



FACTSHEET – GEORGIA

Lanzarote Committee Implementation Report on:

“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 (CSGSIV)”

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I. Introduction

Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs) is a common challenge faced by all States. The often transnational nature of these offences makes international cooperation of the utmost importance especially to identify and protect victims as well as to identify and prosecute perpetrators.

The Council of Europe [Convention on the Protection of Children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse](#) (“Lanzarote Convention”) is a comprehensive instrument that sets out the applicable standards necessary to:

- Prevent child sexual exploitation and abuse, including where this is facilitated by ICTs;
- Protect victims;
- Prosecute perpetrators; and
- Promote national and international co-operation to strengthen these actions.

The [Committee of the Parties to the Lanzarote Convention](#) (“the Lanzarote Committee”) monitors the implementation of the Convention in thematic monitoring rounds. This allows for all Parties to be monitored simultaneously on the same theme.

Particularly concerned by the exponential increase in offences committed using child self-generated sexual images and/or videos (CSGSIV), the Lanzarote Committee decided to dedicate its second monitoring round to this topic. The 43 States that were Party to the Convention at the time the monitoring round was launched took part, including Georgia.

The [implementation report](#) adopted by the Lanzarote Committee in the context of this monitoring round is based on information provided by [State Parties](#) and [other stakeholders](#) in response to a questionnaire. The implementation report also contains information received from 306 [children](#) in 10 Parties who chose to participate.

The Lanzarote Committee’s recommendations to improve or reinforce the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse can be found in boxes in each of the 10 thematic chapters. The key messages resulting from the children’s participation are also reflected throughout the whole report. Each chapter also includes examples of promising practices.

The Lanzarote Committee indicates the different levels of urgency applicable to the recommendations made by using the following terms:

- **“Require”**: when the steps recommended correspond to obligations arising from the Lanzarote Convention, as clarified by its Explanatory report;
- **“Request”**: when the steps recommended correspond to obligations arising from the Lanzarote Convention, as clarified by documents adopted by the Committee (e.g. previous monitoring round findings, opinions, other)¹;
- **“Invite”**: when the steps recommended correspond to promising practices or other measures to enhance protection of children against sexual violence even beyond specific requirements of the Lanzarote Convention.

This factsheet is based on the implementation report and has been prepared by the Lanzarote Committee Secretariat as a practical tool to be used by Georgia to clearly identify the relevant recommendations and actions addressed by the Lanzarote Committee to it. Therefore, it does not include updated information on measures implemented by the Parties since the adoption of the report in March 2022. Parties are encouraged to inform the secretariat of any relevant measures implemented after that date, which may have an impact on the Committee's analysis and recommendations by completing this [online form](#) or by email to lanzarote.committee@coe.int.

¹ See Rule 30 (General comments, proposals and opinions) of the Lanzarote Committee’s Rules of Procedure.

Key findings of the implementation report as to all Parties

The Committee raised particular concerns that in the vast majority of State Parties, children are at risk of criminal liability in relation to their own self-generated materials, and that many Parties do not provide for the specific offence where a child is a victim of extortion involving the use of its CSGSIV.

Strengthening international cooperation was identified as of particular importance in this context, given that these offences often contain a transnational element. The Lanzarote Committee also called on Parties to establish jurisdiction where any constituent element of an offence takes place within their territory.

Many Parties were found to provide mechanisms to facilitate reporting of these crimes but without providing specific services to support and assist children who have been victims of online sexual abuse to recover. Lack of public awareness and education, including among children, about the specific risks associated with ICT facilitated sexual abuse and self-generated content was also identified as a common challenge.

II. Legal frameworks

Interpreting the Convention, in conjunction with its [Opinion on child sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos generated, shared and received by children](#) (6 June 2019), the Committee identifies what Parties ought to have in place as well as what they are encouraged to do to better protect children against the exploitation of their self-generated sexual images and/or videos (CSGSIV).

