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LANZAROTE COMMITTEE

Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe
Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual
Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

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Implementation report

Appendix – List of recommendations

PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE CIRCLE OF TRUST: LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Executive Summary

Most cases of child sexual abuse are perpetrated by someone the child knows and trusts. In this report, the Lanzarote Committee assesses the protection of children within their "circle of trust" in the 48 State Parties to the Lanzarote Convention. The "circle of trust" includes members of the extended family, persons having care-taking functions or exercising control over the child, and persons with whom the child interacts in a trust environment, including their close peers. The report assesses how Parties criminalise child sexual abuse committed within the circle of trust and how children are protected before, during and after criminal proceedings. It also looks at specific measures to respond to cases of intrafamilial abuse, and how States address harmful sexual behaviour by children themselves. Finally, it examines the procedural rules applicable to investigations and prosecutions, and measures to supervise and monitor offenders.

Overall, the Lanzarote Committee identified significant progress made by State Parties to the Lanzarote Convention since the 1st monitoring round, which also focused on the circle of trust, notably in respect of procedural safeguards for victims during criminal investigations and proceedings. Nevertheless, important gaps still persist, especially as regards the criminalisation of sexual abuse of any child under 18 years old, in the context of intrafamilial sexual abuse, and where there is no use of coercion, threat or force. Parties are also called upon to strengthen the provision of legal and psychological support provided to victims and those close to them, and the supervision and monitoring of offenders.

Comprehensive legislation **criminalising sexual abuse of children of all ages by persons in a recognised position of trust, authority or influence** is essential to ensure that all children are protected from sexual abuse. A few Parties have made progress in this area and now provide a clear reference to "a recognised position of trust, authority or influence" in their criminal law definitions of sexual offences against children. However, many Parties still limit this protection to very specific circumstances or to children below the legal age for sexual activities. Some continue to require the element of coercion to constitute a criminal offence. Also, in some Parties children can be held criminally liable for the offence of sexual relations with an adult blood relative or an adoptive or foster parent. Some Parties also continue to allow marriage to the victim to exempt perpetrators from liability or fail to criminalise sexual abuse by spouses of married children. Discriminatory legal wording still exists in some Parties, undermining protection for all children regardless of the sex or sexual orientation of the child victim or the perpetrator.

Protecting children from sexual abuse in the family context requires early detection, swift protective measures, and coordinated interventions that prioritise the child's safety and best interests. The Committee found that most Parties do provide for the removal of the alleged perpetrator from the home even before criminal proceedings are initiated. In many Parties, it is also possible to fully suspend or withdraw parental rights or authority pending the outcome of criminal proceedings or following a criminal conviction of the parent. Conversely, the removal of the child victim should be a last resort, yet not all Parties clearly reflect this principle in law or practice. In most Parties that allow for exploratory interviews with children there is no need to obtain the prior consent of the child's parents or legal guardians if these might prevent the child from disclosing sexual abuse. Progress has also been made by Parties concerning the appointment and provision of special representatives and guardians *ad litem* in cases where a parent is an alleged perpetrator. Most Parties equally ensure that data protection laws and confidentiality rules do not hinder the exchange of information between agencies responding to cases of child sexual abuse.

Children who display harmful sexual behaviour require tailored measures to meet their developmental needs. The Committee found that in most Parties, where a child below the age of criminal responsibility engages in harmful sexual behaviour with another child, they are referred to child welfare services and/or subject to safeguarding measures. While most Parties take a distinct approach to sanctioning children above the age of criminal responsibility, compared to adults who commit similar offences, the Committee calls on Parties to take a restorative justice approach and uphold child-friendly justice principles.

