



FACTSHEET – REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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)”

This factsheet was prepared by the Secretariat in March 2023.

It has been updated with information submitted by the Government of the Republic of Moldova in March 2025 displayed in orange and blue text boxes.

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction.....	3
II.	Legal frameworks	4
III.	Investigations and prosecution.....	9
IV.	Jurisdiction rules.....	14
V.	International cooperation	16
VI.	Assistance to victims.....	19
VII.	Civil society involvement and cooperation.....	24
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	28
IX.	Education for children	31
X.	Higher education curriculum and continuous training.....	34
XI.	Research	42

I. Introduction

One of the main functions of the Lanzarote Committee ("the Committee") is to monitor the effective implementation of the Lanzarote Convention ("the Convention"). The monitoring procedure is divided into rounds, each concerning a specific thematic area and involving all State Parties ("the Parties") simultaneously. The monitoring rounds start with the launch of a thematic questionnaire, to which the national authorities are asked to respond, and which other relevant stakeholders can comment on. After carrying out its evaluation procedure, consisting of the analysis of such replies, the Committee adopts an implementation report where it draws conclusions about the different national frameworks, strategies and policies in place, makes recommendations to Parties, and highlights promising practices as well as some challenges. Sometime after the adoption of the implementation report, the Committee conducts a compliance procedure with the aim of assessing whether Parties comply with the recommendations made by the Committee as part of the evaluation procedure.

The compliance procedure seeks to assess the follow-up given by Parties to the recommendations made by the Committee in the evaluation procedure. In the [implementation report of its 2nd monitoring round concerning the challenges raised by child self-generated sexual images and/or videos](#), the Committee made three types of recommendations:

- "Require": when the steps the Committee recommends Parties to take correspond to obligations arising from the Convention, as clarified by its explanatory report.
- "Request": when the steps the Committee recommends Parties to take correspond to obligations arising from the Convention, as clarified by documents adopted by the Committee (such as previous monitoring round findings, opinions or other documents).
- "Invite": when the steps the Committee recommends Parties to take correspond to promising practices or other measures to enhance protection of children against sexual violence even beyond specific requirements of the Convention.

At its 41st meeting (13-15 February 2024), the Lanzarote Committee agreed on a new methodology for the assessment of State Parties' compliance with the 2nd monitoring round recommendations ([see point 4 of the Appendix to the List of decisions](#)). It entrusted the Secretariat to insert boxes in the 2nd monitoring round country [factsheets](#) to highlight where information on follow-up measures taken or changes occurred may be inserted. It is recalled that these factsheets are a synthesis of the Committee's implementation report findings with respect to specific Parties. The factsheets are structured along the lines of the implementation report and the footnotes in this document refer to the specific paragraphs of the implementation report.

The orange boxes contain information submitted by the State Party regarding progress made towards the implementation of the recommendation.

The blue boxes contain examples of national promising practices that respond to "invite" recommendations made by the Committee.

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 the Republic of Moldova

The Committee notes that within the legislative framework of the Republic of Moldova the term “child pornography” is used as defined within Article 20(2) of the Convention.¹

- The Committee invites the Republic of Moldova 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”](#)² 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 the term “child pornography” can be misleading and undermine the gravity of the crimes it refers to;³

As regards the prosecution of children for the offences falling within the scope of this report, the Committee understands from the information submitted that they are not prosecuted/punishable under national law when, in light of the child’s age, it may be considered that there is no gross fault and no public interest in conviction. The Republic of Moldova pointed at the age of criminal responsibility (16) below which children

cannot be held criminally liable for acts they commit to demonstrate compatibility with the above-mentioned exclusion of criminal liability for the production and possession of CSGSIV. It also noted that production and possession of self-generated material were not criminalised when the child(ren) in question have reached the legal age for sexual activities. The Committee underlines, however, that relying on the age of criminal responsibility and the legal age for sexual activities to exclude the criminal responsibility of children, as advised in its 2019 Opinion, is insufficient as, in such cases, younger and older children may not be covered by the exemption.⁴

The Committee thus requests the Republic of Moldova:

- to ensure in its legal framework that a child will not be prosecuted when he/she possess:
 - 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;⁵

Follow-up actions:

In the context of aligning criminal legislation with the provisions of Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating

¹ Para. 49

² 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.](#)

³ Recommendation II-1

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Recommendation II-6

the sexual abuse of children, the sexual exploitation of children, and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA, the Ministry of Justice has developed a draft law to amend the Criminal Code of the Republic of Moldova No. 985/2002 (on preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse committed against children).

The draft law aims to establish a strengthened regulatory framework for combating the sexual exploitation of children, focused on introducing penal measures to deter and reduce demand that encourages all forms of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children.

One of the amendments to be introduced is the redrafting and supplementing of Article 208/1 of the Criminal Code, which is proposed to be titled "Circulation of materials concerning the sexual abuse of children." Thus, paragraph (4) of this article states that acts of possession or production (including transmission) of such materials by the child represented in them or created by a child with the voluntary involvement of another child, when intended for their personal use, shall not constitute a criminal offense.

These amendments align with the provisions of Article 20, paragraph (3), of the Lanzarote Convention and aim to exclude non-exploitative situations from the scope of criminal liability, ensuring a proportional and fair application of the law. The draft law was approved by the Government by Decision dated 08.07.2024 and was registered in Parliament under No. 223, being adopted in the first reading on 11.07.2024.

- to ensure in its legal framework 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.⁶

Follow-up actions:

The Criminal Code is to be supplemented

with art. 132/4 "Material regarding child sexual abuse"

Material regarding child sexual abuse is understood to mean: a) any material that visually presents a child, who is involved in explicit sexual behavior, real or simulated or any representation of the sexual organs of a child, mainly for sexual purposes; b) realistic images of a child involved in explicit sexual behavior or realistic images of the sexual organs of a child, mainly for sexual purposes.

It is also proposed to reconceptualize the crime of child pornography. Thus, art. 208/1 will be called "Circulation of materials regarding child sexual abuse".

Paragraph 4 of this article will state that "The acts provided for in paragraphs (1)-(2) of this article do not constitute a crime, if the materials regarding the sexual abuse of a child are owned or produced by the child represented in those materials or created by a child with the voluntary involvement of another child, for their personal use".

The Committee also observes that the Republic of Moldova criminalises the distribution by children of self-generated sexual images and/or videos of *other* children.⁷

- It thus requests the Republic of Moldova to ensure that 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.⁸

Follow-up actions:

The draft law amending the Criminal Code mentioned above also proposes tougher penalties for the offense related to the circulation of materials involving the sexual abuse of children, as well as highlighting the aggravating circumstances associated with this crime. Establishing liability for such actions represents a crucial step in achieving the objectives set by international and national acts aimed at combating the

⁶ Recommendation II-8

⁷ Para. 82

⁸ Recommendation II-9

sexual exploitation of children, targeting the firm sanctioning of individuals who access such materials or services. So, the criminal liability for committing the crime provided for by art. 208/1 of the Criminal Code remained the same, 16 years, which is the general age of criminal liability in the Republic of Moldova.

As regards other criminal offences foreseen by the Convention (Articles 22 and 23) that may involve the sharing of CSGSIV, the Committee observes that Article 175 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Moldova criminalises actions committed against a person who is certainly known to be under 16 years old consisting of, among other things, the provision of pornographic materials to that person.⁹

On sexual extortion

The Committee notes that, when a coercer already in possession of child self-generated material attempts to procure or knowingly obtain access to further CSGSIV, the Republic of Moldova qualifies such conduct as corruption of children, trafficking in human beings, or sexual harassment.¹⁰

When the coercer, possessing the CSGSIV, threatens the child for some other kind of sexual gain, the Republic of Moldova would prosecute for sexual abuse of a child in accordance with Article 18, for offences related to child prostitution, to participation in pornographic performances, and corruption of children.¹¹ It would also qualify such conduct as trafficking in human beings.¹²

If the offender possessing CSGSIV also exploits them to gain money or other property from the child, the Republic of Moldova would qualify such conduct as extortion or aggravated extortion.¹³

When dealing with sexual extortion cases involving children, the Committee invites Parties that are not already doing so, including the Republic of Moldova:

- 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;¹⁴

- to ensure that sexual extortion of children involving CSGSIV is investigated and prosecuted.¹⁵

⁹ Para. 83

¹⁰ Para. 100

¹¹ Para. 102

¹² Para. 104

¹³ Para. 106

¹⁴ Recommendation II-11

¹⁵ Recommendation II-12

Generic recommendations of the Committee on legal frameworks

The Committee invites all Parties, including the Republic of Moldova:

- to strengthen the protection of children by introducing explicit references in their 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;¹⁶
- to introduce in their legal framework a definition of “child sexual abuse material” in line with its Recommendation II-1 above;¹⁷
- 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;¹⁸
- 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 self-generated sexual images and/or videos;¹⁹
- to consider criminalising solicitation of children for sexual purposes (“grooming”), even when it does not lead to either a face-to-face meeting or to producing CSAM;²⁰

¹⁶ Recommendation II-2

¹⁷ Recommendation II-3

¹⁸ Recommendation II-4

¹⁹ Recommendation II-7

²⁰ Recommendation II-10

Promising practices:

On 30 November 2023, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova Law no. 370/2023 on the rights of the child, which establishes the fundamental rights of the child, the principles and measures to ensure the rights of the child, the duties of central and local public authorities and their interaction in the process of ensuring the observance of children's rights. On the basis of this Law, children benefit from protection without any discrimination irrespective of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, regardless of their nationality, ethnic or social origin, status obtained by birth, material situation, degree and type of disability, specific aspects of upbringing and education of them, their parents or their legal representatives/legal guardians, regardless of their place of residence (family, educational institution, social service, medical institution, community, etc.) or any other criteria.

It should be noted that the new Law on the rights of the child (no. 370/2023) has been brought in line with the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Thus, Article 24 (The right of the child to be protected in the application of coercive measures) of the abovementioned Law provides the following:

(1) The State shall protect the right of the child to personal liberty.

(2) Detention or arrest of the child shall be applied only as an exceptional measure and only in the cases provided for by law. In case of detention or arrest of the child, the parents, legal representative/legal guardian or person in whose care the child is placed shall be informed immediately.

In order to align with the provisions of the European regulatory framework, a draft law amending the Criminal Code has been drafted. Thus, the Criminal Code is to be supplemented with art. 132/4 which defines "Child sexual abuse material".

