a href="#">“How to make your town a better place”</a> .
Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)	“ <a href="#">Start to Talk</a> ” project: <a href="#">child consultation</a> on how to implement more efficient child safeguarding policies in sport in Bulgaria, in collaboration with the Child Council of the Bulgarian State Agency for Child Protection
Pompidou Group	33 interviews of children and young people to inform the booklet <a href="#">“Listen to the silence of the child”</a> , part of the broader project on <a href="#">“Children whose parents use drugs”</a> .

### **b) Action taken by member states**

In 2022, all respondent member states and in 2023 most respondent member states (94%) have passed legislation or taken policy initiatives at national, regional, or local level to promote and implement child participation at the national, regional, or local level.

Primary focus has been placed on:



- Involving children and giving due weight to their views in the development, implementation and evaluation of national standards, policies and activities;
- Ensuring that participatory processes include children in vulnerable situations;
- Promoting child participation in and through schools;
- Promoting child participation in non-formal learning; and
- Promoting safe and ethical child participation, by implementing child safeguarding policies, data protection and ethical data collection principles, and guaranteeing children’s access to information in child participation processes.

Topic	Member states indicating that initiatives had been taken	
	2022	2023
Involve children and give due weight to their views in the development, implementation and evaluation of national standards, policies and activities	21	22
Provide feedback to children on how their opinions are taken into account in the development, implementation and evaluation of national standards, policies and activities	17	16
Promote safe and ethical child participation, by implementing child safeguarding policies, data protection and ethical data collection principles, and guaranteeing children’s access to information in child participation processes	19	19
Promote child participation in and through schools	20	20
Promote child participation in non-formal learning	18	19
Promote child participation in decisions concerning their health	16	14
Promote child participation in the evaluation of service provision for children and families	12	13
Foster the development of national strategies or action plans on child participation	09	09
Undertake assessments of child participation mechanisms and practice through the Child Participation Assessment Tool (CPAT)	07	05
Promote children’s democratic engagement and ensure their participation in political life in accordance with their age and maturity	16	16
Lowering the voting age	07	04
Empower children to access information and to participate in decisions related to the environment	14	15
Promote practice-oriented working methods and tools for professionals and volunteers working with and for children on how to hear children, communicate with them and provide child-friendly information	17	16
Develop training modules and provide training on child participation	14	11
Establish sustainable channels for communicating directly with children, including by collaborating with existing child-led initiatives and networks	16	16
Protect and empower children acting as defenders of human rights and of the environment	11	11
Enhance the possibilities and capacities for reaching out to children through digital technologies	14	15
Ensure that participatory processes include children in vulnerable situations	20	20
Strengthen accountability for the right of the child to be heard in law and policy making as well as on service provision and decision making in administrative and judicial proceedings	12	13

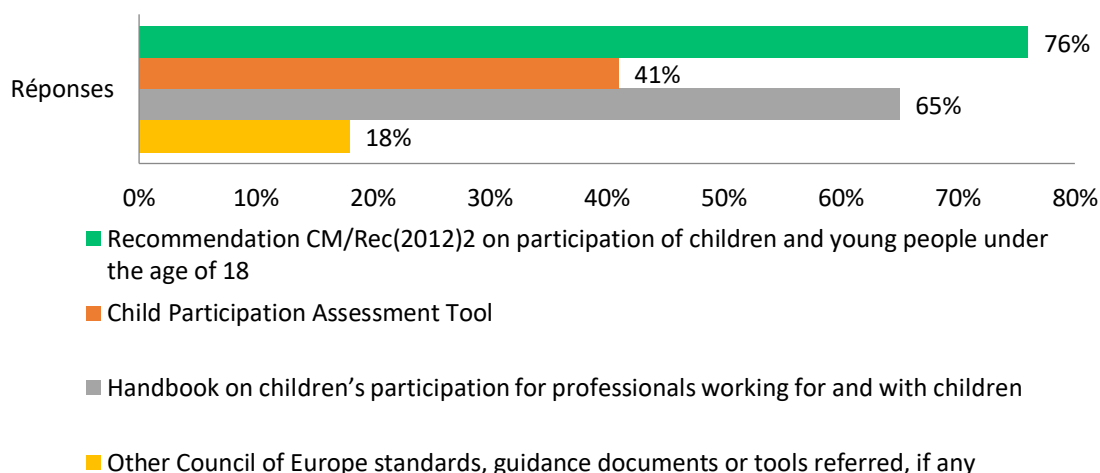
Respondent member states indicate that, over the past year, policymakers and/or other stakeholders have taken steps to embed child participation primarily in the sectors of local or regional democracy, education, sports, culture and leisure, and, to a lesser but significant extent in the sector of social services.

Context	Member state survey respondents who said that steps had been taken in their country to embed child participation within the context
Education	14 – 88%
Justice	7 – 54%
Healthcare	9 – 60%
Social services	9 – 75%
Sports, culture, leisure	13 – 87%
Local or regional democracy	16 – 100%

National promising practices	
Member State	Promising practice
Germany	The Initiative for strong Children and Youth Parliaments, funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ), supports child and youth parliaments nationwide at the local level through advice, information, networking and qualification.
Slovenia	Pilot project – “Minister consults with children”. The first consultation on children’s views on separation and divorce proceedings is due in October 2023.

