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**Committee of Experts on the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the
Child (DECS - ENF)
2nd meeting**

CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

COUNCIL OF EUROPE STRATEGY FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
2016 - 2019/21

DRAFT, 23 APRIL 2015

I. ABOUT THE STRATEGY

The Council of Europe protects and promotes the human rights of everyone, including children. This document outlines the priorities of the Council of Europe in protecting and promoting the rights of children in the period 2016 to 2019/21.

The Strategy identifies:

- the major challenges for children's rights over the coming years;
- four priority areas and accompanying actions for meeting those challenges;
- working methods to deliver the Strategy, including transversal working methods, sustainable partnerships and targeted communication methods.

The four priority areas for action in 2016-2019/21 are:

1. Equal opportunities for all children
2. Participation of all children
3. A life free from violence for all children
4. Access to justice for all children

Children in Council of Europe member States enjoy the full range of human rights granted by the European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These include civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. This Strategy seeks to encompass all these categories of human rights and sets out the commitments by the Council of Europe and its member States in how to make these rights a reality for *all* children.

In addition to the above mentioned priority areas, three cross-cutting objectives are mainstreamed throughout this Strategy:

1. Children's rights apply to all children, girls and boys, without discrimination on any ground. However, the reality is that some groups of children have more difficulties in enjoying their rights than others. This Strategy follows a cross-cutting inclusive approach, paying special attention to the needs of discriminated and marginalised groups of children as well as to gender equality issues in all four priority areas.
2. Today's children live in a digital age. The Internet and other Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have an enormous impact on the lives of children and their families. The opportunities and challenges that come with this reality and ways to address them in an integrated way will be a priority concern for the Council of Europe.
3. Children's participation is one of the four priority areas of the Strategy, but it is also a cross-cutting objective. Involving children in decision-making at individual, family, organisation and policy level is key to realising their rights. The Council of Europe is committed to taking a participatory approach to children's rights in all dimensions of this Strategy and to support its member States in doing so.

The Strategy is the result of a broad consultation with member States, civil society, ombudspersons for children, other international organisations and children. This process was

guided by the Committee of Experts on the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child, representing all 47 member States, which met three times throughout 2014 and 2015. The Strategy was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on ... and will be launched at the High-Level Conference on the Rights of the Child in ... on ... 2016.

The stakeholders contributing to the Strategy development also considered the views of children through direct consultations at national level and through analysing existing data on children's views about the issues at stake. A secondary analysis of over 130 consultations with children in Council of Europe member States was specifically prepared to inform this Strategy.¹ In addition, the report will remain a reference document in the course of the Strategy implementation.

The beneficiaries of the priority areas and actions outlined in this Strategy and its Annex are children, i.e. persons under the age of 18 living in the 47 Council of Europe member States. The action of the Council of Europe as an intergovernmental organisation, however, is mediated through the governments of its member States, which are – along with other stakeholders, such as civil society and ombudspersons for children – the main implementers and actors of this Strategy.

[Paragraph on division into two phases of three years each and evaluation in case the DECS-ENF decides to prolong the Strategy until 2021.]

II. THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: ACHIEVEMENTS TO BUILD ON

In the almost 10 years of its existence, the programme “Building a Europe for and with Children” has been striving to protect and promote the rights of the children in Council of Europe member States. The following results have been achieved:

- A comprehensive set of two binding and 18 non-binding legal standards on children's rights has been elaborated by member States and adopted by the Committee of Ministers.² These Conventions, Recommendations and Guidelines take the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child further at European level.
- Highly informative and reliable data on the respect for children's rights under the relevant Council of Europe Conventions has been collected by at least eight monitoring and other mechanisms³ and communicated to member States and other stakeholders.

¹ *Challenges to children's rights today: What do children think? A desktop study on children's views and priorities to inform the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child*, Council of Europe, April 2015.

² European Convention on the Adoption of Children (revised) (CETS No. 202; 2008/2011); Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) (CETS No. 201; 2007/2010). For a list of all binding and non-binding Council of Europe standards protecting children's rights, see http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/keyLegalTexts/Default_en.asp.

³ European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR); Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Committee); Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT); European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI); Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC); Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA); European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission); Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML).