Thus, child sexual abuse material means: a) any material that visually depicts a child engaged in explicit sexual conduct, real or simulated, or any representation of the sexual organs of a child, primarily for sexual purposes; b) realistic images of a child engaged in explicit sexual conduct or realistic images of the sexual organs of a child, primarily for sexual purposes.

It is also proposed to reconceptualize the crime of child pornography. Thus, art. 208/1 will be called "Circulation of child sexual abuse material". Paragraph 4 of this article shall provide that "The acts provided for in paragraphs (1)-(2) of this article shall not constitute a crime, if the materials regarding the sexual abuse of a child are owned or produced by the child represented in those materials or created by a child with the voluntary involvement of another child, for their personal use."

Also, in 2022, the Ministry of Education and Research developed and approved the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment (for Schools).

The Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment aim to ensure the minimum necessary framework of actions that can be taken by general education institutions to strengthen their efforts in promoting online safety, creating a safe and protected environment for children/students, and establishing measures to inform teachers, parents, and peers/students about online safety, on a regular basis.

With the support of the La Strada International Center, trainings were held for teachers, and a series of educational and informational resources were developed and disseminated in educational institutions for teachers in primary and secondary schools:

- Guide on Child Safety in the Online Environment for Primary School Teachers
- Guide on Child Safety in the Online Environment for Middle School Teachers
- Classroom activity scenarios and informational brochures for activities with parents about online safety
- Guide for implementing the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment
- Guide for specialists on intervention in cases of online violence

- Brochure "Talking to Parents/Guardians about Child Online Safety"
- Brochure of good practices for implementing the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment
- Guide for online safety coordinators in general education institutions.

In February 2025, in the context of events dedicated to the online safety of children and young people (Safer Internet Day), the "Let's talk about CSAM" campaign was launched, carried out in partnership with CI La Strada, the General Inspectorate of Police and with the support of the Global Safe Online Fund.

The aim of the campaign is to combat existing stereotypes and prejudices regarding the viewing, distribution and production of child sexual abuse material (CSAM), as well as to encourage a responsible and proactive attitude in reporting them to the competent authorities and available services.

Thus, within the campaign, 5 vox populi informative materials were developed, in video format, about what child sexual abuse material means and the illegality of any actions related to this content. The messages are addressed to the general public in order to inform about the illegality of non-consensual distribution of intimate images, as well as viewing, distributing and accessing illegal child sexual abuse material. At the same time, the videos promote public responsibility and the role of each person in protecting children online, dispel myths and stereotypes related to viewing, distributing or accessing abuse materials, and encourage reporting illegal child sexual abuse materials on the www.siguronline.md platform.

Public awareness and information activities will continue throughout 2025. In this context, the 7th edition of the National Competition will be organized, in the Ideathon format "Together, for a Better Internet", a series of trainings, webinars and discussions will be held for professionals in the field of education and the law. Children and young people will be involved in various interactive activities to learn about the benefits and risks of the Internet. Special discussion sessions will be organized for parents.

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 the Republic of Moldova

On the specialisation and training of authorities

The Committee observes that the Republic of Moldova's investigation authorities have sections/departments dedicated exclusively to cyber or sexual crimes against children.²¹ Specialised investigative units also exist for

handling ICT facilitated sexual offences where these are committed by children.²² The Forensic and Judicial Expertise Centre in Moldova is able to conduct separate complex forensic examinations.²³

²¹ Para. 116

²² Para. 135

²³ Para. 121

In prosecution, cases concerning sexual abuse or exploitation of children facilitated by ICTs are managed by offices dedicated to combating cybercrime.²⁴ The Office for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Cybercrime leads criminal prosecution on cases involving child sexual abuse and has 5 prosecutors.²⁵

As regards the training of professionals, the Republic of Moldova has training modules in place for law enforcement agents related to aspects of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.²⁶ Such training is also available for prosecutors and judges and is organised within the National Institute of Justice.²⁷ In 2020-2021, in the context of the Council of Europe End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse@Europe (EndOCSEA@Europe) regional project, several national trainings in an online format have been held in a multi-stakeholder setting, reuniting representatives of law enforcement, judges and prosecutors, including from the Republic of Moldova.²⁸

- The Committee requests the Republic of Moldova to ensure that specific training on ICT facilitated sexual offences against children is available for prosecutors and judges who are or will be working on these issues.^{29 30}

Follow-up actions:

Annually, the National Institute of Justice organizes courses, seminars, and training workshops on the topic of child abuse and sexual exploitation, including online. For example, in 2024, the National Institute of Justice organized courses and seminars aimed at training prosecutors and judges on

the topic of sexual offenses against children. The activities conducted include:

- Seminar: "Specifics of Investigating and Adjudicating Criminal Cases Involving Sexual Offenses. Methods for Investigating and Adjudicating Cases of Abuse and Sexual Exploitation Using Online Technologies." - 5 training seminars with the support of IC „La Strada”;
- Seminar: "Methods and Tactics for Investigating and Examining Cases of Sexual Offenses Committed via Information Technologies. Aspects of Online Child Abuse." - 2 training seminars for prosecutor consultants, with support of IC „La Strada”;
- Training Course: "Psychophysiological Aspects of Minors Involved in Sexual Offenses." – 1 training seminars for prosecutor consultants;
- Seminar: "Investigating Sexual Offenses Committed by Minors and Against Minors.";
- a workshop on GREVIO General Recommendation No. 1 on the digital dimension of violence against women and girls;
- Autumn School on the topic of "Preventing and combating online sexual exploitation and abuse of children";

These activities aimed to strengthen professional competencies in investigating and adjudicating complex cases of sexual abuse, focusing on the use of modern technologies and protecting children's rights.

In 2023-2024, Moldova was a part of End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @Europe Plus Project, known as EndOCSEA@Europe+. This project, coordinated by the Council of Europe's Children's Rights Division.

As part of this project, was developed training course: „Preventing and Combatting Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”, for law enforcement, judges, and prosecutors,

²⁴ Para. 125

²⁵ Para. 127

²⁶ Para. 145

²⁷ Paras. 157, 159

²⁸ Para. 172

²⁹ Recommendations III-16, III-18

³⁰ After the adoption of the report, the Committee was informed that the situation in the Republic of Moldova is in fact in line with recommendations III-16 and III-18. Indeed, prosecutors and judges receive regular trainings on aspects of ICT facilitated sexual offences against children.

focusing on strengthening their capacity to respond to OCSEA cases.

The training modules was developed in English by international experts, and adapted to national context, incorporating specific legal references.

In October 2024, was held the training. This session was delivered jointly by an international and national consultant provided to 46 legal professionals directly involved in handling OCSEA cases. The training aimed to improve interagency collaboration and strengthen participants' response capabilities.

The legal trainings include a Training of Trainers component to ensure that knowledge and practices are widely disseminated.

On victim and perpetrator identification

The Republic of Moldova has a victim identification unit located within the Child Protection Section of the Centre for Combating Cybercrime.³¹ It also has national databases for identification of victims in CSAM and has access to the US-Based National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) database.³² It also makes an active contribution to the INTERPOL's International Child Sexual Exploitation video and image database.³³

As regards covert operations against suspected offenders, in the Republic of Moldova, they can be carried out if there is a suspicion of a serious, especially serious or exceptionally serious crime, which includes ICT facilitated sexual offences against children, such as grooming and trafficking in children for sexual exploitation. In the case of crimes related to CSAM, covert operations can only be conducted if another serious cumulative crime is suspected, such as child trafficking. However, other investigative measures are permitted, such as wiretapping.³⁴

³¹ Para. 180

³² Para. 183. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. See further <http://www.missingkids.org/home>

³³ Para. 186

³⁴ Para. 197

Generic recommendations of the Committee on investigations and prosecution

On the specialisation and training of authorities

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

Follow-up actions:

Within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, namely at the National Investigation Inspectorate of the General Inspectorate of Police, the Center for Combating Cybercrimes is established.

In 2023, the Center underwent reorganization. Thus, at the moment it consists of 4 units.

Unit no. 3 „Child protection” has the tasks of preventing and fighting child pornography, online sexual abuse and exploitation of children, dissemination of content promoting sexual abuse of children via the Internet, grooming children for sexual purposes and related crimes; identifying victims of child pornography and online sexual abuse; managing national databases and using international databases. After the reorganization performed in July 2023, the Unit was supplemented with 2 additional working positions and currently it consists of 7 working positions.

Also, the Cybercrime Laboratory was established, which will facilitate the investigation of cases and the management of evidence in cases where the commission of the crime was facilitated by information technologies.

The Committee invites all Parties, including the Republic of Moldova:

- to ensure that the capacities of any investigative units, services or persons specialised in ICT facilitated sexual offences against children take into account evolving technologies and online behaviours, and more specifically, that they reflect current practices used by perpetrators. Additionally, the Committee invites all Parties to exchange best practices between the relevant investigative units;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 ensure that training on the challenges raised by CSGSIV and ICT facilitated coercion or extortion of children is available to judges;⁴⁰
- 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, reflecting current practices across Parties, include the establishment and use of national child abuse material databases, and that resources are sufficiently allocated.⁴¹

The Committee also invites Parties that are not already doing so:

- to provide specific training on ICT facilitated sexual offences against children, including

³⁵ Recommendation III-3, III-7

³⁶ Recommendation III-4

³⁷ Recommendation III-5

³⁸ Recommendation III-9

³⁹ Recommendation III-10

⁴⁰ Recommendation III-19

⁴¹ Recommendation III-24

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 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;⁴³
- 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.⁴⁴

On victim and perpetrator identification, data retention and expeditious proceedings

The Committee also invites all Parties, including the Republic of Moldova:

- to engage in and strengthen inter-Party cooperation for the purpose of identifying child victims of ICT facilitated sexual offences and perpetrators of ICT facilitated sexual offences against children, including, where appropriate, by providing access to each other’s databases or shared databases;⁴⁵
- 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
- 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;⁴⁷
- 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.⁴⁸

⁴² Recommendation III-14

⁴³ Recommendation III-20

⁴⁴ Recommendation III-21

⁴⁵ Recommendation III-25, III-29

⁴⁶ Recommendation III-30

⁴⁷ Recommendation III-31

⁴⁸ Recommendation III-32

Promising practices:

Starting from May 2023, the "Arachnid" project from Canada and a hosting company from the Republic of Moldova were launched, thus implementing the technical solution for detecting child sexual abuse content hosted on the servers of companies that provide content hosting services.

