Multi-sectorial co-operation to prevent and combat Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

**International Conference
16-17 May 2019**

Meeting report

Prepared by the Children's Rights Division
Directorate of Anti-Discrimination

Contents

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Abbreviations	
CAHENF	Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child
Lanzarote Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse
Budapest Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime
OCSEA	Online child sexual exploitation and abuse
CSAM	Child Sexual Abuse Material

Introduction

The digital environment is an integral part of today's society. Technology empowers children to exercise their rights in new ways at the same time, digital technologies can be mis-used and distorted to infringe upon the child's right to privacy, health and in particular the child's right to a life free from violence.

Where sexual violence has been facilitated by or perpetrated through the use of information and communication technologies, the impact can be devastating and long-lasting. Regardless of how or why an image, video or stream is produced, it is of the utmost importance to remember that behind each of these images, videos or streams there is a real child, suffering, who should be identified, rescued, recognised and supported as a victim.

No single service, ministry, authority, NGO or company can tackle this problem alone. From the moment an image is discovered or reported, and then throughout the investigation, prosecution and criminal proceedings, professionals bear a responsibility to co-ordinate their response, ensuring that child-victims benefit from coherent and holistic support and protection.

The criminal law benchmarks to address OCSEA are set down in the *Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse* (the Lanzarote Convention), which applies equally to abuse and exploitation facilitated by the use of ICTs, and the *Cybercrime Convention* (also called the Budapest Convention). Read together these Conventions sets down substantive criminal law and procedural standards including for electronic evidence. In addition, the *Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence* (also called the Istanbul Convention) and *the Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking in human beings* are further standards of relevance to this topic.

The Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) identifies a life free from violence for all children and the rights of the child in the digital environment as priority areas for action. The Council of Europe *Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment[1],* provide further guidance to prevent sexual violence and protect children in the online world.

The Council of Europe *Project to End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @ Europe (EndOCSEA@Europe)* supports all Council of Europe member States to prevent and combat OCSEA, with a focus on strengthening responses in: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine. The Council of Europe gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided for this programme by the Fund to End Violence Against Children.

In the context of this project a conference "*Multi-sectorial cooperation to prevent and combat online child sexual exploitation and abuse*" took place in Strasbourg, France on 16-17 May 2019. In total, 76 participants from 22 countries were present, including representatives from the following sectors: Law enforcement agencies, Ministry of Justice, Specialist judges, specialist prosecutors, Child protection agencies, Ministry of Education, Ombudspersons for children as well as representatives of leading international inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations.

This report contains the key findings and conclusions of the conference.

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[1] https://rm.coe.int/guidelines-to-respect-protect-and-fulfil-the-rights-of-the-child-in-th/16808d881a

Evolving trends in OCSEA: identifying the risks and adequate responses?

Sexual exploitation and abuse of children is often seen as a hidden harm, all the more so where it is facilitated by ICTs. The risks and trends in OCSEA evolve as rapidly as the digital environment itself which in turn increases the challenges faced by member states to effectively prevent and combat this crime. A further challenge stems from the fact that there is no typical victim or perpetrator and that OCSEA pervades beyond borders. International co-operation is therefore key to effectively respond to this crime.

The WePROTECT Global Alliance provides a mechanism for countries to co-operate to strengthen responses to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and abuse of children facilitated by ICTs. The ways in which technology can facilitate sexual exploitation and abuse include:

- Unsupervised access to victims;
- Access to like-minded perpetrators who share knowledge and co-ordinate to commit these crimes;
- Reducing psychosocial inhibitions;
- Providing a storage space where electronic evidence can be hidden making it difficult to investigate and trace.

The WeProtect Global Alliance tools and materials support States to implement effective responses to prevent and combat OCSEA, such tools include the Global Threat assessment on sexual exploitation of children online and the Model National Response.

In addition to co-operation on a political and governance level, effective co-operation between law enforcement is also key. One of the important roles of INTERPOL is to provide a concrete forum for such co-operation between law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions. Co-operation via INTERPOL can facilitate the production of electronic evidence, reduce duplication of resources across jurisdictions and streamline investigations between jurisdictions.

Use of the INTERPOL databases have led to successful investigation and prosecution of perpetrators, as well as to the identification and rescue of victims.

International and national co-ordination between public authorities and institutions must be completed by co-operation with non-governmental organisations and private foundations who can contribute to strengthen investigations, prosecutions and victim identification. One pertinent example of this is reporting hotlines which contribute to triage, classify and filter reports before passing prioritised images to law enforcement agencies whilst removing content from the public domain.

In addition to strengthening reporting mechanisms, victim identification can be significantly improved by sensitising parents, teachers, medical professionals and other adults to recognise signs of abuse and mainstreaming awareness raising into school curriculum.

