



FACTSHEET – THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Lanzarote Committee Implementation Report on:

“The protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs): addressing the challenges raised by child self-generated sexual images and/or videos (CSGSIV)”

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I. Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This factsheet based on the implementation report and has been prepared by the Lanzarote Committee Secretariat as a practical tool to be used by Russian Federation to clearly identify the relevant recommendations and actions addressed by the Lanzarote Committee to it.

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

Key findings of the implementation report as to all Parties

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

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

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

II. Legal frameworks

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

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on the legal framework specific to the Russian Federation

Criminalisation of conduct related to the production and possession of CSAM and its relationship with CSGSIV

The Committee observes that mere possession of “child pornography” is not yet criminalised in the Russian Federation but the legal situation is under review. The Committee encourages the Russian Federation to complete the review.²

The Committee **invites** the Russian Federation:

- to introduce a definition of “child sexual abuse material” (CSAM) for material depicting acts of sexual abuse of children and/or focusing on the genitalia of the child, following the guidance set out in the [“Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse”](#).^{3 4}
- to rather use the term “child sexual abuse material” 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”](#)⁵ in the development of future national, regional and international legal instruments and policies addressing the prevention of and protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, as the Committee acknowledges that using the term “child pornography” can undermine the gravity of the crimes it refers to.⁶

- 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.⁷

Reservations allowed by Article 20(3) of the Convention as regards own sexual images consensually produced and possessed by children for private use

The Committee also observes that the Russian Federation made the reservation foreseen in Article 20(3) of the Convention to exempt from liability for the production and possession of one’s own sexually explicit images only where the children in question are above the age of sexual consent and where the material is produced/possessed with their consent for their own private use.⁸ However in the Russian Federation the situation under the reservation appears to extend to adult liability, as under Article 242 of the Criminal Code⁹ production and possession purely for private use are not subject to criminal liability.¹⁰

- Therefore, the Committee **requires** the Russian Federation to ensure, while providing exemptions for adults from criminal liability for the possession of CSGSIV. that:

² Para. 53.

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

⁴ Recommendation II-3.

⁵ 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.](#)

⁶ Recommendation II-1.

⁷ Recommendation II-2.

⁸ Paras. 54, 55.

⁹ See, replies of the **Russian Federation** to question 9.1 of the Thematic Questionnaire.

¹⁰ Para. 57.

- the child depicted in such images has reached the legal age for sexual activities and has given his/her consent for the possession of such images and/or videos, and that
- the person possessing the child-self generated images and/or videos and the child depicted in them are of similar ages and maturity (e.g., by setting a maximum age difference among them) in line with para 129 of the Lanzarote Convention's Explanatory Report, and that
- the production and possession of the mentioned images and/or videos did not involve any abuse.¹¹

Interplay of the age of criminal responsibility and the age of sexual consent with the criminalisation of conduct related to the production and possession of CSAM and CSGSIV

The Committee observes that in the Russian Federation, children who are below the age of criminal responsibility (the age of 14) and above the legal age for sexual activities cannot be held criminally liable for production and possession of CSGSIV.¹² However, the Committee notes that relying on the age of sexual consent to exclude criminal responsibility for the scenarios listed in paragraphs 3-6 of the 2019 Opinion is insufficient as, in such cases, younger children may not be covered by the exemption from criminal responsibility.¹³

- The Committee **requests** that the Russian Federation ensures in its legal framework¹⁴ that a child will not be prosecuted when he/she possesses:
 - their own self-generated sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos;
 - self-generated sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos of another child with the informed consent of the child depicted on them;
 - the self-generated sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos of another child as a result of receiving them passively without actively asking for them.¹⁵

¹¹ Recommendation II-5.

¹² Paras. 71, 73.

¹³ Para. 73.

¹⁴ The expression "legal framework" is not limited to legislation but should be understood in a broader way, e.g., through prosecutorial guidance or practice.