In 2023, the international "CPORT" Project was carried out, with the participation of the "INHOPE" organization, the OIPC Interpol, the police from Norway, Belgium, France and the "Zeus" company from the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The project aims to develop a portal of law enforcement bodies for cooperation with Hotlines, as well as improving the ICCAM system.

On April 25, 2023, the Republic of Moldova joined the global network INHOPE - International Association of Internet Hotlines, which brings together 54 Hotline services for reporting child sexual abuse material from around the world. The national mechanism for reporting child sexual abuse material is implemented by the International Center "La Strada" in partnership with the General Inspectorate of Police of the Republic of Moldova.

On November 15, 2024, amendments to Law no. 20/2009 on the prevention and combating of cybercrime entered into force, which provide for the issuance of an order to suspend access to a web page or to remove online content at the source. Among the criteria that allow the initiation of the suspension procedure are the display or distribution of information that in itself represents a criminal act provided for in art. 173 Sexual harassment, art. 175/1 Enticement of a minor for sexual purposes and art. 208/1 Child pornography.

The Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation has also drafted a draft law on electronic communications (aligning national legislation with the provisions of European legislation in the field of electronic communications). The draft ensures the transposition of Regulation (EU) 2021/1232 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 July 2021 on a temporary derogation from certain provisions of Directive 2002/58/EC as regards the use of technologies by providers of non-number-based interpersonal communications services for the processing of personal data and other data for the purpose of combating online child sexual abuse.

In 2023-2024, Moldova was a part of End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @Europe Plus Project, known as EndOCSEA@Europe+. This project, coordinated by the Council of Europe's Children's Rights Division.

As part of this project, was developed two main training to be implemented: „Preventing and Combatting Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”, is tailored for law enforcement, judges, and prosecutors, focusing on strengthening their capacity to respond to OCSEA cases, and „Safeguarding Children from OCSEA” aimed at frontline professionals such as teachers, social workers, and doctors, providing them with tools to protect children from online risks.

The training modules was developed in English by international experts, and adapted to national context, incorporating specific legal references.

In October 2024, was held both trainings. This session was delivered jointly by an international and national consultant provided to 46 legal professionals directly involved in handling OCSEA cases. The training aimed to improve interagency collaboration and strengthen participants' response capabilities.

Both the safeguarding and legal trainings include a Training of Trainers component to ensure that knowledge and practices are widely disseminated.

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 the Republic of Moldova

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 the Republic of Moldova has established laws clarifying the circumstances in which its national criminal law will be applicable to a transnational situation following the territoriality principle. Thus, an offence is considered to have been committed in the place where the act was carried out. A transnational offence will also be considered to be committed in the Republic of Moldova if: it was committed on the territory

of the Republic of Moldova and on the territory of at least another State; the offence was committed on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, but a substantial part of its organisation and control took place in another State, and vice versa; the offence was committed on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, with the involvement of an organised criminal group or a criminal organisation (association) carrying out criminal activity in more than one State, and vice versa; or if the offence was committed on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, but has

serious consequences in another State, and vice versa.⁴⁹

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

The Republic of Moldova informed that it can prosecute offences committed abroad by its nationals⁵⁰ and by persons having habitual residence in its territory.⁵¹

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))

The Republic of Moldova did not submit information as to whether its jurisdiction is subordinated to this condition.

- The Committee thus requires the Republic of Moldova 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 (Article 18), offences concerning child prostitution (Article 19), the production of "child pornography" (Article 20(1)(a)) and offences concerning the participation of a child in pornographic performances (Article 21), when committed by one of their nationals or by a person who has his or her habitual residence in its territory.^{52 53}

Follow-up actions:

The Republic of Moldova is in line with Recommendation IV-5. Specifically, article 276(1) of the Criminal Procedure Code provides an exhaustive list of crimes for

which a victim's complaint is a mandatory condition for initiating a criminal case but this list does not include the offenses covered by the Lanzarote Convention.

At the same time, following the provisions of Article 59 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, a minor who has suffered harm through a crime is considered an injured party without his/her consent.

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 Republic of Moldova reported that it would assume jurisdiction over offences involving sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of children, irrespective of the laws of the State where the offence was committed, if committed by one of its nationals or by a person who has his or her habitual residence in its territory.⁵⁴

As regards the possibility to derogate from the general rules on jurisdiction based on international instruments, according to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Moldova, foreign citizens (whether they do or do not have their habitual residence in the territory) who commit crimes outside the territory of the Republic of Moldova shall be criminally liable under the Criminal Code and shall be subject to criminal liability in the territory of the Republic of Moldova provided that the crimes committed are set forth in the international treaties to which the Republic of Moldova is a party (including the Convention).⁵⁵

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))

The Committee observes that the passive personality principle is applied in respect of offences committed against a national in the

⁴⁹ Para. 214

⁵⁰ Para. 215

⁵¹ Para. 224

⁵² Recommendation IV-5

⁵³ After the adoption of the report, the Committee was informed that the situation in the Republic of Moldova is in fact in line with recommendation IV-5. Indeed, 276(1) of the Criminal Procedure Code provides an exhaustive list of crimes following which a complaint of the victim is a mandatory condition for starting a criminal case. These do not include crimes provided for in the Lanzarote Convention.

⁵⁴ Para. 224

⁵⁵ Para. 227

Republic of Moldova, only for offences punishable of imprisonment of at least 6 years.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Para. 231

Generic recommendations of the Committee on jurisdiction rules

The Committee invites those Parties that are not yet doing so:

- to remove the requirement for dual criminality 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 when committed by one of their nationals;⁵⁷
- to remove the requirement for dual criminality for offences concerning solicitation of children for sexual purposes (Article 23) when committed by one of their nationals.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Recommendation IV-7

⁵⁸ Recommendation IV-8

Promising practices

In the Republic of Moldova, offences under the Convention will be punishable according to the Penal Code, even if they are committed outside the territory and irrespective of the identity of the perpetrator.

Promising practices:

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 the Republic of Moldova

The Committee notes that the PROMISE Barnahus Network, WeProtect Global Alliance, ECPAT, and END Violence against Children carry out projects in the Republic of Moldova to prevent and combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children.⁵⁹ Moldovan law enforcement representatives attend the Europol's central training course "Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children on the Internet" (COSEC).⁶⁰ The Republic of Moldova also referred to the protection of victims, raising awareness and training in EMPACT.⁶¹ As regards police cooperation, it referred to the US-Based National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline.⁶²

Generic recommendations of the Committee on international cooperation

The Committee requests all Parties to extend their international cooperation with other Parties to improve the effective implementation of the Convention.⁶³

Follow-up actions:

Cooperation with other states is ensured based on signed bilateral agreements, provisions on judicial cooperation in criminal matters, as well as Instructions for the creation of joint investigation teams. Depending on the need, the process of investigation and trial of the act is ensured through the Prosecutor General's Office or the Ministry of Justice.

If for example, during the reference period, the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Moldova submitted several requests for letters rogatory to other states for execution, in particular on cases of child trafficking (art.206 of the Criminal Code) - 4 requests, child pornography (art.208/1 of the Criminal Code) - 4 requests. At the same time, during 2024, the Prosecutor General's Office received 2 requests for letters rogatory from the competent bodies of other states for execution - on cases of investigation of sexual acts committed with a person who has not reached the age of 16 (art.175 of the Criminal Code).

⁵⁹ Para. 255

⁶⁰ Para. 259

⁶¹ Para. 261

⁶² Para. 262

⁶³ Recommendation V-3

The Committee also invites all Parties, including the Republic of Moldova:

- to consistently analyse the possibilities to

expand international cooperation with countries which are not Parties to the Convention to disseminate the standards of the Convention;⁶⁴

- to assess on a regular basis the difficulties that they face when dealing with international cooperation and remedy them;⁶⁵
- to assess, strengthen and develop international cooperation between the Parties of the Convention for the purpose of preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in matters related to CSGSIV;⁶⁶
- to consistently analyse the possibilities to expand international cooperation with countries which are not Parties to the Convention to disseminate the standards of the Convention for the purpose of preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in matters related to CSGSIV;⁶⁷
- to strengthen cooperation with relevant intergovernmental bodies, and with transnational networks and other international organisations and initiatives due to their capacity to mobilisation, their world-wide scope, and their flexibility to work, for the purpose of preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in matters related to CSGSIV;⁶⁸
- 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;⁶⁹
- to support regional and international 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;⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Recommendation V-4

⁶⁵ Recommendation V-5

⁶⁶ Recommendation V-6

⁶⁷ Recommendation V-7

⁶⁸ Recommendation V-8

⁶⁹ Recommendation V-9

⁷⁰ Recommendation V-10

- to assess, develop and strengthen cooperation between them to protect and provide assistance to victims in matters related to CSGSIV;⁷¹
- to regularly analyse the possibilities to expand international cooperation with countries which are not Parties to the Convention to disseminate the standards of the Convention, for the purpose of protecting and providing assistance to victims in matters related to CSGSIV;⁷²
- to assess, develop and strengthen cooperation with relevant intergovernmental bodies, transnational networks and other international organisations and initiatives due to their capacity to mobilisation, their world-wide scope, and their flexibility to work for the purpose of protecting and providing assistance to victims in matters related to CSGSIV;⁷³
- to maintain and develop efforts to strengthen international cooperation 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 analyse the possibilities to expand international cooperation with countries which are not Parties to the Convention, on investigation and proceedings concerning the offences established in accordance with the Convention, in matters related to CSGSIV;⁷⁵
- to further maintain and develop efforts to strengthen international cooperation in investigation and proceedings concerning the offences established in accordance with the L Convention, with countries which are not Parties to 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 collecting data, training, vetting, and selection

⁷¹ Recommendation V-11

⁷² Recommendation V-12

⁷³ Recommendation V-13

⁷⁴ Recommendation V-14

⁷⁵ Recommendation V-15

in matters related to CSGSIV;⁷⁶

- 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.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Recommendation V-16

⁷⁷ Recommendation V-19

Promising practices

An agreement was signed in 2007 on cooperation within the member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) on the fight against trafficking in human beings, and a model law on combatting trafficking in human beings was adopted at the 30th plenary session of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS Member States (Resolution No. 30-11 of 3 April 2008).

