



**International Convention for
the Protection of All Persons
from Enforced Disappearance**

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Committee on Enforced Disappearances

**Additional information submitted by Portugal under
article 29 (4) of the Convention***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to article 29 of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Portugal submits the follow-up to the Concluding Observations adopted by the Committee. Pursuant to follow-up procedures, States parties are requested to report back to the Committee within one year on measures taken to give effect to the follow-up recommendations.

II. Follow up information on the concluding observations (CED/C/PRT/CO/1)

Information relating to paragraph 9

2. The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance is directly applicable in the Portuguese legal order due to paragraph 2 of article 8 of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, which states the following: “the rules contained in international conventions that have been duly ratified or approved are in force in Portuguese law after their official publication and for as long as they are internationally binding on the Portuguese State”.

3. Since Portugal is a State Party to this Convention, it has been committed to complying with it and implementing it in the Portuguese legal order.

4. Some of the measures that underline this commitment are: providing specific and regular training on the provisions of the Convention to law enforcement, military personnel, medical staff, public officials, and judicial authorities; updating training programs continuously, to incorporate best practices and address evolving challenges; preventing enforced disappearances through support services, advocacy, and collaboration between civil society, government entities and other organisations.

Information relating to paragraph 11

5. The Portuguese Ombudsman is an independent constitutional entity endowed with financial and administrative autonomy, as established in Article 40(2) of its [Statute](#). This autonomy ensures the Institution has its own dedicated budget, premises, and staff, enabling it to perform its duties independently and effectively. In line with its constitutional and legal mandate, the Ombudsman is adequately funded and has sufficient human resources to fulfil its broad responsibilities. To improve accessibility and working conditions, the Ombudsman relocated in November 2023 to new, centrally located facilities in Lisbon, facilitating public access for lodging complaints and seeking information or guidance. Recognizing the growth in responsibilities, the Government approved a new [Organic Law for the Office of the Ombudsman](#), in 2021. This reform modernized the internal structure, establishing three new departments in addition to the existing complaints unit. The new structure reflects the Institution’s multidimensional mandate as National Human Rights Institution and National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the OPCAT. The NPM operates as an independent department within the Office of the Ombudsman, led by a dedicated Coordinator and supported by three full-time staff members. Additional personnel from the wider Ombudsman’s Office and external experts are involved in specific visits, depending on their focus and the nature of the facility. The NPM also has a separate, dedicated budget, ensuring its operational and decision-making independence, including in setting priorities and engaging with relevant stakeholders.

Information relating to paragraph 13

6. The offence of enforced disappearance is already foreseen as a specific and autonomous offence in subparagraph i) of article 9 of the Law 31/2004, of July 22, which

adapts the Portuguese criminal law to the Statute of the International Criminal Court, by typifying the conducts that constitute a violation of international humanitarian law.

7. The offence of enforced disappearances is a crime committed intentionally (*dolum*). This means that any enforced disappearance, such as an arrest, detention or kidnapping promoted by the State or a political organization, or with their authorization, support or agreement, followed by a refusal to recognize such a situation of deprivation of liberty or the refusal to provide any information about the situation or location of the missing persons, with the purpose of denying the protection of the law for a long period of time, will be subject to a criminal sanction.

8. Article 6 of the Law 31/2004, of July 22, establishes the criminal responsibility of the military commander or any other hierarchical superior in relation to the subordinates under his/her effective authority and control in regard to the crime of enforced disappearance.

9. For instance, this provision would be applicable to situations where a squadron's captain under the command of a colonel (the latter being the immediate military superior officer) being aware or having the obligation to be aware that the soldiers under his/her command were committing or preparing to commit an offence foreseen under this law, does not adopt all necessary and appropriate measures to prevent or repress its commission or does not give immediate notice to the appropriate (and immediate) military superior officer.

10. Under this provision, the superior shall be criminally liable and may be punished with the sentence corresponding to the crime or crimes that were committed.