- Support has been provided to member States in implementing children’s rights standards through more than 160 activities in 34 co-operation projects⁴ as well as through numerous bilateral activities within the Council of Europe Programme and Budget. More than 250 activities on children’s rights involving all 47 member States were organised under the previous Strategy, from 2011 to 2015.
- Transversal and flexible working methods have been established with member States through the Network of National Co-ordinators on Children’s Rights and, in 2014 and 2015, the Committee of Experts on the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child.
- Children’s views have been sought and taken into account in the development of all new legal standards on children’s rights and communication tools targeted at children.⁵
- Strong partnerships with other international organisations and non-governmental organisations have been developed and placed the Council of Europe as a key driver of children’s rights at European and international levels.
- Information about children’s rights has been disseminated to children, parents, professionals and policy makers through accessible tools, attractive audio-visual material and innovative campaigns such as the ONE in FIVE campaign to stop sexual violence against children. ⁶
- Children’s rights has been mainstreamed into in all relevant areas of the Organisation with the effect that almost 35 sectors and policy fields of the Council of Europe contribute to the implementation of the last Strategy for the Rights of the Child.

⁴ From 2006 to mid-2015, children’s rights were addressed in 11 Joint Programmes with the European Union and 23 co-operation projects financed by Voluntary Contributions.

⁵ For instance, the Guidelines on child-friendly justice adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2010 take into consideration the conclusions from approx. 3800 questionnaires completed by children in 25 member States as well as from focus group discussions with children.

⁶ For instance, the TV spot and children’s book “Kiko and the Hand” were created within the framework of the ONE in FIVE Campaign targeting young children and their parents (www.underwearrule.org).

III. ARE WE THERE YET? - CHALLENGES FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TODAY AND TOMORROW

Despite the progress achieved, children's rights are still challenged on a daily basis. Based on children's own views as well as the information received from member States, civil society and ombudspersons for children, this chapter gives an overview of the most compelling challenges for children's rights over the coming years.

1. INEQUALITY AND EXCLUSION

The economic crisis has deeply affected children. Out of the 32 Council of Europe member States monitored in a recent UNICEF report⁷, child poverty increased in 20 countries and decreased in only 12 between 2008 and 2012. With cycles of poverty lasting across generations, the risk of producing a "lost generation" of disillusioned young people is real, with potentially grave consequences for intergenerational solidarity, cohesive societies and long-term political stability.⁸ Children living in poverty reportedly are feeling excluded and stigmatised and are greatly concerned about the current economic climate and the impact on their own future.⁹

A comic strip competition organised by the Council of Europe in 2013 showed that one of the greatest concerns of children is being excluded.¹⁰ Not being able to play and share leisure time with others because of financial constraints, not being allowed to attend mainstream schools because of a disability, or being bullied because of one's ethnic origin, are all marking experiences for children that leave traces throughout their lives.

From a human rights point of view, the quality of a society is measured by how it is treating the most marginalised groups. Roma children, migrant children, children in detention as well as many children with disabilities and without parental care are at these margins and thus in need of special protection and empowerment.

2. VIOLENCE

Violence against children is a clear violation of their human rights and a real concern for children¹¹. However, violence continues to affect the lives of too many children in Europe. Corporal punishment by their own parents, carers and educators is still an everyday experience for too many children in Europe. Physical and emotional neglect is a form of violence that severely affects children's development.

With the taboo around sexual violence finally eroding, the alarming extent of sexual abuse and exploitation of boys and girls is becoming increasingly obvious.¹²

Armed conflict is back to Europe. Children have been killed, wounded and displaced. Even once the conflict ends, thousands of children will remain traumatized by what they had to witness. Re-building mutual respect and trust among the young generation will be an important task.

⁷ *Children of the Recession: The impact of the economic crisis on child well-being in rich countries*, Innocenti Report Card 12, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence.

⁸ PACE, Resolution 1885 (2012).

⁹ *Challenges to children's rights today: What do children think?*, Council of Europe, April 2015, chapter 10.

¹⁰ <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/charter-edc-hre-pilot-projects/comics-competition>

¹¹ *Challenges to children's rights today: What do children think?*, Council of Europe, April 2015, chapter 4.

¹² Research suggests that approximately 1 on 5 children are victims of some form of sexual violence. See: *Protecting children from sexual violence. A comprehensive approach*, Council of Europe 2010.