Promising practices:

The investigation of cases involving information technologies is ensured by the Center for Combating Cyber Crime and the available mechanisms for identification, detection, storage are:

- 1) Database specialized in identifying victims of child pornography, abuse and sexual exploitation of children "ICSE", administered by "OIPC Interpol";
- 2) The secure virtual "Cybertip" channel of information from the US National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC);
- 3) "ICACCOPS" database;
- 4) "Lace" database;

On 23.02.2023, the Cooperation Agreement was signed between GPI and CI "La Strada" regarding the implementation of mechanism for reporting sexual abuse materials on children in the Republic of Moldova (HOTLINE reporting service). At the same time, starting from April 2023, CI "La Strada" became a member of the international "INHOPE" network

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.

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on assistance to victims specific to the Republic of Moldova

The Committee notes that in the Republic of Moldova, helplines are run in collaboration between different bodies, including ministries and NGOs.⁷⁸ They are accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.⁷⁹

The Committee requires the Republic of Moldova:

- to take the necessary legislative or other measures to encourage and support the establishment of information services, such as telephone or internet helplines, to provide advice to child victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by ICTs as well as persons wishing to help them, in a confidential manner or with due regard for their anonymity. These information services should be made available as widely as possible. This can be done in several ways: the service is available at extended hours, it is delivered in a language that the caller, and especially the child, can understand, and it is free of charge;⁸⁰

Follow-up actions:

In the Republic of Moldova, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has set up the Free Child Helpline (116 111).

The Regulation on the organization and functioning of the Free Child Helpline was approved by Government Decision no. 519/2022.

The Free Child Helpline Service (hereinafter - Service) is a highly specialized social service without residential component, which is a means of communication and referral in the field of child protection and child care and provides: psycho-emotional

counseling, information in the field of child rights protection, child rights protection advice and referral to the institutions competent to provide the necessary assistance.

The Service, whose scope of activity is exclusively free telephone assistance for children, is not a legal entity, but a specialized structural unit of the Provider based in the municipality of Chisinau and operating non-stop (24 hours/7 days a week) for all callers from the Republic of Moldova and abroad.

The Service has a freephone number (116 111), which allows several calls to be received simultaneously, providing access to callers from any landline or mobile phone.

Assistance within the Service is provided in Romanian and Russian and can be accessed regarding any form of violation of a child's rights.

The Beneficiaries of the Service are:

- Children who come to the Service for advice, information and counseling;
- legal representatives/legal guardians in whose care the children are.

The Service:

- V respects the rights of all children;
- V ensures confidentiality and anonymity;
- V approaches each child individually;
- V offers protection to children against violence (including child victims, to whom moral, physical or material harm has been inflicted as a result of violence, neglect, exploitation, including through information technologies, through actions or inactions);
- V assists children in a child-friendly manner;
- V collaborates with child protection services;
- V ensures participation and respect for children's views;

⁷⁸ Para. 277

⁷⁹ Para. 280

⁸⁰ Recommendation VI-1

V intervenes in situations of violations of children's rights;

V does not discriminate.

The Service can be contacted in various ways:

- freephone and, on request, anonymous at the following number: 116 111;

- chat <https://telefonulcopilului.md/>;

- e-mail address:

telefonul.copilului@social.gov.md;

- social networks.

Also, on 19 July 2024, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, together with the Council of Europe Office in Chisinau, launched the National Campaign for the prevention and reporting of child abuse and violence against children, including online, by promoting the Free Child Helpline 116 111. The campaign was designed to encourage children in particular, but also the general public to report and report cases of child abuse and violence. The campaign messages, including the video spot, were promoted on social media, television, radio, public transportation and playgrounds in a network of restaurants in the cities of Chisinau and Balti.

Also, on November 18 - the European Day for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, the National Child Abuse Prevention Center launched the webpage dedicated to the Regional Integrated Assistance Service for Child Victims of Crime, BARNAHUS - <https://www.barnahus.md/>. The webpage is addressed to professionals working in the field of ensuring the protection of child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation and is also a useful resource for the whole society. The webpage publicizes the results of the work of the Barnahus-type center in the Republic of Moldova, as well as international experience.

- 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, these measures must take due account of the child's views, needs and

concerns.^{81 82}

Follow-up actions:

On 20 November 2024, by Government Decision no. 206 the Set of measures for the implementation of the recommendations of the Lanzarote Committee on ensuring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) for the period 2025-2026 was approved.

Thus, in actions 23.1 and 23.2 of the mentioned Set of Measures, it is envisaged to develop and promote the draft amendment of the normative act on the organization and functioning of the service of psychosocial assistance and rehabilitation of child victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking and children at risk of violence (Term of implementation: Quarter IV, 2026).

In addition, we inform that the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection approved by Order no. 134 of 15 September 2023 the Case Management in Child Protection and the Support Guide for its practical implementation.

Case Management in the field of child protection is the main tool of the employees of the territorial social assistance structures in the process of implementing the provisions of Law 140/2013 on the special protection of children at risk and children separated from their parents.

In accordance with the provisions of the mentioned normative act, throughout the entire process of case management in the field of child protection, from the initial assessment stage to the closing stage of the case, the child's opinion is consulted about his/her situation, the actions to be taken to

⁸¹ Recommendation VI-3

⁸² After the adoption of the report, the Committee was informed that the situation in the Republic of Moldova is in fact in line with recommendation VI-3. Indeed, the Republic of Moldova has developed a procedure for child victim assistance in their physical and psycho-social recovery. Training material on intervention in cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children was developed with the support of the Council of Europe. It is [available online](#) in Romanian.

ensure his/her protection, the impact of the actions taken, etc.

At the same time, the Support Guide for the practical implementation of Case Management in the field of child protection includes Section 1.2 Principles that substantiate the application of Case Management, which describes the procedure for the participation of the child and the family in the decision making.

In addition, we inform that on 30 November 2023, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted the new Law no. 370/2023 on the rights of the child, the drafting of which took into account the Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the combined Fourth and Fifth Periodic National Report of the Republic of Moldova on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the new Law on the rights of the child, new provisions have been introduced:

- the main definitions in the field of child protection (child, best interests of the child, family);
- elucidation of the principles of ensuring the rights of the child;
- every right of the child is fully described, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- the text of the law contains new articles, for example Articles 11 and 12 regarding the child's right to free expression, opinion and participation, etc.

Also, in accordance with art. 15 of *Law no. 370/2023 on the rights of the child*, as well as in accordance with the Case Management in the field of child

protection, the child's opinion will be taken into account on a mandatory basis, taking into account his/her age and degree of maturity, if this does not contradict his/her interests.

Also, one of the principles that guides the provision of the Free Child Helpline (116 111) is to ensure the child's participation and respect for his or her opinion. The examination of the problems addressed by the child is carried out taking into account the child's opinion (Standard 5 – The child's opinion).

It is necessary to mention that according to the Family Code no. 1316/2000, the child has the right to express his/her opinion when solving problems affecting his/her interests in the family and to be heard during judicial or administrative debates. The opinion of the child must be taken into account, in accordance with his/her age and degree of maturity, if this does not contradict the interests of the child (*Art. 54. The right of the child to express his/her opinion*).

In 2022, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection established the first Regional Center for Integrated Assistance to Child Victims/ Witnesses of Crime in the Municipality of Balti (Barnahus-type Center). This Center serves 12 administrative-territorial units: Briceni, Ocnita, Soroca, Donduşeni, Edinet, Drochia, Riscani, Glodeni, Falesti, Singerei, Floresti and Balti Municipality.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on assistance to victims

The Committee invites all Parties that are not already doing so:

- to promote awareness raising or specialised training for professionals who provide advice to children through telephone or internet helplines on ICT facilitated sexual exploitation and abuse of children – including the risks associated with CSGSIV – and on how to
- provide appropriate support to victims and to those who wish to help them;⁸³
- to ensure that the assistance measures referred to in Recommendation VI-3 are available to child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs, including

⁸³ Recommendation VI-2

offences due to the production, possession, distribution or transmission of CSGSIV.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Recommendation VI-4

Promising practices:

Regarding the trainings on the subject of sexual exploitation and abuse of children facilitated by information and communication technologies, which have benefited the specialists within the services under the management of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, we inform the following:

- Free Child Helpline Service 116 111: in the period 2022 - 2024 the team of the "Child's Phone" service was involved mostly as facilitators or trainers in the activities carried out by partners and institutions such as the State Chancellery, UNICEF, the International Center "La Strada" on the subject of children's safety in the online environment.

In 2022 at the request of the State Chancellery, the service team participated in training sessions held for specialists from different authorities, which dealt with the specifics of the 116 111 Service's work in cases of receiving referrals on online sexual exploitation of minors.

In 2023 the training of the above-mentioned specialists continued, *i.e.* in 3 other sessions additional affinities were analyzed on the role of the Free Child Helpline Service in the received cases of online sexual abuse, typology of cases, relevant statistical data and on the protection needs of children subjected to online sexual assault. The training focused on identifying measures to reduce the vulnerability of girls and boys to violence in the digital space. The workshop aimed to build the capacity of the members of the Child Protection Commissions on the risks associated with children's exposure to digital space, as well as measures to identify, report and respond promptly and appropriately, centered on ensuring the principle of the best interests of the child.

From 7 June to 19 August 2024, the specialists of the Free Child Helpline 116 111 participated in 5 training sessions held for members of the local multidisciplinary child protection team:

1. Presentation of available services: Participants were informed about the range of services available for children who have experienced online sexual abuse, which includes emergency and long-term psychological services, specialized survivor counseling, recovery and rehabilitative therapy, legal assistance and legal protection, and social work and community support.
2. Presentation of institutions and organizations involved: Participants were familiarized with the institutions and organizations involved in the provision of these services, including governmental institutions such as social services and the health system, as well as non-governmental organizations specialized in child protection and combating sexual abuse.
3. Focus on the specific needs of child survivors: The importance of tailoring services and interventions to the specific needs of children who have experienced online sexual abuse was emphasized.
4. Exemplification of good practices: Good practice examples illustrating effective ways of providing information about available services to child survivors of online sexual abuse were presented.

The involvement of the 116 111 team was to provide participants with a comprehensive overview of the services available for children who have experienced online sexual abuse.