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on the legal framework specific to Georgia

General remarks

The Committee notes that within Georgia's legislative framework, the term "child pornography" is used as defined within Article 20(2) of the Convention.²

To improve the effective implementation of the Convention, the Committee **invites** Georgia:

- to rather use the term "child sexual abuse material" (CSAM) for material depicting acts of sexual abuse of children and/or focusing on the genitalia of the child following the guidance set out in the ["Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse"](#)³ in the development of future national, regional and international legal instruments and policies addressing the prevention of and protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, as the Committee acknowledges that using the term "child pornography" can undermine the gravity of the crimes it refers to.⁴

The interplay of the age of criminal responsibility and the age of sexual consent

The Committee observes that the production of sexually explicit images by children themselves, and the possession of such images by children is criminalised in Georgia.⁵ The Committee however notes that the majority of Parties do not prosecute such conduct as they may subject the criminalisation to other conditions (e.g. the context of the possession, the legal age for sexual activities, etc). On this, Georgia pointed at the age of criminal responsibility, which is 14 years old,

below which children cannot be held criminally liable for the production and possession of CSGSIV.⁶ However, The Committee highlights that reliance upon the age of criminal responsibility alone to exclude criminal responsibility does not correspond to a situation of full compliance with paragraphs 3-6 of the 2019 Opinion, since older children (those above the age of criminal responsibility) cannot avail themselves of this exemption.⁷

Georgia also noted that the production and possession of self-generated material were not criminalised when the child(ren) in question have reached the legal age for sexual activities. However, the Committee underlines that relying on the age of sexual consent alone, to exclude criminal responsibility for the scenarios listed in paragraphs 3-6 of the 2019 Opinion, is insufficient as, in such cases, younger children may not be covered by the exemption from criminal responsibility.⁸

- The Committee **requests** that Georgia ensures that a child will not be prosecuted when he/she possesses:
 - their own self-generated sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos;
 - self-generated sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos of another child with the informed consent of the child depicted on them;
 - the self-generated sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos of another child as a result of receiving them passively without actively asking for them.⁹

² Para. 49.

³ The Terminology Guidelines also refer to the term "child sexual exploitation material", indicating that this term can be used in a broader sense, see ["Luxembourg Terminology Guidelines", pages 38-40 in particular.](#)

⁴ Recommendation II-1.

⁵ Paras. 67, 68.

⁶ Para. 71.

⁷ Para. 72.

⁸ Para. 73.

⁹ Recommendation II-6.

Sharing own self-generated material and other children's self-generated material

The Committee observes that children are potentially criminally liable for the distribution or transmission of their own CSGSIV in Georgia.¹⁰ Furthermore, Georgia has rules that lead to the criminalisation of the distribution by children of CSGSIV of other children.¹¹

The Committee **requests** that Georgia ensures that:

- a child will not be prosecuted for sharing his/her sexual images and/or videos with another child when such sharing is voluntary, consensual, and intended solely for their own private use.¹²
- the distribution or transmission by children of self-generated sexually explicit images and/or videos of *other* children is prosecuted as a last resort when such images and/or videos qualify as “child pornography” in accordance with Article 20(2) of the Convention.¹³

On the “sexual extortion of children”:

In Georgia, in cases where the sexual extortion is intended to procure additional sexual images or videos, prosecutions would only be brought for offences related to child pornography, the presence of a threat not being taken into account.¹⁴

When it is intended to procure other sexual favours from the child depicted in the images/videos or from other children, Georgia reported that it would prosecute for sexual abuse

of a child in accordance with Article 18 of the Convention, for offences related to child prostitution and to participation in pornographic performances.¹⁵ In addition, Georgia also prosecutes conduct relating to the possession of the initial child sexual image or video as an offence related to “child pornography” under Article 20.¹⁶

In the case where it is intended to procure a financial gain, or other property from the child, Georgia indicated that the conduct would be qualified as extortion or aggravated extortion, as well as child pornography.¹⁷

Georgia did not submit information as to whether it would prosecute extortion intended to procure any other gain (such as contacts of peers for their sexual solicitation).

When dealing with sexual extortion cases involving children, the Committee **invites** Georgia:

- to take into account the situation where CSGSIV are used to force, coerce or threaten the child to give additional self-generated sexual images and/or videos, other sexual favours, a financial gain or other gain to the offenders by:
 - either creating a specific incrimination to address this situation,
 - or prosecuting both the initial detention of CSGSIV and the act of extortion.¹⁸
- to ensure that sexual extortion of children involving CSGSIV is investigated and prosecuted.¹⁹

¹⁰ Para. 78.

¹¹ Para. 82.

¹² Recommendation II-8.

¹³ Recommendation II-9.

¹⁴ Para. 99.

¹⁵ Para. 102.

¹⁶ Para. 103.

¹⁷ Para. 106.

¹⁸ Recommendation II-11.