Common challenges to responses to OCSEA include:

- Limited co-ordination among authorities and agencies;
- Difficulties in translating technical terms into child-friendly understandable language;
- Limited recognition by law enforcement agencies and prosecutors of certain behaviours as a crime, including grooming;
- Inadequate legislation to define online crimes and regulate online programmes;

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- Lack of training among police officers, teachers and social workers, especially to address peer to peer abuse that takes place online;
- Difficulties to address abuse and exploitation that takes place without physical contact, for example prosecuting sexual exploitation via ICTs under the same legislation as prostitution of children;
- Evolving use of technologies by perpetrators to evade law enforcement and store CSAM online.

Multi-sectorial co-ordination and co-operation: why is it so important?

Multi-sectorial co-operation is absolutely central to ensure effective investigation and that child-friendly procedures are co-ordinated to prevent re-traumatisation of child victims and witnesses. Re-traumatisation may result in the child being un-willing or unable to disclose details of abuse during what is already a very traumatic time. Common reactions from victims may include denial that abuse has taken place or lack of recognition by the child that behaviours such as grooming are a form of abuse even where they lead to more explicit exposure and exploitation of the child.

Co-operation between stakeholders is not simply a question of adopting an adequate framework to identify channels for referral and co-ordination, rather it requires very concrete practical co-ordination. Services need to co-operate to plan forensic interviews to ensure that one interview covers all the questions and evidential points required by all services involved. This is the case for the medical examination of the child, police and social workers need to co-operate with the medical staff to identify the questions to be explored during the examination to adequately prepare the prosecution case.

Evidence based protocols and practices are therefore absolutely necessary. The Barnahus model is recognised internationally as a good model for multi-sectorial co-operation. This model is founded on the premise that the child should only have to attend one place where all relevant services and professionals should be present to hear and examine the child as necessary. This model ensures professionals co-ordinate to plan and interview the child in a child-friendly environment thereby up-holding their right to be heard and limiting the risks of re-traumatising the child through multiple interviews of interviews with untrained personnel.

Common challenges for multi-sectorial co-operation include:

- Perceptions that co-ordination is too complex to implement in practice;
- Legal barriers such as rules on confidentiality and data collection that may hinder adequate communication between services;
- Limited capacity or lack of training among professionals to maintain the evidential integrity of evidence collected on behalf of law enforcement;
- In some jurisdictions, requirements that even child-victims/witnesses be available for cross-examination.

Taking stock of Policy and Governance responses to OCSEA

The Budapest Convention sets down both substantive criminal law provisions related to child sexual abuse material (See Article 9 "Child pornography") and procedural law to facilitate the preservation and production of electronic evidence (see Articles 16-21). By implementing these standards, member states can strengthen their policy and governance frameworks for mutual legal assistance to exchange and share evidence across borders.

The provisions of the Lanzarote Convention apply equally to sexual offences committed against children offline or online.[2] Particular difficulties implementing the convention as regards OCSEA include where a child has self-generated a sexually explicit image. This particular situation is problematic because such an image could constitute "child pornography" on a strict interpretation of Article 20 of the Lanzarote Convention whereas there is a growing body of opinion that criminalisation of children in such circumstances should only be a measure of last resort and that other educational or social measures should be preferred to address such harmful sexual behaviours.[3]

The International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC) works around the world on multiple levels to tackle OCSEA. The ICMEC global legislation review aims to assess the ways in which countries comply with international legal standards regarding Child Sexual Abuse Materials. At the same time, ICMEC works with law enforcement around the world to provide training on OCSEA and to improve international cooperation to prevent and combat OCSEA.

Promising practice: Georgia

Decree N437 of the Government of Georgia sets down the child protection referral mechanisms applicable to all children, including vulnerable children without identification documents and victims of violence in the circle of trust. The referral mechanism includes powers for social workers to apply for identity documents on the child's behalf and the right for a social worker to temporarily remove a child from imminent harm without the need to wait for police action or a judicial decision. The Decree identifies the agencies included in the child referral mechanism and their respective responsibilities. The Decree provides that these agencies should adopt internal instructions and standard operating procedures to deal with cases of child abuse. Where an agency or employee fails to make an appropriate referral, administrative liability may arise.

Common challenges for policy and governance responses include:

- Adoption of referral procedures or frameworks to address OCSEA;
- Ensuring referral procedures remain up-to-date and adapted to evolving trends;
- Lack of capacities at regional and local level to implement referral procedures;
- Lack of or limited awareness among relevant agencies to recognise OCSEA;
- Responsibility sharing across agencies and authorities involved in referral mechanisms, including social workers, law enforcement agencies and health care workers;
- Lack of sufficient psycho-social support for victims.