3. RESPECT FOR CHILDREN AS RIGHT-HOLDERS

25 years after the entry into force of the UNCRC, the idea that children are autonomous right holders is still challenged systematically. The fact that in almost half of Council of Europe member States it is still legal or tolerated to hit a child while hitting an adult is illegal throughout is only one indicator of this perception. Another indicator for violations of children's rights is the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. In recent years, the court found a range of violations of the European Convention on Human Rights with respect to children, for instance of Article 8 (Right to respect for private and family life), Article 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion) and Article 14 (Prohibition of discrimination).¹³

4. A JUSTICE SYSTEM MADE FOR ADULTS

European judicial systems are still insufficiently adapted to the specific needs of children. Judicial decisions can have a considerable impact on children's lives but their involvement in often lacks a child rights based approach.¹⁴ Child victims, perpetrators and witnesses all have specific vulnerabilities to which the system needs to be adapted. Detention of children, including administrative detention of migrant children, poses serious challenges to the realisation of their rights.

5. GROWING UP IN A DIGITAL WORLD

Whether it is through computers, gaming consoles, tablets or smartphones, the digital world exposes children to a wealth of opportunities. Using these opportunities in an empowered and responsible way as a "digital citizen" is a challenge for children and their parents, carers and educators.¹⁵ The digital environment also exposes children to harmful content, privacy and data protection issues and other risks, including cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking and excessive exposure to sexualised images, that must be acknowledged and dealt with.

6. FAMILIES AND PARENTS ARE KEY

The family, whatever its form, is the fundamental unit of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of children. Children enormously value the relationships with their parents and siblings.¹⁶ Families are, however, confronted with numerous challenges: the economic crisis exposed many families to unemployment and insecurity about the future. New information and communication technologies add an entirely new dimension to parenting.

¹³ European Court of Human Rights, Factsheet Children's Rights, March 2015, http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/FS_Childrens_ENG.pdf.

¹⁴ *Summary of contextual overviews on children's involvement in criminal judicial proceedings in the 28 member States of the European Union*, European Commission – Directorate General for Justice, 2014.

¹⁵ *EU Kids Online: findings, methods, recommendations*, EU Kids Online, LSE, London, UK, 2014, <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/60512/>.

¹⁶ Challenges to children's rights today: *What do children think?*, Council of Europe, April 2015, chapter 11.

7. RACISM, HATE SPEECH AND RADICALISATION

The recent economic crisis has deeply affected social cohesion in many member States, which may eventually threaten both the rule of law and democracy¹⁷. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) speaks of “scapegoating” and notes an increase in hate speech against vulnerable groups and in racist violence¹⁸. The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights has raised the need to tackle sexist forms of hate speech against women and girls.¹⁹ Radicalisation of children and youth is another issue of concern and calls for more investments into education for tolerance and intercultural competencies.

IV. PRIORITY AREAS

To address the issues outlined above, four priority areas have been identified. This chapter describes these areas, which are all anchored in and build upon the UNCRC, the European Convention on Human Rights, and Council of Europe standards protecting children’s rights. The actions envisaged to implement these priority areas, as well as performance indicators for their evaluation, are described in the Annex.

1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL CHILDREN

The UNCRC recognises the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. The European Social Charter (revised) grants children the right to appropriate social, legal and economic protection. According to the UNCRC and relevant Council of Europe standards, all rights are to be granted without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other status.²⁰

1.1. ALLEVIATING THE EFFECT OF ECONOMIC AUSTERITY ON CHILDREN

The Council of Europe will promote the European Social Charter as a key set of minimum standards safeguarding the rights of families and children, which is particularly relevant in times of economic austerity.²¹ Special attention will be given to follow-up the conclusions of the European Committee of Social Rights on articles relevant for children. Member States are encouraged to be guided by the Council of Europe Recommendations on child-friendly social services and on child-friendly health²² services to strengthen child protection mechanisms, notably in times of economic austerity.

¹⁷ *State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Europe. Report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe*, Council of Europe, May 2015.

¹⁸ Annual Report of ECRI’s Activities 2012 (CRI(2013)42).

¹⁹ “Hate speech against women should be specifically tackled”, *Human Rights Comment*, Commissioner for Human Rights, 6 March 2014.

²⁰ UNCRC, Article 2.1; Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, paragraphs 31 and 32.

²¹ See Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1995(2014) and Recommendation 2044(2014) on Ending child poverty in Europe.

²² Recommendation CM/Rec(2011)12 on children’s rights and social services friendly to children and families; Guidelines on child-friendly health care, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 September 2011.

1.2. GUIDING AND SUPPORTING PARENTS

Families should be afforded all necessary protection and assistance in order to fulfil their crucially important role for children and society. With a view to strengthening positive and non-violent upbringing, the Council of Europe will continue to promote the Recommendation CM/Rec(2006)19 on policy to support positive parenting. Based on this Recommendation and other relevant standards in the field of new media, guidance on respectful and rights-based parenting in the digital age will be developed and disseminated.

