



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

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Consideration of reports of States Parties

### Replies of Kazakhstan to the list of issues in relation to its combined fifth and sixth periodic reports\*, \*\*

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

\*\* The annex to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



## **Replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/KAZ/Q/5-6)**

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraphs 1 and 2 (a)**

1. The Children of Kazakhstan Policy Framework for the period 2026–2030, adopted in January 2026, is a key strategic document that brings together all existing child rights protection measures and programmes.
2. The Child-Friendly City Initiative was implemented at the local level from 2008 to 2020.
3. The year 2022 was declared the Year of the Child, with a focus on quality education, upbringing in a stable family environment, healthcare and the protection of the rights of children with disabilities and orphans.
4. In 2022, a national monitoring mechanism for the situation of children in Kazakhstan, the child well-being index, was introduced (comprising 56 indicators, 35 of which are based on statistical data and 21 on survey data). Changes are currently being made to improve the indicators.
5. Monitoring makes it possible to track the effectiveness of national policies aimed at improving the situation of children in various areas, broken down by region, and to rank regions and individual departments.
6. In 2024, Kazakhstan saw a steady upward trend in the index: the national average rose by 2.5 points (55.3 points in 2022; 56.1 points in 2023; and 58.6 points in 2024).
7. In 2022, the Kazakhstan Khalkyna Foundation was established to address the challenges faced by the people of Kazakhstan in key areas of life, in addition to government support. The Foundation runs 60 social and medical projects aimed at helping children.
8. The National Fund for Children was launched in 2024, distributing 50% of its investment income among all children aged 0–17. The funds can be used for education or to purchase a home once the recipients reach the age of legal majority.
9. Since 2023, the Adal Azamat common civic education programme, which is based on fundamental national and universal values, has been introduced in all schools across the country.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 2 (b)**

10. An action plan has been developed to implement the Children of Kazakhstan Policy Framework, with the aim of securing children's rights to a safe environment, education, health, development and social protection, and the right to live and be brought up in a family.
11. The Committee for the Protection of Children's Rights in the Ministry of Education, the national authorized body in the field of children's rights, plays the coordinating role.
12. The Committee forms the institutional foundation of the child protection system, carries out regulatory, implementation and monitoring functions and participates in fulfilling the central authority's strategic priorities within its competencies. An interdepartmental coordination framework is in place to address issues relating to the protection of children's rights at the local, national and international levels. The Committee's powers are set out in the Children's Rights Act.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 2 (c)**

13. With a view to identifying the main approaches to budgeting for children used internationally, and to studying the budgetary process and budgetary relations in Kazakhstan, a methodology for budgeting has been developed that takes into account all forms of State support for children. A methodology has been introduced to the child well-being index that

will allow central and local authorities to determine the amount of State funding for children and the level of priority and effectiveness of these expenditures.

14. The index includes the indicator “Share of public expenditure allocated to children’s needs”. Results are compiled annually.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 2 (d)**

15. Since 2017, the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms has regularly published a statistical compendium entitled “Children in Kazakhstan”, available in three languages on the official website.

16. In July 2025, Kazakhstan presented its third voluntary national review on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in New York. The Bureau of National Statistics prepared a statistical annex to the voluntary national review, which included an analysis of the situation of the most vulnerable children based on the “leave no one behind” principle, drawing on the results of the 2024 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey.

17. To improve access to statistical information on children, a dedicated web portal containing data on children in Kazakhstan has been launched on the Bureau of National Statistics website (<https://bala.stat.gov.kz/>).

18. The Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Records of the Prosecutor General’s Office systematically collects and disseminates administrative data on offences against children, including crimes related to their safety and sexual inviolability. Making these data publicly available increases transparency.

19. The national education database, which has been in operation since 2012, is designed to automate business processes relating to the collection and processing of primary statistical data in the education sector.

20. Since January 2017, the national databank of orphans and children left without parental care and persons wishing to adopt a child has been in operation to ensure that the procedure for placing orphans in Kazakh families was transparent.

21. The Digital Family Map information system has been introduced to improve assessments of families’ vulnerability without the need for individuals to be directly involved and to enable them to receive social assistance without having to apply to the relevant authorities.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 3**

22. In 2016, the Office of the Commissioner for Children’s Rights was established, in accordance with the Paris Principles regarding independence, a broad mandate and powers, accessibility and transparency, an advisory role and the public dissemination of its views through the media.

23. To strengthen this institution, the position of regional commissioner for children’s rights was established in 2022; the commissioners – 20 in total – carry out their duties on a voluntary basis within their respective administrative divisions. From 2024, commissioners have had unrestricted access to all facilities where children are present, including secure facilities.