11. Whoever commits the crime of enforced disappearance shall be punished by imprisonment from 12 to 25 years.

Information relating to paragraph 15

12. Portugal takes this opportunity to underline that any isolated case of enforced disappearance will always be investigated, prosecuted and harshly sanctioned under the Criminal Code (CC). As pointed out, the conduct making up the crime of enforced disappearance is covered by the description of the objective elements of the type of several other crimes – torture and other cruel, degrading or inhuman treatment (Articles 243 and 244 CC); illegal restraint (Article 158 CC); slavery (Article 159 of the CC); trafficking in persons (Article 160 of the CC); kidnapping (Article 161 of the CC); taking of hostages (Article 162 of the CC).

13. The abovementioned crimes are classified as public crimes and, as such, even when no individual complaint has been presented, the Public Prosecution Service or the Criminal Police shall initiate an investigation *ex officio* once they become aware of the commission of such crimes. Moreover, all forms of participation in a criminal action are punished under the Criminal Code as required by subparagraph a) of paragraph 1 article 6 of the Convention. Any person who commits (material author), participates in (co-author), orders, solicits or induces (moral author) the commission of an enforced disappearance is punished as the author of the crime (article 26 of the CC); any person who is an accomplice to it is punished under the complicity regime (article 27 of the CC). In crimes to which a more severe penalty is applicable, such as the ones listed above, attempt is also punishable.

Information relating to paragraph 17

14. The Portuguese legal order already foresees the prohibition of invoking superior orders or instructions to justify an offence of enforced disappearance in paragraph 3 of article 271 of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, paragraph 2 of article 36 of the Criminal Code and paragraph 5 of article 177 of the Law 35/2014, of July 20, which approves the General Labour Law.

15. The disposition of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic states the following: “The duty of officials and agents of the state and other public entities to obey orders or instructions ceases whenever their fulfilment implies the commitment of any crime.”

16. The disposition of the Criminal Code states the following: “the duty of hierarchical obedience ceases when it leads to the commission of an offence”.

17. The disposition of the Law 35/2014, of July 20, states the following: “the duty of obedience ceases whenever the fulfilment of orders or instructions involves the commission of any crime”.

18. All these provisions expressly state that the duty of obedience ceases to apply whenever compliance with orders or instructions implies the commission of a crime. Therefore, they necessarily also apply to the crime of enforced disappearance.

19. The subordinate who receives an order or instruction that entails the commission of a crime of enforced disappearance is not bound by it and incurs criminal liability in case he/she executes it. Since duty of obedience is excluded in such cases, the subordinate cannot invoke the superior order as a justification to circumvent responsibility.

20. This means that no order or instruction from any public authority, civilian, military or other, may be invoked to justify a crime of enforced disappearance, in full compliance with article 6(2) of the Convention.

Information relating to paragraph 19

21. Article 7 of the Law 31/2004, of July 22, covers the crimes that are not subject to any statute of limitation and includes the crime of enforced disappearance.

22. The Criminal Code (Articles 118 to 121) establishes the statute of limitation for various types of offences (which is established in accordance with the applicable penalties in abstract). Those Articles 118 to 121 also foresee the rules regarding the beginning of the term, interruption and suspension of the statute of limitation.

23. With regard to continuing offences, subparagraph b) of paragraph 2 of article 119 of the Criminal Code establishes that the statute of limitations begins the day the last act of the offence is committed. The statute of limitation may be suspended or interrupted, and in the latter case, after each interruption, the limitation period starts running again.

24. Therefore, the Portuguese legal order provides for proportionality to the seriousness of the offence while not subjecting the crime of enforced disappearance to any statute of limitation.

Information relating to paragraph 21

25. Portugal is firmly committed to fully upholding the principle of non-refoulement, as established in Article 16(1) of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and in Article 33 of the Geneva Convention.