1.3. COUNTERING DISCRIMINATION

The right to non-discrimination is a cross-cutting issue, which will be addressed under all objectives set out in this Strategy.

In doing so, the Council of Europe will give specific attention to the situation of children in alternative care and provide guidance to professionals in this field in implementing a child-rights based and participatory approach to their work.

Stereotypes against Roma children will be addressed through developing a child-friendly version of the “Dosta” Campaign.

The Council of Europe work to combat gender stereotypes and sexism, including in media and education²³, is of direct relevance to countering discrimination of children on the grounds of sex. Other relevant and recent standards with a gender component include CM Recommendation (2015)2 on gender mainstreaming in sport and CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights.

Based on Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, the Council of Europe will assess the need for undertaking research on the situation of LGBT and intersex children as regards the realisation of their rights.

²³ See objective 1 of the Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality 2014-2017 and first annual report on its implementation.

2. PARTICIPATION OF ALL CHILDREN

The European Convention on Human Rights grants to everyone the right to freedom of expression. The UNCRC grants children the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them. Their views need to be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. Optional Protocol 3 to the UNCRC on a Communications Procedure allows children or their representatives to bring a complaint before the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Particular attention should be paid to the opportunities for participation of children in vulnerable situations.

2.1. PROMOTING CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE

The Council of Europe will provide guidance on how to ensure children's right to participate in practice by promoting Recommendation Rec(2012)2 on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18. It will also support member States in using the Council of Europe's Child Participation Assessment Tool as a means to measure progress in promoting the rights of children to participate in matters concerning them.

2.2. EMPOWERING CHILDREN IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention), the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention), and the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (Convention on Data Protection) must be ratified and implemented by all Council of Europe member States. These Conventions, together with the relevant non-binding standards, provide the basis for further work necessary to address challenges children face in the digital world.

To tackle the opportunities and challenges of the digital world for children in an integrated manner, the Council of Europe will develop comprehensive Guidelines for governments and the education sector. Communication tools will be created and disseminated to empower children in making full use of the potential of the Internet and in becoming responsible digital citizens through building their resilience and ensuring their well-being, safety and development in the online world.²⁴ In implementing this objective, particular attention will be paid to the needs of children in vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities.

2.3. STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATION IN AND THROUGH SCHOOLS

The Council of Europe will strengthen the opportunities for children's participation in the school setting and the democratic governance of schools by supporting the development of citizenship and human rights education in its member states, in the framework of the implementation of the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. Children's participation in the 2nd review of the implementation of the Charter will be facilitated. Peer-to-peer learning among the member states will be supported through the

²⁴ This objective will be aligned with the Council of Europe Internet (Governance) Strategy, which is currently being developed under the authority of the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI).

pilot projects scheme “Human Rights and Democracy in Action” jointly funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe²⁵.

2.4. REACHING OUT TO CHILDREN

The Council of Europe will continue to involve and consult children whenever possible in the development, implementation and evaluation of child-related standards, policies and activities of the Council of Europe. In doing so, special emphasis will be given to the participation of children in vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities, children in care, children from minorities, and children in conflict with the law. Efforts will be reinforced to reach out to children and inform them about their rights through websites, applications, games, publications and other child-friendly tools.

3. A LIFE FREE FROM VIOLENCE FOR ALL CHILDREN

The UNCRC obliges States to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. The European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter protects children against the physical and moral hazards to which they are exposed.

3.1. PROMOTING INTEGRATED STRATEGIES TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE

The Council of Europe will continue to act as a regional driver and co-ordinator of initiatives to eliminate violence against children in Europe and to support the mandates of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children, as well as the UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. In this capacity, the Council of Europe will support member States in developing integrated national strategies to protect children from violence as set out in Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)10 on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence.

3.2. COMBATING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The Council of Europe will promote, monitor and support the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention, in particular through the work of the Committee of the Parties to the Convention. Similarly, it will promote, monitor and support the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence through their respective monitoring mechanisms and other Council of Europe instruments that contribute to eradicating all forms of sexual violence.

A European day of action to fight against sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children will be launched on 18 November 2015/16²⁶. The day will be dedicated to member States’ action to

²⁵ Subject to the financial contribution from the European Commission.