¹⁹ Recommendation II-12.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on legal frameworks

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to introduce explicit references in its respective legal frameworks to conduct concerning CSGSIV, identifying the circumstances when children should not be held criminally liable and when they should be prosecuted only as a last resort.²⁰
- to contemplate appropriate legal responses to conduct involving non-visual self-generated sexual material produced by children in the context of offences covered by the Convention.²¹
- to adopt legislative or other measures which promote as a priority educational and other measures that will aim to support children in safely exploring their sexual development while understanding and avoiding risks deriving from the production and possession of CSGSIV.²²
- to consider criminalising the offence of "grooming" (solicitation of children for sexual purposes), even when it does not lead to a face-to-face meeting or producing child sexual abuse material.²³

²⁰ Recommendation II-2.

²¹ Recommendation II-4.

²² Recommendation II-7.

²³ Recommendation II-10.

III. Investigations and prosecution

In its [Interpretative Opinion on the applicability of the Lanzarote Convention to sexual offences against children facilitated through the use of information and communication technologies](#) (ICTs) (12 May 2017), the Committee called on Parties to ensure effective investigation and prosecution of ICT facilitated sexual exploitation and sexual abuse by providing resources and training to responsible authorities.

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on investigations and prosecution specific to Georgia

The Committee observes that Georgia's investigation and prosecution services are already in line with some of its recommendations as it has a specialised unit dealing with ICT facilitated offences against children within law enforcement.²⁴ Furthermore, Georgia has indicated that its specialised investigative unit called the Special Sub-unit for Computer-Digital Forensics within the Forensics-Criminalistics Main Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is able to conduct separate complex forensic examinations as one of its main capacities.²⁵

To improve the effective implementation of the Convention, the Committee:

- **requires** Georgia to ensure training on sexual offences against children to all law enforcement agents who are likely to come into contact with such cases, including front desk officers, rather than reserving it to specialised units.²⁶
- **requests** Georgia to include ICT facilitated sexual offences against children in training of law enforcement agents who are likely to come into contact with such cases.²⁷

The Committee notes that Georgia has training programmes provided by State authorities in place for prosecutors and judges on aspects of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.²⁸

- Nonetheless, the Committee **requests** Georgia to ensure that training on ICT facilitated sexual offences against children is available for prosecutors and judges who are or will be working on these issues.²⁹

In terms of victim identification, Georgia indicated it has access to the US-based National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children's (NCMEC) database³⁰ (designed to assist investigators in the automated categorisation of media-evidence files and in the victim identification process).³¹ However, the Committee notes that Georgia does not have a victim identification unit within law enforcement for cases of ICT facilitated sexual offences against children.³²

- Therefore, the Committee **requires** Georgia to set up victim identification function within law enforcement in charge of combating ICT facilitated sexual offences against children.³³
- The Committee also **requests** Georgia to take the necessary legislative or other measures, in conformity with the fundamental principles of its internal law, to ensure an effective investigation and prosecution of ICT facilitated sexual offences against children, allowing, where appropriate, for the possibility of covert operations.³⁴

²⁴ Para. 115.

²⁵ Para. 121.

²⁶ Recommendation III-12.

²⁷ Recommendation III-13.

²⁸ Paras. 156, 157, 167.

²⁹ Recommendations III-16 and III-18.

³⁰ National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. See further <http://www.missingkids.org/home>.

³¹ Para. 183.

³² Para. 180.

³³ Recommendation III-23.

³⁴ Recommendation III-28.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on investigation and prosecution

On the specialisation and training of authorities:

- Mindful of the different contexts in the Parties as recalled in para 235 of the Explanatory Report, the Committee **requests** those Parties that are not already doing so to ensure that law enforcement and prosecution units, services or persons specialised in ICT facilitated sexual offences against children are adequately financed to ensure sufficient resources, including staff, equipment and training.³⁵

