



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

List of issues prior to submission of the combined fifth to seventh periodic reports of Estonia*

1. The State party is requested to submit in writing the information requested below (21,200 words maximum), if possible before 15 March 2023. The replies should take into consideration the Committee's recommendations contained in its concluding observations on the combined second to fourth periodic reports of the State party,¹ adopted on 3 February 2017. The Committee may take up all aspects of children's rights set out in the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto during the dialogue with the State party.

I. New developments

2. The Committee requests the State party to provide:

(a) Information on the adoption or reform of laws, policies and programmes, and any other type of measures taken, such as the creation or reform of institutions, that are significant for the implementation of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol thereto on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography;

(b) Information on the measures taken to ensure the protection of children's rights in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and to mitigate the adverse effects of the pandemic, including on children's mental health, in view of the Committee's statement of 8 April 2020 on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children;

(c) Any other information that the State party considers relevant in this regard and that is not covered in the replies to the questions below, including information on obstacles and challenges faced.

3. The Committee also requests the State party to provide information on how a child rights-based approach is integrated into the planning, implementation and monitoring of measures for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including with regard to the participation of children and data collection, and how such measures promote the realization of children's rights under the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto.

* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group on 1 October 2021.

¹ [CRC/C/EST/CO/2-4](#).



II. Rights under the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6))

Legislation

4. Please provide information on the measures taken to:

(a) Enforce and evaluate legislation in areas covered by the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto, including the Child Protection Act – for example, budgets allocated, regulations adopted and child-rights impact assessments undertaken;

(b) Regulate the obligations of local governments with regard to by-laws establishing the position of child protection workers.

Comprehensive policy, strategy and coordination

5. Please provide information on the following:

(a) Measures taken to develop a comprehensive policy and strategy covering all areas of children's rights under the Convention;

(b) The mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of such a policy and strategy, and the main findings of the monitoring and evaluation;

(c) The participation of children in the development, implementation and evaluation of such a policy and strategy;

(d) Measures taken to strengthen the mandate of the Child Protection Council that coordinates activities relating to the implementation of the Convention at different levels.

Allocation of resources

6. Please provide information on the following:

(a) Measures taken to introduce a child-rights approach to budgeting, at both the State and local levels, including a tracking system for the allocation and use of resources for children in budgets;

(b) Budget allocations for children in vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities, children from disadvantaged households, children belonging to language and ethnic minority groups, children who are victims of abuse, children in situations of migration and children in institutions;

(c) Mechanisms in place to ensure transparent and participatory budgeting, involving children and non-governmental organizations working in the area of children's rights;

(d) Measures taken to assess the impact of austerity measures, in particular in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, on children's rights.

Data collection

7. Please provide information on the measures taken to improve data collection to ensure that it covers all areas of the Convention, and in particular to:

(a) Develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated system for examining the situation of children in the State party;

(b) Ensure that adequate child-focused statistics, disaggregated by age, sex, disability, geographical location, ethnic and national origin and socioeconomic background, are collected and published in mainstream statistics on a regular basis;

(c) Improve the collection and analysis of data on children with disabilities, children in alternative care, children who are victims of all forms of violence, including

sexual violence, children who are victims of trafficking, asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children, stateless children and children with undetermined citizenship.

Independent monitoring

8. With regard to the Chancellor of Justice, please provide information on the measures taken to ensure the visibility of its mandate regarding children's rights, including with regard to complaints from children and among Russian-speaking children.

Dissemination, awareness-raising and training

9. Please describe the efforts made to:

(a) Disseminate and promote the provisions of the Convention, including in child-friendly formats;

(b) Provide systematic training on the provisions of the Convention, the Optional Protocols thereto and the Committee's concluding observations on the second to fourth reports of the State party to all relevant professionals;

(c) Integrate children's rights into the school curricula;

(d) Make the mechanisms of individual complaints known to children.

Cooperation with civil society

10. Please provide information on the following:

(a) Progress made in establishing a mechanism to systematically involve civil society and non-governmental organizations working in the area of children's rights in the implementation of the Convention, including the preparation of reports, policymaking, programming, budgeting and legislative processes concerning children's rights;

(b) Efforts made to improve funding and financing for non-governmental organizations working in the area of children's rights.

Children's rights and the business sector

11. Please inform the Committee about efforts made to engage the business sector on children's rights and to establish a regulatory child protection framework for companies operating under the jurisdiction of the State party, including policies, legislation, regulations, mechanisms for conducting child-rights impact assessments, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and access to justice, in order to report and address children's rights violations.

International cooperation

12. Please provide information on any planned increase to the official development assistance with a view to meeting the internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income.

B. Definition of the child (art. 1)

13. Please provide information on measures taken to ensure that the minimum age of marriage is 18 years and that it is applied without exception, and on measures taken to eliminate child marriage.