²⁶ Subject to decision by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

raise awareness of this scourge and to encourage states to change legislation and practice, to better protect children, to prevent violence and to encourage action on the part of all stakeholders. Taking into consideration the actions and results of its Network to stop sexual violence against children in 2011-2015 in the framework of the ONE in FIVE Campaign, the Parliamentary Assembly will continue promoting the ratification and effective implementation of the Lanzarote Convention, and will cooperate to make the European Day a success.

3.3. PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM OTHER SPECIFIC FORMS OF VIOLENCE

The Council of Europe will promote the effective elimination of corporal punishment of children in all settings, including within the home, both in law and in practice. Member States will be supported in raising awareness about alternatives to corporal punishment and positive and non-violent parenting.

The Council of Europe will support awareness raising actions and campaigns on the role of citizenship and human rights education in addressing violence at school.

The Council of Europe will encourage the signature, ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), in particular through the work of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), with a view to protecting girls from gender-based violence and all children who have witnessed it, and to protecting all children from experiencing or witnessing domestic violence.

The Council of Europe will support member States in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, in particular through the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA).

4. ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL CHILDREN

According to the UNCRC, children shall be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting them. Furthermore, States Parties to the UNCRC recognize the right of every child in conflict with the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity, and taking into account the child's age and the desirability of his or her reintegration into society. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

4.1. PROMOTING CHILD-FRIENDLY JUSTICE

The Council of Europe will promote the implementation of the Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly justice²⁷ through a range of actions implemented by the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ), the Programme on Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) and other relevant bodies. In doing so, the Council will continue to work closely with the

²⁷ Guidelines on child friendly justice adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 17 November 2010. Please also see Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 2010(2014) "Child-friendly juvenile justice: from rhetoric to reality".

European Commission, the Fundamental Rights Agency, as well as UNICEF and the Council of Baltic Sea States.

4.2. PROTECTING CHILDREN IN THE CONTEXT OF DETENTION

The Council of Europe will support member States in implementing the European Rules for juvenile offenders subject to sanctions or measures²⁸, which provide that juvenile offenders²⁹ should only be deprived of their liberty as a last resort and for the shortest possible period of time. It will promote the implementation of the Standards of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)³⁰ regarding the protection of children in detention from ill-treatment and violence and look into the possibility of addressing the situation of children with imprisoned parents.

4.3. PROVIDING A SAFE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILIES

The Council of Europe will promote the implementation of the Council of Europe standards on family law, including the European Convention on the Adoption of Children (Revised), the European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights, and the Recommendations and Guidelines on family mediation (1998/2007), policy to support positive parenting (2006), and child relocation (2015). The Council will evaluate the need to undertake action on current challenges to children's best interests in the context of family affairs, such as divorce and family breakup, the rights of children of LGBT parents and of children's rights in the context of new technologies and bioethics. Particular attention will be paid to the assessment and determination process of the best interests of the child in family matters³¹.

²⁸ Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)11 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the European Rules for juvenile offenders subject to sanctions or measures.

²⁹ "Juvenile offender" means any person below the age of 18 who is alleged to have or who has committed an offence.

³⁰ CPT/Inf/E (2002) 1 - Rev. 2015

³¹ Decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the Conclusions of the Conference on the "Best Interests of the Child", Brussels, 9-10 December 2014 at its meeting of 15 April 2015 (DD(2015)266); General Comment No. 14 (2013) of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration.

V. DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

The Council of Europe intends to deliver this Strategy through a continued focus on implementation of existing standards, sustainable partnerships, targeted communication and evaluation of performance.

1. MAKING THE STANDARDS WORK FOR CHILDREN

To make the objectives set out in this Strategy into a reality for children, the Council of Europe will concentrate its resources on the *implementation of existing standards*. Increased efforts will be put into co-operation activities wherever a need is expressed by a member State and resources are made available, for instance through voluntary contributions by member States or Joint Programmes. Children's rights issues will be mainstreamed into relevant co-operation projects and activities of other sectors, where appropriate.

Based on the achievements under the previous Strategy, children's rights will continue to be systematically addressed in the Council of Europe's thematic and country-based monitoring of Conventions. The focus will be on giving visibility and support to member States in following up the conclusions of monitoring mechanisms concerning children's rights. This will be achieved, *inter alia*, through a more systematic co-operation with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Given the existence of a wide spectrum of up-to-date Council of Europe legal standards on children's rights, the development of any new standards will be subject to a thorough assessment of needs and feasibility. Children's rights will continue to be mainstreamed into all relevant new Conventions and Recommendations developed by the Committee of Ministers.