Prevention and Protection of victims of OCSEA

Prevention is far more effective to protect children from OCSEA than combatting such abuse or exploitation once it is underway. It is therefore of the utmost importance that prevention is a priority for decision makers and professionals alike. To achieve this, parents, teachers, law enforcement agencies and all other professionals involved with children must understand the risks and signs of OCSEA, including when sending and sharing images of themselves with

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[2] Interpretative Opinion on for the Lanzarote Committee on the applicability of the Lanzarote Convention to sexual offences against children facilitated through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), adopted on 12 May 2017, available at: https://rm.coe.int/t-es-2017-03-en-final-interpretative-opinion/168071cb4f

[3] Opinion of the Lanzarote Committee on child sexually suggestive or explicit images and/or videos generated, shared and received by children, adopted on 6 June 2019, available at: https://rm.coe.int/opinion-of-the-lanzarote-committee-on-child-sexually-suggestive-or-exp/168094e72c

their peers. Prevention must be multi-disciplinary and take place across the board: in schools, families and in the online environment. Children and other stakeholders should be familiarised with the legislation in force and the risks of OCSEA. Two effective prevention tools identified are awareness raising and effective reporting.

Parents, teachers and other professionals should not fall into the trap of believing that because children grow up with the digital environment, they are competent to use these technologies without supervision. Children need help to overcome challenges and build up their resilience in the physical world, in addition children should be equipped to exercise their rights in the digital environment with confidence and resilience. In order to empower children to make the most of the online environment, parents, teachers and other professionals need to have a realistic understanding and expectation of children's capacities in the digital environment according to their age and maturity.

Effective reporting of child abuse material present on the internet is a key for effective prevention. By reporting such materials, law enforcement can take-down the content and put an end to the re-victimisation of the child-victim featured in the image. Furthermore, by enriching the body of evidence available to law enforcement, reporting increases the likelihood that the perpetrator will be brought to justice, therefore preventing re-victimisation of the child and protecting other children from falling victim in the future.

Promising practice: Republic of Moldova

Extensive awareness raising activities and campaigns have been implemented in Moldova in recent years. These have been co-ordinated among multiple stakeholders and include partnerships with public and private entities including internet service providers and phone companies. The awareness raising campaign targets parents, teachers and care-givers. One particular aspect of the campaign seeks to mainstream protection from OCSEA into school curricula and to support schools to raise awareness on how to prevent and respond to OCSEA.

Promising practice: Ukraine

Awareness raising activities have taken place in Ukraine for school children (aged 13-17), with dedicated resources and lesson plans for teachers, regarding online relationships and sexting. The awareness raising campaign has also included dissemination of Europol videos that have been translated into Ukrainian.

Common challenges for prevention and protection include:

- Resistance or social unease to acknowledge this form of abuse and to engage in awareness raising;
- Ill-adapted legislative and policy frameworks to facilitate reporting of CSAM between hotline providers and law enforcement agencies;
- Lack of awareness among children to be able to recognise risky behaviours online and signs of grooming;
- Terminology was also identified as challenging including questions of whether to move away from the legally binding term of "*Child Pornography*" towards "*Child Sexual Abuse Materials*", in accordance with the Luxembourg Guidelines.

Strengthening investigation and prosecution of OCSEA

Sexual exploitation or abuse of a child facilitated by information and communication technologies may be committed in circumstances whereby the perpetrator is a complete

stranger, living and operating from another jurisdiction, who has never stepped foot in the same country as the child and whom the child has never met in the physical world. Therefore, investigators and prosecutors may face additional challenges to identify both the victim and the perpetrator of this crime across several jurisdictions. To make this task even harder increased use of technologies such as the Darknet to trade and exchange materials have been noted in recent years.

Where live streaming of child sexual abuse is concerned, investigators face additional challenges to locate and obtain electronic evidence. Similarly, where offences are committed using self-produced images, for example grooming, coercing or extorting the child to self-produce child sexual abuse material, obtaining and preserving the evidence may be a further challenge for law enforcement; A lack of understanding of the harm suffered by the child where there is no physical contact between a child-victim and the perpetrator has been identified as an additional issue particularly at the stage of prosecution or sentencing these types of offences.

At national level, training in electronic evidence and forensic investigations, including the use of undercover investigations should therefore be encouraged. In addition, awareness raising and sensitisation among law enforcement, judges and prosecutors should also be encouraged.

Promising practice: Armenia

In Armenia a special police division is responsible to investigate crimes related to "*child pornography*". In addition, specialised prosecutors and specialised psychologists receive training on "*child pornography*" to work in co-operation with law enforcement during OCSEA investigations and prosecutions.

National, specialised police units are encouraged to develop mechanisms to monitor convicted offenders and identify the trends in online child sexual exploitation and abuse. They should other aspects, such as financial investigations and making connections between transfers of money and data, into account when conducting these threat assessments. Effective victim identification and identification of perpetrators were also identified as foundational to the long-term fight against OCSEA.

Promising practice: Turkey

A special police unit dealing with "*child pornography*" was created in 2011, approximately 500 police officers have been trained nationwide. The special unit is tasked with the detection and identification of perpetrators through online investigation and digital devices. In 2018 36,000 investigations were underway, with the most important source of initial information coming from Cybertip hotline reports.