Effective mechanisms for **initiating investigations and prosecution** are essential to ensure that cases of child sexual abuse in the circle of trust are addressed regardless of a victim's ability or willingness to file a complaint. The report finds that most Parties now allow for the initiation of proceedings *ex officio* without the prior lodging of a complaint by a victim. Major progress has also been made regarding the possibility to continue proceedings following the withdrawal of a complaint by a victim, with over a three-fold increase in the number of Parties which allow for this possibility. Progress was also made in the context of reporting. Many Parties impose legal obligations on certain professionals to report suspicion of sexual offences against children, and ensure that confidentiality is not a barrier to this reporting duty. Many Parties also make it possible to suspend professionals or volunteers under investigation for abuse and ensure that legal persons can also be held liable if they benefit from these offences.

Child victims require specific **safeguards and protection during investigations and proceedings** to reduce the risk of re-traumatisation and ensure their effective participation in the justice process. With regards to the investigation phase, significant progress was seen since the 1st monitoring round with the expansion of the *Barnahus* model of multidisciplinary integrated child-friendly services for children that help to avoid the secondary victimisation of child victims. In the context of criminal proceedings, major progress has been made in respect of the possibility for children to testify in a courtroom without being physically present, for children to be questioned without the physical presence of the presumed offender, and to video record the child's testimony. However, while almost all Parties ensure pre-recorded/pre-constituted testimony is admissible in court, only half of them use these to replace live evidence given by the child. There has also been progress with respect to measures to protect the privacy of child victims. Most Parties allow for hearings without the presence of the public and have legal provisions preventing the disclosure of the victim's identity in the media. Even though all Parties provide child victims with access to some form of free legal advice, not all Parties provide a "legal aid lawyer" or attorney free of charge or under more lenient conditions than for adults.

Victims and third parties also require additional safeguards outside the context of criminal proceedings. Many Parties have legal safeguards to protect both the child victim and their family members from adverse consequences or secondary victimisation following the child's disclosure of sexual abuse. Progress has been observed in the provision of therapeutic assistance to persons close to the victim. In several Parties, support for the family members of the victim is provided within *Barnahus* or *Barnahus*-type services.

Significant gaps remain as regards the **supervision and monitoring of offenders** after release from prison the **sharing of data on convicted offenders** between Parties. These are both key steps Parties can take to prevent re-offending.

The Lanzarote Committee reiterates the need for Parties to fully align their legal frameworks with the Lanzarote Convention. This report offers targeted recommendations and concrete examples of good practices to support reform to improve the legal protection of children from sexual abuse in the circle of trust.

Appendix – List of recommendations

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to take note of the promising practices identified in this report and to consider implementing similar practices at national level.

Recommendation 2

The Lanzarote Committee requires the following Parties to ensure, in accordance with Article 18 paragraph 1.b second indent, that their criminal law provisions criminalising sexual activity with a child by a person in a recognised position of trust, authority or influence over the child are formulated sufficiently widely to cover all relevant situations:

- **Spain** in respect of children below the legal age for sexual activities;
- **other Parties** in respect of children both below and above the legal age for sexual activities.¹

Recommendation 3

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties which have not yet done so**,² to ensure, in accordance with Article 18 paragraph 1.b second indent, that their criminal law provisions criminalise sexual activity with children of all ages, including above the legal age for sexual activities, by a person in a recognised position of trust, authority or influence. These provisions should be formulated sufficiently widely to cover all relevant situations.

Recommendation 4

The Lanzarote Committee invites the **Republic of Moldova**, and **any other Parties which have similar provisions**, to review their legislation to ensure that a child below the legal age for sexual activities cannot be considered capable of providing consent to such an activity.

Recommendation 5

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, North Macedonia, Switzerland**, and **any other Parties which have similar provisions**, to ensure that a child is recognised as a victim of sexual abuse and not held criminally liable for the offence of sexual relations with an adult family member related to them by blood in the ascending line, an adoptive or foster parent, or an adult sibling.

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, North Macedonia, Switzerland**, and **any other Parties which have similar provisions** to ensure, when prosecuting offences related to sexual activity between child siblings, that if one of the siblings is a victim of abuse of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence by the other, that person should not be held criminally liable.

Recommendation 6

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Tunisia, Türkiye, and United Kingdom.

² Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia, Russian Federation, and Ukraine.