2. INVOLVING ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

The implementation of this Strategy depends on many actors, including member States, international organisations, civil society, and ombudspersons for children.

[Paragraph on co-operation with member States / inter-governmental working methods / Network of National Co-ordinators to be inserted following discussions of the DECS-ENF]

Based on a Joint Declaration by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Executive Director of UNICEF of 2007, both organisations seek to further reinforce their co-operation, including through exploring possible regional co-operation on child-friendly justice. The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children as well as the UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), are valuable partners in the Council of Europe's efforts to stop all forms of violence against children.

Through the priorities set out in this Strategy, the Council of Europe aims at contributing to the ratification and implementation of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and on a Communications Procedure, as well as to the implementation of the post 2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda.

Furthermore, the Council of Europe will continue its close co-operation with the European Union, in particular the European Commission and the Fundamental Rights Agency, which are

key partners in promoting the implementation of Council of Europe standards. Possibilities to strengthen this co-operation even further will be explored.

The Council of Europe will also continue to co-operate closely with the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF).

The Council of Europe Conference of INGOs, umbrella NGOs such as Eurochild, as well as national NGOs, are important implementing partners for the Council of Europe. Ways to increase transparency and efficiency of the co-operation with civil society will be further explored.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights and all relevant steering, expert committees and monitoring bodies will play an important role in implementing this Strategy. The Council of Europe Development Bank can provide loans to its member countries to co-finance infrastructure projects that benefit children.

The Council of Europe's work on children's rights will continue to be co-ordinated by the Children's Rights Division within the Directorate General of Democracy. The Intersecretariat Task Force on Children's Rights will facilitate this task.

3. COMMUNICATING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Raising the awareness of children's rights among children, parents, carers, professionals and policy makers is an enormous task, which the Council of Europe is determined to fulfil throughout the Strategy period. More efforts will be put into online and audiovisual communication tools and the further development of the website www.coe.int/children into a European hub with comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information on children's rights.

4. EVALUATING PERFORMANCE

The Secretariat will report to the Committee of Ministers on the implementation of this Strategy every two years. The reports will evaluate progress against the objectives set out in this Strategy with reference to the deliverables and key performance indicators set out in the action table (see Annex).

COUNCIL OF EUROPE STRATEGY FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 2016- 2019/21

ANNEX

ACTION TABLE AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

This list is a non-exhaustive rolling document. Activities may be cancelled or added depending on demand by member States, necessity, feasibility, availability of resources and other external factors.

The performance indicators will be finalised and outcomes for each objective defined after the DECS-ENF has decided upon the duration of the Strategy (4 vs. 6 years).

The entity mentioned first is the leading entity for this particular action.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	ENTITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1. EQUAL CHANCES FOR ALL CHILDREN			
1.1. Alleviating the effect of economic insecurity on children	Monitoring of the implementation of relevant rights in the Social Charter and Revised Social Charter by the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR)	DGI – ESC	Conclusions by the ECSR published in January 2016
	Awareness raising on the ECSR Conclusions with respect to children’s rights	DGII – Children DGI – ESC	ECSR conclusions publicised on websites, through NGO networks and at conferences
	Communication of ECSR Conclusions to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child	DGII – Children DGI - ESC	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is aware and refers to ECSR conclusions
	Organisation of at least 1 meeting with member States on following up the ECSR conclusions in the field of children’s rights	PACE DGI – ESC DGII – Children	Member States have received guidance and/or shared good practice on following up ECSR conclusions
	Capacity building for ombudspersons for children on advocating children’s rights in the context of austerity measures	DGII – Children DGI – ESC	At least 10 ombudspersons for children have undergone capacity building on ECSR conclusions regarding children.
	Targeted awareness raising among governments, civil society and professional networks of the Recommendation on social services friendly to children and families with a view to its implementation in all member States	DGII – Children	Relevant government and civil society interlocutors in all member States are identified, made aware of the Recommendation and encouraged to translate and disseminate it. Text is available in ... non-official languages
	Adoption of a Recommendation and a Resolution on championing children’s rights in times of austerity: local and regional authorities’ responsibilities	Congress	At least ... local authorities have developed child-friendly services including training on children’s rights for their staff and undertake children’s budgeting