During 2024 the specialists from the Free Child Helpline participated in several events specific to the topic:

- 15-16.02.2024 - International Forum "Child Online Safety";
- 12.12.2024 - Conference "Together against online violence: How we encourage teenage boys and girls to seek help."
- 14.12.2024 - National Conference "Children in the Digital Age: How are we transforming education to respond to new trends?"

Regional Center for Integrated Assistance to Child Victims / Witnesses of Crime in the Municipality of Balti (Barnahus-type center).

In 2022, taking into account the scope and specificity of the activity, immediately after their employment, the staff of the Northern Regional Center was included in an initial training program of 40 hours, as provided for by item 34 of the Framework Regulation approved by Government

Decision no. 708/2019.

During 2022, Northern Regional Center employees participated in various ongoing training activities as follows: Social Risk Management and Building Resilience in Social Services; Development of quality and sustainability in social services and Accreditation of social service providers - an important component of quality assurance of social services; Developing the skills of professionals (psychologists) to carry out activities with and for pre-school children to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation; Strengthening the skills of professionals working with people affected by trauma; Intervention methods for acute stress and trauma in violent crisis contexts Open communication, eye dialog and late conversations about pain, forgotten and hidden traumas; Assistance to child victims of war and the role of Barnahus-type structures in this process.

During the first year of activity (2022) of the Barnahus Center, the National Child Abuse Prevention Center developed professional capacities and trained about 400 professionals from various fields on the segment of providing child-friendly services in contact with the justice system.

The program that was the most complex and most successful was the cycle of trainings for specialists of multidisciplinary teams and professionals from the legal system working with them in the context of assisting child victims/witnesses of crime. As a result, around 290 professionals from different fields of activity in the Northern area have become more sensitive to the needs of assisting child victims/witnesses of crime thanks to these trainings. The program ran from May to November 2022, with financial support from the project entitled "Strengthening the Northern Regional Center for Integrated Assistance to Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime - Integrated Social Services "under one roof", financed from the resources of the European Union within the project "Civil Society Organizations act for better social services", co-financed and implemented by Soros Foundation Moldova in partnership with Keystone Moldova Association and Institutum Virtutes Civilis.

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 the Republic of Moldova

The Committee notes that in the Republic of Moldova, civil society is consulted during the drafting of new legislation.⁸⁵ The Republic of Moldova develops and supports different activities which are aimed at raising the awareness of not only children but also adults such as parents, educators, doctors and social workers about existing risks and dangers of ICTs for children.⁸⁶ Some projects specifically aim at educating and raising awareness of children on the issue of CSGSIV.⁸⁷ Other civil society projects - whether or not carried out in cooperation with the State - aiming at preventing abuses related to the sharing of such content are educational activities.⁸⁸

- The Committee requests the Republic of Moldova to encourage the financing of projects and programmes carried out by civil society aiming at preventing and protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.⁸⁹

Follow-up actions:

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, on the platform created by UNICEF and UNHCR, within the Child Protection Working Subgroup, has requested the involvement of non-governmental organizations in the implementation of investment projects to strengthen the child protection system in the Republic of Moldova. Thus, with the support of various non-governmental organizations working in the field of child

protection, a series of trainings for child rights protection specialists and members of multidisciplinary teams that examine the cases of children at risk have been carried out.

Also, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection's provision of services at the national level, namely the Free Child Helpline (116 111) and the Northern Regional Centre for Integrated Assistance to Child Victims/ Witnesses of Crime (Barnahus), is carried out on the basis of contracts concluded with non-governmental organizations, each of the parties having its own contribution to this, which provides sustainability of the services concerned.

On 23.02.2023, the Cooperation Agreement was signed between GPI and CI "La Strada" regarding the implementation of mechanism for reporting sexual abuse materials on children in the Republic of Moldova (HOTLINE reporting service). At the same time, starting from April 2023, CI "La Strada" became a member of the international "INHOPE" network.

⁸⁵ Para. 313

⁸⁶ Para. 315

⁸⁷ Para. 321

⁸⁸ Para. 323

⁸⁹ Recommendation VII-2. Examples of projects and/or programmes will enable assessment of follow-up to this recommendation.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on civil society involvement and cooperation

The Committee invites all Parties, including the Republic of Moldova:

- 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;⁹⁰
- 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;⁹¹
- to support civil society to carry out projects and programmes that include the issue of CSGSIV;⁹²
- to encourage the participation of children, according to their evolving capacity, in the development and implementation of state policies, programmes or other initiatives 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.⁹³

⁹⁰ Recommendation VII-3

⁹¹ Recommendation VII-4

⁹² Recommendation VII-5

⁹³ Recommendations VII-6, VII-7

Promising practices

In the Republic of Moldova, helplines/hotlines work directly in cooperation with the Police or a Criminal investigation department, in order to report directly any suspicion of abuse.

Promising practices:

The Law no. 370/2023 on the rights of the child regulates that the State ensures an open and effective collaboration between its authorities and institutions in order to respect the rights of each child, including through the application of intersectoral mechanisms approved for this purpose (art. 33 para. (1)).

Also in accordance with Art. 53 paras. (6) and (7) of the Family Code no. 1316/2000, employees of central and local public administration authorities, structures, institutions and services within or subordinated to them, working in the fields of social assistance, education, health care, law enforcement bodies, in accordance with the intersectoral cooperation mechanism for identification, assessment, referral, assistance and monitoring of child victims and potential victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking, are obliged to forward to the local/territorial guardianship authority the reports on children at risk, as well as those on cases of violence, neglect or exploitation of children in social services, health, educational and cultural institutions.

Individuals who have information about a suspected case of child abuse, neglect or exploitation are obliged to report it to the local/territorial guardianship authority or law enforcement bodies.

Thus, in case of identification of a child who is presumed to be at risk, he/she is referred to the authorities responsible for providing the necessary support to the child, based on the needs identified following the assessment of the case.

In 2022 the National Child Abuse Prevention Center in partnership with UNICEF, the National Institute of Justice and the Ministry of Justice designed and implemented the Training Program for Interviewers in the field of interviewing child victims/witnesses of crime. Financially the program was supported from the project "Support for Integrated Assistance to Child Witnesses and Victims of Crime in the Republic of Moldova" funded by UNICEF.

As a result, 8 specialists out of the 12 enrolled graduated from the program, possessing the necessary skills and competences to facilitate the hearing of child victims/witnesses of crime under special conditions. Two of these have been employed in the Northern Regional Center for Integrated Assistance to Child Victims/ Witnesses of Crime.

Strengthening the skills of forensic experts in communicating and approaching children in the process of conducting forensic examinations was another objective set for the first year of activity. Thus, during the month of November, the National Child Abuse Prevention Center organized a training workshop for forensic experts on "National procedure for forensic examination of child victims of physical and sexual violence in Barnahus-type Centre".

In order to ensure the sustainability of training programs on the topic "Integrated assistance to child victims/witnesses of crime: multidisciplinary aspects", the National Child Abuse Prevention Center, during 2022, developed a series of eLearning courses. In particular, three training courses were created for different groups of professionals, such as police officers, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, social workers. Two modules of the interviewer training programme were also digitized.

During the year 2023, the National Child Abuse Prevention Center organized a training session with the heads of the public security units of the Territorial Police Inspectorates of the Northern Area. The session aimed to strengthen the mechanism of cooperation of the employees of the Northern Regional Center with the employees of the Police in order to ensure prompt, professional and effective response to child victims/witnesses of crimes in the criminal process.

During the year 2024 the Center's specialists participated in the online training "How to provide initial support to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV)" with the support of UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA and IOM. The training was finalized with certificates of attendance.

Also, psychologists from the Centre participated in the training TBRI-principles, techniques, practical trainings on working with vulnerable children, organized by UNHCR. The aim of the training was to

develop and improve the skills to relate and connect with child victims who have lived traumatizing experiences.

The same, social workers and psychologists from the center participated online in a webinar on Psychological Scalable Interventions, presented by Dr. Ken Carswell from WHO. This session aimed to explore the importance of scalable interventions for mental health.

In May 2024, the Center's psychologist participated in the third phase of the Child Victim/ Witness of Crime Interviewer Training Program. This program is part of the better services for children in contact with the justice system, parents and adolescents", which is implemented by the National Child Abuse Prevention Center in partnership with UNICEF with the financial support of the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany through the German Development Bank.

In November 2024, the National Child Abuse Prevention Center organized training sessions for forensic doctors, proctologists and gynecologists from the Balti, Chisinau and Cahul regions. The aim of these activities was to improve the professional skills of specialists in the field of forensic examination of child victims of sexual violence, thus supporting a more effective and quality intervention in cases of abuse. The event is part of the project "Better services for children in contact with the justice system, parents and adolescents", carried out by the National Child Abuse Prevention Center in partnership with UNICEF Moldova and funded by the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany through the German Development Bank.

With the support of the La Strada International Center (IC La Strada), trainings were held for teachers, and a series of educational and informational resources were developed and disseminated in educational institutions for teachers in primary and secondary schools:

- Guide on Child Safety in the Online Environment for Primary School Teachers
- Guide on Child Safety in the Online Environment for Middle School Teachers
- Classroom activity scenarios and informational brochures for activities with parents about online safety
- Guide for implementing the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment
- Guide for specialists on intervention in cases of online violence
- Brochure "Talking to Parents/Guardians about Child Online Safety"
- Brochure of good practices for implementing the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment
- Guide for online safety coordinators in general education institutions.

In February 2025, in the context of events dedicated to the online safety of children and young people (Safer Internet Day), the "Let's talk about CSAM" campaign was launched, carried out in partnership with IC La Strada, the General Inspectorate of Police and with the support of the Global Safe Online Fund.

The aim of the campaign is to combat existing stereotypes and prejudices regarding the viewing, distribution and production of child sexual abuse material (CSAM), as well as to encourage a responsible and proactive attitude in reporting them to the competent authorities and available services.

Thus, within the campaign, 5 vox populi informative materials were developed, in video format, about what child sexual abuse material means and the illegality of any actions related to this content. The messages are addressed to the general public in order to inform about the illegality of non-consensual distribution of intimate images, as well as viewing, distributing and accessing illegal child sexual abuse material. At the same time, the videos promote public responsibility and the role of each person in protecting children online, dispel myths and stereotypes related to viewing, distributing or accessing abuse materials, and encourage reporting illegal child sexual abuse materials on the www.siguronline.md platform.