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to ensure that the capacities of any investigative unit specialised in ICT facilitated sexual offences against children take into account evolving technologies and online behaviours and reflect current practices used by perpetrators.³⁶
- to ensure that law enforcement units, services or persons specialised in ICT facilitated sexual offences against children adequately cover and/or are specialised in offences against children involving CSGSIV.³⁷
- to ensure that units, services or persons within courts responsible for ICT facilitated sexual offences against children have the necessary specialisation in the intersecting areas of children's rights, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, and ICT technical knowledge.³⁸
- to ensure that units, services, or persons within courts responsible for ICT facilitated sexual offences against children have sufficient specialisation in offences involving CSGSIV.³⁹
- to have units, sections or persons specialised in ICT facilitated sexual offences committed by children against other children for authorities responsible for investigation and

for authorities responsible for prosecution.⁴⁰

- to provide specific training⁴¹ on ICT facilitated sexual offences against children, including when such offences involve CSGSIV, and ICT facilitated coercion or extortion to law enforcement agents who are likely to come into contact with such cases.⁴²
- to ensure that training on the challenges raised by CSGSIV and ICT facilitated coercion or extortion of children is available to prosecutors and to judges.⁴³
- to offer joint (or "joined-up") training for professionals, and particularly law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges, involved in legal proceedings involving ICT facilitated child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, in order to ensure consistency at all stages.⁴⁴
- to ensure that training on ICT facilitated sexual offences against children for law-enforcement, prosecutors and judges contains a practical element, involving simulated or real cases.⁴⁵

On measures to ensure the effective investigation and prosecution:

- The Committee **requires** all Parties to ensure that investigations and criminal proceedings in ICT facilitated sexual offences against children are treated as priority and carried out without any unjustified delay.⁴⁶

It also **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to ensure that measures, services and technology available to those in charge of identifying child victims of ICT facilitated sexual offences are up to date, reflect current practices across Parties, including establishing and using national child abuse material databases, and that resources are sufficiently allocated.⁴⁷

³⁵ Recommendations III-3 and III-7.

³⁶ Recommendation III-4.

³⁷ Recommendation III-5.

³⁸ Recommendation III-9.

³⁹ Recommendation III-10.

⁴⁰ Recommendation III-11.

⁴¹ Such trainings can also be part of broader training

programmes.

⁴² Recommendation III-14.

⁴³ Recommendations III-17 and III-19.

⁴⁴ Recommendation III-20.

⁴⁵ Recommendation III-21.

⁴⁶ Recommendation III-30.

⁴⁷ Recommendation III-24.

- to engage in and strengthen inter-Party cooperation for the purpose of identifying child victims and perpetrators of ICT facilitated sexual offences, including, where appropriate, by providing access to each other's databases or shared databases, including those containing information on such perpetrators.⁴⁸
- to take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that preservation of specified stored computer data in connection with a specific criminal investigation or proceedings is made possible, fully upholding the rights of the parties involved.⁴⁹
- to take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the investment in human, financial and physical resources is sufficient to have data generated by ICTs analysed in a timely manner so that investigations are carried out without any unjustified delay.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Recommendations III-25, III-29.

⁴⁹ Recommendation III-31.

⁵⁰ Recommendation III-32.

IV. Jurisdiction rules

Due to their online component, offences related to conducts involving CSGSIV have an inherently international aspect. As the prosecution of offences related to this material may involve more than one jurisdiction, the report analyses the jurisdictional rules in place in the Parties, enabling the determination of which Party may prosecute a particular case and under what conditions.

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on jurisdiction rules specific to Georgia

Jurisdiction in cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs committed on the territory of a Party: the territoriality principle (Article 25(1) (a-c))

The Committee notes that Georgia has not established laws clarifying the circumstances in which its national criminal law will apply to a transnational situation following the territoriality principle or has not communicated this information to the Committee.⁵¹

- Therefore, the Committee **requests** Georgia to take the necessary legislative or other measures to establish jurisdiction over transnational cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs, when one of the constituent elements of the offence has taken place in Georgia.⁵²

Jurisdiction based on nationality and residency (Article 25(1)(d), (e))

It appears that Georgia establishes jurisdiction over offences covered by the Lanzarote Convention when committed by one of its nationals. However, the Committee observes that Georgia does not establish jurisdiction over offences established under the Convention committed abroad by persons who have their habitual residence in its territory.⁵³

- Therefore, the Committee **requires** Georgia to establish jurisdiction over offences established under the Convention committed abroad by persons who have their habitual residence in Georgia.⁵⁴

Jurisdiction not subordinated to the condition that prosecution can only be initiated following a report from the victim or denunciation from the State where the offence was committed (Article 25(6))

Georgia did not provide information as to whether there is a condition requiring prosecution to be initiated only upon a report from the victim or denunciation from the State where the offence was committed.