¹⁵ Recommendation II-6.

Criminalisation of conduct related to "offering or making available" child abuse material and its relationship with the sharing of CSGSIV

The Committee observes that in the Russian Federation children are potentially criminally liable for the distribution or transmission of their own CSGSIV.¹⁶

Criminalisation of conduct related to "offering or making available" CSAM and its relationship with the sharing of their own or other children's self-generated material

The Committee also observes that in the Russian Federation distribution by children over the age of criminal responsibility (14 years old) of other children's CSGSIV will be criminalised if the image/video is the result of exploitation of the child depicted in the self-generated material or if the child deliberately made available such material to other persons.¹⁷

Therefore, the Committee **requests** Parties that are not already doing so, including the Russian Federation:

to ensure in their legal framework¹⁸ 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.¹⁹

- 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) Lanzarote Convention.²⁰

On the prosecution of conduct amounting to "sexual extortion of children"

In cases where the sexual extortion is intended to procure additional sexual images or videos of the child, the Committee observes that, in the Russian Federation, prosecutions would only be brought for offences related to child pornography, the presence of a threat not being

¹⁶ Para. 78.

¹⁷ Para. 82.

¹⁸ The expression "legal framework" is not limited to legislation but should be understood in a broader way, e.g., through prosecutorial guidance or practice.

¹⁹ Recommendation II-8.

²⁰ Recommendation II-9.

taken into account.²¹ The Russian Federation also referred to further offences, such as the offences of corruption of children which may be established in recognition of the constituent elements of coercion/extortion.²²

In cases where the sexual extortion is intended to procure other sexual favours from the child depicted on the images/videos or from another child, the Russian Federation would prosecute for offences related to sexual abuse of a child in accordance with Article 18, participation in pornographic performances and corruption of children.²³ In addition, the Russian Federation would prosecute conduct relating to the possession of the initial child sexual image or video as an offence related to "child pornography" under Article 20.²⁴

If the objective of the perpetrator is a financial gain, the Russian Federation identified the

situation as participation in pornographic performances and did not refer to extortion or any similar offences.²⁵

The Committee **invites** the Russian Federation:

- 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.²⁶
- to ensure that sexual extortion of children involving CSGSIV is investigated and prosecuted.²⁷

Generic recommendations of the Committee on legal frameworks

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

- 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 Lanzarote Convention.²⁸
- 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.²⁹

- to consider criminalising the offence of "grooming" (solicitation of children for sexual purposes), even when it does not lead to a face-to-face meeting or producing child sexual abuse material.³⁰

²¹ Para. 99.

²² Para. 100.

²³ Para. 102, 103.

²⁴ Para. 103.

²⁵ Para. 106.

²⁶ Recommendation II-11.

²⁷ Recommendation II-12.

²⁸ Recommendation II-4.

²⁹ Recommendation II-7.

³⁰ Recommendation II-10.

III. Investigations and prosecution

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

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on investigations and prosecution specific to the Russian Federation

The Committee observes that the Russian Federation's investigation, prosecution, and legal services are already in line with some of its recommendations as the Russian Federation has:

- a specialised unit dealing with ICT-facilitated offences against children within law enforcement.³¹
- specialised investigative units for handling ICT facilitated sexual offences where these are committed by children.³²
- specialised prosecution services which handle ICT facilitated sexual offences committed by children.³³
- training modules in place for law enforcement agents related to aspects of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, as well as its own training programme, used either in full or in part to carry out training for law enforcement agents.³⁴
- specific law enforcement training on production, possession, distribution or transmitting of CSGSIV, and ICT-facilitated coercion or extortion.³⁵
- training programmes provided by State authorities in place and external training available for prosecutors and judges.³⁶ Training of judges provided by the Russian State University of Justice includes the specifics of trial on sexual offences against minors on the Internet.³⁷
- training resources, in cooperation with international organisations, such as the training

of prosecutors within the framework of the University of the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation and its branches, which includes a set of disciplines such as the protection of the rights of children, in general, and ICT facilitated sexual offences against children, in particular.³⁸