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	ENTITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1.2. Guiding and supporting parents	Development of guidance on respectful and rights-based parenting in the digital age, based on Rec(2006)19 on policy to support positive parenting	DGII – Children	Tool on parenting in the digital age to be taken up and adapted by member States is developed
	Development of an online repository to promote positive and non-violent parenting (see 3.3.)	DGII-Children	See 3.3.
1.3. Countering discrimination	Continue to promote the booklets “Children and young people in care – discover your rights!” and “Securing Children’s rights – A guide for professionals working in alternative care” in the framework of a multi-annual project to be implemented with SOS Children’s Villages International and other partners	DGII – Children	t.b.d. based on the lessons learned from the pilot training course in Budapest in autumn 2015
	Produce and disseminate a child-friendly version of the Campaign “Dosta! Enough! Go beyond prejudice, meet the Roma”	DGII – Roma DGII – Children	Campaign materials produced, tested by children, launched, translated and used in ... member States
	Identify need for research or data collection on discrimination of LGBT children and intersex children and undertake action if necessary	DGII – SOGI DGII – Children DGI – Justice	Needs assessment carried out and research undertaken and published if applicable

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	ENTITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
2. PARTICIPATION OF ALL CHILDREN			
2.1. Promoting children's right to participate	Multi-annual project to support member States in using the Council of Europe's Child Participation Assessment Tool, to be determined on the basis of the lessons learned from the current testing in 3 pilot countries	DGII – Children DGII – Youth	Child Participation Assessment tool used in ... member States.
	Dissemination and translation of Recommendation Rec(2012)2 on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18	DGII – Children DGII – Youth	Relevant government and non-state actors in all member States are identified and made aware of the Guidelines. Text is available in at least ... non-official languages.
2.2. Empowering children in the digital world	Subject to assessment of needs and feasibility, develop Guidelines for member States on an integrated approach to children's rights in the digital environment	DGII – Children DGI – CDMSI	Guidelines developed, adopted by Committee of Ministers, and disseminated to member States and other relevant actors.
	Development of Policy Guidelines on Digital Citizenship Education and a set of descriptors of the digital citizenship education competence in curricula	DGII – Education DGII – Children DGI - CDMSI	t.b.d. by the Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE)
	Development of application(s) on safely navigating the Internet for children of different age groups	DGII – Children	Applications developed, translated and disseminated for at least 1 age group
	Subject to assessment of needs and feasibility as well as resources, undertake a participatory research project on the digital lives of children with disabilities	DGII – Children DGII – Disability	Research project completed and research published, widely disseminated, used and referenced
2.3. Strengthening participation in and through schools	Support the implementation of the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education through the pilot project scheme "Human Rights and Democracy in Action" jointly funded by the EU and the CoE	DGII – Education DGII – Children?	At least 6 pilot projects with participation of at least 30 member States are supported. A database of tools on various aspects of citizenship and human rights education is available (EC contribution provided)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	ENTITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
	Organise a major event / conference on “Education for Democracy” in order to facilitate a high profile debate on the role of education in building sustainable democratic societies, as part of the review process of the implementation of the CoE Charter on citizenship and human rights education, Strasbourg 2017	DGII – Education DGII – Children	Children’s perspective is represented in the review process of the implementation of the CoE Charter
2.4. Strengthening participation in and through schools	Promote the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education through the pilot project scheme jointly funded by the EU and the CoE	DGII – Education DGII – Children	At least ... pilot projects completed in ... member States
	High-level conference to give visibility to and assess the implementation of the Charter, Strasbourg 2017	DGII – Education DGII – Children	
2.5. Reaching out to children	Develop and regularly update a “Children’s corner” in the website www.coe.int/children	DGII – Children	Children’s corner exists and is widely used by children and professionals working with children
	Dissemination of existing and development of new child-friendly audio-visual materials on children’s rights	DGII – Children	Materials are widely disseminated, ...new products are developed and available in ... languages.
	Ensure genuine and systematic child participation in relevant Council of Europe policy making and other child rights related activities	DGII - Children	Children’s views have been sought and considered in all major activities on children’s rights
	Support member States in developing systematic child participation in policy making through capacity building and exchange of good practices	DGII – Children	1 capacity building event on child participation organised for member State representatives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	ENTITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
3. A LIFE FREE FROM VIOLENCE FOR ALL CHILDREN			
3.1. Promoting an integrated approach to violence	Highlight the relevance of CM/Rec(2009)10 on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence in the framework of the EU work on integrated child protection systems	DGII – Children	Recommendation referenced in the EU contribution