- To improve the effective implementation of the Convention, the Committee **requires** Georgia to remove the requirement that prosecution can only be initiated following a report from the victim or a denunciation from the State of the place where the offence was committed for offences of sexual abuse, offences concerning child prostitution, the production of “child pornography” and offences concerning the participation of a child in pornographic performances, when committed by one of its nationals or by a person who has his or her habitual residence in its territory.⁵⁵

Jurisdiction not subordinated to the condition that the acts are criminalised at the place where they were performed (Article 25(4)): the dual criminality principle

The Committee notes that in Georgia the national criminal law will apply to any acts committed outside the territory of Georgia regardless of the law of the territory where the offence was committed for offences committed by a national or a stateless person (but not in the cases of persons who have their habitual residence in its

⁵¹ Para. 214.

⁵² Recommendation IV-1.

⁵³ Para. 217.

⁵⁴ Recommendation IV-4.

⁵⁵ Recommendation IV-5.

territory).⁵⁶ However, Georgia has also indicated that if an act is not considered a crime under the legislation of the State where it was committed, but it is a crime under Georgian national legislation, a Georgian national or a person who is stateless and habitually resident in Georgia shall be liable only where the act constitutes a serious or particularly serious crime directed against the interests of Georgia, or if criminal liability for this act is prescribed by international treaties to which Georgia is a party.⁵⁷

- Therefore, the Committee **requires** Georgia to remove the requirement for dual criminality when committed by one of its nationals, for offences of sexual abuse, offences concerning child prostitution, the production of child pornography and offences concerning the participation of a child in pornographic performances.⁵⁸
- The Committee also **invites** Georgia to remove the requirement for dual criminality when committed by one of its nationals, for

offences of:

- possessing, offering, distributing, transmitting, procuring child pornography, and the fact of knowingly gaining access to child pornography through ICTs, when CSGSIV are involved,⁵⁹
- solicitation of children for sexual purposes.⁶⁰

Jurisdiction in cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs committed against nationals or habitual residents of a Party: the passive personality principle (Art. 25(2))

Georgia did not provide information as to whether it assumes jurisdiction in such cases.

- To improve the effective implementation of the Convention, the Committee **requests** Parties that are not already doing so, including Georgia, to endeavour to take the necessary legislative or other measures to establish jurisdiction over any offence established under the Convention where the offence is committed against one of its nationals or a person who has his or her habitual residence in its territory.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Para. 226.

⁵⁷ Para. 229.

⁵⁸ Recommendation IV-6.

⁵⁹ Recommendation IV-7.

⁶⁰ Recommendation IV-8.

⁶¹ Recommendation IV-9.

V. International cooperation

The implementation report also analyses cooperation practices and examples of coordinated international responses, not only in the fight against sexual exploitation and abuse of children, but also in areas related to the prevention, protection and assistance of child victims and persons related to them.

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on international cooperation specific to Georgia

The Committee observes that the WeProtect Global Alliance,⁶² ECPAT,⁶³ and End Violence against Children⁶⁴ conduct cooperation projects to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in Georgia.⁶⁵

- To improve the effective implementation of the Convention, the Committee **requires**

Georgia to ensure that victims of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse in matters related to CSGSIV in the territory of a Party other than the one where they reside may make a complaint before the competent authorities of their State of residence.⁶⁶

Generic recommendations of the Committee on international cooperation

- On international cooperation, the Committee **requests** all Parties, including Georgia to extend their international cooperation with other Parties to improve the effective implementation of the Convention.⁶⁷

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to assess, strengthen and develop international cooperation with other Parties to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children and to provide assistance to victims in matters related to CSGSIV.⁶⁸
- to expand international cooperation with countries which are not Parties to the Convention to disseminate the standards of the Convention, including for the purpose of preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, for the purpose of protecting and providing assistance to victims and concerning the

- offences established in accordance with the Convention, in matters related to CSGSIV.⁶⁹
- to regularly assess the difficulties that they face when dealing with international cooperation and remedy them.⁷⁰
- to strengthen cooperation with relevant intergovernmental bodies and with transnational networks and other international organisations and initiatives due to their capacity to mobilisation, their worldwide scope, and their flexibility to work, for the purpose of preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children as well as for protecting and providing assistance to victims, in matters related to CSGSIV.⁷¹
- to consider requesting the establishment of cooperation projects managed by the Council of Europe to assist them in their efforts to preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in matters related to CSGSIV.⁷²
- to support regional and international

⁶² <https://www.weprotect.org/>

⁶³ <https://ecpat.org/>

⁶⁴ <https://www.end-violence.org/>

⁶⁵ Para. 255.