24. In 2020, following the introduction of nationwide lockdown measures in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, there was a decline in the level of communication and, consequently, a reduction in the number of conditions and factors contributing to the emergence of risks and situations leading to violations of children’s rights.

25. Since 2023, the number of complaints filed with the Office of the Commissioner for Children’s Rights has doubled, reflecting the public’s growing confidence in the Office as a guardian of children’s rights.

26. In recent years, applications to the Office have mainly concerned psychological support, legal advice, social protection, education and healthcare, and violence and abuse against women and children.

27. The measures adopted in the country over the past two years have helped enhance the capacity of the Office.

#### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 4 (a)**

28. In accordance with the topics included in the educational curricula and textbooks at all levels of education and as part of the Adal Azamat civic education programme, students' legal literacy is developed by promoting the ideology of law and order and holding events to mark key dates (International Children's Day and World Children's Day).

29. Every year, as part of the child well-being index, social surveys are conducted to determine the level of legal protection afforded to children. A positive trend has been observed in children's perception of the protection of their rights in the country:

- 58% in 2015; 63% in 2016; 72% in 2017; 75% in 2018; 78% in 2019; 81% in 2020; 86.4% in 2021; 87.1% in 2022; 88.2% in 2023; and 90.3% in 2024.

#### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 4 (b)**

30. On 30 December 2025, the Act amending certain legislative acts on crime prevention and the improvement of specific areas of Kazakh legislation was adopted, which establishes administrative liability for violations of legislation in the field of child rights protection.

31. The Act amending certain legislative acts on State awards of 30 December 2024 introduced a licensing scheme for preschool educational institutions. This scheme will come into force on 1 January 2027, allowing stricter requirements to be imposed on private educational institutions regarding the observance and safeguarding of children's rights.

32. The Entrepreneurial Code establishes corporate social responsibility in the environmental sphere.

#### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 4 (c)**

33. Since 2011, the Council of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) has been operating under the Committee for the Protection of Children's Rights; there are more than 100 organizations in the country working to safeguard children's rights, all of which are actively involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring of issues relating to children.

34. In accordance with article 17-1 of the Legal Instruments Act, bills are posted for public discussion on the Internet portal of publicly available laws and regulations.

35. Furthermore, any document affecting the interests of business entities must be discussed with the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs and the expert councils on private enterprise.

#### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 4 (d)**

36. The Act on Religious Activity and Religious Associations sets out a detailed system of restrictions and regulations relating exclusively to religious activity and the establishment of religious associations.

37. Kazakhstan is a multi-ethnic and multi-faith country where everyone enjoys equal rights and freedoms, regardless of their ethnicity or religion. The purpose of all of the above-mentioned restrictions is to ensure the secular nature of the State, public safety and citizens' rights and to prevent extremism.

38. However, this law does not regulate matters relating to access to information or restrictions on Internet access.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 5 (a)**

39. Under the legal system of Kazakhstan, provisions prohibiting all forms of discrimination are laid set out in various legal instruments, ranging from the Constitution (art. 14) to criminal, administrative and other sector-specific legislation, along with established enforcement mechanisms to implement these provisions.

40. The handling of complaints and the submission of applications by citizens seeking to protect their rights and interests are governed by criminal procedure, civil procedure and administrative law. Complaints are accepted by human rights institutions and bodies (the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner and its regional offices, the Office of the Commissioner for Children's Rights and its regional representatives, guardianship authorities and various consultative and advisory bodies).

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 5 (b)**

41. A national framework of support for families with children is in place, comprising a system of State benefits and payments aimed at boosting the birth rate, facilitating the upbringing of children in the family and raising the profile and standing of mothers with many children.

42. All children are guaranteed access to healthcare, regardless of their social status, nationality, state of health or place of residence. Standards and clinical protocols are used in medical practice.

43. The necessary measures are being taken to ensure that citizens' rights to freedom of speech and expression are upheld. Kazakhstan has ratified key international instruments relating to media freedom.

44. The Constitution, the Civil Code, the Media Act and the Access to Information Act strike a balance between the protection of public interests and human rights, including mechanisms for holding individuals accountable for disseminating false or unlawful information, while guaranteeing citizens' right to freedom of expression.

45. On 30 December 2025, regulations were introduced that prohibited the dissemination of information promoting paedophilia and non-traditional sexual orientation in public spaces or via the media, telecommunications networks and online platforms. The law does not impose any restrictions on members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. Their rights are inviolable and are protected in the same way as those of any citizen of Kazakhstan.

46. The ban should therefore be viewed not as a restriction on freedom of expression, but as a measure to protect public morals and children's health, including their mental health, which does not conflict with the obligation to guarantee freedom of expression and certainly does not infringe upon other fundamental human rights.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 5 (c)**

47. The child well-being index includes indicators related to children's health and housing, including the provision of housing for orphans.