	Evaluation of member States' progress in adopting national strategies for the protection of children from violence in line with CM/Rec(2009)10 and the UN Secretary General's Report on Violence against Children. Definition of follow-up action based on the conclusions	DGII – Children	Evaluation report published and at least 1 follow-up activity completed
	Contribute to the 2016 Report of the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children	DGII – Children DGII – Education	
3.2. Combating sexual violence	Promote, monitor and support the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention through the Committee of the Parties to the Convention	DGII – Children	2 nd (and 3 rd ?) implementation report prepared and adopted; number of ratifications increased to ... and of accessions by non-member States to ...
	Organisation of the European Day of Action on the Fight against Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children on 18 November of every year	DGII – Children PACE Congress	At least ... member States per year organise events in the framework of the European Day
	Promote, monitor and support the implementation of the Budapest Convention through the Committee of the Parties to the Convention (TC-Y)	DGI – Cybercrime	TC-Y
	Organisation of a seminar with national associations of local authorities from 47 member States to raise awareness of the 1in5 campaign and the Congress Pact of Towns and Regions to stop sexual violence against children	Congress	National associations lobby their members representing cities and towns to sign the Pact: the number of signatories is doubled (from 60 to 120) by the end of the reference period.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	ENTITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
3.3. Protecting children from other specific forms of violence	Development of an online repository of educational and awareness raising tools promoting positive and non-violent parenting in co-operation with the European Commission	DGII - Children	Existence and ample use of the online repository
	High-level Conference on the elimination of corporal punishment, Austria, 2016	DGII – Children	
	Raise awareness of the role of citizenship and human rights education in addressing violence, including bullying	DG – Education DGII – Children	Educational multimedia materials on violence at school are available, accessible and are in demand
	Assessment of the need to undertake action on bullying against LGBT children and young people and undertaking action if applicable	DGII – Children	Needs assessment carried out and action undertaken if appropriate
	Promote, monitor and support the implementation of the Istanbul Convention through the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).	DGII - GREVIO	GREVIO conclusions regarding children are published and lead to legislative / policy change in member States
	Promote, monitor and support the implementation of the Anti-Trafficking Convention through the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)	DGII - Trafficking	GRETA conclusions regarding children are published and lead to legislative / policy change in member States
	Disseminate the findings of the 2 nd evaluation round of GRETA, which includes a range of questions on child trafficking, to children’s rights stakeholders, including the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child	DGII – Children DGII - Trafficking	Children’s rights stakeholders are aware of GRETA conclusions regarding children.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	ENTITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
4. ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL CHILDREN			
4.1. Promoting child-friendly justice	Data collection on children's involvement in judicial proceedings in Member States (non-EU countries)	DGI - Justice	
	Regional activities to exchange and develop good practices on child-friendly justice initiatives	DGI – Justice	
	Data collection on ... in the framework of the CDCJ	DGI - Justice	
	Regional conferences and co-operation activities	DGI – Justice	
	Develop a series of protocols and guidelines for legal professionals in contact with children in the justice system	DGI – Justice	
	Training on child-friendly justice and children rights for legal professionals	DGI – HELP DGI- Justice	One new model curriculum developed and updated; 8 trainings courses delivered to pilot groups of judges, prosecutors and lawyers in 8 target countries; self-learning materials made available to all interested legal professionals on the HELP website
	Training on child-friendly justice and children rights for legal professionals	DGI – HELP	
	Promote the Guidelines on child-friendly justice through child-friendly tools (video clips etc.)	DGII – Children	Child-friendly tools on the Guidelines have been produced, translated and widely disseminated
4.2. Protecting children in the context of detention	Strengthen the protection of children deprived of their liberty from torture and other ill-treatment through the work of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)	DGI – CPT	CPT conclusions regarding children are published and lead to legislative / policy change in member States

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	ACTION	ENTITY	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
	Subject to assessment of needs and feasibility, undertake research on the situation of children with imprisoned parents and evaluate the added value of Council of Europe action in this field	DGI – PCCP DGII – Children	
	Parliamentary Campaign to End Immigration Detention of Children	PACE AS/Mig	
4.3. Providing a safe legal framework for families	Evaluate the need to undertake action on current challenges to children’s best interests in the context of family affairs such as divorce and family breakup and the rights of children of LGBT parents.	DGII – Children DGI – Justice DGII – SOGI	Needs assessment accomplished and follow-up action taken where applicable
	Evaluate the need to undertake further specific action to address children’s rights issues in the biomedical field, including in relation to the application of new technologies.	DG I – Bioethics DG II – Children	Expert study on the basis of existing instruments