C. General principles (arts. 2–3, 6 and 12)

Non-discrimination

14. Please provide information on the measures taken to:

(a) Revise the Equal Treatment Act (2009) to expand its scope of protection against discrimination relevant to children in line with the recommendations of the Human Rights Committee² and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;³

(b) Raise the awareness of children and the public about the Equal Treatment Act;

(c) Provide effective remedies for children who are victims of discrimination and organizations representing them;

(d) Ensure that children in vulnerable situations, including children from economically disadvantaged households, children belonging to linguistic and ethnic minority groups, including Russian-speaking children, children in situations of migration, children with disabilities, and children who are victims of violence and of trafficking have access to essential services, housing, education, childcare facilities, health care, leisure and State support;

(e) Address discrimination, hate crime and harassment against children belonging to the above-mentioned groups, including the reported harassment of migrant families and children by border control authorities.

Best interests of the child

15. Please provide information on the development, and dissemination to all relevant professionals working with and for children, of the following:

(a) Policies, procedures, criteria and guidance to determine and consistently apply the best interests of the child as a primary consideration in programmes and administrative and judicial proceedings and decisions concerning children;

(b) An impact assessment of national legislation, policies and programmes, at the national and local levels, on the best interests of the child.

Respect for the views of the child

16. Please provide information about the measures taken to:

(a) Ensure the effective implementation of legislation recognizing the right of every child to be heard, according to his or her level of maturity, in all settings;

(b) Encourage, promote and support the participation of children, in particular children in vulnerable situations, including children with disabilities, children in situations of migration, children belonging to linguistic and ethnic minority groups, within the family and the community and in schools, including in relation to environmental issues, and ensure that their views are taken into account;

(c) Train professionals working with and for children on the right of the child to be heard.

D. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7–8 and 13–17)

17. Please provide information on the measures taken to prevent and reduce statelessness among children, including by establishing procedures for the identification and determination of persons as stateless, facilitating naturalization of children with undetermined citizenship, collecting data, disaggregated by relevant factors, on stateless children and considering acceding to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

² CCPR/C/EST/CO/4, para. 11.

³ E/C.12/EST/CO/3, para. 11.

E. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 37 (a) and 39)

Freedom of the child from all forms of violence

18. Please provide information on the following:

- (a) Existing policies, strategies and action plans to prevent and protect children from all forms of violence, in particular bullying and cyberbullying, including within the family, online and at school;
- (b) Implementation of the Child Protection Act with regard to the prohibition of corporal punishment of children and measures taken to promote positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline for parents, teachers and care professionals;
- (c) Existing detection, reporting, protection and follow-up mechanisms in cases of violence against children, including on the impact of the implementation of the memorandum on the domestic violence action plan, 2019–2023, on children;
- (d) Existing avenues for seeking justice for children who are victims of abuse and neglect;
- (e) Existing system to collect and analyse data on the prevalence and incidence of all forms of violence against children.

Sexual exploitation and abuse

19. Please provide information on the following:

- (a) Steps taken to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse of children, including raising awareness among both the public and professionals on child sexual abuse and exploitation;
- (b) Reporting, investigation and prosecution of, and sanctions imposed in, cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of children;
- (c) Measures taken to protect children from online sexual exploitation and abuse;
- (d) Progress made in establishing child-friendly facilities for forensic interviews for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse;
- (e) Existing support services for children who are victims of sexual exploitation and abuse;
- (f) Effect of the measures taken on the prevalence of sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

F. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9–11, 18 (1)–(2), 20–21, 25 and 27 (4))

Family environment

20. Please provide information on progress made with regard to the following:

- (a) Providing counselling and conciliation services at an affordable rate;
- (b) Protecting economic rights of women in de facto unions and of their children in case of separation;
- (c) Enforcing child support orders;
- (d) Introducing the right to family reunification under the Aliens Act;
- (e) Promoting equal sharing of family responsibilities and supporting parents in taking care of young children;
- (f) Eliminating child poverty.

Children deprived of a family environment

21. Please describe the steps taken to:

- (a) Ensure an adequate number of child protection workers;
- (b) Provide adequate support to families, with a view to avoiding separation, in particular for families of children with disabilities, and widely disseminate information about available support, including in Russian;
- (c) Phase out the institutionalization of children, with particular attention to children under 3 years of age, children who are victims of violence and children with disabilities, and specify human, technical and financial resources allocated to this end;
- (d) Support and facilitate family-based care for children, including for children with disabilities;
- (e) Establish operating standards for substitute home services, shelter services and foster care, and strengthen the capacity of professionals and foster parents to care for children, including those with special needs;
- (f) Ensure the periodic review of placement in alternative care, regularly monitor alternative care settings and establish a child-friendly complaint mechanism for the children concerned;
- (g) Provide support to children leaving care to enable them to reintegrate into family and society;
- (h) Protect the rights of children of incarcerated parents, including visitation rights.

