

# Ending all forms of violence against children by 2030:

The Council of Europe's contribution  
to the 2030 Agenda and the  
Sustainable Development Goals

Information Note – July 2017

Building a Europe  
for and with children

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# What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

**O**n 1 January 2016, the World began implementing the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, an ambitious and universal vision, based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as 169 associated targets, which are all integrated, indivisible and interlinked.

■ This agenda, adopted on 25 September 2015, seeks to put an end to poverty, and facilitate sustainable development, by the year 2030. Building on the success of the Millennium Development Goals, it addresses the three pillars of sustainable development, namely the social, economic and environmental, in an integrated and crosscutting manner. The Goals are the end-result of a process that involved input from Governments, civil society, private sector and citizens, including children. They are relevant for all countries, which need to build the SDGs into their national policies and plans in order to achieve them. Governments have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review, at the national, regional and global levels the progress made in implementing the 2030 Agenda over the coming 15 years.

■ The strengthening of partnerships is one of the global goals. Partnerships should bring together Governments, civil society, the private sector, the United Nations system, regional organisations such as the Council of Europe and other actors to mobilise all available resources. Political leadership, guidance, follow-up, review of progress of the SDGs’ implementation at the global level is ensured through the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development. In 2017, the HLPF will focus on “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world” (Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17). “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies” will be the focus in 2018 (Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17) and “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality” in 2019 (Goals 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17).

## Agenda 2030 targets to end violence against children

**T**he 2030 Agenda includes a specific target to end all forms of violence against children (16.2). Abuse, neglect and exploitation of children are also mainstreamed across several other targets. In the spirit of an integrated approach, it is vital to tackle violence against children through broader efforts, such as the promotion of high-quality education, and gender equality. The following goals and targets are particularly relevant for eradicating violence against children:



### **Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all**

■ **4.7** By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation for cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

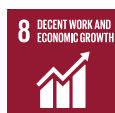
■ **4.a** Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.



### **Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

■ **5.2** Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and in private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

■ **5.3** Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation.



### **Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

■ **8.7** Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all forms.



## Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

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■ **11.7** By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children (...) and persons with disabilities.



## Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

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■ **16.1** Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

■ **16.2** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

■ **16.3** Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice to all.

■ **16.9** By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.

■ **16.a** Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence



## Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

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■ **17.16** Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

■ **17.17** Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

# The Council of Europe's contribution to the 2030 Agenda and SDGs' targets to end violence against children

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**T**he Council of Europe is the European continent's leading human rights organisation. Its action focuses on the promotion and protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law and, as such, it entails the promotion and protection of the rights of over 150 million children in Europe.

■ Recognising the intrinsic links between sustainable development and the protection of human rights, and building on its standards, intergovernmental platforms and monitoring bodies, the Council of Europe is committed to working with and supporting its 47 member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda through a wide range of actions:

- ▶ Providing States and other stakeholders with a **platform** to discuss achievements and to identify and address challenges in the implementation of Agenda 2030 in Europe, including by supporting the development of benchmarks and indicators at national level to measure progress;
- ▶ promoting the implementation of European and global standards, in particular through changes to national legal frameworks and the adoption of integrated policies and other measures;
- ▶ providing **guidance and support for the implementation** of these standards, through recommendations, guidelines and resolutions of its various mechanisms and bodies;
- ▶ assisting in the **collection of data, information and good practice** for the promotion and review of progress towards the SDGs;
- ▶ promoting accountability and ascertaining States' level of implementation and compliance through **monitoring bodies and committees**;
- ▶ **funding projects and activities** whose results bring along the necessary outcomes at national or regional level, in line with the SDGs, including with the involvement of children as well as other national and international stakeholders.

■ The Council of Europe is actively engaged in the eradication of all forms of violence against children at pan-European level. “A life free from violence” is one of the five key priority areas of the current Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021). The Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child (CAHENF) supports and reviews the implementation of the strategy and therefore plays a crucial role in supporting States and the international community in their efforts to meet the SDGs.

■ The Council of Europe Policy Guidelines on Integrated National Strategies for the Protection of Children from Violence aim to be a source of inspiration for States striving to adopt a holistic approach to violence against children and to guarantee children a childhood free from violence. The guidelines contain detailed proposals on how to develop an integrated national strategy on the rights of the child and the eradication of violence against children. The strategy is defined as a multidisciplinary and systematic framework integrated into the national planning process, rooted in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and bringing together all stakeholders. It should include realistic and time-bound targets, be supported by adequate human and financial resources, be based on current scientific knowledge (with regard to what works) and be systematically evaluated.