Approximately two thirds of reports provided actionable information and one in twenty reports lead to the identification of a perpetrator.

This situation underlines the difficulties faced by law enforcement who may receive large numbers of reports that do not contain actionable evidence. Improving the quality of reports being passed to law enforcement by strengthening evidence-based reporting can contribute to improve the use of police time dedicated to investigating reports.

Solutions identified to strengthen investigation and prosecution include: greater international co-operation, effective ICT examination to identify traces of evidence, investment through resourcing and training specialised units and a multi-sectorial approach. To achieve these

objectives, political engagement and sufficient allocation of resources are absolutely key. Effective use of Mutual Legal Assistance (MLAT) is also important to ensure cross-border co-operation to share evidence and secure the extradition of suspects or convicted offenders. Law enforcement and prosecutors should work with hotlines to raise awareness and capacities among hotline staff to identify actionable data that should be passed to the authorities. Such actionable data should be assessed according to national laws to ensure that hotlines contribute to efficient resource allocation.

Common challenges for investigation and prosecution include:

- Lack of adequately trained specialised units to investigate OCSEA and carry out forensic examinations, including specialised dedicated officers to act as first responders to carry out forensic examination of devices used by child victims and perpetrators of OCSEA;
- Limited harmonisation of national laws with international conventions and agreements which raises barriers to effective cross-border collaboration between law enforcement agencies, industry and reporting hotlines;
- High quantities of unactionable reports being passed from hotlines to law enforcement agencies can saturate investigation and prosecution capacities and result in decisions not to investigate reports.

Strengthening victim identification and reporting

The internet provides many new opportunities for perpetrators to groom children, but the vast majority of children are groomed by someone who already knows them, whether it is a family-member or non-family member whom the child and family trust.[4] The definition of grooming may vary in wording across jurisdictions, but in principle it involves winning the confidence of a child and building trust with the child with intent to: sexually abuse the child, produce child sexual abuse material (child pornography) or obtain self-produced sexual images of the child. Sexual predators who groom children also groom the social circles around the child meaning that they are often perceived as up-standing members of the community until it comes to light that they have been sexually abusing or exploiting the child. Investigators generally consider that "*being nice*" is part of the modus operandi of grooming. The grooming cycle can be understood as being made up of stages: friendship forming stage, relationship forming stage, risk assessment stage, exclusivity stage and sexual abuse stage.

It is therefore highly important that not only parents, but also investigators and other frontline professionals are aware of the way in which children interact online with their devices, for example: gaming consoles offer online interaction opportunities and therefore increase a child's vulnerability to being groomed. The Irish model for Victim Identification and reporting of OCSEA relies on cross-sector collaboration between Police, Social Services, reporting hotlines and International Organisations. A joint protocol as been established to facilitate smooth co-operation between law enforcement and social services during investigations. In Ireland a specific unit composed of 3 officers specialise in victim identification including identifying victims in online CSAM.

Common challenges to victim identification and reporting include:

- Lack of legal provisions to criminalise grooming;

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[4] Opinion of the Lanzarote Committee on the Solicitation of children for sexual purposes through information and communication technologies (Grooming), adopted on 17 June 2015, available at: https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168064de 98

- The need to strengthen mechanisms to avoid criminalising children in cases of self-produced materials where some states identify children up until the age of 18 as victims and other states may treat such children as perpetrators;
- Lack of child-friendly procedures for children as victims and witnesses of OCSEA to ensure that the child is interviewed only once and not revictimized by repeated interviews;
- Lack of dedicated protocols for collaboration and assistance between investigators and social services to ensure effective intervention, evidence-gathering and victim assistance in OCSEA cases.

Raising awareness to sensitise all actors involved in the multi-sectorial response

Due to the complex nature of OCSEA, all stakeholders, including government authorities and administrations, have a responsibility to raise awareness. Inter-ministerial groups or committees provide a forum to discuss and assign responsibility for awareness raising among public and private actors. Although co-operation and joint activities with private actors can be an effective way to raise awareness, stakeholders should remember that private actors may have priorities and objectives that are not limited to simply protecting children from OCSEA.

Effective awareness raising should not focus on extreme cases and shock factors but rather on positive messaging to empower children, parents and teachers to understand what a child should or should not be capable of doing online in accordance with their age and maturity. Education and awareness raising should be implemented as part of a long-term strategy to empower children to recognise risks, understand the rules for online safety and how to respond to incidents. Participation in an annual day such as the European day on the protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the Safer Internet Day.

Due to their age and level of maturity children may have a tendency to believe all information available on the internet is true, this extends to belief that all relationships formed online are sincere, exposing the child to a high risk of grooming.

Promising practice: Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Ministry of Security, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social Welfare have jointly developed a guide to raise awareness among professionals working with children on how to respond to sexual violence faced by children in the digital environment.