⁶⁶ Recommendation V-17.

⁶⁷ Recommendation V-3.

⁶⁸ Recommendations V-6, V-11.

⁶⁹ Recommendations V-4, V-7, V-12, V-15.

⁷⁰ Recommendation V-5.

⁷¹ Recommendations V-8, V-13.

⁷² Recommendation V-9.

capacity building efforts to improve policy and operational measures including the pooling and sharing of successful education and awareness-raising tools for the purpose of preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in matters related to CSGSIV.⁷³

- to maintain and develop efforts to strengthen international cooperation with other Parties and non-Parties to the Convention, in investigation and proceedings concerning the offences established in accordance with the Convention, in

particular in the area of police cooperation, namely ensuring that their law-enforcement agencies can connect and contribute to the Europol and Interpol databases, and develop the areas of data, training, vetting, and selection, in matters related to CSGSIV.⁷⁴

- to integrate, where appropriate, prevention and the fight against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in matters related to CSGSIV, in assistance programmes for development provided for the benefit of third States.⁷⁵

Promising practices

In Georgia, in case of requests for preservation of data sent by the national contact points of Parties to the Convention on cybercrime (ETS 185) or by the 24/7 national network established under Article 35 of this Convention, the request is recorded, and receipt is confirmed by email upon delivery/opening of the report (if requested by sender). The next step is an initial review to make sure that the conduct at stake constitutes an offence in the jurisdiction of both the requesting State and Georgia (dual criminality) for which the judicial cooperation central authority may be consulted. If approved, the relevant internet service provider (ISP) is approached and requested to preserve data, and if ISP confirms data preservation, the requesting authority will be notified accordingly. If preservation is not available, the requesting country is offered urgent mutual legal assistance procedures. Given the nature of preservation requests, they are all treated as urgent.

⁷³ Recommendation V-10.

⁷⁴ Recommendations V-14, V-16.

⁷⁵ Recommendation V-19.

VI. Assistance to victims

This chapter provides a comparative study of national mechanisms and measures for assisting child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly where this results from the CSGSIV.

Recommendations of the Committee on assistance to victims specific to Georgia

The Committee observes that Georgia did not provide information on assistance to victims.

- Therefore, to improve the implementation of the Convention, the Committee **requires** Georgia to take the necessary legislative or other measures to assist child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, in the short and long term, in their physical and psycho-social recovery, taking due account of the child's views, needs and concerns.⁷⁶

Additionally, the Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to promote awareness raising or specialised

training for professionals who advise children through telephone or internet helplines on ICT facilitated sexual exploitation and abuse of children – including the risks associated with CSGSIV – and how to provide appropriate support to victims and to those who wish to help them.⁷⁷

- to assist child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs, including of offences due to the production, possession, distribution or transmission of CSGSIV in the short and long term, in their physical and psycho-social recovery, these measures must take due account of the child's views, needs and concerns.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Recommendation VI-3.

⁷⁷ Recommendation VI-2.

⁷⁸ Recommendation VI-4.

VII. Civil society involvement and cooperation

Civil society's involvement in protecting children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse is crucial and acknowledged by the Convention. Projects and programmes carried out by civil society, as well as cooperation between the competent state authorities and civil society, cover a wide range of issues.

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on civil society involvement and cooperation specific to Georgia

The Committee observes that civil society encompasses very different actors. While NGOs are the most involved counterparts in this field, in Georgia, schools and other educational institutions are also frequent actors.⁷⁹

In terms of forms of cooperation between State authorities and civil society in prevention and assistance to victims, Georgia mentioned the training opportunities it offers to civil society actors concerning the online environment and related risks but also the opportunities it presents for children's rights.⁸⁰ Georgia also indicated that the State is called upon to give its expertise on specific subjects to civil society actors.⁸¹ The Committee recognises Georgia's efforts to develop and support different activities aimed at raising the awareness of not only

children but also adults, such as parents, educators, doctors and social workers, about the existing risks and dangers of ICTs for children.⁸²

- To improve the implementation of the Convention, the Committee **requests** Georgia to encourage the financing of projects and programmes carried out by civil society aiming to prevent and protect children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.⁸³

Concerning civil society involvement in prevention activities on combating sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs, the Committee notes that Georgia only provided information about general prevention projects and programmes on violence against children.⁸⁴