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, North Macedonia, Switzerland, and any other Parties which have similar provisions** to ensure that children are only prosecuted as a last resort for sexual activity between siblings and that priority is given, depending on the circumstances, to other more appropriate methods of dealing with their harmful behaviour (e.g. therapeutic assistance and educational measures).

Recommendation 7

The Lanzarote Committee requires **the Russian Federation and any other Parties which have similar provisions** to take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure in accordance with Article 27 paragraph 1, that a perpetrator cannot be exempt from criminal liability or sanction as a result of marrying a child victim of a sexual offence committed by the perpetrator, even after the child victim has reached the age of majority.

Recommendation 8

The Lanzarote Committee requires **the Russian Federation and Tunisia** to ensure, in accordance with Article 18 paragraph 1.b first indent, that children who are married are protected from sexual offences committed by their spouse.

Recommendation 9

The Lanzarote Committee requests **Parties** to review their legislation to ensure that all forms of sexual abuse committed by a person in a recognised position of trust, authority or influence, as defined by Article 18 paragraph 1.b second indent, are covered by criminal provisions including offences committed by:

- penetration – regardless of whether there is a lack of consent or use of violence, threat, or force;³
- some physical contact without penetration – regardless of whether there is a lack of consent or use of violence, threat, or force;⁴ and
- in specific cases without physical contact, facilitated by information and communication technologies, in accordance with the provisions of the Lanzarote Convention.

Recommendation 10

The Lanzarote Committee requests **Parties that have not yet done so**,⁵ to take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that the solicitation of children for sexual purposes (grooming) is criminalised even when there is no proposal to meet followed by material acts leading to such a meeting, in line with the Lanzarote Committee's opinion on Article 23.

Recommendation 11

The Lanzarote Committee requires the following **Parties** to ensure, in accordance with Article 2, that all children are equally protected from sexual abuse without discrimination on the grounds of their sex or sexual orientation, in particular by:

³ Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Latvia, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, and Ukraine.

⁴ Albania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Malta, and Russian Federation.

⁵ Armenia, Greece, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Tunisia, and Türkiye.

- **Albania** reviewing the wording of its legislation to avoid stigmatisation of sexual activities based on sexual orientation by removing reference to “homosexual activities”;
- **Bulgaria** and the **Russian Federation** reviewing their legislation to ensure equal sanctions for all forms of sexual abuse committed against children of any sex or gender, irrespective of the sex or gender of the perpetrator;
- **North Macedonia** and **Serbia** ensuring that step-parents of any gender are included as persons who may be considered as offenders in the legislative provision(s) criminalising sexual activity with a child above the legal age for sexual activities.

Recommendation 12

The Lanzarote Committee requests **Parties** that provide in their legal frameworks for exploratory interviews with children suspected of having been sexually abused, and **that have not yet done so**,⁶ to ensure that such interviews can be conducted without informing in advance the child’s parents or legal guardians or acquiring their prior consent in cases in which there is a reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse in the family and there is a reason to believe that parents or legal guardians may prevent the child from disclosing sexual abuse.

Recommendation 13

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,⁷ to take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure, in accordance with Article 14 paragraph 3 first indent, a possibility to remove an alleged perpetrator from the family home, including prior to initiation and outside the framework of any criminal proceedings.

Recommendation 14

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that, if the alleged perpetrator is removed, safeguards are in place to ensure the socio-economic well-being of, and psycho-social support to, the remaining family members.

Recommendation 15

The Lanzarote Committee requests **Parties that have not yet done so**,⁸ to ensure that removal of a child victim from the family environment is considered only if removal of the alleged perpetrator from the same environment, among other measures, will not be sufficient to protect the child or not possible in the specific circumstances of the case and that this is done in the best interests of the child.

Recommendation 16

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,⁹ to ensure in accordance with Article 10 paragraph 1, that agencies involved in response to cases of child sexual abuse are able to exchange information, in accordance with the best interests of the

⁶ Denmark, Germany, Greece, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Spain, and United Kingdom (England and Wales).