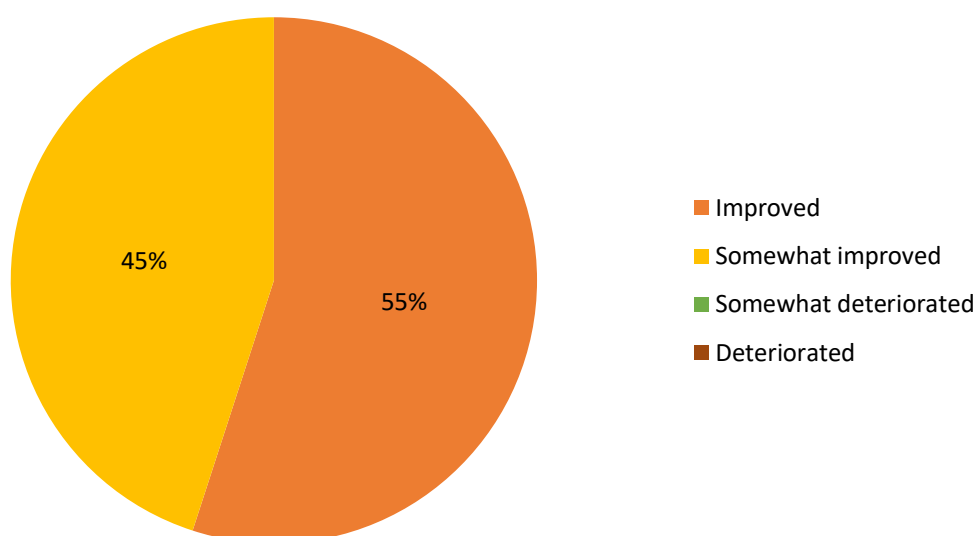
Respondent member states indicate that the Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)2 on participation of children and young people under the age of 18 and the Handbook on children’s participation for professionals working for and with children are the main standards referred to or considered when preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at promoting ensuring child-friendly justice for all children.

Over the past two years, has your country passed new legislation or taken policy initiatives to implement children’s right to participation using the tools issued by the Council of Europe? (N=17)



All respondent member states (20) consider that the overall situation of children regarding children’s right to participation has (somewhat) improved.

Over the past two years, would you say the guarantee of children's right to participation in your country has ...? (N=20)



## **Strategic Objective 6 – Children’s rights in crisis and emergency situations**

### **a) Action taken by the Council of Europe**

The Strategic Objective dedicated to the protection of children’s rights in crisis and emergency situations has been particularly relevant during this reporting period. Action by the Council of Europe under this objective has shifted from focusing on protecting children from the effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the subsequent measures adopted by member states, to paying particular attention at the **Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine**, which is entailing dramatic consequences for all Ukrainian people, including children.

During the [4<sup>th</sup> Summit](#) of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Reykjavík Summit, 16-17 May 2023), a [Declaration on the situation of children of Ukraine](#) was adopted, calling for “the Council of Europe to facilitate co-operation between states, the European Union and relevant international organisations through an appropriate mechanism.” Subsequently, in June 2023, the CDENF held an extraordinary plenary session dedicated to the follow-up to the Declaration. The Council of Europe **Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine (CGU)** has been created to serve as a multilateral co-operation platform to exchange information on legal and policy frameworks regarding the situation, status and needs of children from Ukraine residing in Council of Europe member states; to advise on the reform of the Ukrainian child protection and care system; and facilitate the sharing of relevant information, including information from the Network of Focal Points on Migration and, as far as possible, the co-ordination of measures taken with regard to the best interests of the children of Ukraine.

The **Lanzarote Committee** has also adopted a [Statement](#) on protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse resulting from the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, and addressed urgent [questions](#) to the Russian Federation concerning measures taken to protect Ukrainian children against sexual exploitation and abuse, resulting in a [Statement](#) regarding cooperation by the Russian Federation in the context of the questions addressed, deploring the lack of an appropriate response from the Russian Federation and urging it to co-operate fully in conformity with its obligations as a Party to the Lanzarote Convention.

The **Commissioner for Human Rights** also [visited](#) Ukraine to address the human rights situation of Ukrainian children transferred to the Russian Federation and to territories of Ukraine under Russian occupation.

Following action taken under the previous Strategy, the Council of Europe has continued working towards the protection of **children in the context of migration**. The Committee of Ministers has adopted Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)22](#) on human rights principles and guidelines on age assessment in the context of migration, with its [Explanatory Memorandum](#), being the first international legal instrument setting human rights standards on age assessment in the context of migration. The [Explanatory Memorandum](#) to Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on Effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration, adopted by the CDENF, has further been published. The implementation review of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 is underway by the CDENF. As it has also been reported under Strategic Objective 2, a new Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)17](#) on protecting the right of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls has also been adopted.

The work of the **Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees** (SRSG) continues to be of utmost importance, as many member states are receiving a large influx of refugees coming from Ukraine and other countries. In the reporting period, the SRSG on Migration and Refugees has undertaken five [fact-finding missions](#) to member states, where she highlighted challenges with regards the protection of the rights of migrant and refugee children. The SRSG-initiated [Network of Focal Points on Migration](#) plays a central role in enabling co-operation and dialogue among migration and asylum authorities in member states.

Since 2021, various monitoring bodies (i.e. ECRI, GRETA, Lanzarote Committee) are following the situation of migrant children under the Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe (2021-2025). In this regard, the Lanzarote Committee has adopted its last five [compliance reports](#) concerning recommendations made in its [special monitoring report](#) on the Protection of children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

The Strategy also calls for stepping up efforts with regards to **children’s rights in relation to the environment and the fight against climate change**. A new Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2022\)20](#) on human rights and the protection of the environment, although the specific work on children’s rights and the protection of the environment is still incipient at Council of Europe level. The CDENF has held a Thematic exchange on Children’s rights and the Environment, and the PACE has also paid attention to this issue. The Commissioner for Human Rights has recently [intervened](#) in the Hearing of the ECtHR in the case of [Duarte Agostinho and Others v. Portugal and 32 Others](#), closely linked to children’s rights and the environment.

CoE entity (in alphabetical order)	Activity/product
CDENF	<a href="#">Thematic exchange</a> on Children’s rights and the Environment, during its 8 <sup>th</sup> plenary meeting (14-16 November 2023).
Children’s Rights CoE Office in Chisinau	Roundtable on the Implementation of CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration and its Explanatory Memorandum.
Children’s Rights CoE Office in Kyiv	Training on “Psychosocial support for war-affected children and adolescents”
Commissioner for Human Rights	<a href="#">Intervention</a> in the Hearing of the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Duarte Agostinho and Others v. Portugal and 32 Others.
CLRAE	<a href="#">Report</a> on Reception of women and children refugees in Europe’s cities and regions, <a href="#">Resolution 487 (2022)</a> , <a href="#">Recommendation 481 (2022)</a>
Advisory Committee on the FCNM	Monitoring access to education and healthcare for children belonging to national minorities, in particular Roma and Travellers and monitoring socio-economic effects of measures taken in response to the crisis (see opinions on: <a href="#">Norway</a> , <a href="#">Estonia</a> , <a href="#">UK</a> , <a href="#">Italy</a> , <a href="#">North Macedonia</a> , <a href="#">Kosovo*</a> ). See also <a href="#">biennial report</a> published in 2022.