Public awareness and information activities will continue throughout 2025. In this context, the 7th edition of the National Competition will be organized, in the Ideathon format "Together, for a Better

Internet", a series of trainings, webinars and discussions will be held for professionals in the field of education and the law. Children and young people will be involved in various interactive activities to learn about the benefits and risks of the Internet. Special discussion sessions will be organized for parents.

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 risks 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 the Republic of Moldova:

- 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;⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Recommendation VIII-1

- 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;⁹⁵
- 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;⁹⁶
- to have available awareness-raising tools, materials, and activities suitable for children with disabilities;⁹⁷
- 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;⁹⁸
- 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 and about the preventive measures that can be taken;⁹⁹
- 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 and about the preventive measures that can be taken;¹⁰⁰
- 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;¹⁰¹
- 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.¹⁰²

⁹⁵ Recommendation VIII-2

⁹⁶ Recommendation VIII-3

⁹⁷ Recommendation VIII-4

⁹⁸ Recommendation VIII-5

⁹⁹ Recommendation VIII-6

¹⁰⁰ Recommendation VIII-7

¹⁰¹ Recommendation VIII-8

¹⁰² Recommendation VIII-9

Promising practices:

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection informs that in 2022 under the auspices of the Children's Rights Division of the Department for Children's Rights and Sports Values, within the framework of the Council of Europe project "Combating violence against children in the Republic of Moldova", the Training Materials on intervention in cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse were developed, which are posted on the official website of the Ministry and can be accessed by specialists at [this link](#).

Annually, in the first week of February, in the context of marking the International Day of Safer Internet, various activities are carried out within educational institutions regarding the safety and protection of children in the online environment.

As part of the activities with parents, over 11,800 parents received information materials on specific aspects of online safety for children at different ages (6-10 years, 11-13 years, 14+ years), developed and offered by CI La Strada.

Also, direct activities were carried out with children on how to recognize risks in the online environment and deal with them, support and guidance were provided for teachers in carrying out activities on online safety. Over 35,000 children participated in these activities and received information materials, who are prepared to recognize risks in the online environment and how to act when faced with an unpleasant situation on the Internet.

With the support of UNICEF and CI La Strada, 12 video lessons (Russian and Romanian) were developed on 6 topics related to online safety, which will help diaconal staff in carrying out their activities.

On February 6, 2024, on International Day for Online Safety, in partnership with CI La Strada, the awareness-raising campaign "It's more than an image, it's abuse" was launched. Its goal is to raise awareness about the problem of online sexual abuse of children and to encourage society to report materials on the Internet with such content.

The Ministry of Education and Research (MEC) is also the co-organizer of the National Competition for students "Together, for a Better Internet!", held by CI La Strada, which is organized annually in February.

Also, several information resources for teachers, students and parents have been placed on the MER portal and siguronline.md. On the siguronline.md website, anyone can contact the consultant to discuss a specific online situation in the online environment.

In February 2025, in the context of events dedicated to the online safety of children and young people (Safer Internet Day), the "Let's talk about CSAM" campaign was launched, carried out in partnership with IC La Strada, the General Inspectorate of Police and with the support of the Global Safe Online Fund.

Within the framework of the "Intersection. Safe Online Zone" Program, the following activities were carried out:

- national conferences on online child safety for primary and secondary school teachers, attended by 80 teachers;
- good practice exchange workshops attended by over 100 teachers who shared their experience working with students in the activities organized on the topic of online safety, based on recommended teaching resources and challenges encountered in the educational process;
- training of secondary and primary school teachers, as well as managerial staff in the context of piloting and providing support in the implementation of the Standards for the protection and safety of children/students in the online environment, attended by 295 teachers from 23 institutions;
- a training session for those responsible for online safety within the specialized local education bodies;
- three national competitions "Intersection. Safe Online Zone", in which teachers put into practice the information and knowledge gained from participating in conferences and workshops. Over 50 teachers and over 4000 children participated in the competition;
- developed, tested and validated several teaching resources (articles, guides, teaching scenarios,

etc.) for primary and secondary school teachers as support in carrying out activities on the topic of online safety. All resources are available online on the portal www.siguronline.md, in the category "Teaching resources".

As well, on 15-16 February 2024, the Ministry of Internal Affairs launched the International Forum "Children's Online Safety". The forum brought together international experts, government representatives, European Union officials, representatives of the Romanian Senate, Ministers of the Government of the Republic of Moldova, diplomats, specialists in the field of information and communications technology (ICT), as well as representatives of civil society to discuss and collaborate in the field of child protection in the online environment.

The main topics addressed at the forum include:

- Legislative initiatives and good practices at EU and national level in responding to online child sexual abuse and exploitation;
- Analysis of relevant European strategies and legislation and Ireland's experience in an integrated approach to online child safety measures;
- Combating online sexual abuse through intersectoral cooperation and standards of law enforcement activity;
- Implementation of the Digital Services Regulation and national priorities in the context of the European Union accession agenda;
- Digital education and development of online safety skills for children, with a focus on EU-level policies;
- Secondary prevention through measures focused on sexual offenders, including the creation of a national register of sexual offenders.

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 the Republic of Moldova, to ensure that all children at primary and secondary 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.¹⁰³

Follow-up actions:

In 2022, the Ministry of Education and Research developed and approved the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment (for Schools).

The Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment aim to ensure the minimum necessary framework of actions that can be taken by general education institutions to strengthen their efforts in promoting online safety, creating a safe and protected environment for children/students, and establishing measures to inform teachers, parents, and peers/students about online safety, on a regular basis.

With the support of the La Strada International Center, trainings were held for teachers, and a series of educational and informational resources were developed and disseminated in educational institutions for teachers in primary and secondary schools:

- Guide on Child Safety in the Online Environment for Primary School Teachers
- Guide on Child Safety in the Online Environment for Middle School Teachers
- Classroom activity scenarios and informational brochures for activities with

parents about online safety

- Guide for implementing the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment

- Guide for specialists on intervention in cases of online violence

- Brochure "Talking to Parents/Guardians about Child Online Safety"

- Brochure of good practices for implementing the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment

- Guide for online safety coordinators in general education institutions.

Also, the curriculum, developed for the first time for the mandatory subject "Personal Development" in grades I-XII, is being implemented, which includes 5 modules in its structure, one of which is "Personal Identity and Harmonious Relationships". All students in general education study this subject, which contains topics related to gender roles, stereotypes, family as a value, responsibilities, assertive, non-conflictual and non-violent communication.

as well as the discipline "Health Education", which provides communication, analysis and decision-making tools for adolescents/youth regarding health, including sexual and reproductive health, resilience in risk situations. The objectives of the current curriculum guide teachers to encourage students and prepare them to prevent risky health behaviors, including in sexual life.

The Committee invites all Parties, including the Republic of Moldova:

- to address in educational contexts the issue of the risks of child sexual exploitation and sexual

¹⁰³ Recommendation IX-3

abuse facilitated by ICTs, including as regards CSGSIV;¹⁰⁴

- 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);¹⁰⁵
- to consistently involve children in the development of internet safety awareness programmes;¹⁰⁶
- to ensure that there is a standing national internet safety resource, with an ongoing programme of activities;¹⁰⁷
- 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;¹⁰⁸
- 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;¹⁰⁹
- 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.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ Recommendation IX-1

¹⁰⁵ Recommendation IX-2

¹⁰⁶ Recommendation IX-4

¹⁰⁷ Recommendation IX-5

¹⁰⁸ Recommendation IX-6

¹⁰⁹ Recommendation IX-7

¹¹⁰ Recommendation IX-8

Promising practices:

The National Child Protection Program for 2022-2026 includes General Objective 1. Strengthening the child protection system in order to respond promptly and effectively to the needs of every child and Specific Objective 1.1. Establishing in the national normative framework the mechanisms for prompt and effective intervention of the protection system to the needs of every child, in accordance with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Association Agreement and other international mechanisms, ensuring full implementation of their recommendations, as confirmed by the Platform for Monitoring International Recommendations on Human Rights in Moldova.

Thus, in accordance with Action 13 (Development of the National Plan for Children's Online Safety) of the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Child Protection Program for 2022-2026, approved by Government Decision no. 347/2022, the Ministry of Education and Research has developed a draft decision in this regard, which was approved by Government Decision no. 676 of 2 October 2024.

The normative act in question provides for the completion of Annex no. 2 to Government Decision no. 347/2022 with new actions with reference to the safety and protection of children online, to be carried out by various responsible institutions in collaboration with NGOs in the period 2024-2026, namely: Expanding the partnership network of the child sexual abuse material reporting service with intermediary service providers; Ensuring the sustainability of the national child sexual abuse material reporting mechanism; Carrying out information campaigns about the online risks to which children may be exposed and promoting services for reporting cases of violence in the online environment; Strengthening international cooperation through the exchange of information with international reporting services (Hotline services) and the global INHOPE network; Conducting surveys on children's ICT preferences, interests in the virtual environment and the risks to which they are exposed; Conducting research on children's online safety; Promoting and monitoring the implementation of the Standards for the protection and safety of children/students in the online environment within general education institutions; Updating the continuous and initial training programs of teachers with reference to the field of online child safety; Developing and disseminating information materials for teaching staff on child safety in the online environment, adapted to the age categories of primary, secondary and high school students; Strengthening the capacities of education professionals regarding the didactic approach in activities related to online safety, as well as the management of cases of online abuse; Development of training programs for parents and caregivers regarding children's online safety, adapted to the specific age category of children, as well as regarding the tools that serve to combat potentially harmful content in the online environment; Encouraging the involvement of the educational community and students in initiatives to promote children's online safety in educational institutions; Strengthening the capacity of student councils and youth centers regarding online safety, the implementation of initiatives to prevent and combat digital violence and community mobilization at local level.