G. Children with disabilities (art. 23)

22. Please provide information on the measures taken to:
- (a) Remove physical barriers, to enable effective access for children with disabilities to schools and other institutions and services;
 - (b) Develop and implement inclusive education, including by training and assigning an adequate number of specialized teachers and professionals to assist children with disabilities in integrated classes;
 - (c) Ensure access to specialized health and rehabilitation services for children with disabilities, including early detection and intervention programmes.

H. Basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 24, 26, 27 (1)–(3) and 33)

23. Please provide information on the measures taken to:
- (a) Address children's mental health and prevent adolescent suicide, and ensure that the necessary psychological and psychiatric services are available to children, including by equipping schools with multidisciplinary health professionals who can diagnose the early signs of mental health concerns;
 - (b) Address tobacco, alcohol and drug use by children, including through the use of awareness-raising activities, and introduce community-based drug dependence treatment;
 - (c) Regulate the organization of rehabilitation institutions for children with addiction problems to ensure that the rights of the children receiving treatment are fulfilled, including with respect to the restrictions on their freedom of movement;
 - (d) Combat obesity and overweightedness among children, and ensure an adequate provision of school meals;
 - (e) Provide access to sexual and reproductive health services to all children, in particular to children from disadvantaged backgrounds, children with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender children;
 - (f) Ensure access to antenatal and postnatal care;

(g) Safeguard environmental health and take into account the special vulnerabilities and needs of children in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of specific policies and programmes.

I. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28–31)

24. Please inform the Committee about the measures taken to:

(a) Address the decrease in the enrolment rates in primary education and the reasons for the increase in dropout rates, especially among boys;

(b) Review the language and integration policies to facilitate the acquisition of mastery in Estonian for children in Russian-speaking schools to ensure that they learn core subjects that are taught exclusively in Estonian;

(c) Ensure the availability of quality teachers, in particular in mathematics and science, including in Russian-speaking schools, and strengthen the status and benefits of teachers;

(d) Regulate preschool education and make it compulsory;

(e) Strengthen the quality, availability and affordability of preschool education for children in situations of vulnerability, including children from economically disadvantaged households, children belonging to linguistic and ethnic minorities, children in situations of migration and children with disabilities;

(f) Enhance the quality of vocational education and encourage boys to enrol in and complete such educational programmes;

(g) Cultivate environmental awareness in school and promote participation of children in environmental issues.

J. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32–33, 35–36, 37 (b)–(d) and 38–40)

Asylum-seeking, refugee and unaccompanied children and children in situations of migration

25. Please describe the measures taken to:

(a) End the detention of children for migration purposes;

(b) Provide adequate reception conditions for children and their families, especially in emergency situations;

(c) Strengthen the mechanism for the identification and assessment of special needs and vulnerability of children seeking asylum;

(d) Provide unaccompanied children immediately upon their arrival with qualified guardians and free legal representatives to represent them throughout the asylum proceedings;

(e) Establish mechanisms to monitor the quality of guardianship.

Sale, trafficking and abduction of children

26. Please provide information on the following:

(a) The investigation and prosecution of, and sanctions imposed in, cases of trafficking in persons involving children;

(b) Measures taken to strengthen the identification of children who are victims of trafficking;

(c) The rehabilitation and reintegration assistance and services provided to children who are victims of trafficking;

(d) Efforts made to prevent the trafficking of children and to address its root causes.

Administration of child justice

27. Please indicate the measures taken to:

(a) Establish a system of child justice and integrate restorative justice measures in child justice;

(b) Ensure that deprivation of liberty is used as a last resort and for the shortest possible period of time, promote alternatives to detention and ban solitary confinement for children;

(c) Improve conditions of detention, including with regard to access to education and health, privacy and confidentiality of correspondence and prevent violence between child detainees;

(d) Ensure that qualified and independent legal aid is made available to children in conflict with the law from the beginning of the procedure and throughout the legal proceedings.

K. Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

28. Please provide information on measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee contained in its concluding observations on the report of the State party submitted under article 12 (1) of the Optional Protocol.⁴ In particular, please indicate whether:

(a) The “sale of children” and “child pornography”, which are distinct from trafficking in persons, are defined and criminalized in accordance with articles 2 and 3, respectively, of the Optional Protocol;

(b) Children between the ages of 14 and 18 are explicitly protected from sexual exploitation in prostitution and their use in pornographic performances and materials;

(c) Children are not criminalized for consensual sharing of self-generated sexual images.

L. Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict

29. Please provide information on measures taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee contained in its concluding observations on the report of the State party submitted under article 8 (1) of the Optional Protocol.⁵

M. Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

30. Please provide information on efforts made to accede to the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure.

III. Statistical information and data

31. The statistical information and disaggregated data provided by the State party should cover the period since the consideration of its previous reports on the implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto. The data should be disaggregated by age, sex, ethnic origin, national origin, type of disability, geographical location and socioeconomic status, as well as by year or other relevant time frame.

⁴ [CRC/C/OPSC/EST/CO/1](#).

⁵ [CRC/C/OPAC/EST/CO/1](#).

32. The provision of tables presenting trends over the reporting period is recommended and explanations or comments on significant changes that have taken place over the reporting period should also be provided.

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6))

33. Please provide information on the budget lines regarding children and social sectors by indicating the amount and the proportion of each budget line in terms of the total national budget.

B. Definition of the child (art. 1)

34. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number and proportion of children under 18 years of age living in the State party.

C. General principles (arts. 2–3, 6 and 12)

35. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number of cases and prosecutions brought before the courts under the Equal Treatment Act on non-discrimination, and the sanctions issued to perpetrators.

36. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number of children who attempted or completed suicide.

D. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7–8 and 13–17)

37. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number of stateless children and children with undetermined citizenship.

E. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 37 (a) and 39)

38. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the following:

(a) Number of cases of violence against children, including corporal punishment, reported to the authorities, investigated and prosecuted, and the sanctions issued to perpetrators, further disaggregated by type of offence;

(b) Number and type of protective measures provided to children who are victims of violence.

F. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9–11, 18 (1)–(2), 20–21, 25 and 27 (4))

39. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number and proportion of families and children receiving economic and other type of support services.

40. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number of children in:

(a) Institutional care and average days of stay;

(b) Family-based and community-based care.

G. Children with disabilities (art. 23)

41. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, further disaggregated by type of disability, on the number of:

- (a) Children with disabilities;
- (b) Children with disabilities living with their families and living in family-based and community-based care;
- (c) Children with disabilities in inclusive education and in special schools;
- (d) Reported cases of inhuman or degrading treatment and neglect and sexual violence against children with disabilities placed in institutions, investigations and prosecutions carried out, and sentences imposed on the perpetrators.

H. Basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 24, 26, 27 (1)–(3) and 33)

42. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the following:

- (a) Number and rate of children with health insurance;
- (b) Number of paediatric and mental health services and professionals specialized in young children and adolescents, further disaggregated by region.

43. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number of:

- (a) Adolescent mothers;
- (b) Children abusing drugs or alcohol;
- (c) Malnourished and obese children;
- (d) Sexual and reproductive health services available to adolescents, further disaggregated by region.

44. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number and proportion of children living under the poverty line and in extreme poverty.

I. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28–31)

45. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the following:

- (a) Number and proportion of children aged between 16 and 18 years not attending school;
- (b) Number and proportion of children who have dropped out of school;
- (c) Number of children in Russian-speaking schools;
- (d) Number of children in special schools and in special classes in regular schools for children with special educational needs arising from disabilities;
- (e) Number and proportion of children attending early childhood education and the average years of attendance;
- (f) Number of children in public and private schools, including religious schools.

J. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32–33, 35–36, 37 (b)–(d) and 38–40)

46. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, and by country of origin, and accompanied or unaccompanied status, on the number of:

- (a) Asylum-seeking and refugee children;
- (b) Children in situations of migration;
- (c) Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children;

(d) Asylum-seeking and refugee children, and children in situations of migration, who have been detained, including in transit centres;

(e) Children expelled from the territory of the State party;

(f) Asylum-seeking and refugee children, and children in situations of migration, who are attending school and who have access to health care.

47. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, and by type of violation reported, on the following:

(a) Number of reported cases and the number of children who are victims of trafficking;

(b) Number of such children who have been provided with access to rehabilitation programmes;

(c) Number and percentage of such cases that have resulted in sanctions, with information on the country of origin of the perpetrator and the nature of the penalties imposed.

48. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, further disaggregated by type of crime, on the number of:

(a) Children in detention facilities and the average length of stay, further disaggregated by location of pretrial detention, such as in police cells or in prison;

(b) Children referred to diversion and non-custodial sentencing options.

K. Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

49. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number of:

(a) Reported cases of sale of children, sexual exploitation of children in prostitution and the use of children in pornographic performances and materials;

(b) Such cases that have been investigated, prosecuted and for which sanctions have been imposed;

(c) Children who are victims of such crimes who have been provided with recovery assistance or compensation.

L. Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict

50. Please provide data, disaggregated as described in paragraph 31 above, on the number of:

(a) Asylum-seeking and refugee children entering the State party from areas where children may have been recruited or used in hostilities;

(b) Children who benefit from physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration measures.