Advisory Committee on the FCNM	Advisory Committee's <a href="#">statement</a> on the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine condemned in the strongest possible terms the violence against women and children and deplored the Russian authorities' use of minority rights as a pretext for the aggression. The ACFC continues to receive information about the situation relating to children belonging to national minorities in Ukraine.
DPAER with the Office of the SRSG on Migration and Refugees	Follow-up to the previous seminar on Psychological Support to Refugees: Strengthening Capacities for Professionals Working with Children and Adolescents Who Experience War or Conflict Trauma.
GRETA	<a href="#">Guidance Note</a> on addressing the risks of trafficking in human beings related to the war in Ukraine and the ensuing humanitarian crisis
Lanzarote Committee	<a href="#">Statement</a> on protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse resulting from the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.
Lanzarote Committee	Urgent <a href="#">questions</a> to the Russian Federation concerning measures taken to protect Ukrainian children against sexual exploitation and abuse.
Lanzarote Committee	<a href="#">Statement</a> regarding cooperation by the Russian Federation in the context of the questions addressed to it under Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure, deploring the lack of an appropriate response from the Russian Federation and urging it to co-operate fully in conformity with its obligations as a Party to the Lanzarote Convention.
Lanzarote Committee	Last 5 compliance reports concerning recommendations made by the Lanzarote Committee in its <a href="#">special monitoring report</a> on the Protection of children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <a href="#">R7 on mechanisms for data collection,</a></li> <li>– <a href="#">R11 on protection to child victims,</a></li> <li>– <a href="#">R13 on coordination and collaboration of different actors,</a></li> <li>– <a href="#">R31 on child-friendly proceedings,</a></li> <li>– <a href="#">R37 on a coordinated approach between responsible agencies.</a></li> </ul>
Lanzarote Committee Secretariat	<a href="#">Checklist</a> on the protection of children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse: States' main obligations under the Lanzarote Convention. It provides concrete guidance for migration practitioners and policy makers to identify measures or procedures to prevent and protect children affected by refugee crisis from sexual abuse.
Lanzarote Committee Secretariat, Office of the SRSG on Migration and Refugees.	<a href="#">Handbook</a> on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in crisis and emergency situations, with examples of concrete measures that may be set up or improved in member states, as well as promising practices.
Office of the SRSG on Migration and Refugees	Fact-finding missions in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Moldova and Romania, highlighting challenges with regards the protection of the rights of migrant and refugee children in terms of registration, guardianship, institutionalization, and access to education (see the <a href="#">reports</a> ).
Office of the SRSG on Migration and Refugees, jointly with UNHCR	Thematic discussion in the Slovak Republic on protection against abuse and exploitation of vulnerable persons, in particular women and children who have fled Ukraine.
Office of the SRSG on Migration and Refugees	Pilot "Seminar on Psychological Support to Refugees: Strengthening Professional Capacities", aimed at strengthening the skills of psychologists, teachers and social workers to detect signs of war-related traumas in women and children and treat them adequately.
Office of the SRSG on Migration and Refugees	Network of Focal Points on Migration has held discussion on the situation of children fleeing Ukraine, including discussions on child-friendly approaches and procedures in migration. A restricted web space has been created within

	the website of the SRSB, allowing members of the Network to share and access relevant documents that can be of help in their work.
Office of the SRSB on Migration and Refugees	<a href="#">Event</a> on “Age assessment of unaccompanied migrant children: promoting a human rights and multidisciplinary approach”.
Office of the SRSB on Migration and Refugees	Mapping study to gather information on existing guidance on the identification and referral of vulnerable persons in the context of migration.
PACE	<a href="#">Report</a> on Deportations and forcible transfers of Ukrainian children and other civilians to Russian Federation or to Ukrainian territories temporarily occupied: create conditions for their safe return, stop these crimes and punish the perpetrators.
PACE	<a href="#">Report</a> on “Inaction on climate change – A violation of children’s rights”.
PACE	<a href="#">Opinion</a> on “Addressing the issue of Daesh foreign fighters and their families returning from Syria and other countries to the member States of the Council of Europe”.

### **b) Action taken by member states**

Over the past two years, most respondent member states (85%) have passed legislation or taken policy initiatives at national, regional, or local level to ensure children’s rights and child protection in crisis and emergency situations.

Primary focus has been placed on:

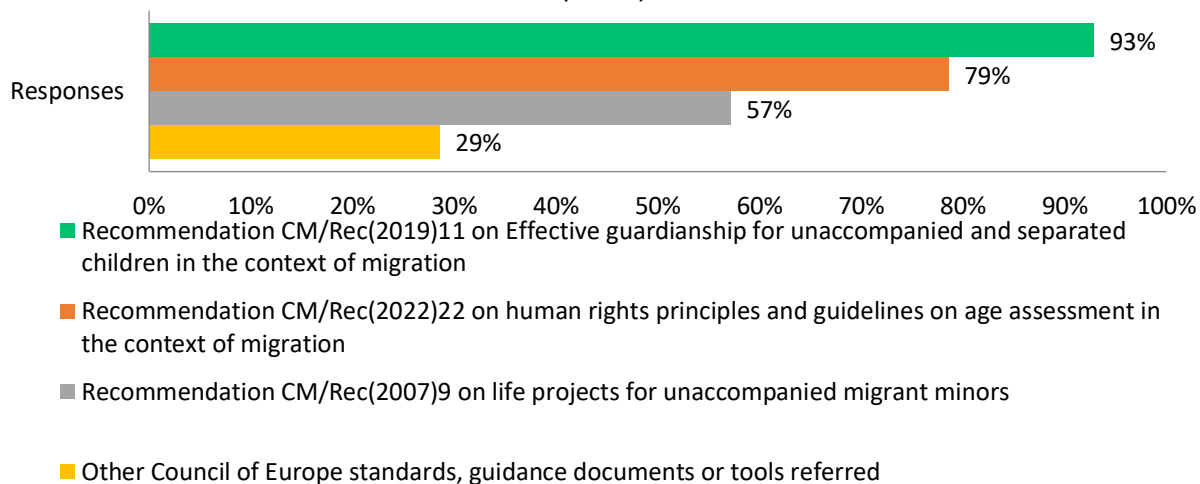
- Protecting the rights of children in migration and on the move, including internally displaced children;
- Building stronger child protection systems able to adjust to a crisis;
- Providing guidance to protect children in a public health crisis, including by supporting children’s resilience, and ensuring that the right to education and to participation are not overlooked; and
- Reintegrating and rehabilitating children returning from conflict zones.