Promising practice: Azerbaijan

The State Committee on Family Women and Children Affairs jointly with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Transport, Communication and High Technologies have developed an awareness raising programme to be implemented in schools. In addition, the series of tools on Parenting in the Digital Age have been translated into Azerbaijani to raise awareness among parents.

Challenges to awareness raising include:

- Misconceptions that filtering and blocking content in school premises is sufficient to protect children and that therefore there is no need to raise awareness among children in schools;
- Limited understanding among children and adults of the rules surrounding data protection as regards photo sharing;

- Unsustainability of awareness raising efforts shared across ministries where no one ministry takes clear ownership;
- Lack of mandatory teacher training on online safety resulting in teachers feeling ill-equipped to teach children about the risks and responses to OCSEA;
- Lack of internet literacy among parents and caregivers resulting in children being ill-equipped to recognise risky behaviours and suspect relationships in the online environment;
- Developing and adapting awareness raising materials to the needs of children with disabilities.

Upholding the rights of child-victims: before, during and after proceedings

Investigations into OCSEA may or may not lead to a prosecution and even then, a prosecution may or may not lead to a conviction. Regardless of the outcome of a procedure, child-victims of OCSEA must be protected and supported throughout these procedures including throughout their interactions with investigators, prosecutors and judges. In this context the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration throughout their interactions with the police, prosecutors and the criminal justice system. This can be achieved by ensuring that interviews and judgments are child-friendly. In concrete terms this means that law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges need to adapt their language and behaviour to the age and maturity of the child. In addition, procedures for giving evidence in court should be adapted to safeguard the child from re-traumatisation.

Promising Practice: Montenegro
A project is underway to improve procedures to respond to the needs of child-victims. The project aims to strengthen infrastructure to facilitate child-friendly interviewing and evidence gathering from child-victims of sexual abuse and violence. In addition, specialised training for judges will be provided to improve professional capacities to avoid re-victimisation of a child-victim.

The online nature of OCSEA means that it is highly important for the victim's recovery that they understand what happens to the images of the abuse and understands that all possible efforts are being made to take-down and remove every image of the abuse as well as to protect the child from future abuse or victimisation by the offender after conviction. Such protection may extend beyond a prison term to include enforcement of judgments to ban or exclude convicted offenders from using internet services once they are released back into society. As such, co-operation with industry to monitor and identify convicted sex offenders on their platforms can serve to prevent future re-victimisation or victimisation of a child. This can be done by monitoring and acting upon information contained in sex offender registers to screen and trace social media accounts with a view to blocking and taking-down harmful content.

Risks of re-victimisation of a child by a known sex offender can be mitigated through risk management of convicted offenders upon reaching the end of their sentence, providing support and monitoring known sex offenders beyond the scope of their prison sentence, reinforcing screening during recruitment procedures for certain professions and banning known sex offenders from exercising these professions. Child-victims require a wide range of support including medical, psychological and legal support to access their rights and make a full recovery. Protecting the identity of the child is also a key safeguard for victim recovery and to prevent re-victimisation.

Promising Practice: Georgia
Reforms are underway to develop a sex offender register and to strengthen screening of candidates during recruitment procedures for certain professions, including teaching. Reforms to the Child-protection framework will also aim to strengthen inter-agency co-operation to monitor known sex offenders.

Common challenges to uphold the rights of the child during proceedings include:

- Protecting children from re-victimisation beyond the time-frame of a sentence following criminal conviction;
- Protecting the identity of the child-victim of OCSEA, particularly in rural and village settings;
- Lack of recognition and understanding, including among law enforcement agencies, judges, prosecutors and frontline child protection professionals of the harm caused to a child where the sexual abuse or exploitation takes place online, without any physical contact between the victim and the perpetrator;
- Lack of co-operation or even resistance among industry actors to apply tools and programmes, such as photo DNA, black-listing or Hashing, to track and remove copies of known child-abuse materials.

The Way Forward

As a result of the discussions and workshops a series of strategic priorities were identified and agreed upon by the participants to respond to the common challenges and outstanding needs. The main conclusions of the conference identified by participants include:

- The need to develop legislation and cooperation both with the Council of Europe and other member states;
- The importance of close cooperation between agencies;
- The need and importance of data collection and statistics to raise awareness and gain support at a political level;
- The need to train judges and prosecutors on OCSEA and related topics;
- The need to keep pace with the evolution of technology through up-to-date information and investigation techniques;
- Appreciation for the Barnahus model as an example of multi-sectorial co-operation and its' importance in regard to children/victim approach.

Relevant Council of Europe initiatives to support such efforts, above and beyond the scope of the project EndOCSEA@Europe include the European day on the protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, which is on 18th of November each year and the campaign Free to Speak, Safe to Learn.

