



T-ES(2023)11_en final

15 February 2024

LANZAROTE COMMITTEE

Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe
Convention on the protection of children against sexual
exploitation and sexual abuse

.....

Survey of data collection mechanisms regarding data on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

Document adopted by the Committee on 15 February 2024

What does the Lanzarote Convention foresee in the context of data collection?

1. The Council of Europe Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (“Lanzarote Convention”), which entered into force on 1 July 2010, requires State Parties to observe and evaluate the phenomenon of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, (see box below).

**Lanzarote Convention Article 10 National measures of co-ordination and collaboration
Paragraph 2**

“Each party shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to set up or designate:

b. mechanisms for data collection or focal points, at the national or local levels and in collaboration with civil society, for the purpose of observing and evaluating the phenomenon of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, with due respect for the requirements of personal data protection.”

Article 37, paragraph 1 of the Lanzarote Convention – Recording and storing of national data on convicted sexual offenders

“For the purposes of prevention and prosecution of the offences established in accordance with this Convention, each Party shall take the necessary legislative or other measures to collect and store, in accordance with the relevant provisions on the protection of personal data and other appropriate rules and guarantees as prescribed by domestic law, data relating to the identity and to the genetic profile (DNA) of persons convicted of the offences established in accordance with this Convention.”

This Convention obligation can be fulfilled through the collection of statistical data on victims and offenders which can then be used to inform policy and target resources in a strategic way to better protect children and prevent these crimes. The collection of data is crucial to allow States to take an evidence-based approach.

Why a questionnaire on data collection mechanisms?

In December 2022, it was agreed that the Committee of the Parties to the Lanzarote Convention (“Lanzarote Committee” or “the Committee”) should collect updated data on the occurrence of sexual violence against children in Parties to the [Convention](#). To this end the Committee [requested](#) that the Secretariat prepare a questionnaire using as a basis the survey conducted in 2010 by the European Committee on Crime Problems (“CDPC survey”) and the relevant recommendations in Chapter 2 of its [first implementation report](#) “Protection of children against sexual abuse in the circle of trust: The framework”.

The 2010 CDPC survey was addressed to CDPC delegations and responses were received from 20 Council of Europe Member States. The survey asked four short questions on statistics. A copy of the compilation of replies to the survey was circulated to the Lanzarote Committee on 14/12/2022. The questions were silent as to the reference period to be covered in responses, therefore the responses received covered various periods (varying from 2006-2010). As a result, the comparability and compatibility of data received varied according to the responses.

During its 39th and 40th meetings, the Committee carefully examined the possibility of collecting statistical data from State Parties on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. However, due to the various challenges outlined below the Committee decided at its 40th meeting to firstly gather information about data collection mechanisms in State Parties before seeking to collect and analyse statistical data.

What data has already been examined by the Lanzarote Committee?

The general overview questionnaire completed by each State Party when they ratify or accede to the Convention includes a question on the setting up or designation of mechanisms for data collection for the purposes of observing and evaluating the phenomenon of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children (Article 10.2.b.). It also contains a question on collecting data relating to the I.D. and DNA of persons convicted of offences established under the Lanzarote Convention (Article 37). The reference period concerning data collected under this questionnaire depends on the date that the State joins the Lanzarote Convention. The dates are therefore rolling over time depending on each Party’s date of ratification or accession to the Convention. This therefore does not allow for a coherent or up to date analysis of the situation in State Parties.

The First Monitoring Round First [implementation report](#) issued in May 2013 focused on the protection of children against sexual abuse in the circle of trust. In preparation for this report, the Committee asked State Parties if data was collected regarding sexual abuse in the circle of trust.¹ The monitoring was limited to examining if such mechanisms exist and did not require States to share statistical data on prevalence or trends.