Generic recommendations of the Committee on civil society involvement and cooperation

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to expand cooperation with civil society to better prevent sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including when facilitated by ICTs and the challenges raised by the exploitation of CSGSIV.⁸⁵
- to ensure that the forms of cooperation that take place with civil society in the field of prevention and protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse are of a sustainable nature.⁸⁶

- To support civil society to carry out projects and programmes that include the issue of CSGSIV.⁸⁷
- to encourage the participation of children, according to their evolving capacity, in the development and implementation of state policies, programmes or other initiatives⁸⁸ and to seek children's views at the stage of drafting new legislation concerning the fight against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including when facilitated by ICTs and as regards CSGSIV.⁸⁹

⁷⁹ Para. 308.

⁸⁰ Para. 311.

⁸¹ Para. 313.

⁸² Para. 315.

⁸³ Recommendation VII-2.

⁸⁴ Paras. 318, 319.

⁸⁵ Recommendation VII-3.

⁸⁶ Recommendation VII-4.

⁸⁷ Recommendation VII-5.

⁸⁸ Parties are also invited to provide example(s) of how children's views are taken into account in the context of the participation of children.

⁸⁹ Recommendations VII-6, VII-7.

VIII. Promoting awareness of the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves

The Articles 5, 6 and 8 of the Convention establish that States Parties should take the necessary measures to prevent all forms of child sexual exploitation and abuse and to protect children from their effects. Awareness-raising is one type of preventive measure.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on promoting awareness of the risk of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to ensure that explanations of the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves, with or without coercion, are included in the awareness-raising campaigns that they promote or conduct, whatever the target audience.⁹⁰
- to ensure that awareness-raising for children about the risks that they face when generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves takes place early enough, before they reach their teens, and that it is “adapted to their evolving capacity” or, in other words, their age and degree of maturity.⁹¹
- to use unchanged, wherever possible, the awareness-raising tools, materials and activities mentioned in this report or else to adapt them to their national contexts and their own languages and, if necessary, develop new ones, concentrating on videos and distribution through social media.⁹²
- to have available awareness-raising tools, materials, and activities suitable for children with disabilities.⁹³
- to ensure that awareness-raising for children regarding the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse that they face when generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves is led first and foremost by their peers.⁹⁴
- to promote themselves and to encourage the information and communication of the technology sector, the media, and other professionals to raise awareness among children, their parents, persons having regular contact with children, and the general public about the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves of themselves and about the preventive measures that can be taken.⁹⁵
- to step-up awareness-raising for parents and persons with parental authority about the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves of themselves and about the preventive measures that can be taken.⁹⁶
- to promote or conduct awareness-raising campaigns for the general public providing information about the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves and about the preventive measures that can be taken.⁹⁷
- to take the necessary measures to ensure co-ordination between the agencies responsible for raising awareness of the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves.⁹⁸

⁹⁰ Recommendation VIII-1.

⁹¹ Recommendation VIII-2.

⁹² Recommendation VIII-3.

⁹³ Recommendation VIII-4.

⁹⁴ Recommendation VIII-5.

⁹⁵ Recommendation VIII-6.

⁹⁶ Recommendation VIII-7.

⁹⁷ Recommendation VIII-8.

⁹⁸ Recommendation VIII-9.

IX. Education for children

While the protection of child victims and the prosecution of offenders are key elements in the fight against the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, preventing them from occurring in the first place is paramount. Informing children about the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and how to protect themselves is the cornerstone of prevention.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on education for children

- The Committee **requires** all Parties, including Georgia, to ensure that all children at primary and secondary education level receive information about the risks of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by ICTs. Organising lectures and/or activities on this topic should not be left to the discretion of schools or teachers.⁹⁹

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to address in educational contexts the issue of the risks of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by ICTs, including as regards CSGSIV.¹⁰⁰
- to ensure that information on the risks of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by ICTs, including as regards CSGSIV, is provided to children during both primary and secondary education (whether as part of the national curricula or in the context of non-formal education for children at these levels).¹⁰¹
- to consistently involve children in the development of internet safety awareness programmes.¹⁰²
- to ensure that there is a standing national internet safety resource, with an ongoing programme of activities.¹⁰³
- to provide information to children on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, facilitated by ICTs, including as regards CSGSIV, in their national curriculum or other non-formal educational contexts, in a form which is adapted to the evolving capacity of the children and therefore which is appropriate for their age and maturity.¹⁰⁴
- to provide information to children on the risks of child sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs, including CSGSIV, within a more general context of sexuality education.¹⁰⁵
- to ensure that parents, caregivers, and educators are involved, where appropriate, in the provision of information to children on the risks of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by ICTs, in particular as regards CSGSIV.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁹ Recommendation IX-3.