Annex A: Strategic Priorities to prevent and combat Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse through multi-sectorial co-operation

The following strategic priorities to strengthen multi-sectorial co-operation to prevent and combat OCSEA were endorsed at the international conference "*Multi-sectorial co-operation to prevent and combat online child sexual exploitation and abuse*":

Identify child-victims and strengthen reporting

• Improve and adapt legislation to address evolving trends, including grooming of children and self-produced material, to uphold the best interests of the child.

• Strengthen co-operation and collaboration between law enforcement and social services to include a coordinated approach to uphold the rights of the child victim during procedures and investigations of OCSEA.

• Provide psychological support and therapy for child victims following identification to prevent re-victimisation and co-ordinate responses to facilitate single disclosure of evidence from the child-victim.

Strengthen investigation and prosecution of OCSEA

• Set up and strengthen specialised law enforcement units to deal with cases of OCSEA including conducting online investigations.

• Implement up-to-date, initial and on-going training for specialised law enforcement units dealing with OCSEA and strengthen understanding among prosecutors and judges of OCSEA, especially as regards: forensic techniques, electronic evidence, victim identification, online harms and child rights approach during proceedings.

• Strengthen dialogue between reporting hotlines, internet service providers and law enforcement to support effective intervention, collaboration and procedures including: notifications of usable illegal content, obtaining user and server data, blocking and removing illegal content.

Uphold the rights of child-victims: before, during and after proceedings

• Develop and strengthen capacities among law enforcement, judges and prosecutors to implement child friendly procedures and up-hold the rights of the child-victim throughout reporting, investigation, prosecution and criminal proceedings.

• Strengthen understanding and responsibility sharing, including among media, to maintain confidentiality to protect victims' identities throughout reporting, investigation, prosecution and following the conclusion of criminal proceedings.

Raise awareness to sensitise all actors involved in the multi-sectorial response

• Implement long-term awareness raising campaigns in co-operation with all stakeholders (ministries, agencies, private entities and industry) and address all levels of society including children, vulnerable children, parents, teachers, policy makers and frontline professionals working with children.

• Integrate awareness raising on online safety into school curricula to increase resilience among children and capacity to implement peer to peer information.

• Regularly review programmes, awareness raising mechanisms and campaigns to ensure an evidence-based approach to prevent and combat OCSEA.

Annex B: Useful resources

Council of Europe Conventions and standards and policy tools
- Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention)
- Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Cybercrime Convention)
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)07 to member States on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)2 of the Committee of Ministers on participation of children and young people under the age of 18
- Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly justice adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 November 2010

Reports and documents of the Lanzarote Committee
- 1st implementation report on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (2015)
- 2nd implementation report protection of children against sexual abuse in the circle of trust, the strategies (2018)
- Interpretative Opinion on the applicability of the Lanzarote Convention to sexual offences against children facilitated through the use of ICTs
- Guidelines for Implementation of Child Participation in the 2nd thematic monitoring round of the Lanzarote Convention on "The protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies (ICTs)"

Useful guidance, tools and publications
- WePROTECT Model National Response
- WePROTECT Global Threat Assessment 2018
- European day on the protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: tools
- Protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse: Child-friendly, multidisciplinary and interagency response inspired by the Barnahus model (2018)
- How to convey child-friendly information to children in migration: a handbook for frontline professionals (2018)
- It's our world: children's views on how to protect their rights in the digital environment (2017)
- Council of Europe Internet Literacy handbook (2017)
- Council of Europe Child Participation Assessment Tool (2016)
- C-PROC E-Evidence Guide
- C-PROC Computer Forensic Lab
- C-PROC Standard Operating Procedures

Council of Europe projects
- End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @Europe
- Responding to child sexual exploitation and abuse in Georgia, phase I
- Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Republic of Moldova

Annex C: Conference Programme

Thursday 16 May 2019	
09.00	**Registration**
09.15 – 09.30	**Welcome remarks** **Jeroen Schokkenbroek, Director of the Directorate of Anti-Discrimination of the Council of Europe**
09.30 – 11.00	**Evolving trends in OCSEA: identifying the risks and adequate responses?** The digital environment is rapidly evolving, providing new opportunities for children to exercise their rights but also exposing them to increased risks of falling victim to sexual exploitation and abuse. The risks and trends in online abuse evolve as rapidly as the environment itself which in turn increases the challenges faced by member states to effectively prevent and combat OCSEA. During this session trends in OCSEA will be identified, taking into account local environmental and societal factors and challenges to victim support. Responses provided by the Lanzarote Convention and other international frameworks, will also be considered. **Moderator** Regína Jensdóttir, Council of Europe Co-ordinator for the Rights of the Child **Speakers** Iain Drennan, Head of International Team, Tackling Exploitation and Abuse Unit, United Kingdom Home Office Laura Smith, Criminal Intelligence Officer, Crimes against Children Unit, INTERPOL *Tour de table:* One representative from each focus country is invited to present emerging trends observed in their country. **Questions for discussion**: *What trends in OCSEA have or are being observed in your country? (you can refer to any public cases, media articles, institutional data or research)* *Is there a formal monitoring mechanism? (National threat assessment on CSEA, national research centre, for example)* *How are national institutions/authorities dealing with these emerging trends?* *Is information on OCSEA trends shared with other stakeholders?*
11.00-11.30	*Coffee Break*
11.30-12.30	**Multi-sectorial co-ordination and co-operation: why is it so important?** The consequences of sexual exploitation and abuse are multi-faceted and long-lasting. A child-victim of sexual exploitation or abuse, whether online or offline, may have suffered physical injury, psychological trauma and social or familial breakdown as a result, all the more so where the abuser is in the circle of trust of the child-victim. A child-victim of sexual exploitation and abuse, whether online or offline, needs appropriate support and care from a wide range of actors including education, health and social services. As a victim and witness of this crime, the child will also interact with law enforcement and judicial authorities in the course of investigations and criminal proceedings.