⁷ Albania, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Denmark, Lithuania, Monaco, North Macedonia, Norway, Russian Federation, San Marino, and Tunisia.

⁸ Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, Ukraine, and United Kingdom.

⁹ Albania, Azerbaijan, Luxembourg, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Russian Federation, San Marino, Tunisia, Ukraine, and United Kingdom (Scotland).

child and appropriate safeguards, without breaching data protection laws or data confidentiality rules.

Recommendation 17

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that:

- in order to guarantee the protection of a child and safeguard criminal proceedings, an automatic risk assessment, based on the best interests of the child, is made in every case where a parent or legal guardian is suspected or accused of sexual abuse of own child with a view to deciding whether parental or guardianship rights or authority should be suspended or temporarily withdrawn.
- an automatic assessment of risk and the best interests of the child is made in every case where a parent or legal guardian is convicted of sexual abuse of their own child, with a view to deciding on a continued suspension or withdrawal of parental or guardianship rights or authority.

Recommendation 18

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Liechtenstein** and the **Russian Federation** to ensure, in accordance with Article 31 paragraph 4, that special representatives and guardians *ad litem* are appointed when there is a conflict of interest between the holders of parental authority and a child victim.

Recommendation 19

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,¹⁰ to take legislative and other measures to ensure, in accordance with Article 5 paragraph 2, that special representatives and guardians *ad litem* have adequate knowledge of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.

Recommendation 20

The Lanzarote Committee requests **Parties that have not yet done so**, to take the necessary legislative or other measures to:

- Avoid combining the functions of a lawyer and guardian *ad litem* in one person;¹¹ and
- Provide special representatives and guardians *ad litem* free of charge for the child victim.¹²

Recommendation 21

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,¹³ to provide, in accordance with Article 16 paragraph 3, intervention programmes or measures that are adapted to the developmental needs of children who sexually offend, including for children below the age of criminal responsibility.

Recommendation 22

¹⁰ Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Ukraine.

¹¹ Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Türkiye, and Ukraine.

¹² Belgium, Italy, Liechtenstein, Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine, and United Kingdom.

¹³ Albania, Bulgaria, Denmark, North Macedonia, San Marino, and the Slovak Republic.

The Lanzarote Committee requires **all Parties** to provide, in accordance with Article 6, all children with comprehensive education to empower them to recognise harmful sexual activities, avoid engaging in harmful sexual behaviours, and access support if they are a victim of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.

Recommendation 23

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties**, wherever possible, to take a restorative justice approach and to uphold child-friendly justice principles when dealing with children above the age of criminal responsibility who display or engage in harmful sexual behaviours or sexual offences, in line with the Council of Europe Guidelines on Child-friendly Justice.

Recommendation 24

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that detention of children is a last resort, in line with the Council of Europe Guidelines on Child-friendly Justice.

Recommendation 25

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Hungary, North Macedonia, San Marino and Türkiye**, to ensure, in accordance with Article 32, that all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, as defined in the Lanzarote Convention, may be investigated and / or prosecuted in the absence of a complaint from the victim.

Recommendation 26

The Lanzarote Committee requests **Portugal** to take the necessary legislative or other measures to simplify the provisions and clarify that all offences of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse can be investigated and prosecuted in the absence of a complaint by the victim.

Recommendation 27

The Lanzarote Committee requires **North Macedonia, the Russian Federation and Serbia**, to ensure in accordance with Article 32, that the proceedings may continue even if the victim withdraws their statement.

Recommendation 28

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Parties**, in particular **Andorra**, to ensure that front desk officers receive appropriate training to ensure that they register cases of sexual abuse of children even in the absence of a complaint by the victim.

Recommendation 29

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Parties**, in particular **Denmark**, to ensure safeguards are in place to protect victims and avoid re-traumatisation where a victim is summoned as a witness even after having withdrawn a complaint.

Recommendation 30

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that the best interests of the child are taken into consideration when deciding whether to continue or cease proceedings for sexual offences against a child following the withdrawal of a complaint by the victim.