Topic	Member states indicating that initiatives had been taken	
	2022	2023
Protect the rights of children in migration and on the move, including internally displaced children	17	16
Uphold the right to an education with respect for nature and which raises awareness of natural hazards and environmental risks	14	15
Build stronger child protection systems able to adjust to a crisis	15	15
Provide guidance to protect children in a public health crisis, including by supporting children’s resilience, and ensuring that the right to education and to participation are not overlooked	15	15
Map the existence of possible new vulnerable situations arising from crisis or emergency situations and develop innovative measures targeting their protection	11	9
Protect children in armed conflicts	14	12
Reintegrate and rehabilitate children returning from conflict zones	15	13
Recognise the human rights obligations as they relate to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment	12	11
Facilitate children’s access to justice against environmental harm	7	7

Respondent member states indicate that the Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on Effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration and the Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)22 on human rights principles and guidelines on age assessment in the context of migration

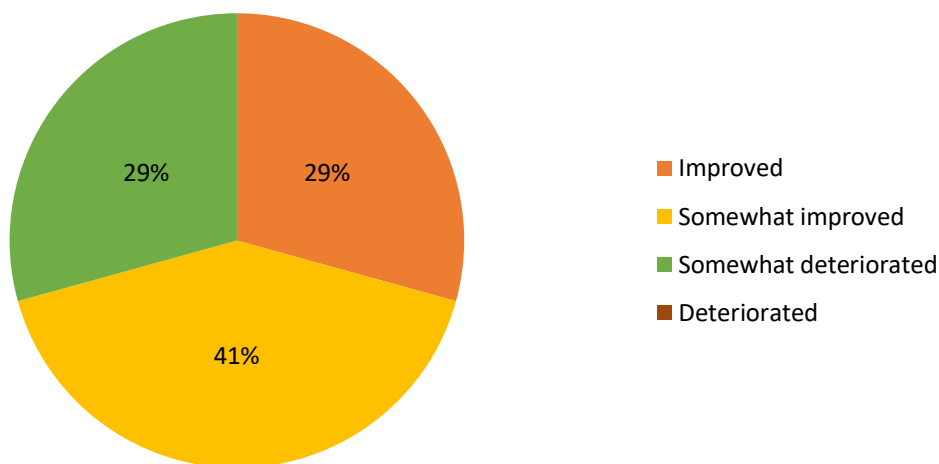
are the main standards referred to or considered when preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at ensuring children’s rights and child protection in crisis and emergency situations.

In preparing or implementing legislation or policies aimed at ensuring children’s rights and child protection in crisis and emergency situations, did you refer to or take into account any Council of Europe standards or tools?  
(N=14)



Most of the respondent member states (12 out of 17) consider that the overall situation of children regarding their rights in crisis and emergency situations has (somewhat) improved.

Over the past two years, has the overall situation of children in your country with regard to crisis and emergency situations (public health crisis, war/armed conflict, migration, climate change/environmental degradation, or other)...? (N=17)



## IV. Strategic partnerships with other regional, international organisations, civil society and other relevant stakeholders, including children

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The Council of Europe is mainstreaming action on the rights of the child across the Organisation, but its activities towards the protection of all children go beyond the realms of the Council of Europe. The implementation of the Rome Strategy is multiplied thanks to strong partnerships with external organisations at all levels (international organisations, civil society organisations as well as other stakeholders).

In particular, the CDENF, which is the main co-ordination body designing, implementing and overseeing progress made under the Strategy, involves multiple internal and external partners in its standard-setting work, through its formal meetings as well as in implementation activities and promotional events. These partnerships allow for a greater impact on the rights of the child.

Amongst the key partners in implementing the Strategy during this first implementation period, there are other **European and international organisations**, starting with the European Union, represented by the European Commission and the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child have numerous synergies, and the Council of Europe often relies on EU funding provided for co-operation projects led by the Children's Rights Division. Other international partners for implementing the current Strategy include the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and in particular the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF ECARO), the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (UN SRSG VAC), the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS).

The setting up of the CGU has also received significant support from key partners, including the European Commission, the FRA, EU Asylum Agency (EUAA), UNHCR and UNICEF ECARO, and the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), as well as important civil society organisations, confirming the unwavering solidarity for ensuring the best interests of Ukrainian children among all stakeholders.

A concrete result of collaboration through partnerships is the publication of the second edition of the [Handbook on European law relating to the rights of the child](#), jointly by FRA, the Council of Europe and the EctHR.

**Civil society organisations** continue to be key partners, including: the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC), Eurochild, Defence for Children International (DCI) and its different branches, the End Violence Initiative, the Inter-agency Panel on Juvenile justice (IPJJ), End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT international), Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages, Missing Children Europe, the Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union (COFACE), the International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates, the International Social Service (ISS), Child Rights International Network (CRIN), the Child-Friendly Justice European Network (CFJ-EN) and World Vision International, and others.

More importantly, **children** have been a key partner in this first implementation period of the Strategy, as they have provided their expertise in the development, implementation and evaluation of Council of Europe standards, policies and activities related to their rights and well-being (see Strategic Objective 5 for a detailed account of activities entailing child participation).