- victim identification units within law enforcement for cases of ICT facilitated sexual offences against children.³⁹

Therefore, the Committee **invites** the Russian Federation:

- to provide specific training⁴⁰ on ICT facilitated sexual offences against children, including when such offences involve CSGSIV, and ICT facilitated coercion or extortion to law enforcement agents who are likely to come into contact with such cases.⁴¹
- to ensure that training on the challenges raised by CSGSIV and ICT-facilitated coercion or extortion of children⁴² is available to prosecutors.⁴³
- to ensure that training on the challenges raised by CSGSIV and ICT facilitated coercion or extortion of children⁴⁴ is available to judges.⁴⁵
- 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

³¹ Para. 115.

³² Para. 135.

³³ Para. 138.

³⁴ Paras. 145, 146.

³⁵ Para. 153.

³⁶ Paras. 156, 157, 167.

³⁷ Para. 168.

³⁸ Para. 160.

³⁹ Para. 180.

⁴⁰ Such trainings can also be part of broader training programmes.

⁴¹ Recommendation III-14.

⁴² Such trainings can also be part of broader training programmes.

⁴³ Recommendation III-17.

⁴⁴ Such trainings can also be part of broader training programmes.

⁴⁵ Recommendation III-19.

consistency at all stages.⁴⁶

- 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.⁴⁷

The Committee observes that the Russian Federation makes an active contribution to the INTERPOL's international child sexual exploitation (ICSE) database.⁴⁸

The Committee also observes that in the Russian Federation, investigations of sexual offences

against children through ICTs are carried out with the help of undercover operations where necessary, based on Federal Law N 144-FZ of 12 August 1995 (as amended on 30 December 2020) "On Operational Investigative Activities". This law defines the rules for the observance of human and civil rights and freedoms in the implementation of operational-search activities, on the one hand, and provides for the reception of computer information, among other sources of information and measures for its reception, control of messages sent through various communication channels, access to information from technical communication channels, undercover operative activities.⁴⁹

Generic recommendations of the Committee on investigation and prosecution

On the specialisation and training of authorities

- Mindful of the different contexts in the Parties as recalled in para 235 of the Explanatory Report, the Committee **requests** those Parties that are not already doing so to ensure that law enforcement and prosecution units, services or persons specialised in ICT facilitated sexual offences against children are adequately financed to ensure sufficient resources, including staff, equipment and training.⁵⁰

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

- to ensure that the capacities of any investigative unit specialised in ICT-facilitated sexual offences against children take into account evolving technologies and online behaviours and reflect current practices used by perpetrators. Additionally, the Committee invites all Parties to exchange best practices between the relevant investigative units.⁵¹
- 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.⁵²
- 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.⁵³

- to ensure that units, services or persons within courts responsible for ICT-facilitated sexual offences against children have sufficient specialisation in offences involving CSGSIV.⁵⁴

On measures to ensure the effective investigation and prosecution

- The Committee **requires** all Parties to ensure that investigations and criminal proceedings in ICT facilitated sexual offences against children are treated as priority and carried out without any unjustified delay.⁵⁵

It also **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

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

⁴⁶ Recommendation III-20.

⁴⁷ Recommendation III-21.

⁴⁸ Para. 186.

⁴⁹ Para. 197

⁵⁰ Recommendations III-3 and III-7.

⁵¹ Recommendation III-4.

⁵² Recommendation III-5.

⁵³ Recommendation III-9.

⁵⁴ Recommendation III-10.

⁵⁵ Recommendation III-30.

resources are sufficiently allocated.⁵⁶

- to engage in and strengthen inter-Party cooperation for the purpose of identifying child victims and perpetrators of ICT facilitated sexual offences, including, where appropriate, by providing access to each other's databases or shared databases, including those containing information on such perpetrators.⁵⁷
- 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.⁵⁸

- 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.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Recommendation III-24.