48. Since 2019, national legislation has provided for the establishment of regional support centres for children in need of special social services. These are organizations under the jurisdiction of the educational authorities that provide specialized social services, including accommodation on a permanent or temporary (daycare) basis, and information, advisory and mediation services to legal entities whose activities involve measures to prevent people from falling into difficult circumstances.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 5 (d)**

49. A child's right to freedom of speech and expression is governed by article 62 of the Marriage and the Family Code and article 11 of the Rights of the Child Act.

50. Children have the right to express their opinion when the family decides on any matter affecting their interests and to be heard in any judicial or administrative proceedings. The opinion of a child who has reached the age of 10 must be taken into account, unless it is contrary to the child's interests.

51. In order to give children the opportunity to be heard and express their views on all matters related to the protection of their rights, children's representative offices (children's ombudsmen) were established under the Committee for the Protection of Children's Rights in 2020.

52. Since February 2021, school parliaments, student self-governance bodies, have been operating, and youth volunteer movements and debate clubs have been introduced.

53. On the instructions of the Head of State, the Taza Kazakhstan environmental campaign has been under way throughout the country since April 2024. The campaign aims to improve the environmental situation in Kazakhstan, raise public awareness of the importance of nature conservation and encourage every child to get involved in protecting the environment.

54. Since 2005, the Zhasyl El project has been implemented with the aim of fostering a sense of responsibility among young people (aged 14–35) towards environmental protection and boosting youth employment.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 5 (e)**

55. Minors are guaranteed access to justice and legal remedies on an equal footing with adult citizens of Kazakhstan.

56. Under criminal procedure law, when juvenile victims, witnesses or suspects are involved, their legal representatives and lawyers, together with a teacher and/or psychologist, must participate in the proceedings to protect the minors' rights and legitimate interests. The presence of a defence lawyer is mandatory in cases involving criminal offences committed by minors.

57. Their interests may be represented by a parent or legal guardian, an agency of tutorship or guardianship, prosecutors and the Commissioner for Children's Rights.

58. Any child who has reached the age of 14 has the right to personally apply to law enforcement agencies or a court to seek protection of their interests and is guaranteed free legal assistance.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 5 (f)**

59. In order to strengthen fundamental human rights, active measures are being taken to reduce statelessness.

60. Under the Citizenship Act, a child born in Kazakhstan to two stateless parents automatically acquires Kazakh citizenship.

61. If a child is born outside of a medical establishment, the child's parentage is established by the registration authority based on a medical birth certificate that confirms the birth. If there is no medical birth certificate, parentage is established through the courts.

62. To register a birth with the authorities, an application must be submitted by the child's parents or by authorized persons who have established the birth. This addresses the problem of home deliveries.

63. A birth is registered regardless of whether the parents are married. This protects the rights of children born out of wedlock. A birth certificate may record both parents, one parent or, when no information is available, an entry based on the mother's declaration. Paternity may be established at a later date.

64. Between 2023 and 2025, 18,489 children previously recognized as stateless were granted Kazakh citizenship, including 101 children who returned to the country from areas of armed conflict (Afghanistan, Israel, Iran, Iraq, Syria) (6,544 in 2023, 5,499 in 2024 and 6,446 in 2025). There are 277 stateless children on the register.

65. Another element of the legal framework is the procedure for registering the births of children whose parents do not have the necessary documentation. This measure is designed to prevent cases of statelessness.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 6 (a)**

#### **(i)**

66. On the instructions of the Head of State, the investigation into the January events was carried out by interdepartmental investigative teams under the supervision of special prosecutors. Information obtained during a preliminary investigation is not subject to disclosure (Code of Criminal Procedure, art. 201).

67. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has not recorded any criminal cases involving torture or ill-treatment of minors during the January 2022 events. However, two criminal cases relating to the deaths of minors during that period have been filed. In these cases, the individuals responsible for the children's deaths have been identified. They have been sentenced to imprisonment.

#### **(ii)**

68. The criminal case relating to this incident was investigated by the Internal Security Department of the West Kazakhstan Oblast Police Department. The investigation has conclusively established that police officers did not subject the minors to cruel treatment or torture; consequently, the case was dropped on the grounds of lack of evidence that a crime had been committed.

#### **(iii)**

69. The criminal case regarding the deaths of four children from the Ayagoz special services centre was investigated by special prosecutors from the East Kazakhstan Oblast Procurator's Office.

#### **(iv)**

70. The Pavlodar Oblast Police Department is investigating a criminal case involving the abuse of children at a kindergarten in Pavlodar. The teacher's unlawful actions have been classified under the Criminal Code, article 140 (2) (failure to fulfil duties for the upbringing of a minor) and article 110 (2) (1) and (2) (torture), and the case will be referred to court.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 6 (b)**

71. Between 2022 and 2025, comprehensive measures were implemented to ensure that educational institutions are equipped with security systems, including the legal establishment of requirements, the development of infrastructure and the creation of institutional mechanisms to monitor compliance. Anti-terrorism protection of educational facilities has been ensured, including security improvements to the surrounding areas.