Chapter II of this report recalls that Article 10.2.b. sets out an obligation of result (not means) to collect accurate and reliable data on the phenomenon of sexual abuse of children, this means that where there is a general data collection mechanism in place to collect data on child abuse and neglect it should be possible to extrapolate specific sub data sets relevant to sexual abuse of children including

¹ Question 1: Data on sexual abuse in the circle of trust: Please indicate whether data are collected for the purpose of observing and evaluating the phenomenon of sexual abuse of children in the circle of trust. If so, please:

- specify what mechanisms have been established for data collection or whether focal points have been identified especially with regard to statistical data on victims and offenders within the circle of trust (Article 10 (2) (b), Explanatory Report, paras. 83 and 84);
- include any relevant data in an Appendix.

whether this takes place in the circle of trust. The Lanzarote Committee made nine recommendations to State Parties on how to strengthen data collection, including inviting parties to record case-based data on child sexual exploitation and abuse in the circle of trust (R15), and to disaggregate data on the basis of the gender of the child victim and of the perpetrator (R17).

It should be noted that responses examined by the Committee revealed a wide variety of types of data collection from specific registries and surveillance mechanisms in some States compared to regular administrative data sources that were non-specific to child sexual abuse or child victimisation in other States. Few States had mechanisms for interdisciplinary and intersectoral data collection whereas other States collected data from one sector only (for example: criminal justice or law enforcement statistics). The Committee noted that in some Parties data were gathered by multiple administrations in parallel and were not compatible or comparable. In some Parties data were only available in aggregative estimates whereas in other Parties case-based data on child sexual victimisation was available. The Committee also noted that in some Parties data was only collected in relation to some specific sexual crimes against children, for example trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation.

The [Special Report on Protecting children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse](#) requested Parties to provide data in relation to the numbers of children who were affected by the refugee crisis and the prevalence of sexual abuse in that context. The report concludes that robust systems for data collection of this type were not in place in the Parties.

The Second Monitoring Round [Implementation Report](#) focused on protecting children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs). The Lanzarote Committee found that there was a general lack of data collection on the number of victims of Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA) who have received support and psychological help (§295). Further, that where data was available it was still limited and insufficient to develop evidence-based services and procedures (§298). The Committee also found that the majority of research undertaken in relation to child self-generated sexual images and/or videos (CSGSIV) took place within a wider framework and that research was not undertaken on this topic in all Parties. The Lanzarote Committee invites Parties to collect data and undertake research in this area (R XI-1 to 3) and specifically reiterates Parties' obligations to set up or designate mechanisms for data collection (R XI-4).

Specific challenges in collecting data on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

There is a lack of common definitions or indicators for data collection related to child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. A variety of definitions and indicators also exists at national level between administrations, professionals, researchers and sectors, for example social services generally gather case-based data which focuses on the child victim whereas criminal justice statistics focus more on aggregative data in relation to investigations, indictments, prosecutions, convictions, out of court or other disposal of cases.

In the first monitoring round, the Lanzarote Committee identified that there was a need for guidelines establishing a minimum set of variables and procedures to collect data on CSEA to make data internationally compatible and comparable (R16). This need has also been recognised in the Council of Europe [Recommendation](#) on strengthening reporting systems on violence against children.

There have been several attempts at an international level to define violence against children by UN Committee for the Rights of the Child General comment No. 13 (2011), "The right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence" [[CRC/C/GC/13 \(2011\)](#) §19-33], World Report on Violence against Children ([2006](#)), World Health Organisation and International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse

and Neglect ([2006](#)) and Centre for Disease Control ([2008](#)). The Luxembourg Terminology Guidelines ([2016](#)) provide guidance on terms and definitions, these are currently under review to be updated.

Several initiatives have also been taken to define a common set of indicators for reporting child sexual abuse. These are described in the section below.

Beyond these definitional difficulties, it is generally acknowledged that the vast majority of cases of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are never reported to the police, therefore relying on criminal justice statistics alone would not provide an accurate or holistic insight into the nature and phenomenon of these crimes.