⁵⁷ Recommendations III-25, III-29.

⁵⁸ Recommendation III-31.

⁵⁹ Recommendation III-32.

IV. Jurisdiction rules

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

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on jurisdiction rules specific to the Russian Federation

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 Russian Federation has established laws clarifying the circumstances in which its national criminal law will apply to a transnational situation following the territoriality principle. Pursuant to article 12 of the Russian Criminal Code, if the victim or guilty person is found outside the Russian Federation, the provisions of the national legislation and international treaties of the Russian Federation on legal assistance, the extradition and transfer of criminal proceedings are applied for the purposes of criminal prosecution. In addition, citizens of the Russian Federation and stateless persons permanently residing in the Russian Federation who have committed a crime outside the Russian Federation are subject to criminal liability in accordance with this Code, if there is no foreign court decision regarding these persons on this crime.⁶⁰

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

The Committee observes that the Russian Federation has reserved the right not to apply the jurisdiction rule provided under the Convention requiring Parties to take the necessary legislative and other measures to establish jurisdiction over offences committed by persons who have their habitual residence in their territory (Article 25(1)(e)). Accordingly, the Russian Federation does not claim jurisdiction over any offence covered by the Convention if the offence was committed by a person who has his or her habitual residence in its territory.⁶¹

- Therefore, the Committee **invites** the Russian Federation to consider removing this reservation and establish jurisdiction for offences under the Convention when such offences are committed abroad by persons having their habitual residence in its territory.⁶²

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 Committee observes that in the Russian Federation the offences of sexual abuse, offences concerning child prostitution, the production of child pornography and participation of a child in pornographic performances are prosecuted ex officio in line with Article 25(6) of the Convention.⁶³

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

For offences committed abroad by one of their nationals, Article 25(4) of the Lanzarote Convention provides that Parties should take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that its jurisdiction is not subordinate to the condition that the acts are criminalised at the place where they were performed, i.e. subject to the dual criminality principle. This concerns the following offences: sexual abuse (Articles 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(1)(a) and (b)). The Committee observes that only the Russian

⁶⁰ Para. 214.

⁶¹ Para. 216.

⁶² Recommendation IV-3.

⁶³ Para. 218.

Federation reserved the right, in accordance with Article 25(5), to limit the application of this provision with regard to offences established in accordance with Article 18(1)(b), second and third indents (abuse of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence; abuse of a particularly vulnerable situation of the child), to cases where nationals of the Russian Federation also have their habitual residence in its territory.⁶⁴

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 notes that as detailed in the Explanatory Report of the Convention, Parties are not obliged, but can endeavour, to establish jurisdiction over an offence committed against one of its nationals or a person having habitual residence in the territory under Article 25(2). The

passive personality principle is applied in respect of offences committed against a national, and against persons who have their habitual residence in its territory, only in the case of a stateless person granted permanent residence in the Russian Federation.⁶⁵ A further condition of prosecution in this case is that the perpetrator must have not been already convicted in a foreign State.⁶⁶

- The Committee **requests** Parties that are not already doing so, including the Russian Federation, to endeavour to take the necessary legislative or other measures to establish jurisdiction over any offence established in accordance with the Lanzarote Convention where the offence is committed against one of its nationals or a person who has his or her habitual residence in its territory.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Para. 221.

⁶⁵ Para. 231.

⁶⁶ Para. 233.

⁶⁷ Recommendation IV-9.