## V. Conclusion

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### **a) Overall impact of the Strategy**

This first report provides an insight into main actions and progress to date in the implementation of the Strategy, illustrating the transversality of this Strategy and the impact of the co-ordination and mainstreaming efforts both within the Organisation and in member states. The actions taken both by the Council of Europe and at national level during the reporting period show that the Strategy is being implemented widely. Most actions so far have focused on objectives related to the implementation of existing standards, and there are clearly a number of developments and areas where action should be reinforced, through the implementation of the Strategy's innovative objectives. This calls for increased efforts to be undertaken by the Organisation in co-operation with member states, in line with the priorities set out under the Strategy, as complemented by other Council of Europe thematic action plans and strategies.

### **b) Lessons learnt and remaining challenges**

Amongst the lessons learnt during this first implementation period, those related to the institutional and human limits that become visible in the fulfilment of such a complex undertaking should be mentioned. Without disposing of excessive resources, the Children's Rights Division has successfully initiated numerous activities with external and internal partners and continued mainstreaming the rights of the child through the Organisation. Once again, it has become evident that effective action in favour of the rights of the child involves clear and transparent priority setting and distribution of tasks, not least to manage the expectations of different stakeholders and keep everyone on board for the six-year journey under the Strategy.

Many of the activities led towards the rights of the child could not be undertaken without the commitment and support of member states that regularly provide voluntary contributions to the Council of Europe. The Children's Rights Division and the CDENF Secretariat have amply benefited of this opportunity of extended resources and would like to thank, in particular, the governments of Andorra, Cyprus, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Slovenia to have supported the Strategy implementation, under a project on "Protecting children from human rights violations of all forms in all settings" led in the period 2022-2023. The Lanzarote Committee Secretariat has also largely benefitted from voluntary contributions, in the context of the project "Lanzarote Convention Monitoring Mechanism" during the period 2020-2024, and would like to thank in particular the Governments of Belgium, Estonia and Ireland, the Secretariat has also benefitted from a secondment from the Government of Portugal, these additional resources have made it possible to progress more quickly with the monitoring and capacity building work.

As per progress made under each of the Strategic Objectives by the Council of Europe, there are continuous developments to protect children from violence in many forms and settings (Strategic Objective 1). Thanks to, among others, the work of the Lanzarote Committee, the fight against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children remains high on the Organisation's agenda. However, other types of violence against children, such as bullying, cyberbullying, peer-to-peer violence, and violence perpetrated in schools and care institutions, have received less attention during the reporting period. There is also an identified need to provide comprehensive sexuality education to children as a means to prevent violence as well as harmful or risky sexual behaviour by children. Furthermore, the implementation review of CM/Rec(2009)10 on Policy Guidelines on Integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence is likely to reveal promising practices and gaps in member states.

Children in vulnerable situation have been covered by different actions by the Organisation under Strategic Objective 2, but the rights of children with disabilities and children living in institutions have been somehow left aside during this reporting period. The special needs of these groups of children need to be kept on the

radar, for instance, in the work regarding violence against children, migrant and refugee children and children's rights with relation to technologies.

With regards Strategic Objective 3 (Access to and safe use of technologies for all children), the main topic addressed by the Council of Europe has been the fight against OCSEA, although further actions addressing children's rights in relation to artificial intelligence systems are expected during the upcoming years. This upcoming work is therefore to be seen in the context and aims at complementing other prioritised Council of Europe work on IA, notably, the ongoing and future work of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI), which includes the drafting of a [Framework] Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law as well as the methodology for the Risk and Impact Assessment of AI Systems from the point of view of Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law (HUDERIA). Efforts should be stepped up regarding ensuring equal access to technologies for all children as well as providing digital education programmes, including through co-operation with the private sector.

Actions to provide child-friendly justice for all children (Strategic Objective 4) have been on the focus during the reporting period, with both standard-setting and co-operation projects being developed on this topic. A thematic review of the Guidelines on child-friendly justice is expected to contribute highlighting promising practices while underlining remaining gaps. Member states seem to have a particular interest in stepping up their implementation of multidisciplinary and interagency child-friendly justice models responding to violence against children, and the Council of Europe should continue supporting them in that endeavour including from the intergovernmental perspective through a focus by the CDENF.

The Council of Europe has continued involving children and giving due consideration to their views in its standard-setting and co-operation activities, under Strategic Objective 5 (Giving a voice to every child). More efforts could yet be done to ensure children's participation also in monitoring activities by the Organisation. Another remaining challenge in this area is to ensure the participation of children from various backgrounds, including children in vulnerable situations. Besides, the adoption of an organisation-wide child safeguarding policy would be advisable in order to ensure that all children participating in Council of Europe activities are duly protected when doing so and that Council of Europe staff is supported in acting and reporting any child safeguarding incidences. A review of the implementation of child participation standards in member states would also be advisable.

Finally, in view of the on-going war of aggression by the Russian Federation to Ukraine, many actions have been developed under Strategic Objective 6 (Children's rights in crisis and emergency situations), both regarding the protection of children in armed conflict, as well as migrant and refugee children. The strategic decisions taken at the Reykjavík Summit, including the [Declaration on the situation of children of Ukraine](#), and the establishment of the Council of Europe Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine (CGU) are indicative of the significant importance attached to this area.

In order to fulfil with the Strategy's objectives, more steps should be taken on children's rights in relation to a healthy environment in the coming years, building on the recently adopted [General Comment No. 26](#) on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change<sup>3</sup> by the UN Committee on the Rights of Child (CRC).

Moving over to member states' actions, they generally consider that the overall situation of children has improved under every strategic objective, particularly in the area of child participation, as well as in the areas of child-friendly justice and access to and safe use of new technologies.

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<sup>3</sup> See the [child-friendly version of the General Comment No 26](#).

This is notably due to the steady development of national legislation, policies and strategic documents inspired and/or guided by the Council of Europe Strategy for the rights of the child, the European Convention on Human Rights as well as Council of Europe standards targeting specific issues.

The main reported challenge on the implementation of the Strategy is its dissemination. Most of the respondent member states (64%) do not have a translated copy of the Strategy available in their national languages. However, 27% are planning to translate it in the upcoming year. Hence it is expected that by the end of 2024, the majority of respondent member states (63%) will avail the Strategy in their national languages, which should contribute to its wider dissemination, knowledge, and command, paving the way forward towards its greater implementation at the national level over the next few years.