Regarding the prevention of sexual violence, support for victims and identification of cases of sexual abuse in educational institutions, the local specialized bodies in the field of education have carried out the following actions:

- referring children to consultations from specialists: pediatrician, psychologist, gynecologist, urologist, social worker;
- organizing joint meetings with the specialists from the Youth Friendly Services Center "Youth for Youth" with the parents of adolescents;
- consulting students by psychologists, gynecologists, pediatricians and dermatovenerologists of the "Youth for Youth" Mobile Clinic within the framework of various campaigns: HIV/AIDS Prevention, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Unwanted Pregnancy in Adolescents;
- awareness-raising activities in general education institutions with the involvement of teachers in seminars: Stop violence, Prevention of violence, Management of rape cases, Violence in the family

forms, Effective communication between students and students, between students and teachers, between children and parents, Violence and its influence on the student;

- activities for students, teachers and parents on topics related to online child safety, such as the Cyber Security Month, International Internet Safety Day, International Child Abuse Prevention Day, Children's Rights Week;

Awareness-raising campaign: School security, Prevention of sexual violence in schools, Aspects of delinquent and deviant behavior, The danger of school and home dropout, carried out in collaboration with the General Inspectorate of Police;

- Implementation of the Project "Safe and Participatory Inclusion of Refugee Children in Institutions in the Republic of Moldova" and "Prevention of Unwanted Pregnancy" - in partnership with VITA-Longa;

- monthly health meetings with parents and workshops with teachers on the topics "Adolescence is Beautiful in Digurance", "What we do not tell them, they will find out on their own", developed informative leaflets for parents.

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 the Republic of Moldova

The Committee notes that in the Republic of Moldova, professionals receive education or training on Internet safety for children. Various activities have been recently implemented on this topic:

- In June 2020, the National program of digital education of teachers was launched in educational institutions. It includes training on child protection in online environment. As for October 2020, more than 20 000 teachers were trained.
- Video lessons on child safety in online environment were made available within the Digital Library Program.¹¹¹
- In August 2020, teachers were trained on child protection in online environment, in cooperation with the NGO La Strada.
- The ministerial order No. 351 of 19.03.2020 on security in educational process was completed in September 2020 with an amendment on child safety in using platforms for distant education, which was delivered to teachers in the context of a higher risk of online child abuse during the Covid-19 pandemic.¹¹²

- The Committee requests the Republic of Moldova 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 sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including when facilitated by ICTs, for example through education or continuous training.¹¹³

Follow-up actions:

Set of measures for the implementation of the recommendations of the Lanzarote Committee on ensuring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) for the period 2025-2026, approved by Government Decision no. 206 of 20.11.2024, includes actions:

14.3. Developing, as appropriate, adjusting/revising guides/instructions on the application of legal provisions on sexual violence against children, in the context of amending the legislation related to the field, for specialists who interact with children in the sectors of education, health, social protection, as well as in the fields related to sports, culture and recreational activities (term of implementation 2nd quarter, 2025); 14.4. Organizing thematic trainings on the identification and reporting of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, the method of notifying services in case of suspicion of sexual exploitation or

¹¹¹ See <http://educatieonline.md/>

¹¹² Para.417

¹¹³ Recommendation X-1

sexual abuse of children by specialists who interact with children in the sectors of education, health, social protection, as well as in the fields related to sports, culture and recreational activities (including on available online training platforms) (Term of implementation: annually); 14.5. Training of multidisciplinary teams and other specialists who come into contact with child victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation on intervention and coordinated response to these cases (including on available online training platforms) (Term of implementation: annually); 24.1 Organizing trainings for members of territorial commissions with competences in the field of children's rights (Term of implementation: annually) and 24.2 Drafting methodical/practical materials for members of territorial commissions (Term of implementation: 2nd quarter, 2025), to be carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Internal Affairs, ANPCV, Council of Europe, the International Centre "La Strada", UNICEF, the non-governmental organization National Child Abuse Prevention Centre.

The Committee also requires the Republic of Moldova:

- 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;¹¹⁴

Follow-up actions:

In order to strengthen the partnership between the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and the academic environment on university education and continuous training of social workers / child rights protection specialists, on November 25, 2022 a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Labor and

Social Protection and Moldova State University, "Ion Creanga" State Pedagogical University, "Alecu Russo" State University of Balti and Free International University of Moldova, which sets priorities such as: Initial and continuous professional training of specialists in the field of social work in accordance with the needs of the labor market; strengthening the status of the social worker and child rights protection specialist; facilitating the dialogue between academia and the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection in the development and endorsement of social policies; developing scientific research to substantiate policies in this field.

In the same vein, the strategic partner of USAID Moldova, through the project "Data for Impact" has concluded grant agreements aimed at the initial training and continuing education of specialists in the field with 4 higher education institutions in the country: Moldova State University (USM), "Ion Creanga" State Pedagogical University (UPSC), Free International University of Moldova, "Alecu Russo" State University of Balti. As a result, 4 university curricula were approved, supplemented with modules in the field of evaluation management and use of data in social work, including child rights protection at bachelor and master level and 2 internship programs of USM and UPSC (bachelor and master level) were developed.

In 2022, the Ministry of Education and Research developed and approved the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment (for Schools).

The Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment aim to ensure the minimum necessary framework of actions that can be taken by general education institutions to strengthen their efforts in promoting online safety, creating a safe and protected environment for children/students, and establishing measures to inform teachers, parents, and peers/students about online safety, on a regular basis.

With the support of the La Strada

¹¹⁴ Recommendation X-4

International Center, trainings were held for teachers, and a series of educational and informational resources were developed and disseminated in educational institutions for teachers in primary and secondary schools:

- Guide on Child Safety in the Online Environment for Primary School Teachers
- Guide on Child Safety in the Online Environment for Middle School Teachers
- Classroom activity scenarios and informational brochures for activities with parents about online safety
- Guide for implementing the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment
- Guide for specialists on intervention in cases of online violence
- Brochure "Talking to Parents/Guardians about Child Online Safety"
- Brochure of good practices for implementing the Standards for the Protection and Safety of Children/Students in the Online Environment
- Guide for online safety coordinators in general education institutions.

- to ensure that the persons who have regular contacts with children are equipped to identify any situation 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;¹¹⁵

Follow-up actions:

As regards the trainings carried out, we draw your attention that the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in the last period (2023-2024) has organized several training sessions for social assistance staff with the involvement of development partners, thus, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Refugee Agency, Moldova (UNHCR) and the Association "Ave Copiii", a comprehensive training course was organized from 03 to 05 April 2023, at

national level, for all child rights protection specialists.

The trainings focused on the priority aspects of the child protection system, the national normative framework in the field of protection of unaccompanied or separated children, methods of alternative care and other relevant issues in this field. These trainings are also timely in the context of the implementation of the National Child Protection Program for 2022-2026, which focuses on the main areas of intervention, namely:

- Strengthening the child protection system to respond promptly and effectively to the needs of every child;
- Ensuring zero tolerance by adults and children of any form of violence against children;
- Ensuring that children grow up in a safe and protective family environment.

Also, in order to implement the above-mentioned Program, within the framework of the Council of Europe project on "Protection of children against violence and its prevention, including in the online environment in the Republic of Moldova" in order to strengthen the capacities of community social workers, in the periods: 4-6 September, 11-13 September, 19-21 September and 26-28 September 2023 training sessions on the practical application of the Intersectoral Cooperation Mechanism for the identification, assessment, referral, assistance and monitoring of child victims and potential victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking were organized, in which 240 social workers and child rights protection specialists from 36 regions of the country participated. Participants under the guidance of trainers discussed topics related to reporting obligation, personal and institutional responsibility and had the opportunity to participate in several practical exercises related to conducting the initial assessment, the protection interview and the establishment of urgent child protection measures.

At the same time, social workers and child rights protection specialists had the

¹¹⁵ Recommendation X-5

opportunity to exchange knowledge with their colleagues from other regions and to jointly identify possible challenges, to which they prepared actions and response plans. In the same context, namely, taking into account the need to ensure prompt and effective response to all cases of violence and trafficking against children by specialists working for and with children, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in partnership with the Office of the Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and in collaboration with the OSCE Mission Moldova in November 2023 organized trainings on the topic "Unconditional Access to Services for Victims of Human Trafficking" which were intended for specialists working in the field of child rights protection in order to strengthen professional capacities and to train specialists working for and with children to identify good practices on human trafficking.

These trainings were attended by about 108 representatives of territorial guardianship authorities working in the field of child rights protection or in the field of protection of families with children at risk.

In 2024, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection in collaboration with development partners and non-governmental organizations carried out several trainings of specialists with competence in the field of child protection, as follows:

2 Training of Trainers sessions in the field of Child Protection (UNICEF and the "Ave Copiii" Association), during which 48 child rights protection specialists from all territorial social assistance structures in the country were trained.

The training seminars included the following training modules:

- Theoretical and practical dimensions of child protection. Child protection system in the Republic of Moldova.
- Children at risk. Violence against children, including forms and types of violence, signs of violence. Risk factors for child welfare and family protective factors.

- Identification, assessment, referral, assistance and monitoring of child victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking.

- Protection of children separated from their parents, including emergency placement and planned placement. Custody.

- Case management.

- Developments in responding to violence against children.

- Violence against children, including definitions, forms, types, signs of violence.

- Duties of the local guardianship authority.

- Identification, assessment, referral, assistance and monitoring of child victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking (Law no. 140/2013; Law no. 45/2007; Government Decision no. 270/2014), including intersectoral procedures, Referral sheet, sectoral procedures.

- Intersectoral cooperation (between sectors, levels of administration, referral of cases, closure of cases, follow-up); Liability (Law no. 140/2013; Government Decision no. 270/2014; Contraventional Code) etc.

Following the realization of the mentioned Training Seminars, local trainers conducted trainings on the specified modules for 1079 community social workers from all over the country.

Also, with OSCE support, 45 psychologists from the territorial social assistance structures were trained in child protection (violence prevention).

In collaboration with the "Ave Copiii" Association, 210 community social workers and child rights protection specialists (employed with UNICEF support) were trained. The training aimed at strengthening multidisciplinary teams, including representatives of authorities with competences in the field of child rights protection, working at local level, in the public order, education and health sectors. At the same time, with the support of the International Center "La Strada", 101 psychologists, community social workers from the territorial social assistance

structures were trained in child protection. Also, with the support of the Terre des hommes Moldova Foundation (Tdh Moldova) in order to strengthen the child protection system, a Training of Trainers for the initial training of members of the Commission for the Protection of Children in Difficulty was carried out. As a result of the training, 27 specialists from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, territorial social assistance agencies and structures were trained to conduct local initial training of the members of the Commission for the Protection of Children in Need.