V. International cooperation

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

Observations and recommendations of the Committee on international cooperation specific to the Russian Federation

As an important amount of time has passed since the great majority of the ratifications to the Convention, and since national legislation of the Parties concerned evolved since then, it seems appropriate for the Committee to evaluate the effects of those Parties' reservations with a significant impact on CSISIV, in accordance with Article 48 of the Convention. In particular, the Russian Federation should evaluate the necessity for maintaining reservations made in accordance with Article 20(4) of the Convention, activating the right not to apply, in whole or in part, Article 20(1)(f) of the Convention which implies the criminalisation of knowingly obtaining access, through information and communication technologies, to child pornography, when committed without right, with a view to withdrawing such reservation. The Russian Federation should also evaluate the necessity for maintaining reservations made in accordance with Article 21(2) of the Convention, activating the right to limit the application of Article 21(1)(c) of the Convention to cases where children have been

recruited or coerced in conformity with paragraph 1.a or b, with a view to withdrawing such reservation.⁶⁸

Therefore, the Committee **invites** the Russian Federation:

- to withdraw the reservation it made in accordance with Article 20(4) of the Lanzarote Convention, activating the right not to apply, in whole or in part, Article 20(1)(f) of the Lanzarote Convention.⁶⁹
- to withdraw the reservation it made in accordance with Article 21(2) of the Lanzarote Convention, activating the right to limit the application of Article 21(1)(c) of the Lanzarote Convention.⁷⁰

The Committee observes that INHOPE⁷¹ and ECPAT⁷² conduct cooperation projects to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children in the Russian Federation.⁷³ The Russian Federation has also referred to international police cooperation in the area of prevention.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Para. 242.

⁶⁹ Recommendation V-1.

⁷⁰ Recommendation V-2.

⁷¹ www.inhope.org/

⁷² <https://ecpat.org/>

⁷³ Para. 255.

⁷⁴ Para. 259.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on international cooperation

• The Committee **requests** all Parties, including the Russian Federation, to extend their international cooperation with other Parties to improve the effective implementation of the Lanzarote Convention.⁷⁵

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

• to assess, strengthen and develop international cooperation with other Parties to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children and to provide assistance to victims in matters related to CSGSIV.⁷⁶

• to expand international cooperation with countries which are not Parties to the Lanzarote Convention to disseminate the standards of the Lanzarote Convention, including for the purpose of preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, for the purpose of protecting and providing assistance to victims and concerning the offences established in accordance with the Lanzarote Convention, in matters related to CSGSIV.⁷⁷

• to regularly assess the difficulties that they face when dealing with international cooperation and remedy them.⁷⁸

• to strengthen cooperation with relevant intergovernmental bodies and with transnational networks and other international organisations and initiatives due to their capacity to mobilisation, their worldwide scope, and their flexibility to work, for the purpose of preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual

abuse of children as well as for protecting and providing assistance to victims, in matters related to CSGSIV.⁷⁹

• 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.⁸⁰

• 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.⁸¹

• to maintain and develop efforts to strengthen international cooperation with other Parties and non-Parties to the Lanzarote Convention, in investigation and proceedings concerning the offences established in accordance with the Lanzarote 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.⁸²

• 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.⁸³

Promising practice

An agreement was signed in 2007 on the 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).

⁷⁵ Recommendation V-3.

⁷⁶ Recommendations V-6, V-11.

⁷⁷ Recommendations V-4, V-7, V-12, V-15.

⁷⁸ Recommendation V-5.

⁷⁹ Recommendations V-8, V-13.

⁸⁰ Recommendation V-9.

⁸¹ Recommendation V-10.

⁸² Recommendations V-14, V-16.

⁸³ Recommendation V-19.

VI. Assistance to victims

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

Observations of the Committee on assistance to victims specific to the Russian Federation

The Committee observes that in the Russian Federation many helplines for children are accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and are run in collaboration between different bodies, including ministries and NGOs.⁸⁴ This can be very effective for victims who benefit from this synergy and broader services.

Generic recommendations of the Committee on assistance to victims

The Committee also **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

- to promote awareness raising or specialised training for professionals who advise children through telephone or internet helplines on ICT-facilitated sexual exploitation and abuse of children – including the risks associated with CSGSIV – and how to provide appropriate support to victims and to those who wish to help them.⁸⁵
- to ensure that the assistance measures are available to child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse facilitated by ICTs, including of offences due to the production, possession, distribution or transmission of CSGSIV.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Paras. 277, 280.