	Co-operation and co-ordination among these authorities and bodies, together with the judiciary and law enforcement, is therefore absolutely central to prevent the child being re-victimised and to encourage victim recovery whilst supporting effective investigations and prosecutions. **Moderator** Ms Regína Jensdóttir, Council of Europe Co-ordinator for the Rights of the Child **Speakers** Katlijn Declercq, Focal point on European Institutions, ECPAT International Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Co-founding Director Child Circle John Carr, Council of Europe Expert, Children's Rights in the Online Environment **Questions for discussion**: *How do institutions/bodies/authorities co-operate in practice to protect and support child-victims of OCSEA?* *Which institutions/bodies/authorities actively partner or co-operate with private entities to tackle OCSEA?* *Is your country participating in any international mechanisms to prevent or combat OCSEA? Does this mechanism deal with removal of OCSEA content, victim support and identification, apprehension of perpetrators?*
12.30 – 14.00	*Lunch Parliamentary Bar*
14.00 – 15.30	**Taking stock of Policy and Governance responses to OCSEA** Member states face common challenges to protect children from OCSEA despite the wide range of national contexts present across the Council of Europe. International standards, including the Lanzarote and Budapest Conventions, provide benchmarks to guide member states in their responses to OCSEA. During this session participants are invited to consider promising practices identified, provide further examples and information on multi-sectorial co-operation. An open floor discussion will focus on multi-sectorial co-operation to ensure effective legislative and policy frameworks as well as law enforcement capacities to investigate cases of OCSEA, including through effective research and monitoring. **Moderator and opening remarks** Alexander Seger, Head of the Council of Europe Cybercrime Division **Speakers** Gioia Scappucci, Executive Secretary to the Lanzarote Committee Jacqueline Hazzan, International Programs Liaison, International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children Ana Ivanishvili, Chief Specialist of the Department of Public International Law, Ministry of Justice, Georgia **Questions for discussion**: *How are international standards (Lanzarote Convention and Budapest Convention, WePROTECT model national response) being implemented in practice in your country?* *Is there a referral mechanism or inter-institutional co-operation mechanism specifically dealing with child-victims of sexual exploitation and abuse?*

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	What policies and co-operation mechanisms are in place to deal with the publication or distribution of OCSEA? *Is there a government organisation of multi-stakeholder group in charge of these policies and mechanisms?*
15.30-16.00	*Coffee break*
16.00-17.30	**Prevention and Protection of victims of OCSEA** Children must be empowered to participate in the procedures affecting them, such participation can only be achieved through the provision of effective end-to-end victim support. In this context, children must be aware of the risks of OCSEA with a view to avoiding victimisation as well as how to report instances of OCSEA and access support services if they fall victim to this crime. The preliminary findings of the baseline mapping regarding victim-focused criminal justice, support and assistance for victims and awareness raising initiatives will be considered during this session. Participants are invited to participate in open floor discussions to share promising examples of protective measures and assistance to victims provided throughout investigations and criminal proceedings as well as preventive measures to empower children to stay safe online. Child participation in policy development will also be discussed. **Moderator** Virgil Spiridon, Head of Operations, Council of Europe Cybercrime Programme Office in Bucharest (C-PROC) **Speakers** Victoria Baines, Council of Europe Expert, Visiting Fellow, Bournemouth University David Wright, Director, UK Safer Internet Centre, South West Grid for Learning Amela Efendic, Expert Advisor/EURC CEO, IFS-EMMAUS, INHOPE member Bosnia and Herzegovina Artur Degteariov, Child protection section, Center for Combating Cyber Crime, Republic of Moldova; Ms Ludmila Oleinic, Department for Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation Policies, Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of Republic of Moldova. **Questions for discussion**: *What reporting mechanisms are in place and who is involved in running these? Are they part of an interntational network?* *Are any awareness raising programmes or projects being implemented in schools?* *Are any awareness raising programmes or projects being implemented among parents or carers?* *Do judges and prosecutors receive any specific training on OCSEA?* *Do you have any examples of child participationor consultation in policy development?*
17.30	Close Day 1