### ***c) The way forward***

The Organisation is committed to deliver this Strategy through a continued focus on implementation of existing standards, development of innovative actions, partnerships, communication and evaluation. The work of the CDENF and other committees demonstrated that there remains a need to develop more opportunities for good practice sharing and peer to peer support between member states in the area of child rights, particularly with regards innovative actions. Practical support to mainstream children's rights at the operational level and strengthen the level of expertise and capacity in member states should be a priority for the co-operation activities, including through extra-budgetary resource mobilisation.

The adoption of the **Declaration on the situation of children of Ukraine** among one of the main outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe and the subsequent setting up of the **Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine (CGU)** display a political commitment at the highest level, and entail important avenues for the future work of the Organisation on the rights of the child.

The progress of this six-year Strategy will be evaluated against its objectives. The CDENF will play a key role in the mid-term review after the first three years, under the guidance of member states and other relevant stakeholders, including children.

## Appendix 1: List of case law of the European Court of Human Rights on children's rights for the period of 2022 and 2023

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[Hashemi v. Azerbaijan nos. 1480/16, 3936/16, 15835/16, 28034/16, 34491/16, 51348/16 and 15904/17, 13/01/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning that the denial of Azerbaijani citizenship to the applicants' children was neither lawful nor accompanied by the necessary procedural safeguards)

[D.M and N. v. Italy, no. 60083/19, 20/01/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning an adoption procedure initiated by the authorities in breach of the mother's and her child's right to respect for family life)

[A.L. and Others v. Norway, no. 45889/18, 20/01/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning severe limitations on parents' contact rights, following their child's placement in foster care, at variance with aim of family reunification, and the failure to examine the existence of any other alternative arrangement to avoid permanent foster care)

[E.M. and Others v. Norway, no. 53471/17, 20/01/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning the justified continuation of foster care and the removal of the mother's parental responsibilities and refusal of her contact rights)

[N.M. and Others v. France, no. 66328/14, 03/02/2022](#) (on violation of Article 1 of the Protocol No.1 concerning compensation for the costs of caring for a child whose disability was not detected during prenatal screening)

[Q and R v. Slovenia, no. 19938/20, 08/02/2022](#) (on violation of Article 6 concerning unreasonable length of proceedings, lasting six years and ongoing, for grandparent requesting foster care of children left without parental care and non-violation of Article 8 concerning court's refusal to hear young children without parental care represented by social services, and not by special guardian)

[M.B.K and others v. Hungary, no. 73860/17, 24/02/2022](#) (on violation of Articles 3 and 5 concerning conditions to which the six applicants; mother, father and their four children were subjected during their seven-months-long stay in the transit zone at the border of Hungary and Serbia)

[I.V.T v. Romania, no. 35582/15, 01/03/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning a television interview of a minor without parental consent)

[Nikoghosyan and others v. Poland, no. 14743/17, 03/03/2022](#) (on violation of Article 5 concerning automatic placement of a family of adult and child asylum-seekers in six-month-long detention without thorough and individualised assessment of particular situation and needs)

[C.E. and Others v. France, nos. 29775/18 and 29693/19, 24/03/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning refusal to recognise a legal relationship between a child and the biological mother's ex-partner)

[A.L. v. France, no. 13344/20, 07/04/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning refusal to establish the applicant's paternity in respect of his biological son, who was born as a result of surrogate motherhood and entrusted by the surrogate mother to a third couple)

[Landi v. Italy, no. 10929/19, 07/04/2022](#) (on violation of Article 2 concerning the authorities failed to protect a woman and her deceased son from domestic violence, and non-violation of Article 14 concerning the alleged discriminatory treatment)

[Callamand v. France, no. 2338/20, 07/04/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning rejection of a request for contact rights vis-à-vis former spouse's child)

[A.Ö. and H.Ö. v. Romania, no. 1455/20, 03/05/2022](#) (on violation of Article 3 concerning lack of effective criminal proceedings into allegations of child sexual abuse while placed by the child protection services in a privately run child-care home)

[P.D. v. Russia, no. 30560/19, 03/05/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning domestic courts' refusal of applicant's request for his daughter's return under the Hague Convention in an international child abduction case)

[H.P. and Others v. Croatia, no. 58282/19, 19/05/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning failure of authorities to protect applicant children from further abuse in a case of custody dispute and alleged abuse of children by their mother)

[T.C. v. Italy, no. 54032/18, 19/05/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 14 taken in conjunction with Article 8 concerning the order prohibiting a Jehovah's Witness from actively involving his young child, brought up in Catholicism, in his religious practice)

[Roengkasettakorn Eriksson v. Sweden, no. 21574/16, 19/05/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning decision and reasoning of domestic courts for transfer of custody of applicant's child to foster parents and limitation of contact rights)

[Dokukiny v. Russia, no. 1223/12, 24/05/2022](#) (on violation of Article 3 concerning failure to conduct effective investigation into arguable claim of ill-treatment by police against parent and child)

[X and Others v. Albania, nos. 73548/17 and 45521/19, 31/05/2022](#) (on violation of Article 1 of Protocol No.12 concerning failure to implement swift and comprehensive desegregation measures in an elementary school attended almost exclusively by Roma and Egyptian children)

[H.M. and Others v. Hungary, no. 38967/17, 02/06/2022](#) (on violation of Articles 3 and 5 concerning living conditions for over four months of an asylum-seeker family including a pregnant woman and her children that exceeds threshold of severity)

[I.G.D. v. Bulgaria, no. 70139/14, 07/06/2022](#) (on violation of Articles 5, 8, and 13 taken in conjunction with Article 8 concerning failure of periodical review by a court of the placement of a child)

[De Giorgi v. Italy, no. 23735/19, 16/06/2022](#) (on violation of Article 3 concerning failure of authorities to investigate and protect the applicant and her children from the husband's acts of domestic violence)

[S.M. v. Russia, no. 17219/20, 21/06/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning proportionate deprivation of parental authority, following exhaustion of all possibilities for maintaining ties and corresponding to children's best interests)