⁸⁵ Recommendation VI-2.

⁸⁶ Recommendation VI-4.

VII. Civil society involvement and cooperation

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

Generic recommendations of the Committee on civil society involvement and cooperation

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

- 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 child self-generated sexual images and/or videos.⁸⁷
- 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.⁸⁸

- to support civil society to carry out projects and programmes that include the issue of CSGSIV.⁸⁹
- to encourage the participation of children, according to their evolving capacity, in the development and implementation of state policies, programmes or other initiatives⁹⁰ 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 child self-generated sexual images and/or videos.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Recommendation VII-3.

⁸⁸ Recommendation VII-4.

⁸⁹ Recommendation VII-5.

⁹⁰ Parties are also invited to provide example(s) of how

children's views are taken into account in the context of the participation of children.

⁹¹ Recommendations VII-6, VII-7.

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

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

Observations of the Committee on promoting awareness of the risk of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves specific to the Russian Federation

Although not necessarily specific to co-ordination of awareness-raising activities concerning the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse faced by children generating and/or sharing sexual images and/or videos of themselves, the Committee observes that in the Russian Federation, materials to inform children of different age groups about the

“risks of life on the Internet” are developed in coordination by the Ministry of Education and the Federal State Centre for the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children of the Ministry of Education. This work of informing children is carried out by competent organisations, primarily educational.⁹²

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

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

- 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.⁹³
- 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.⁹⁴
- 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.⁹⁵

- to have available awareness-raising tools, materials, and activities suitable for children with disabilities.⁹⁶
- 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.⁹⁷
- 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

⁹² Para. 378

⁹³ Recommendation VIII-1.

⁹⁴ Recommendation VIII-2.

⁹⁵ Recommendation VIII-3.

⁹⁶ Recommendation VIII-4.

⁹⁷ Recommendation VIII-5.

taken.⁹⁸

- 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.⁹⁹
- 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.¹⁰⁰

- 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.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Recommendation VIII-6.

⁹⁹ Recommendation VIII-7.

¹⁰⁰ Recommendation VIII-8.

¹⁰¹ Recommendation VIII-9.

IX. Education for children

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

Observations and recommendation of the Committee on education for children specific to the Russian Federation

The Committee observes that in the Russian Federation, information on the prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children is part of the national curriculum of the primary and secondary education and addresses the challenges raised by CSGSIV.¹⁰²

The information on the risks of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by ICTs and/or on the challenges raised by CSGSIV is delivered in the framework of topics related to “Safety in the cyberspace”,¹⁰³ or in the broader contexts of health and social issues such as “The World around Us” and “Fundamentals of Life Safety, Information and Security” in the Russian Federation.¹⁰⁴

The Committee also observes that although in

practice there is limited encouragement for such participation, a system of interagency coordination has been established in the Russian Federation, to involve parents in providing information to children about the risks of sexual exploitation of children and sexual abuse, which are promoted by ICTs.¹⁰⁵ As part of the state education system for children, the Federal State Center for the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation develops special recommendations for parents on how they can inform their children about the risks of Internet communication and techniques for safe interpersonal interaction on the Web.¹⁰⁶ In addition, this center holds the All-Russian parent meeting "Prevention of Internet risks and threats to the life of children and adolescents."¹⁰⁷

Generic recommendations of the Committee on education for children

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

- 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.¹⁰⁸
- to consistently involve children in the development of internet safety awareness programmes.¹⁰⁹
- to ensure that there is a standing national internet safety resource, with an ongoing

programme of activities.¹¹⁰

- 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.¹¹¹
- 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.¹¹²

¹⁰² Paras. 383, 392.

¹⁰³ Para. 398.

¹⁰⁴ Para.399.