## Examples of relevant frameworks and actions to end violence against children

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### **Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all**

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■ In April 2016, Ministers of Education of the member states have asked the Council of Europe to take a regional role in measuring progress towards common long-term objectives on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education, in line with global efforts to make progress towards Target 4.7 of SDG 4. All 47 members of the Council of Europe have adopted the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, whose implementation is pursued with member states and in cooperation with NGOs. A Reference Framework of Competencies for Democratic Culture has also been put in place.



### **Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

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■ The Council of Europe has three ground-breaking and comprehensive conventions in the area of human dignity that are of relevance notably to achieving Goal 5 and Goal 16: the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention); the Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Lanzarote Convention) and the Convention on action against trafficking in human beings. All three conventions are open for accession by non-member states.

■ The Istanbul Convention requires States to condemn all forms of discrimination and violence against women, including girls under the age of 18, and to take the necessary legislative and other measures to prevent it. States should take steps to include teaching materials on matters of gender-equality (Article 4(1)). Follow-up on the implementation of the Convention is ensured by its monitoring bodies, GREVIO and the Committee of the Parties. The elimination of harmful practices, such as child early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation, are addressed under the Istanbul convention. Female genital mutilation is considered a form of torture under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and thus subject to the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights. The Anti-Trafficking Convention makes particular reference to children’s vulnerability in trafficking, and requires States to take special account of their need for special protection and assistance. Its implementation is monitored by an independent body, GRETA and a Committee of the Parties.

■ The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-17 has as its central goal the empowerment of women and girls, and hence the effective realisation of gender equality. Its dual-track approach includes a focus on specific policies and actions, including positive action when appropriate, in critical areas for the advancement of women and for the realisation of de facto gender equality, as well as on the promotion, co-ordination, monitoring, review, co-ordination and evaluation of the process of gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes. The Gender Equality Commission guides the implementation of the Strategy.





## **Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

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■ The European Social Charter sets a minimum age of employment for occupations that are considered dangerous or unhealthy (Article 7(2)). Its compliance is monitored on a regular basis by the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR).

■ Forced labour is forbidden under Article 4(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights. The often closely-related phenomenon of human trafficking is also encompassed by Article 4, as well as by the set of measures set out in the Convention on action against trafficking in human beings, which are relevant in the context of target 8.7 (take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition of the worst form of child labour, including recruitment and abuse of child soldiers and by 2021 end child labour in all its forms).



## **Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

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■ The right to life is protected under Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights, while freedom from torture and inhuman and degrading treatment is encompassed by Article 3. These rights are enjoyed by adults and children alike, and protect them against violence. The European Social Charter, moreover, makes particular mention of the need to protect children and young persons against violence or exploitation (Article 17(1)(b)).

■ The Lanzarote Convention is the most ambitious and comprehensive legal instrument on the protection of children against sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, criminalising all possible kinds of sexual offences against children, setting measures for the protection of child victims, for prosecuting perpetrators and promoting international cooperation. The Lanzarote Committee issues regular reports on the implementation of the Convention by the State Parties and facilitates the collection, analysis and exchange of information and good practice to build States' capacity against such abuses.

■ The Council of Europe has undertaken several highly successful awareness-raising initiatives, such as the ONE in FIVE campaign, with the active involvement of the Parliamentary Assembly, or the "Underwear Rule" campaign, focusing on children and parents. The 18th of November marks the annual European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, which aims to raise awareness, facilitate open discussion, and promote the Lanzarote Convention.

■ The Council of Europe has consistently supported a ban on corporal punishment in the resolutions of both the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly. The campaign "Raise your hand against smacking" aimed at raising awareness of the matter. Putting an end to corporal punishment remains a priority within the 2016-21 Strategy.

■ The digital environment presents new risks in terms of children's exposure to violence. The Budapest Convention on Cybercrime can act as a key tool here, through the work of the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY). The Council has also initiated a No Hate Speech Campaign, which continues to this day, while a Parliamentary Assembly Resolution on Preventing the radicalisation of children and young people by fighting the root causes, recognised firmly that children subject to radicalisation were victims of violence. The Council has also done work to raise children's awareness of their rights and risks online; it will continue to do so as a key priority under the 2016-21 Strategy.

■ Equal access to justice and the adaptation of the judicial system to the specific rights and needs of children is promoted through the Council of Europe's Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice of 2010, while the Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies (2016-2019) provides an impetus for human rights-centred education, combating stereotypes, and effective integration measures.

This information note contains a brief overview of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in relation to **ending all forms of violence against children** as well as an illustration of the many ways in which the Council of Europe's work contributes to the 2030 Agenda and the realisation of these goals.

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

- ▶ [www.coe.int/children](http://www.coe.int/children)
- ▶ [www.endviolenceagainstchildren.org](http://www.endviolenceagainstchildren.org)
- ▶ [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment)

**www.coe.int**

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation.

It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union.

All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.