Additional sources of data include helplines and hotlines that receive reports of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse from the public and from victims themselves.

What data and indicators exist and are available to the Lanzarote Committee?

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been [collecting data](#) on the realisation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). In this context a set of indicators has been developed to allow for the collection of data in a harmonised way. Of relevance to the Committee is data collected on the basis of indicator 16.2.2 “number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation”. It is possible to disaggregate the data gathered here to obtain data on the number of child victims of trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation. It should however be born in mind that this represents only a small fraction of the total number of child victims of sexual exploitation in a given State as not all child victims of sexual exploitation will also meet the legal definition of trafficking in human beings. The UNODC also collects data on [victims of sexual violence](#) disaggregated by the relationship to the perpetrator, however, it is not possible to disaggregate this data by age of the victim, therefore it is impossible to use this to understand how many child victims are concerned. The UNODC has developed the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes ([ICCS](#)) which provides indicators and detailed definitions of behaviours to be taken into account when collecting data. This provides clear indicators for data on child sexual exploitation however statutory rape and other sexual offences are excluded from this definition, in addition the indicators and definitions related to sexual violence are not specific to children.

UNICEF is also charged with collecting data on the realisation of the SDGs. Some limited and partial data is available via the [UNICEF data warehouse](#). Although a number of indicators used on this platform are relevant to the Committee’s work, data recorded for State parties to the Convention are only very partial. For six indicators specifically linked to the percentage of children having experienced sexual violence, partial data was available for only two State parties: Armenia and the United Kingdom. In June 2023, UNICEF published the [International Classification of Violence against Children](#) which includes statistical definitions of “sexual violence against a child”. This classification is intended for use in national statistical systems to gather data from law enforcement, health, and child protection sectors as well as population-based surveys.

EUROSTAT collects data on [police recorded offences](#) by crime including crimes of “sexual violence” disaggregated by the sex of the victim. However, it is not possible to disaggregate this data according to the age of the victim it is therefore not possible to obtain data on the number of child victims or the number of perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse. This data set includes information about the relationship to the offender for victims of intentional homicide only.

The European Union has been funding a project to develop a coordinated response to Child Abuse & Neglect via Minimum Data Set ([can-via-mds.eu](#)). This tool provides sets of operational definitions of

child sexual abuse and includes a pre-coded registration system for multidisciplinary and intersectoral recording of child abuse in a common registration system.

The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) regularly collects data on the efficiency of justice in Council of Europe member states. The CEPEJ [Evaluation Report 2022](#) (on 2020 data) provides insights into the numbers of Council of Europe member States that provide victims of crime in general with access to a lawyer free of charge (figure 2.25 on page 36), training for judges and prosecutors on child-friendly justice (page 75), including specific training for prosecutors in matters related to CSEA (page 76). This report also provides insights into the provision of specific protections for children in judicial proceedings including use of Barnahus and child-friendly rooms to give evidence (page 106). The most recent [questionnaire](#) (2022) contains similar questions along with additional questions on the number of cases relating to child sexual abuse and child sexual abuse materials. Analysis of responses to this questionnaire is due to be published in 2024.

It appears that none of the data collection exercises identified above provide a clear and comprehensive insight into the phenomenon of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in State parties to the Convention.

What are the aims and objectives of the present questionnaire?

The present survey has been prepared with reference to the CDPC survey circulated in 2010 and the relevant recommendations of the Lanzarote Committee on this subject. The aim of the survey is to map existing mechanisms for data collection on the nature and phenomenon of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in State Parties.