26. In this context, it is important to highlight that Law no. 27/2008 of June 30, which establishes the conditions and procedures for granting asylum or subsidiary protection, as well as the legal statuses of asylum seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, explicitly incorporates this principle in Article 47(2). This article provides that ‘no one shall be returned, removed, extradited, or expelled to a country where they may be subjected to torture or cruel or degrading treatment,’ which includes the risk of enforced disappearance.

27. Additionally, the Portuguese legal framework establishes strong procedural safeguards for assessing each international protection request, guaranteeing an individual, objective, and impartial evaluation that fully respects human rights and the international obligations undertaken by Portugal.

28. Officers responsible for handling international protection requests receive specialized training from the European Union Asylum Agency, enabling them to adopt appropriate measures for investigating and verifying acts as defined in Article 2 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

29. Before a decision is made on an international protection request, the applicant is guaranteed the right to provide statements, in accordance with Article 16(1) of Law No. 27/2008 of June 30, as currently in force. When there are indications or credible allegations of a risk of enforced disappearance, these factors are thoroughly assessed during the decision-making process—especially in cases involving the refusal of international protection or the potential issuance of a voluntary abandonment notification, in which case a decision may be made not to notify the applicant.

30. However, when the loss of the right to international protection requires the initiation of a coercive removal procedure, it is carried out in compliance with the principle of non-refoulement, in accordance with the provisions and objectives set forth in Article 147(1) of Law No. 27/2008 of June 30, as currently in force.

31. Within the framework governing the entry, stay, and removal of third-country nationals, Article 143 of Law No. 23/2007 of July 4, as currently in force, is applicable. Its first paragraph provides that ‘coercive removal and expulsion cannot be carried out to any country where the foreign national may face persecution for reasons that, under the law, justify the granting of asylum, or where they may be subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment as defined in Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.’ In addition, Article 149(3)(d) of the same law requires that a coercive removal decision must explicitly indicate, among other elements, ‘the country to which the foreign national benefiting from the safeguard provided in Article 143 must not be removed.’

32. In summary, the Portuguese Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA) ensures that procedures related to the processing and decision of international protection requests—as well as those concerning coercive removal from national territory—fully uphold the principle of non-refoulement, in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights and the relevant jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights. Throughout the examination of these procedures, particular attention is given to whether an individual may, directly or indirectly, be at risk of enforced disappearance, thereby ensuring full compliance with the obligations undertaken under the Convention.

33. The Committee has also expressed concern regarding the “uncertainty relating to the cases in which a person who is requested to be extradited may be subjected to an autonomous crime of enforced disappearance that does not amount to a crime against humanity” (par. 20 of the Concluding Observations). In that regard, Portugal would like to stress that extradition procedures follow a strict set of rules foreseen in Law 144/99, of August 31, regulating the international judicial cooperation in criminal matters, article 6 of said Law sets out the mandatory general grounds for refusal of a request for international cooperation.

34. The first ground reads: “when it does not meet the requirements of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 4 November, 1950, or other relevant international instruments in this matter, ratified by Portugal”, which is the case of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

35. The second ground for refusal reads: “if there are reasonable grounds to believe that cooperation is requested for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on account of his/her race, religion, sex, nationality, language, of his/her political or ideological beliefs or his/her membership of a particular social group”. The request is examined taking into account not only the reasons that justify the request and the situation of the person concerned, but also the whole context of the requesting State, including the knowledge that there is a consistent pattern of gross, flagrant or mass violation of human rights or serious violations of international humanitarian law.

36. Therefore, there should be no uncertainty as to the fact that extradition is mandatorily refused if there are sufficient reasons to believe that the person could be subject to an enforced disappearance.

Information relating to paragraph 23

37. Portugal acknowledges the importance of training and continues to provide specific and regular training on the provisions of the Convention to law enforcement, military

personnel, medical staff, public officials, and judicial authorities. Training programs are continuously updated to incorporate best practices and address evolving challenges.