¹⁰⁵ Para. 403.

¹⁰⁶ See for example:

<https://fcprc.ru/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/5.-Kak-zashhitit-detei-ot-internet-riskov-pamyatka-roditelyam.pdf>

¹⁰⁷ See for example:

<http://saki-school2.ucoz.ru/jurnali/prezentacija-k-vserossijskomu-roditelskomu-sobrani.pdf>

¹⁰⁸ Recommendation IX-3.

¹⁰⁹ Recommendation IX-4.

¹¹⁰ Recommendation IX-5.

¹¹¹ Recommendation IX-6.

¹¹² Recommendation IX-7.

Promising practice

In the Russian Federation, educational institutions are developing materials for parents of children of different ages, including, for example, parents of preschoolers²⁶¹ and parents of school-aged children.¹¹³ In coordination with educational and public organizations, law enforcement agencies also develop materials and carry out activities to inform parents and children about the risks of the Internet. Health care facilities also produce parenting education materials on working with children.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ See for example: http://www.school7.pervouralsk.ru/parents/kids_safe_internet.pdf

¹¹⁴ See for example the Memo for parents and children "Safe Internet", developed by the Investigative Committee, at: http://saki-school2.ucoz.ru/Risunki/elektrobezop/pamjatka_dlja_roditelej_i_detej-bezopasnyj_interne.pdf

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 of the Committee on higher education curriculum and continuous training specific to the Russian Federation

The Committee observes that persons working in contact with children receive information on the risks associated with CSGSIV and education in the form of continuous training on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Russian Federation.¹¹⁵

The Committee also observes that some of the professionals in the Russian Federation working in contact with children have been trained and/or received education on how to identify potential situations where a child is a victim of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse.¹¹⁶

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

- The Committee **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation, to ensure that all the sectors where professionals work in contact with children, including when working on a voluntary basis, have an 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, for example through education or continuous training.¹¹⁷

Promising practices

In the Russian Federation, training resources addressing the challenges raised by CSGSIV are made available to teachers and other educational workers:

- The manual "Risks of Internet Communication of children and youth: a study guide"¹¹⁸ contains chapters focusing on the Consequences of the dissemination of CSGSIV on the Web, Cyberbullying and Sexting. It is made available to teachers of the course "Fundamentals of counsellor activity", students, teachers, counsellors, and specialists in the field of education.

¹¹⁵ Paras. 410, 416.

¹¹⁶ Para. 428.

¹¹⁷ Recommendations X-3.

¹¹⁸ N. Yu. Leskonog, I. V. Zhilavskoy, E. V. Brodovskaya (Moscow: Moscow State Pedagogical University, 2019, 80 p., http://summercamps.ru/wp-content/uploads/documents/books/Riski_Internet.pdf)

- The textbook “Practical Psychology of Safety. Personal data management on the Internet: textbook: manual for employees of the general education system”.¹¹⁹

- The resource "How to protect a child from Internet risks",¹²⁰ prepared by the Center for the Protection of the rights and interests of children contains the topic “the issues of unwanted actions of children sending personal photos”.

Further, a series of training seminars have been held by the Internet Development Fund under the title “Internet: opportunities, competencies, security”. This Continuing Professional Development Program (CPD) includes modules on communication risks on the Internet, their consequences, including sexting and grooming. The course is designed for teachers and tutors who will be able to transfer their knowledge to colleagues and students, thus helping them to improve their digital competence.

Additionally, in the Russian Federation, organisations within the Ministry of Sports train sports professionals to prevent and identify factors of sexual violence. Persons who have regular contact with children in the education sector are targeted to raise their awareness on the need to report, through for example, various higher education programmes at the undergraduate, specialist and graduate levels in different fields and specialties.

¹¹⁹ By G. U. Soldatova, A. A. Priezzheva, O. I. Olkina, V. N. Shlyapnikov (Moscow, Genesis, 2017, 224 p.)