Recommendation 31

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Serbia** to ensure that children concerned by potential offences of “cohabiting with a minor” are systematically screened for potential offences related to sexual abuse or sexual exploitation and that the best interests of the child are taken into account when taking a decision not to prosecute or cease proceedings of this specific offence.

Recommendation 32

The Lanzarote Committee requests **all Parties** to take the necessary legislative or other measures in line with the Declaration protecting children in out-of-home care from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, to ensure that professionals working in the public, private or voluntary sectors are held liable if they commit sexual offences against a child or fail to report to the competent authorities any such offences that occur in out-of-home care settings.

Recommendation 33

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,¹⁴ to ensure in accordance with Article 12 paragraph 1, that the confidentiality rules imposed by internal law on certain professionals working in contact with children do not hinder the possibility to report to competent services any situation where they have reasonable grounds for believing that a child is the victim of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse.

Recommendation 34

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that professionals do not have to inform the child/parents/caregivers before making a report if the reporting professional considers that such notification would put the child/parents/caregivers or themselves at risk.

Recommendation 35

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to offer special protection to professionals reporting sexual offences against children in good faith, including protecting them against professional or employment sanctions.

Recommendation 36

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to strengthen the protection of persons who report child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse in good faith and to keep the threshold for reporting suspicions as low as possible.

Recommendation 37

The Lanzarote Committee requests **all Parties** to allow for the possibility of removing the alleged perpetrator from the out of home care setting from the onset of the investigation.

Recommendation 38

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to consider introducing precautionary measures to suspend suspected perpetrators from professional or voluntary activities involving contact

¹⁴ Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, and United Kingdom.

with children during criminal investigations and proceedings in relation to offences established in accordance with the Lanzarote Convention.

Recommendation 39

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,¹⁵ to take the necessary legislative or other measures in accordance with Article 26, to ensure that legal persons can be held liable for child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Recommendation 40

The Lanzarote Committee continues to recognise the “children’s house” or “Barnahus” model as a promising practice and invites **Parties** that have not yet done so to make similar multidisciplinary and inter-agency services for the protection of victims of child sexual exploitation and abuse available throughout their national territory.

Recommendation 41

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Norway** and **any other Parties where this may not yet be the case**, to enable access to all children up to 18 years of age to the services provided by the Children’s Houses or other similar multi-disciplinary and inter-agency services established in the country.

Recommendation 42

The Lanzarote Committee requires the **Russian Federation** to ensure in accordance with Article 35 paragraph 1.c, that all staff responsible for interviewing child victims are required to undergo suitable training.

Recommendation 43

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,¹⁶ take the necessary legislative or other measures, in accordance with Article 35 paragraph 1.a, to ensure that interviews with child victims are conducted as soon as possible after the offence.

Recommendation 44

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,¹⁷ to take the necessary legislative or other measures in accordance with Article 35 paragraph 1.d, to ensure that, where it is indispensable to interview the victim more than once, if possible and where appropriate, interviews are conducted by the same person and under the same material conditions, upholding the same child-friendly procedural safeguards, as the first.

Recommendation 45

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Georgia, North Macedonia**, and the **Russian Federation** to take the legislative or other measures necessary to ensure that the criminal defence can contest a child’s disclosure during the interview through questions, thus obviating the need for the child to be present in the court room during the proceedings.

¹⁵ Andorra, Azerbaijan, Denmark, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Malta, North Macedonia, Russian Federation, and Serbia.

¹⁶ Bulgaria, France, Greece, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

¹⁷ Bulgaria, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia, Poland, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Recommendation 46

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,¹⁸ to ensure that all child victims of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, under the age of 18, can benefit from the procedural safeguards set out in the Lanzarote Convention.

Recommendation 47

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that as a general rule child victims under 18 can be heard without being physically present in court unless this would be contrary to their best interests.