The survey seeks to examine the way that State Parties collect data on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, the present survey does not seek to collect statistical data. The responses received will be used to assess the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention and to make recommendations to State Parties to strengthen implementation.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Child	Person under the age of 18 years (LC Article 3.a).
Child Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse	Includes behaviours as referred to in Articles 18-23 of the Lanzarote Convention. (LC Article 3.b)
Circle of trust	“Circle of trust” includes members of the extended family, persons having care-taking functions or exercising control over the child, persons with which the child has relations, including his/her peers. Paragraph 123 of the Explanatory memorandum states that this “relates to abuse of a recognised position of trust, authority or influence over the child”. For more information see paragraphs 123-125 of the Explanatory Report of the Convention, and also 1 st Implementation Report “Protection of Children against Sexual Abuse in the Circle of Trust: The Framework”, p. 12. .
Victim	Any child subject to sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. (LC Article 3.c) It is important to note that the facts of the sexual exploitation or abuse do not have to be established before a child is to be considered a victim.LC Explanatory Report §51)

Questions

Survey on mechanisms for data collection on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

Data collection mechanisms – questions based on the Lanzarote Convention and Lanzarote Committee recommendations

The aim of this survey is to gather information to allow the Lanzarote Committee to assess how data is collected in State Parties and to identify promising practices for data collection.

1. Who collects data?

- i. Is there a specific mechanism or focal point responsible for collecting data on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse? If so, please provide details. (Article 10.2b of the Lanzarote Convention and R13 of the first implementation report of first monitoring round)

No.

- ii. If not: Do existing general data collection mechanisms collect data on child sexual abuse? Please describe how these mechanisms collect data taking into account all forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation, including online. (Article 10.2b of the Lanzarote Convention and R14 of the first implementation report of first monitoring round)
- iii. Are data on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse collected through a multisectoral mechanism involving more than one sector of public administration? Please list sectors involved and who operates the mechanism.

Mainly, comprehensive and complete data on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in Norway is gathered from register data from the police registers. The Norwegian Police's Central Register (STRASAK) contains exhaustive data on offences reported to the police and criminal case proceedings, including information on the prosecutorial decisions and outcomes. As Norway has a two-tiered prosecution system, the data includes criminal cases handled by both the police integrated prosecution authority and the higher prosecution authority. Furthermore, the data contain demographic information on all parties involved in criminal cases. Corresponding, data on court decisions and sentencing is available from the Norwegian Central Criminal Record and Police Information System (SSP).

As for breakdowns by different types of sexual offences, the criminal case data from the police registers is structured in accordance with the Norwegian penal code, from which there are more than 1 270 different offence codes. In aggregation, these offence codes offer sufficient coherence with the Articles 18-23, cf. question 2. Furthermore, for sexual offences specifically, the Norwegian criminal case data corresponds sufficiently with the classification of sexual offences in the international classification of crime for statistical purposes (ICCS) and the international classification of violence against children (ICVAC).

In regards to online child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, the police data contain information on modus operandi, from which it is possible to identify if specific cases of exploitation/abuse have been carried out through digital platforms. Although the data on modus operandi does not have the same

level of quality as other crime data, it is perceived as a sufficiently precise indicator on the scope of digitally aided child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Please note that Statistics Norway (SSB) produce the official Norwegian crime statistics, which offers higher data quality than the raw operating statistics of the Norwegian police. SSB publishes full-year crime statistics on offences reported to the police, offences investigated, penal sanctions and imprisonments, for which extensive historical time series are digitally available.

Certain Norwegian crime surveys collect data on self-reported victimisation of sexual offences. However, the population samples in these surveys are limited to respondents aged 16 years or older, thus making the survey data unsuitable as an indicator for the scope of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

2. What data is collected?

- i. Does your State collect data in relation to all of the offences covered by Articles 18-23 of the Convention?