¹²⁰ Pages 5-7 :

<https://fcprc.ru/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/5.-Kak-zashhitit-detei-ot-internet-riskov-pamyatka-roditelyam.pdf>

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 of the Committee on research specific to the Russian Federation

The Russian Federation has provided information to the Committee on research undertaken on the issues raised by CSGSIV in general.¹²¹ The Committee observes that the research on CSGSIV was included in several broader topics, such as risky sexual behavior, victimology and criminology in the Russian Federation.¹²²

State authorities in the Russian Federation collaborate with universities and the academia for the purpose of undertaking research projects addressing the issues raised by CSGSIV or provide financial support¹²³.¹²⁴ There is research on the issues raised by CSGSIV¹²⁵ that explores the psychological effects arising from such material

being shared online.¹²⁶

The Committee observes that the Russian Federation has participated for at least one year in the EU Kids Online surveys which is a multinational research network seeking to enhance knowledge of children's online opportunities, risks and safety.¹²⁷ In the Russian Federation, the research was carried out by universities and supported by the government.¹²⁸ According to EU Kids Online 2020 Report,¹²⁹ national authorities in the Russian Federation supported the research and enabled the surveys to be carried out.¹³⁰

Generic recommendations of the Committee on research

The Committee **invites** all Parties, including the Russian Federation:

- to collect data and undertake research at the national and local levels to observe and evaluate the phenomenon of CSGSIV.¹³¹
- 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.¹³²

- 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.¹³³
- 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

¹²¹ Para. 437.

¹²² Para. 438.

¹²³ The Russian Federation has financially supported several research on the topic, e.g.:

<https://www.ersj.eu/journal/1244>

¹²⁴ Para. 448.

¹²⁵ Atabekova, A.A. Child Self-Generated Sexual Content: A Glance at Russia within International Context. Moscow, Russia: RUDN

http://lanzarote.rudn.ru/news_reader.php?id=3031

¹²⁶ Para. 441.

¹²⁷ Para. 440.

¹²⁸ Para. 453.

¹²⁹ See EU Kids Online Report 2020:

<https://www.lse.ac.uk/media-and-communications/assets/documents/research/eu-kids-online/reports/EU-Kids-Online-2020-10Feb2020.pdf>

¹³⁰ Para. 454.

¹³¹ Recommendation XI-1.

¹³² Recommendation XI-2.

¹³³ Recommendation XI-3.

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.¹³⁴

Promising practices

In the Russian Federation, a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of CSGSIV was undertaken, including its socio-psychological consequences.¹³⁵ Of particular relevance to this report, this study includes, *inter alia*, an analysis of the results of surveys conducted in the State, an analysis of academic research on the topic, research done by psychologists and educators, and statements from children who have seen their CSGSIV disseminated online. Moreover, a research survey specifically addressing the criminal and victimological aspects of the phenomenon of “sexting against minors” in Russia was carried out.¹³⁶

In conducting research, information gathered from hotlines can be a tool used for the purpose of observing and evaluating the phenomenon of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, including the issue of CSGSIV. The Russian Federation has informed making use of information from hotlines. This can be of particular use when resources for the development for large scale studies are lacking. Case-analysis of information from national hotlines, with due respect for the requirements of personal data protection, may provide valuable input to policy-making.

EU Kids Online is a multinational research network, working to increase knowledge of the opportunities, risks and safeties children face online. A significant number of Parties, including the Russian Federation, have participated to this research network for one or several years.

¹³⁴ Recommendation XI-4.

¹³⁵ Atabekova, A.A. Child Self-Generated Sexual Content: A Glance at Russia within International Context. Moscow, Russia: RUDN:

http://lanzarote.rudn.ru/news_reader.php?id=3031

¹³⁶ Turkulets, V.A. (2020). Sexting against minors: criminal and victimological aspects. Legal Research, (5), 1-11: https://author.nbpublish.com/lr/article_33125.html