Recommendation 48

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties, which have not yet done so**, to ensure in accordance with Article 31 paragraph 1.g, that as a general rule children are not subject to confrontation with the suspected perpetrator,¹⁹ and requests that if any exceptions are foreseen in national law that these are in compliance with the principle of the best interests of the child and subject to an independent expert opinion.²⁰

Recommendation 49

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to take the necessary legislative or other measures to also protect child victims from coming into contact with suspected perpetrators in the context of family court or care proceedings that run in parallel to the criminal investigation or judicial proceedings.

Recommendation 50

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties, that have not yet done so**,²¹ to take the necessary legislative or other measures in accordance with Article 31 paragraph 1, to prevent the public dissemination of any information, notably by the media, that could lead to the identification of any child victim of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse.

Recommendation 51

The Lanzarote Committee requires **North Macedonia to ensure**, in accordance with Article 36 paragraph 2, that criminal proceedings concerning child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse can be conducted without the presence of the public.

Recommendation 52

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that, when a child is in the care of a guardian or social services due to a suspicion that an offence under this Convention has been committed against the child, and the child can have the status of a party to criminal proceedings, those services are required to seek legal advice on behalf of the child.

¹⁸ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, Norway, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, and Spain.

¹⁹ Luxembourg, Monaco, and Russian Federation.

²⁰ Azerbaijan, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

²¹ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Romania (in respect of children aged 14 and above), Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Recommendation 53

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that, where legal advice and legal aid is available to child victims of sexual offences, that they receive information to empower them to access these services.

Recommendation 54

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to grant free legal aid to child victims of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, especially in cases of abuse of a position of trust, authority or influence.

Recommendation 55

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to make psychological support by a trained professional available to child victims of all ages involved in investigative and judicial proceedings and not dependent on the authorities' discretion or a request by a victim or their representative.

Recommendation 56

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Norway** to ensure, in accordance with Article 2, that victims and those close to them can access support without discrimination on any grounds.

Recommendation 57

The Lanzarote Committee invite **Parties that have not yet done so**,²² to ensure that victims and those close to them can access appropriate support even if they are not acting as witnesses in court.

Recommendation 58

The Lanzarote Committee requests that **Armenia, Ukraine and any other Parties**, which provide support to child victims in the context of interventions designed for victims of domestic violence or trafficking in human beings, to make explicit reference to child victims of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse in those frameworks.

Recommendation 59

The Lanzarote Committee invites all **Parties** to ensure that adequate funding is allocated to services providing support, including emergency psychological support, to victims and those close to them.

Recommendation 60

The Lanzarote Committee invites all **Parties** to take the necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that professionals working with child victims have access to training and resources to be able to identify and react appropriately to potential conflicts of interest arising in the context of access to information about a child.

Recommendation 61

The Lanzarote Committee invites all **Parties** to ensure, without prejudice to the free and proper evaluation of evidence, that where a child has received therapeutic intervention this will not,

²² Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

by itself, have an adverse effect on the assessment of the credibility or weight given to the child's testimony.

Recommendation 62

The Lanzarote Committee invites **all Parties** to ensure that victims of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse have access to long term support designed to cater for their specific needs.

Recommendation 63

The Lanzarote Committee requires **Parties that have not yet done so**,²³ to establish mechanisms to monitor and supervise persons convicted of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in accordance with Article 27 paragraph 4.

Recommendation 64

The Lanzarote Committee invites **Parties** to enhance monitoring and supervision of offenders convicted of child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, for example by considering the steps set out in the additional guidance below.

Recommendation 65

The Lanzarote Committee reiterates Recommendation 11 of the Report on Data Collection Mechanisms, requiring **Parties that have not yet done so**,²⁴ to co-operate with other Parties through the exchange of data relating to the identity and the genetic profile of persons convicted of the offences established in accordance with the Lanzarote Convention, in line with data sharing agreements and protocols, for the purpose of prevention and prosecution of such offences in accordance with Article 37 paragraph 3.

²³ Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Greece, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Norway, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovak Republic, and Tunisia.

²⁴ Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Iceland, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Tunisia, Türkiye, and Ukraine.