[Paparrigopoulos v. Greece, no. 61657/16, 30/06/2022](#) (on violation of Article 14 taken in conjunction with Article 8 concerning exercise of parental responsibility of child born out of wedlock)

[Darboe and Camara v. Italy, no. 5797/17, 21/07/2022](#) (on violation of Articles 3 and 8 concerning failure of authorities to act with reasonable diligence in respect of declared unaccompanied minor asylum-seeker, not benefitting from minimum procedural guarantees in age-assessment procedure)

[H.F. and others v. France, nos. 24384/19 and 44234/20, 14/09/2022](#) (on violation of Article 3 of Protocol No.4 concerning lack of review with safeguards against arbitrariness for refusal to repatriate nationals held with their children in Kurdish-run camps after fall of "Islamic State")

[Popadić v. Serbia, no. 7833/12, 20/09/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning authorities' failure to consider applicant's legitimate interest in developing a bond with his child and the latter's long-term interest to the same effect)

[M.T. and Others v. Sweden, no. 22105/18, 20/10/2022](#) (on non-violation of Articles 8 and 14 taken in conjunction with Article 8 concerning temporary statutory three-year suspension period for family

reunification of persons with subsidiary protection status, gradually reduced and allowing individualised assessment)

[Loste v. France, no. 59227/12, 03/11/2022](#) (on violation of Articles 3, 9 and 13 concerning authorities' failure to protect the child applicant for twelve years from ill-treatment and sexual abuse during her placement with a foster family and to take the necessary measures to ensure that the foster family complied with the religious neutrality clause under which it had undertaken to honour the religious opinions of the child and her family)

[I.M. and Others v. Italy, no. 25426/20, 10/11/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning applicant children forced to meet their violent father in an unprotective environment and suspension of parental authority of the hostile mother)

[N.V. and C.C. v. Malta, no. 4952/21, 10/11/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning disproportionate order by family court preventing couple in stable relationship from living together to safeguard interests of child from mother's previous marriage)

[A and Others v. Iceland, nos. 25133/20 and 31856/20, 15/11/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning domestic courts' decision depriving parents of custody of their two children due to inability to properly care for them and children's wishes to remain in foster care)

[D.B. and Others v. Switzerland, nos. 58817/15 and 58252/15, 22/11/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning lack of provisions in domestic law for alternative means of recognising children born to same-sex couples through surrogacy)

[D.K. v. Italy, no. 14260/17, 01/12/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 3 concerning the investigation by the national authorities into the applicant's allegation of sexual abuse by her uncle)

[M.H v. Poland, no. 73247/14, 01/12/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning unjustified seven-month delay in joint divorce and custody proceedings depriving applicant of possibility of having additional contact with young daughter over a three-month period)

[K.K and Others. v. Denmark, no. 25212/21, 06/12/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning refusal of authorities' to let the intended mother adopt the applicants who are twins born through surrogacy)

[Scalzo v. Italy, no. 8790/21, 06/12/2022](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning prolonged inability to bring an action to establish paternity on the part of the biological father owing to the length of the proceedings to contest the paternity of the putative father)

[Elmazova and Others v. North Macedonia, nos. 11811/20 and 13550/20, 13/12/2022](#) (on violation of Article 14 taken in conjunction with Article 2 of Protocol No.1 concerning discrimination of Roma children on account of their segregation in two State-run primary schools attended predominantly by Roma children and with Roma-only classes respectively)

[V.Y.R. and A.V.R. v. Bulgaria, no. 48321/20, 13/12/2022](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning authorities' decision based on the child's best interests to place child for adoption without the biological mother's consent)

[Macatė v. Lithuania, no. 61435/19, 23/01/2023](#) (on violation of Article 10 concerning suspension of distribution of a children's book of fairy tales containing storylines about same-sex marriage)

[Elvan v. Türkiye, no. 64937/19, 07/02/2023](#) (on violation of Article 2 concerning lack of an effective investigation in the death of a 15-year-old boy as a result of a wound inflicted by a grenade launcher during the Gezi protests)

[B v. Russia, no. 36328/20, 07/02/2023](#) (on violation of Article 3 concerning failure to protect the personal integrity of an extremely vulnerable child in criminal proceedings concerning her alleged sexual abuse by several individuals and leading to her secondary victimisation by numerous and unrecorded interviews by different and mainly male investigators in ordinary offices)

[Byčenko v. Lithuania, no. 10477/21, 14/02/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning domestic courts' refusal to make a residence order in the applicant's favour in respect of his son following child's unlawful removal from Lithuania by his mother)

[G.K. v. Cyprus, no. 16205/21, 21/02/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning domestic courts' order to return the child in an international child abduction case)

[Deltuva v. Lithuania, no. 38144/20, 21/03/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning the limitations on prisoner's family visits with his wife and child)

[Simona Mihaela Dobre v. Romania, no.8361/21, 21/03/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning domestic court's refusal to allow applicant and her child to move residence to a foreign country in absence of father's consent)

[Szolcsan v. Hungary, no. 24408/16, 30/03/2023](#) (on violation of Article 14 taken in conjunction with Article 2 of Protocol No.1 concerning the discrimination against a Roma child by segregation in a public primary school attended almost exclusively by Roma children)

[X v. the Czech Republic, no. 64886/19, 30/03/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning the return order of the applicant's child under the Hague Convention in an international child abduction case)

[O.H. and G.H. v. Germany nos. 53568/18 and 54741/18, 04/04/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning the refusal of the domestic courts to allow the applicant transgender parent to be recorded as father of the second applicant child to whom he had given birth, even though the legal recognition of his gender change to male had already been obtained before the child was conceived)

[A.H. and Others v. Germany, no. 7246/20, 04/04/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning refusal of civil registration authorities to record the applicant transgender parent in the registry as mother of the applicant child on the grounds that the third applicant to the case had given birth to the child who had in fact been conceived with the first applicant's sperm)

[T.H. v. Bulgaria, no. 46519/20, 11/04/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 14 taken in conjunction with Article 1 of Protocol No.2 concerning the primary school's response to aggressive behaviour of the applicant child diagnosed with hyperkinetic and scholastic-skills disorder)