Friday 17 May 2019		
8.45 – 09.00	**Registration**	
09.00 – 10.30	**Room 8** **Session 1: Strengthening investigation and prosecution of OCSEA** This workshop will explore considerations for effective reporting, evidence gathering and referrals where reports are received. The production and preservation of e-evidence including international co-operation to transfer evidence to investigating authorities will also be explored. Participants will be invited to identify strategic priorities to strengthen multi-sectorial co-operation for effective investigations and prosecutions of OCSEA. **Moderators** Virgil Spiridon, Head of Operations, Council of Europe Cybercrime Programme Office in Bucharest (C-PROC) Michael Lynch, Detective Inspector, An Garda Síochana, Ireland **Questions for discussion**: *Is there a specialist law enforcement unit in your country for OCSEA?* *Do law enforcement officers receive specific training on OCSEA?* *How does law enforcement co-operate with other actors to obtain and exchange e-evidence?*	**Room 9** **Session 2: Raising awareness to sensitise all actors involved in the multi-sectorial response** This workshop will focus on awareness raising and capacity building to prevent OCSEA at all levels of society. Participants will be invited to identify priority actions to sensitise professionals involved at each stage of the multi-sectorial response, including: education, health and social sectors, law enforcement authorities, judges and prosecutors. **Moderators** David Wright, Director, UK Safer Internet Centre, South West Grid for Learning Iain Drennan**,** Head of International Team, Tackling Exploitation and Abuse Unit, United Kingdom Home Office. **Questions for discussion**: *Which institutions/bodies/authorities receive information and sensitisation OCSEA?* *Which institutions/bodies/authorities are involved in awareness raising campaigns on OCSEA among the general public?* *How can these be strengthened in practice?* *How do we systematically build resilience in children?* *What are the digital skills children have and what do they lack to protect themselves and their communities?* *What are the obstacles to effective information gathering and assessment on OCSEA? How can these be overcome?*
10.30-11.00	Coffee break	

11.00-12.30	**Room 8** **Session 3: Identifying child-victims and reporting OCSEA** This workshop will focus on victim-identification including strengthening the understanding of reporting mechanisms in this process. Participants will also discuss the necessity to recognise children as victims and to co-operate for victim referral and support during investigations. Participants will be invited to identify strategic priorities to improve law enforcement capacities to lead, support and coordinate OCSEA investigations, whilst avoiding criminalisation of children. **Moderator** Michael Lynch, Detective Inspector, An Garda Síochana, Ireland **Questions for discussion**: *How are cases involving self-produced materials dealt with? Are there any mechanisms to avoid criminalising children?* *How does law enforcement, acting alone and/or co-operating with other actors, follow-up on reports received to identify and support child-victims as well as apprehend perpetrators?Is there an agreed process for removing CSAM/OCSEA material to prevent ongoing victimisation?*	**Room 9** **Session 4: Upholding the rights of child-victims: before, during and after proceedings** This workshop will focus on victim-centred procedures throughout the investigation, prosecution and criminal proceedings. Participants are invited to identify strategic priorities to enhance end-to-end victim support through multi-sectorial co-operation. Participants are also invited to discuss child participation in the development of such policies and procedures. **Moderators** Victoria Baines, Visiting Fellow, Bournemouth University John Carr, Council of Europe Expert, Children's Rights in the Online Environment **Questions for discussion**: *Is there specialist support for victims of OCSEA in your country? What policies or mechanisms are in place to ensure effective referral of child-victims of OCSEA to relevant support services?* *What procedures are in place to ensure victim support during criminal proceedings?*
12.30 - 14.00	*Lunch Parliamentary Bar*	
14.00 – 15.30	**Strategic priorities to strengthen multi-sectorial co-operation** Discussion on strategic priorities identified in each Workshop for multi-sectorial co-operation and reporting on discussion from each workshop. Rapporteurs will be invited to summarise workshop findings and key priorities identified. Participants will be informed of the ways in which the conference outcomes will be implemented through the project EndOCSEA@Europe. **Moderator** Naomi Trewinnard, Senior Project Officer End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @Europe	
15.30 -16.00	*Coffee Break*	
16.00 -17.00	**The way forward** The Council of Europe is committed to supporting member states to end violence against children through various initiatives, campaigns and activities. To this end a number of grants have been identified to develop	

(see table above)

	and support awareness raising activities in member states. Participants are invited to take note of the results of the grant award, to consider activities and actions at national level that could contribute to activities at international level. **Moderator** Naomi Trewinnard **Speakers** Livia Stoica, Secretary to the Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child Mikaël Poutiers, Administrator to the Lanzarote Committee Katerina Toura, Programme Manager, Council of Europe Education Policy Division
17.00	**Close of Conference**