38. Table 1 provides detailed information regarding the training provided to law enforcement personnel by the Institute of Judicial Police and Criminal Sciences, namely the subjects and the number of trainees, between 2021 and 2024.

Table 1

Training provided by the Institute of Judicial Police and Criminal Sciences to law enforcement personnel (2021-2024)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Course/subject</i>	<i>No. trainees</i>
2021/2022	Initial	<p>43rd Training Course for Inspectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary Law: Police practices and human rights as part of the Disciplinary Law subject. • Fundamental rights, police ethics and deontology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concepts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundamental rights and human rights; Characteristics and classification of fundamental rights and human rights; Functions of fundamental rights and human rights; The process by which the legal and constitutional order recognises fundamental rights and freedoms for all persons; Ethics, conduct and integrity in the police service – notions; The Universal Declaration of Human Rights; The European Convention on Human Rights; The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; The United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials; The consequences of police forces breaking the law; The effects of police respect for human rights. 	101
2022/2023	Initial	<p>1st Course for Scientific Police Specialists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics, Deontology and Disciplinary Law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional ethics Legal framework for police ethics; The Universal Convention on Human Rights; The European Convention on Human Rights; The United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials; 	30

<i>Year</i>	<i>Training</i>	<i>Course/subject</i>	<i>No. trainees</i>
		The declaration on the police annexed to resolution 690 of the Assembly of the Council of Europe;	
		The importance of the police function;	
		Effects of police violations of the law;	
		Effects of police respect for human rights.	
2023	Initial	2nd Scientific Police Specialists Course	57
		3rd Scientific Police Specialists Course	28
		4th Scientific Police Specialists Course (with the same subjects as the 1st Course)	8
2023	Professional valorisation	Training course for the professional development of workers in the investigation and inspection career of the special corps of the former foreigners and frontiers service (1st phase) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Ethics and Disciplinary Statute for Workers in Special and Subsistence Careers 	240
2023/2024	Initial	45th Training Course for Inspectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary Law • Fundamental and Human Rights, Ethics and Deontology 	85
2024 (preview)	Promotion	Training for Chief Inspectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Deontology and Disciplinary Law 	40
	Initial	46th Training Course for Inspectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary Law • Fundamental Rights, Ethics and Police Deontology 	120
	Initial	Initial Training Course for Security Guards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline Ethics, Deontology and Disciplinary Law 	40
	Initial	5th Scientific Police Specialists Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline Ethics, Deontology and Disciplinary Law 	20

39. Table 2 details information concerning the training provided to prison staff, namely the number of sessions and trainees, between 2021 and 2024.

Table 2

Training provided to prison staff (2021-2024)

	<i>Target public</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>No. of sessions</i>	<i>No. of trainees</i>
Attitude and Professional Relationships - Communication, professional relationships and personal development	Prison Guards	10h30m	1	10

	<i>Target public</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>No. of sessions</i>	<i>No. of trainees</i>
Attitude and Professional Relationships - Attitude and Ethics	Prison Guards	24h30m	1	10
Attitude and Professional Relations - Dynamic safety, professionalism and human rights	Prison Guards	21h	1	10
Use of Coercive Means: Case analyses	Prison Guards	7h	1	12
	Guards on training			
	Human rights and international principles and standards in the execution of sentences and measures involving deprivation of liberty	9h		
CFICGP 2021	Gender equality and preventing and combating domestic and gender-based violence	6h		
	Dynamic security, professionalism and human rights	9h		
	Imprisonment and multiculturalism	6h	2	137
Human rights: challenges of everyday prison life and case analyses	Prison Guards	7h	3	37
Attitude and Professional Relationships - Communication, professional relationships and personal development	Prison Guards	10h30m	1	14
Attitude and Professional Relationships - Attitude and Ethics	Prison Guards	24h30m	1	14
Professional Behaviour and Relationships - Dynamic safety, professionalism and human rights	Prison Guards	21h	1	14
Prisoner Disciplinary System	Prison directors, legal advisors, lawyers and prison graduates	21h	1	12
Human rights: challenges of everyday prison life and case analyses	Prison Guards	7h	9	124
Professional behaviour and relationships - Communication and teamwork	Prison Guards	21h	2	30
Attitude and Professional Relationships - Dynamic Security	Prison Guards	14h	1	17
Use of Coercive Means: Case analyses	Prison Guards	7h	6	92