Article	Data collected yes/no/partially?	Can data on this be easily produced? (less than 3 weeks) Yes/No
Sexual abuse (Article 18)	Yes	Yes
Offences concerning child prostitution (Article 19)	Yes	Yes
Offences concerning child pornography (Article 20)	Yes	Yes
Offences concerning the participation of a child in pornographic performances (Article 21)	Yes	Yes
Corruption of children (Article 22)	Yes	Yes
Solicitation of children for sexual purposes (Article 23)	Yes	Yes

If you have indicated “no” or “partially” please provide more information:

- ii. Does your State collect case-based data for child sexual abuse in the circle of trust, including specific aspects mentioned in the table below? (R15 of the first implementation report of the first monitoring round)

	Data collected? Yes/No/partially	Can data on this be easily produced? (less than 3 weeks)

		Yes/No
a. Number of children (under 18) that were victimized, disaggregated by sex/gender	Yes	No
b. Number of children (under 18) that were victimized in the context of: i. reports ii. prosecutions iii. convictions	Partially	No
c. Number of perpetrators under investigation, disaggregated by sex/gender	Partially	No
d. Number of convicted perpetrators, disaggregated by sex/gender	Partially	No
e. Number of cases where the person convicted was a minor, disaggregated by sex/gender	Partially	No
f. Number of cases where the victim and the perpetrator had a prior acquaintance.	No	No
g. Number of cases where the victim and the perpetrator were strangers.	No	No
h. Number of cases committed within the family (including extended family) of the child victim,	Partially	No
i. Information on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator	Partially	No
j. Information on the environment in which the child sexual abuse was alleged to be committed (home, school, workplace, other)	No	No
k. Information about the age of the child victim and the perpetrator	Partially	No
<p>l. If you have responded “partially” to any of the questions above please indicate what data is not collected</p> <p>Data from the Norwegian police registers does not contain structured information from which victim-perpetrator relationships can be mapped without manually reviewing each case. The same issues apply for information on the environment in which the sexual abuse took place.</p>		

iii. Is data collected by relevant agencies specifically on CSEA?

Yes. See answer to question 1 ii. and 3 ii.

- iv. Does your State collect aggregative data on child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse?

Yes. See answer to question 1 ii. and 3 ii.

- v. Does your State use standardised operational definitions and indicators of CSEA to classify data across administrations and sectors at national level?

Yes. See answer to question 1 ii.

- vi. Does your State use internationally agreed definitions and indicators, such as the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes, to gather data related to child sexual exploitation?

The Norwegian classification of offences is structured in accordance with the Norwegian penal code. As such, international classifications such as the ICCS or ICVAC are not used specifically to gather data on child sexual exploitation. However, in aggregation, Norwegian crime data has a quite high level of level of compliance with the aforementioned international classifications.

- vii. Does your State collect data on the number of persons convicted of any form of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse of a child committed outside your territory but convicted in your country?

Yes. Any person convicted in Norwegian courts are entered into police registers, regardless of where the crime has been committed.

- viii. Does your State collect data on the number of persons convicted of any form of child sexual exploitation or sexual abuse committed outside your territory and convicted outside your territory? Please specify if this includes your nationals and persons with habitual residence in your country?

In general, no. However, in case a person convicted outside of national territory is to be transferred to Norway to serve parts of the sentence in a Norwegian correctional facility, or if Norwegian police have aided the police in other countries in relation to an investigation, the persons in question will be registered in the Norwegian police registers.

- ix. Does your State collect data on the numbers of suspected cases of CSEA which are not substantiated after investigation?

Yes. All reports of child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are included in the police registers, regardless of the prosecutorial decision/outcome.

- x. Does your State collect data relating to the identity and genetic profile (DNA) of persons convicted of the offences established in accordance with the Convention? (Article 37 paragraph 1 of the Lanzarote Convention)

Norway records and stores DNA profiles of convicted persons in accordance with conditions set out in the Police Databases Act, where whether or not the DNA of a convicted person is recorded depends on the sentence imposed, not the crime committed.