As a follow-up to the above mentioned trainings, local trainers conducted trainings for 297 members of the Commission for the Protection of Children in Need (Gate Keeping) (33 territorial social assistance structures x 9 members).

With the support of the Council of Europe a Training of Trainers was organized for frontline specialists "Protection of children from online sexual exploitation and abuse", in which 21 national trainers were trained. In order to strengthen the capacities of professionals working with/for children in planned foster care - 9th grade students and secondary school graduates, training workshops were organized jointly with the Association for the Ability of the Child and Family "AVE Copiii".

The training workshops targeted the professionals of the territorial social assistance structures (child protection specialists, managers of the Social Services "Professional Parental Assistance"/"Family-type Children's Home", managers of the Service "Community Social Assistance", community social workers, other specialists) and focused on developing their capacities to assist children in the process of empowerment for independent living, preparing them in the process of leaving the alternative care system, professional guidance.

In partnership with the "Partnerships for every child" Organization, the following was organised:

- a training workshop on "PANDA psycho-social assistance program", with the

participation of Center-West, Center-East, North-West territorial social assistance agencies (20 participants);

- a training workshop on "Mellow Parenting Education Program".

With the support of UNICEF Moldova and the "Partnerships for Every Child" Organization, a training workshop was organized for all professional parental assistants of the Professional Parental Assistance Service (hereinafter - PPA) throughout the country. Training workshop for professional parental assistants and specialists involved in the provision of the PPA service - Specialized placement for children with complex emotional needs.

In partnership with UNHCR and UNICEF Moldova, within the Project "Empowering National Child Protection Mechanisms", implemented by the Association for Child and Family Empowerment "AVE Copiii", a training workshop in the field of child protection and community activism was organized to support the training and capacity building of specialists working with and for children. The workshop is intended for child protection specialists, community social workers and community mediators.

In the general context of ensuring access to education for all children/students and protecting them from any form of discrimination, violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, child trafficking, the institutions subordinated to the MEC were involved, such as the Republican Center for Psychopedagogical Assistance (RCPA), educational institutions and local specialized bodies in the field of education. RCPA carried out actions oriented towards intersectoral collaboration regarding the identification, referral and specific intervention in cases of child abuse, training specialists of territorial psychopedagogical assistance structures in order to identify signs of risk and provide psychological support to children victims of sexual abuse, carrying out information and awareness-raising activities for educational actors regarding the phenomenon of sexual abuse of children:

- Action „intersectoral collaboration on identification, referral and specific intervention in cases of child abuse” - development and approval of the Safeguarding Policy of the RCPA in the 35-territorial psycho-pedagogical assistance structures and development of instructions regarding the procedure for the prevention and post-prevention of teenage pregnancy;
- Action „Training of SAP specialists in order to identify risk signs and provide psychological support to children victims of sexual abuse” - training of about 60 psychologists from psycho-pedagogical assistance structures on "Intervention of specialists in situations of online violence", with the support of CI La Strada, Participation in the international forum "Online safety of children. Advancing the European agenda in the field of child protection in the online environment in the Republic of Moldova", in partnership with CI La Strada, Training of 37 SAP psychologists on "Sexual abuse and human trafficking", in partnership with the "Eliberare" Organization, Braşov, Romania, Training of 20 trainers on the implementation of the "Kiko and Hand" Program training of about 50 SAP specialists on the prevention of sexual abuse of children, and equipping participants with tools for working with children aged 5-7, 7-12, 12+, in partnership with the National Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse;
- Action „Carrying out information and awareness-raising activities for actors regarding the phenomenon of child sexual abuse": Training of approximately 40 teachers on the institutional organization procedure for prevention, identification and intervention in cases of violence, abuse and neglect, Carrying out approximately 40 information/awareness-raising activities for teachers regarding the prevention of child sexual abuse, in partnership with National Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

- to ensure that the persons who have regular contacts with children 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.¹¹⁶

Follow-up actions:

Social protection specialists are trained on the implementation of the intersectoral cooperation mechanism.

National normative acts regulate that referrals concerning cases of child violence, neglect and exploitation are registered and examined by specialists from the territorial social assistance structures as well as by specialists from social services in accordance with the procedures of the intersectoral cooperation mechanism (a comprehensive approach to the case is carried out).

Set of measures for the implementation of the recommendations of the Lanzarote Committee on ensuring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) for the period 2025-2026, approved by Government Decision no. 206 of 20.11.2024, includes actions:

14.4. Organizing thematic trainings on the identification and reporting of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, the method of notifying services in case of suspicion of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse of children by specialists who interact with children in the sectors of education, health, social protection, as well as in the fields related to sports, culture and recreational activities (including on available online training platforms) (Term of implementation: annually); 14.5. Training of multidisciplinary teams and other specialists who come into contact with child victims of sexual abuse and sexual

¹¹⁶ Recommendation X-6

exploitation on intervention and coordinated response to these cases (including on available online training platforms) (Term of implementation: annually).

In 2023-2024, Moldova was a part of End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @Europe Plus Project, known as EndOCSEA@Europe+. This project, coordinated by the Council of Europe's Children's Rights Division.

As part of this project, was developed two main training to be implemented: „Preventing and Combatting Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”, is tailored for law enforcement, judges, and prosecutors, focusing on strengthening their capacity to respond to OCSEA cases, and „Safeguarding Children from OCSEA” *aimed at frontline professionals such as teachers, social workers, and doctors, providing them with tools to protect children from online risks.*

The training modules was developed in English by international experts, and adapted to national context, incorporating

specific legal references.

In October 2024, was held both trainings. This session was delivered jointly by an international and national consultant provided to 46 legal professionals directly involved in handling OCSEA cases. The training aimed to improve interagency collaboration and strengthen participants' response capabilities.

The training for frontline professionals -this session was structured as a Training of Trainers and aimed at supporting participants to address online safety challenges, especially OCSEA, and to build networks that support continuous community education and protection for children in digital spaces. The training was attended by 43 people, including Moldova teachers and social workers.

Both the safeguarding and legal trainings include a Training of Trainers component to ensure that knowledge and practices are widely disseminated.

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

The Committee also invites all Parties, including the Republic of Moldova:

- 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;¹¹⁷
- 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.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Recommendation X-2

¹¹⁸ Recommendation X-3

Promising practices:

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has proposed that in order to ensure a sufficient number of professional staff working in the best interests of the child and providing social assistance to families with children in need and children at risk, with the implementation of the "RESTART" Social Assistance Reform and by Law no. 256/2023, which entered into force on 01.01.2024 and brought several changes in the system of child rights protection: the possibility of hiring new specialists (child rights protection specialists, psychologists) was ensured both at the level of the territorial social assistance agency and at the level of the territorial social assistance structure. At the same time, the employment formula of the child rights protection specialist has been changed, who can also be employed by the territorial guardianship authority, but will work within each City Hall. Thus, currently there are already about 150 child rights protection specialists employed, who are seconded to work within the City Halls and to perform support activities for the exercise of the local guardianship authority's duties in the field of child rights protection.

It should be noted that the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection from April 2024 to December 2024 implemented the training program for newly hired child rights protection specialists, a joint initiative of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, UNICEF Moldova, UNHCR Moldova and the "AVE Copiii" Association, with the support of the International Plan of Action in partnership with "AVE Copiii" Association. The training program lasted for 9 months and was structured in eight modules that were delivered in four sessions for child rights protection specialists.

Thus, we emphasize that the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has launched a series of trainings (initial and ongoing) for a large number of employees in the field of social assistance (child rights protection specialists, psychologists, trainers (ToT) members of the Commissions for the protection of children in need) who have competences in the field of child rights protection with the aim of strengthening the professional capacities of child rights protection specialists, community social workers, multidisciplinary teams, commission for the protection of children in need, etc.

The targeted specialists were also provided with the necessary equipment for the implementation of its work.

Additionally, in accordance with action 14.4. (*Organization of thematic trainings on the identification and reporting of cases of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, how to refer cases of suspected sexual exploitation or sexual abuse of children to services by specialists interacting with children in the sectors of education, health, social protection, as well as in the areas related to sports, culture and recreation (including on available online training platforms); Term of implementation: Annually*) of the Set of Measures for the implementation of the recommendations of the Lanzarote Committee on ensuring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) for the period 2025-2026, approved by Government Decision no. 206 of 20.11.2024, training of specialists in the fields concerned will continue in cooperation with non-governmental organizations.

Also, Action 14.5. of the Set of Measures foresees the training of multidisciplinary teams and other professionals in contact with child victims of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation on intervention and coordinated response to these cases (including on available online training platforms); Term of implementation: Annually.

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 the Republic of Moldova

The Committee notes that the Republic of Moldova provided information on research undertaken on the issues raised by CSGSIV in general.¹¹⁹ It was included in the broader topic of online sexual exploitation and abuse.¹²⁰

No information has been provided as to whether the research results have been shared with the authorities¹²¹ or whether public authorities have collaborated with civil society.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Para. 437

¹²⁰ Para. 438

¹²¹ Para. 442

¹²² Para. 457

Generic recommendations of the Committee on research

The Committee invites all those Parties which have not already done or are not already doing so:

- to collect data and undertake research at the national and local level, for the purpose of observing and evaluating the phenomenon of CSGSIV;¹²³
- 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, for the purpose of observing and evaluating 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.¹²⁴

The Committee also invites all Parties, including the Republic of Moldova:

- 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;¹²⁵
- 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.¹²⁶

¹²³ Recommendation XI-1

¹²⁴ Recommendation XI-4

¹²⁵ Recommendation XI-2

¹²⁶ Recommendation XI-3

Promising practices:

The data collection process is to be adjusted. Thus, according to the Set of measures for the implementation of the recommendations of the Lanzarote Committee on ensuring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) for the period 2025-2026, approved by Government Decree 206/2024, we propose to carry out the following actions in the coming years:

2.1. Analysis of data collection mechanisms with competences in preventing and combating sexual abuse and exploitation of children, assistance and protection of child victims and perpetrators.

Identification of needs;

2.2. Development/adjustment of internal data collection mechanisms;

3.1. Ensuring the exchange of information between existing information systems that hold data on cases of sexual abuse of children, through the interoperability platform;

4.1. Development of the Methodology for the collection, analysis and issuance of analytical reports in the field of child abuse and sexual exploitation;

5.1. Annual development of the report on child abuse and sexual exploitation.