¹⁰⁰ Recommendation IX-1.

¹⁰¹ Recommendation IX-2.

¹⁰² Recommendation IX-4.

¹⁰³ Recommendation IX-5.

¹⁰⁴ Recommendation IX-6.

¹⁰⁵ Recommendation IX-7.

¹⁰⁶ Recommendation IX-8.

X. Higher education curriculum and continuous training

Persons who have regular contact with children in the education, health and social protection sectors and areas related to sport, culture and leisure are at the forefront of the prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, as they have the most interaction with children under their supervision in these different settings. However, they may not be adequately equipped to inform children about their rights, to detect situations where a child is at risk of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse and to respond appropriately. It is therefore of crucial importance that they are well informed about the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, both during their education and continuously during their careers, to enable them to adapt to emerging trends and risks in the fight against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including when facilitated by ICTs.

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on higher education curriculum and continuous training specific to Georgia

The Committee notices a lack of action from Georgia regarding higher education curriculum and continuous training.

Therefore, the Committee **requires** Georgia:

- to ensure that teaching or training on the rights of children and their protection for persons who have regular contacts with children (i.e. in the education, health and social protection sectors and in areas relating to sport, culture and leisure activities) is not optional.¹⁰⁷
- to ensure that the persons who have regular contact with children are equipped to identify any situation of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children and are informed of the possibility for them to report to the services responsible for child protection any situation where they have “reasonable grounds” for believing that a child is a victim of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children:
 - in the education sector
 - in the health sector
 - in the social protection sector
 - in areas relating to sport, culture, and leisure activities.¹⁰⁸
- to encourage awareness of the protection and rights of children among persons who have regular contact with children in the education, health, social protection, judicial and law-enforcement sectors and in areas relating to sport, culture, and leisure activities.¹⁰⁹
- The Committee also **requests** Georgia to ensure that the persons who have regular contact with children have adequate knowledge of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including when facilitated by ICTs, for example through education or continuous training.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Recommendation X-4.

¹⁰⁸ Recommendations X-5, X-6.

¹⁰⁹ Recommendation X-7.

¹¹⁰ Recommendation X-1.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on higher education curriculum and continuous training

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to ensure that the persons who have regular contacts with children (i.e. in the education, health and social protection, sectors and in areas relating to sport, culture and leisure activities), have an adequate knowledge of the risks associated with CSGSIV, for example through education or continuous training.¹¹¹
- to ensure that all the sectors where professionals work in contact with children, including when working on a voluntary basis, have adequate knowledge of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including when facilitated by ICTs and with specific reference to the risks associated with CSGSIV.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Recommendation X-2.

¹¹² Recommendation X-3.

XI. Research

Effective prevention mechanisms and responses to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse of children require an understanding of the issues at stake, as well as knowledge of the prevalence and characteristics of the phenomenon. Accurate and precise information may be necessary to develop quality and targeted policies and measures. The gathering of information and understanding of the phenomenon is particularly important in the context of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by ICTs, in light of their rapid development and increased use.

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on research specific to Georgia

Georgia informed that no research had been undertaken on issues raised by CSGSIV and/or on the psychological effects on persons who have had such material shared online.¹¹³

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including Georgia:

- to collect data and undertake research at the national and local levels to observe and evaluate the phenomenon of CSGSIV.¹¹⁴
- to ensure that data on the phenomenon of CSGSIV and the risks associated with it is regularly collected and research on the issue is regularly undertaken.¹¹⁵
- to build on the findings from existing research on CSGSIV, when available, to ensure that policies and measures are best developed and appropriately targeted to tackle the issues raised by CSGSIV.¹¹⁶
- to take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or designate mechanisms for data collection or focal points at the national or local levels and in collaboration with civil society to observe and evaluate the phenomenon of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including on the issues arising from CSGSIV, with due respect for the requirements of personal data protection.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Para. 443.

¹¹⁴ Recommendation XI-1.

¹¹⁵ Recommendation XI-2.

¹¹⁶ Recommendation XI-3.

¹¹⁷ Recommendation XI-4.