	<i>Target public</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>No. of sessions</i>	<i>No. of trainees</i>	
CFICGP 2023	Human rights		11h		
	Gender, sexual diversity and non-discrimination		14h		
	Dynamic security professionalism and human rights		10h		
	Conflict management and de-escalation		18h		
	Inclusion and cultural diversity	Initial training of prison guards	8h	1	107
The Process of the Use of Coercive Means by the Prison Guards		Prison Legal Services and legal advisers	7h	5	75
Human rights: challenges of everyday prison life and case analyses	Prison Guards		7h	4	62
Notions of Forensic Clinic and Pathology applied to the prison environment	Prison nurses		6h	3	47
Prisoner Disciplinary System	Legal officers		21h	1	14
Bangkok Rules - Prison Treatment of Women Deprived of their Liberty	All staff		2h	3	78
Dynamic Safety	Prison Guards		14h	1	21
Use of Coercive Means: Case analyses	Prison Guards		7h	3	44

National Republican Guard (GNR)

40. The GNR implemented the Plan for the Prevention of Manifestations of Discrimination in the Security Forces and Services in 2021, approved by Directive no. 2/21. This directive outlines specific areas of intervention focused on preventing discrimination. A key priority of the Plan is training, with its primary objective being the enhancement of GNR course curricula to include content related to human rights.

41. Regarding Initial Training Courses: i) for Guards and Forest Guards, entry-level courses for personnel beginning their careers in the GNR feature a strong component related to human rights and include two curricular units of 25 hours each; additionally, other learning objectives align with the respect for rights enshrined in the Constitution, Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code; the courses also cover techniques for approaching, immobilizing and detaining suspects, first aid, legal aid and the provision of translation services; the same curriculum applies to civilian professionals within the GNR's Forest Guard category; ii) regarding Officer Training and Technical Officer Training Courses, designed for individuals entering the GNR, encompass an integrated master's degree offering training across several areas; curricular units on human rights are integral to these programs.

42. Regarding Specific Training; i) the 'Crime Prevention, Community Policing and Human Rights Course' was developed to provide certified training on human rights; ii) the 'Investigation and Support for Specific Victims Course' provides military personnel with comprehensive knowledge of violence impacting specific victim groups, including women, children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and members of ethnic minorities; it ensures the development of skills for delivering assistance, information and protection to victims, thereby guaranteeing high-quality service; iii) the 'Psychological First Aid Course' provides GNR personnel with technical knowledge to identify psychological crises, assess intervention needs, provide immediate support and facilitate referrals in line with GNR's

psychosocial model; iv) additional training includes sessions on Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence and Gender Equality.

43. To ensure comprehensive implementation of the Plan, it was mandated that all remaining training courses include at least one lecture on Equality and Human Rights, lasting a minimum of two teaching hours.

Public Security Police (PSP)

44. The PSP's national director prioritized human rights in the PSP Strategy 2020–2022, designating the first Ethical Pillar as 'Respect for the rights, freedoms and guarantees of citizens', while the fourth Ethical Pillar was defined as 'Rejection of all forms of extremism and discrimination'. Also, the first objective of the 'Leadership, motivation and communication' strategic axis was defined as: "To promote a culture of excellence in the provision of police service, based on transparency, strict compliance with approved police protocols and respect for the rights, freedoms and guarantees of the citizens we serve". The second goal of the 'Training and physical training' strategic axis was to "Consolidate, through training, the importance of all police activity being based on respect for citizens' rights, freedoms and guarantees". As for objective 5.4 of the strategic axis 'Institutional image', it was highlighted the need to "Fight all forms of extremism, radicalism and discrimination". Finally, the objective 5.5 of the 'Institutional image' strategic axis was defined as "Holding police officers accountable if they deliberately, seriously or grossly violate their legal obligations and hierarchical instructions, particularly to the use of public force and statements made on social networks". The PSP Strategy 2023–2025 further reinforces the importance of training all police officers to respect citizens' rights, freedoms and guarantees.