[Simonova v. Bulgaria, no. 30782/16, 11/04/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning domestic authorities' order for the demolition of an unlawfully erected building that have been the only home of the applicant mother and her children)

[Jírová and Others v. The Czech Republic, no. 66015/17, 13/04/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning court ordered prohibition on contact between former foster parents and their foster child even after reaching majority)

[E.K. v. Latvia, no. 25942/20, 13/04/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning failure of domestic authorities to take necessary and timely steps to enforce the applicant's contact rights with his daughter seeking to overcome the mother's obstructive attitude)

[A.C. et M.C. v. France, no. 4289/21, 04/05/2023](#) (on violation of Articles 3 and 5 concerning administrative detention of a mother and her seven-and-a-half-month-old son, with the purpose of transferring them to another country under the EU Dublin III Regulation)

[A.M. and Others v. France, no. 7534/20, 04/05/2023](#) (on violation of Articles 3 and 5 concerning administrative detention of a mother and her three children, with the purpose of transferring them to another country under the EU Dublin III Regulation)

[Bogdanov v. Ukraine, no. 27380/20, 04/05/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning refusal of the police to disclose the applicant the address where his minor son was living with his mother, although he also exercised parental responsibilities)

[A.E. v. Bulgaria, no. 53891/20, 23/05/2023](#) (on violation of Articles 3 and 14 concerning failure to provide adequate protection to a child victim of domestic violence)

[I.S. v. Greece, no. 19165/20, 23/05/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning domestic authorities' failure to take all necessary measures to enforce the applicant's rights to have contact and establish relationship with his children)

[Pitsiladi and Vasilellis v. Greece, nos. 5049/14 and 5122/14, 06/06/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 2 concerning the applicant parents' complaint that the regulatory framework, which made it impossible to access a bank account opened in their name and crowdfunded for the treatment of their child suffering from cancer, led to the death of their child)

[P.N. v. The Czech Republic no. 44684/14, 08/06/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning applicant father's complaint that the domestic courts in an international child abduction case had consented to children stay with their mother)

[A and B c. France, no. 12482/21, 08/06/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning the annulment of the recognition of paternity by the applicant mother's ex-husband of the (applicant) child born by medical assistance with anonymous gamete donation)

[Kukavica v. Bulgaria, no. 57202/21, 13/06/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning domestic court's refusal to immediate return of the applicant's child in international child abduction proceedings)

[X and Others v. Ireland, nos. 23851/20 and 24360/20, 22/06/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 14 taken in conjunction with Article 1 of Protocol No.1 concerning alleged discrimination based on non-fulfilment of the domestic law habitual residence criterion as regards eligibility for universal statutory child benefit of two applicant mothers)

[Neshcheret v. Ukraine, no.41395/19, 22/06/2023](#) (on violation of Articles 3 and 13 concerning the conditions of detention of a mother and her new-born child at the pre-trial detention centre as well as the medical care provided to the baby in that institution)

[C v. Italy, no. 47196/21, 31/08/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning refusal to establish the legal parent-child relationship between the applicant child and her biological father and non-violation of Article 8 concerning to establish the legal parent-child relationship between the applicant child and her intended mother)

[M.A. v. Italy, 70583/17, 31/08/2023](#) (on violation of Article 3 concerning placement of unaccompanied minor asylum-seeker, allegedly a victim of sexual abuse, for almost eight months, in adult reception centre not equipped to provide her with appropriate psychological assistance)

[Vinskovsky v. The Czech Republic, no. 59252/19, 05/09/2023](#) (inadmissibility decision on Article 8 concerning the dismissal of the applicant's request to have contact right with the child of his former partner with whom he had lived for two years)

[A and Others v. Italy, no. 17791/22, 07/09/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning lack of adequate efforts by domestic authorities to ensure the applicants right to visit and establish relation with his children)

[D.R. and Others v. Norway, nos. 63307/17, 12/09/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning withdrawals of and limitations on the applicants' right to contact with their children who had been taken into public care)

[Gauvin-Fournis and Silliau v. France, nos. 21424/16 and 45728/17, 07/09/2023](#) (on non-violation of Article 8 concerning refusal to allow persons born through medically assisted production involving an anonymous donor to access information about the donor)

[K.F. and Others v. Norway, nos. 39769/17, 9167/18, 48372/18, 38097/19, 45985/19, 58880/19, 12/09/2023](#) / [S.S. and J.H. v. Norway, no. 15784/19, 12/09/2023](#) (on violation of Article 8 concerning domestic courts'



decisions to withdraw the applicant parents' parental responsibilities in respect of the children in foster care and to authorise their adoption, against the parents' wishes)

[Luca v. the Republic of Moldova, no. 55351/17, 17/10/2023](#) (on violation of Articles 3, 8 and 14 in conjunction with Article 3 concerning the authorities' failure to protect the applicant from domestic violence and to help her maintain her relationship with her children when domestic violence proceedings had been initiated)

[Bîzdîga v. the Republic of Moldova, no. 15646/18, 17/10/2023](#) (on violation of Articles 6 and 8, concerning restrictions on the applicant's rights to contact his child and his inability to obtain custody despite new circumstances in the case)

Since the launch of the Programme “Building a Europe for and with children” in 2006, the Council of Europe has promoted and supported the implementation of the rights of the child across Europe under a number of Strategy cycles. This is the first implementation report of the current Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027), covering the years 2022-2023. It builds on information coming from a variety of sources: information that was provided by member states through a survey and by different Council of Europe bodies via the Inter-Secretariat Task Force on the Rights of the Child, or that was researched amongst the most recent case-law of the European Court of Human Rights or the findings of a range of Council of Europe monitoring bodies.

Covering all six strategic objectives of the Strategy – freedom from violence, equal opportunities, access to and safe use of technologies, child-friendly justice, child participation, and crisis and emergency situations – the report points to achievements and promising practices and sets out a number of challenges that lie ahead in each of the priority areas, as well as specific topics where action should be stepped up to ensure the full implementation of the Strategy.

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