- xi. Is it possible for information about the identity and genetic profile (DNA) of persons convicted of the offences established in accordance with the Convention to be transmitted to the competent authority of another Party? (Article 37 paragraph 3 of the Lanzarote Convention)

Yes, providing the conditions mentioned below are met, it is possible to transmit the DNA-profile and the identity of a person convicted of violating, or trying to violate chapter 26 of the Penal Code to the competent authority of another Party. Chapter 26 includes articles corresponding with articles 18 to 23 in the Lanzarote Convention.

According to the Act relating to the processing of personal data by the police and the prosecuting authority, Police registers and other systems, Section 12, DNA Register, the Norwegian police shall keep a DNA register consisting of an attributed DNA profile register, a DNA investigation register and a DNA evidence register. In the attributed DNA profile register a person may be registered who

1. has been the subject of a penalty mentioned in section 29 of the Penal Code for an act which by law may be punishable by a custodial sentence. Registration may not take place until the decision is legally enforceable or the case has been finally decided. An act for which a fine has been issued in lieu of prosecution does not constitute grounds for registration.
2. on account of the provisions of section 20 of the Penal Code may not be sentenced to a penalty that qualifies the person for registration. The same applies when the person is held inculpable due to his or her state,
3. is a Norwegian citizen, works or is staying in Norway, and who has been sentenced abroad to a penalty equivalent to those mentioned in section 29 of the Penal Code, and the act committed could have been punishable by a custodial sentence if it had been committed in Norway, or
4. so requests for reasons that are deemed to be satisfactory.

The Norwegian Attorney General has instructed that a person in this country sentenced to protective custody (sentence of detention), custodial sentence, youth penalty or community

sentence shall be registered in the Convicted Offenders Database part of the National DNA Database.

In addition, a person sentenced to a suspended sentence of imprisonment for violating or trying to violate the Penal Code sections 231-232, chapter 26, sections 282-283, sections 271-275, section 322 cf. section 321 or section 328 cf. § 327 shall be registered in the Convicted Offenders Database part of the DNA Database.

According to the Regulations on the processing of information in the police and prosecution authorities, Section 45-6, the DNA profile data regarding persons mentioned in section 12 second paragraph of the Police Databases Act as well as that person's identity data may be recorded in the DNA database.

According to the Police Register Act, Section 45-12. Confidentiality and disclosure, data from the DNA database cannot be disclosed unless the purposes mentioned in sections 22, 26 and 33 of the Police Databases Act, whereof use in a criminal case is the most practical.

Norwegian police participate in the PRÜM program exchanging profiles with Austria. In addition profiles are exchanged via Interpol Oslo to all Interpol participating countries. Information regarding DNA-profiles and identities can be submitted and transmitted to competent authorities via this channel as well.

- xii. Does your State collect the data referred to above in accordance with relevant provisions on the protection of personal data? (as provided for by Articles 10 paragraph 2 and 37 paragraph 1 of the Lanzarote Convention)

Yes.

3. Use of data collected

- i. Does your State provide data on CSEA to international organisations such as: Council of Europe, World Health Organisation, EUROSTAT, UN Office of Drugs and Crime and UNICEF?

Statistics Norway (SSB) provide crime statistics, including statistics on sexual offences, to international organisations, e.g. EUROSTAT and UNODC.

- ii. Has your State appointed a national or local agency tasked with providing periodic reports on aggregated data or recording information on child sexual abuse committed in the circle of trust? Please specify the agency responsible. (R20 of the first implementation report of first monitoring round).

The National Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs is responsible for this.

4. Evaluation of data collection mechanisms

- i. How does your State evaluate the effectiveness of the mechanisms or focal points for data collection (for example through audits) as regards the accuracy and reliability of the data collected, including any issues of under-reporting? (R21 of the first implementation report of first monitoring round)

The production of Statistics Norway's (SSB) crime statistics includes extensive error testing and data validation. Furthermore, certain survey based data estimate the victimisation rate in the population in relation to sexual offences, however these survey mainly include respondents aged 16 years or older.

- ii. Is there a system in place to validate the data?

See answer to question 4 i.