45. The PSP, in collaboration with civil society, organizes annual human rights training sessions. Between 2020 and 2023, 440 courses were conducted, training 3.738 officers. Key initiatives include Domestic Violence Training (345 sessions from 2021 to 2023, training 2.224 officers); 'Together For All' Training (59 sessions held between 2016 and 2021, involving 1.031 officers). The PSP also trained 117 civil technicians as part of the ACM/Programa Escolhas; the 'Roma History and Culture' Training (36 sessions delivered by the ACM, training 367 officers); and the Criminal Investigation Training (four sessions in 2023, training 116 officers).

46. In 2022, the Higher Institute of Police Sciences and Internal Security introduced a 75-hour course unit, 'Contemporary Police Subjects', addressing topics such as diversity, gender, racism, mental health and LGBTQIA+ issues.

Information relating to paragraph 25

47. The Portuguese legal order foresees several dispositions on the reparation of a victim of a crime. Firstly, the Portuguese Constitution guarantees the right to compensation for victims of crimes.

48. The Civil Code allows for compensation, even if it does not explicitly address the forms of reparation outlined in paragraph 5 of article 24 of the Convention.

49. The Criminal Procedure Code also provides for reparation rights of the victim of a crime. Paragraph 2 of article 393 foresees that the injured party may express their intention to obtain compensation for the damage suffered. Article 82-A of this Code stipulates the right to compensation for the damage suffered when the particular requirements of protecting the victim so require, when no civil claim for damages has been made, in the criminal proceedings or separately.

50. The Portuguese legal order provides important reparation mechanisms that apply to all crimes, including enforced disappearances.

Information relating to paragraph 27

51. Even if the criminal Portuguese legislation does not foresee, in the exact terms, the crimes foreseen in paragraph 1 of article 25 of the Convention, it does have a legal framework that prevents and punishes the same type of actions.

52. Article 249 of the CC specifically foresees the crime of subtraction of a minor, stating the following:

“1 - Whoever:

- a) Abducts a minor;
- b) By means of violence or threats of serious harm, causes a minor to run away; or
- c) Repeatedly and unjustifiably fails to comply with the regime established for the cohabitation of the minor in the regulation of the exercise of parental responsibilities, by refusing, delaying or significantly hindering its delivery or reception;

shall be punished with imprisonment of up to two years or a fine of up to 240 days.

2 - In the cases provided for in paragraph 1 c), the penalty shall be especially attenuated when the agent’s conduct has been conditioned by respect for the will of the minor over 12 years of age.

3 - Criminal proceedings depend on a complaint.”

53. Article 161 of the CC foresees the crime of abduction, as follows:

“1 - Whoever, by means of violence, threat or cunning, abducts another person with the intention of:

- a) Subject the victim to extortion;
- b) Committing an offence against the victim’s sexual freedom and self-determination;
- c) Obtaining a ransom or reward; or
- d) Constraining the public authority or a third party to an action or omission, or to endure an activity;

shall be punished with imprisonment of two to eight years.

2 - If the situations provided for in:

- a) In Article 158(2), the perpetrator shall be punished with imprisonment from three to fifteen years;
- b) Article 158(3), the perpetrator shall be punished with imprisonment from eight to sixteen years.

3 - If the perpetrator voluntarily renounces his pretension and releases the victim, or makes a serious effort to do so, the penalty may be specially mitigated.”

54. Paragraph 7 of article 160 of the CC includes a provision regarding the destruction of identity documents, as follows:

“Anyone who withholds, conceals, damages or destroys identification or travel documents of a person who has been the victim of an offence under paragraphs 1 and 2 shall be punished with imprisonment of up to three years, if a more serious penalty is not imposed by virtue of another legal provision”.

55. Article 256 of the CC foresees the crime of falsification or counterfeiting of a document. It states the following:

“1 - Whoever, with intent to cause harm to another person or to the State, to obtain for himself or for another person an illegitimate benefit, or to prepare, facilitate, execute or cover up another crime:

- a) Manufactures or draws up a false document, or any of the components intended to embody it;
- b) Falsifying or altering a document or any of its components;
- c) Abusing another person’s signature to forge or counterfeit a document;
- d) Falsely stating a legally relevant fact in a document or any of its components;
- e) Using a document referred to in the previous paragraphs; or
- f) By any means, provide or hold a forged or counterfeit document;

shall be punished with imprisonment for a term of up to three years or a fine.

2 - Attempts shall be punishable.

3 - If the acts referred to in paragraph 1 relate to an authentic document or a document of equal force, a sealed will, a postal order, a bill of exchange, a cheque or other commercial document transferable by endorsement, or any other credit instrument not included in article 267, the perpetrator shall be punished with imprisonment from six months to five years or a fine of 60 to 600 days.

4 - If the acts referred to in paragraphs 1 and 3 are committed by an official in the exercise of his duties, the perpetrator shall be punished with imprisonment from one to five years.”

56. Therefore, we can conclude the crimes foreseen in paragraph 1 of article 25 of the Convention are covered by the Portuguese legislation.

Information relating to paragraph 28

57. Please see the answer in paragraphs 2 to 4.

Information relating to paragraph 29

58. Portugal recognises that women and children affected by enforced disappearances face unique harms, including violence, trauma, economic hardship, and social stigma.

59. Portugal has already implemented several measures to protect the human rights of women and children in cases of enforced disappearances, namely:

- Legal protections for victims, including access to justice and support services. On this matter, it is important to refer to the Victims’ Statute, approved by the Law 130/2015, of September 4, which contains a set of measures aimed at ensuring the protection and promotion of the rights of victims of crime. The Portuguese legal order also foresees the Law for the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger, approved by the Law 147/99, of September 1, which aims to guarantee their well-being and integral development.
- Safe houses and shelters for women facing violence
- Child protection laws and anti-trafficking measures
- Training for officials on gender and child-sensitive approaches
- Cooperation with UN bodies and compliance with international human rights standards

60. It should also be noted that the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People (CNPDPJ) in Portugal ensures compliance with child rights standards, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the

Child. It coordinates 313 local Commissions (CPCJ), supporting, monitoring, and annually evaluating their activities. Executive summaries and selected extracts of these reports are available in English [here](#).

61. Portugal adopted in 2025 the [Single Strategy on the Rights of Children and Young People 2025-2035](#), whose Action Plan 2025-2030 in development.

62. According to the UN Convention and the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#), CPCJ interventions require parental or guardian consent and, sometimes, the child's agreement. Exceptions include forced disappearances where judicial intervention is needed. If a missing child reappears and is deemed at risk, CPCJ can assess and act on the danger.

63. The CNPDPCJ annually promotes children's rights and prevents violations, including enforced disappearances, through national initiatives such as the [European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#) (November 18), the [Month for the Prevention of Child Ill-Treatment](#) (April), and the UNCRRC Anniversary (November 20). Additionally, it also publishes accessible, [child-friendly materials](#)—including a Braille version of the UNCRRC—available [online](#) and organized by [age group](#). Throughout the year, CPCJ also organizes preventive and awareness initiatives, including actions for the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances (August 30) to educate children, professionals, and the community about this violation of children's rights.

64. In 2019, the CNPDPCJ contributed to the development of the [Protocol for the Prevention, Detection, and Protection of \(presumed\) Child Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings](#), published in May 2021, as part of Portugal's National Referral System. The [National Strategy on the Rights of the Child \(2021–2024\)](#), also included measures to prevent, assess, and intervene in trafficking, and to strengthen the support and protection network for victims, as outlined in its 2021–2022 (measure 12.2.1) and 2023-2024 (measure 12.2.2) Action Plans.

65. These measures have been put into practice through training sessions for frontline professionals and actions within the national referral system for presumed child victims of human trafficking. The focus is on identifying and addressing child trafficking, including forced begging, petty theft, and sexual exploitation. Since 2025, the CNPDPCJ has collaborated with the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings and the Commission for Gender Equality to implement the Fifth Action Plan for Preventing and Combating THB 2025-2027. This includes training the CPCJ as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Training provided to CPCJ staff (2023-2025)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Target Group</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>
2023	Awareness-Raising activity	Members and all types of professionals that integrate CPCJ	1) To understand what is child trafficking; 2) To learn about the National Referral System for (presumed) child victims of trafficking in human beings; and 3) To reflect upon the role of the CPCJ in signalling and protecting.	<i>Circa 369</i>

<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Target Group</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>
2024	Awareness-Raising activity	Members and all types of professionals that integrate CPCJ	1) To understand what is child trafficking; 2) To learn about the National Referral System for (presumed) child victims of trafficking in human beings; and 3) To reflect upon the role of the CPCJ in signaling and protecting.	<i>Circa 475</i>
		Teachers and other professionals of schools awarded with the Protective Seal by the CNPDPCJ, along with other entities with competences in matters of childhood and youth	1) To understand what is child trafficking; 2) To learn about the National Referral System for (presumed) child victims of trafficking in human beings	283
2025	Training	Members and all types of professionals that integrate the CPCJ of the northern region of Portugal	1) To understand what is child trafficking; 2) To learn about the National Referral System for (presumed) child victims of trafficking in human beings; and 3) To reflect upon the role of the CPCJ in signaling and protecting, including contact with an entity that is territorially competent for such.	<i>Circa 15</i>
		Members and all types of professionals that integrate the CPCJ of the central region of Portugal		Currently under planning
		Members and all types of professionals that integrate the CPCJ of the regions of Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve and the Autonomous Region of Madeira		Currently under planning

Information relating to paragraph 29

66. Information regarding Portugal's engagement with all United Nations treaty bodies is made publicly available through the institutional portal of the Public Prosecutor's Office, which provides access to all documents submitted and received throughout the dialogue process — including the Convention, the national report, the replies to the list of issues, and the concluding observations — as well as documentation from previous review cycles. The National Human Rights Committee (CNDH) also shares the national reports on its website and plays a key role in fostering engagement with civil society. In this second monitoring cycle, the relevant information will likewise be duly made available.

67. It is also important to mention that civil society in Portugal has been actively involved in preventing enforced disappearances through various initiatives. Organizations like APAV (Portuguese Association for Victim Support), the Portuguese Red Cross and Caritas provide assistance to victims and work with international networks to promote human rights. Also, the *Instituto de Apoio à Criança* (Institute to Support Children) runs the 116000 hotline for missing children as part of Missing Children Europe, helping to address child disappearances.

68. Groups like Security Women and national organizations involved in Portugal's National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security advocate for gender equality and the inclusion of civil society in peace and security policies.

69. Civil society also collaborates with the government through entities like the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG), helping to implement and monitor protective measures related to enforced disappearances.

Information relating to paragraph 31

70. Portugal considers that the reply provided in 2019 remains valid. There are no further elements to add at this point.

Information relating to paragraph 32

71. The National Human Rights Committee (CNDH) is leading the coordination of the national report submitted by Portugal in response to the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, pursuant to Article 29 of the Convention.

72. This coordination involves close cooperation across several governmental sectors, which are working jointly — particularly through the newly established National Recommendations Tracking Database (NRTD), developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights — to provide accurate, concise, and up-to-date information on the implementation of the Convention's provisions.