72. Since the start of the school year, educational institutions have introduced personal safety lessons designed to help children feel confident in their actions in various real-life situations, using practical, interactive and visual teaching methods.

73. More than 8,000 police officers have been assigned to schools across the country, and police patrols have been deployed as close as possible to educational institutions.

74. To identify medical and social risks in families with children, 4,000 nurses are working across the country under a universal progressive home visiting model. Home visit records have been digitized and now include a global navigation satellite system and photo documentation.

75. As a result, cross-sectoral collaboration has increased by 36%, home deaths have fallen by 22%, and the proportion of children admitted to hospital at a later stage has decreased by 5%.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 7 (a)**

76. Kazakhstan has established a multi-tiered legal and institutional framework to protect children from violence.

77. Since April 2019, rape and sexual assault have been classified as aggravated offences (under Act No. 240-VI amending certain legislative acts on the work of organizations protecting the rights of the child). Furthermore, if such offences are committed against young children, penalties are increased from 15 to 20 years to 17 to 20 years of imprisonment.

78. In 2021, the police introduced a specialization for female investigators focusing on investigating violent (sexual) offences against women and minors. The introduction of this practice has had a positive impact on the effectiveness of investigations into these offences.

79. The concept of “bullying of a child” was established in law in 2022 and administrative liability was introduced for bullying (including cyberbullying) of minors in 2024.

80. Certain articles of the Criminal Code (arts. 105, 121-1, 122, 131, 132, 134, 309 and others) provide for penalties for committing criminal offences using the Internet. The requirements for online platforms have been tightened.

81. In 2024, regulations were adopted to impose stricter penalties for any acts of violence against children and to strengthen the institution of the family and the safety of minors (reconciliation is no longer an option for any criminal offences involving violence against children; life imprisonment is now the only penalty for paedophilia; criminal liability is established for sexual harassment of children; remand in custody is provided for during the investigation of crimes involving violence against a child; and responsibility is incurred for bullying and cyberbullying).

82. On 31 December 2025, the Prevention of Offences Act was adopted, providing for expanded support measures for victims of violence and the establishment of a lifetime preventive registration system for individuals who have served sentences for offences against the sexual inviolability of children.

83. In 2024, a programme was launched to provide assistance to child victims and witnesses of violence. Work is currently under way to draft the relevant regulations for the practical implementation of programmes for children, using the *barnahus* approach. The implementation of such services is set out in the Children of Kazakhstan Policy Framework.

84. The Cybercrime Department was established within the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 2024.

85. Kazakhstan participates in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, which includes a module on violence against children. The survey data make it possible to identify the main forms and causes of violence, providing a solid basis for developing preventive measures to eliminate violence.

86. Since 2024, Kazakhstan has been providing the Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity (TransMonEE) database with data on recorded cases of violence from child protection services (social services) and healthcare facilities.

87. Twenty-nine centres providing special social services play a significant role in supporting victims of violence. They ensure that a full range of social services is provided to children and women who have been victims of violence.

88. Particular attention is given to professional development courses for teachers on the prevention of violence and bullying (in 2025, 17,450 teachers completed these courses).

89. On the instruction of the Head of State, psychological support centres have been opened in all 20 regions. The Kazakh DOSBOLLiKe anti-bullying programme has been developed and is currently being implemented successfully.

90. As part of the Comprehensive Plan to Protect Children from Violence, Prevent Suicide and Ensure Children's Rights and Welfare for 2023–2025, indicators of violence against children in school settings based on the international classification of forms of violence against children have been developed, tested and integrated into the national educational database.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 7 (b)**

91. Corporal punishment of children is prohibited in Kazakhstan. Article 108 of the Criminal Code establishes liability for inflicting beatings or committing other acts of violence that cause physical pain but do not result in temporary impairment of health or minor, moderate or serious bodily harm.

92. On 15 June 2024, an amendment was introduced that provides that any intentional harm to or physical abuse of a child is subject to criminal liability, regardless of the wishes of parents or guardians.

93. There are more than 6.2 million households in Kazakhstan, including 3.0 million households with children. There are 131 family support centres in operation, which play a key role in strengthening the institution of the family at regional level. Work continues on the implementation of the Family and Gender Policy Framework for the period up to 2030.

94. According to the results of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in Kazakhstan, the proportion of parents using coercive forms of discipline, including physical punishment and psychological aggression, has fallen from 53% to 38%.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 7 (c)**

95. To respond promptly to violations of children's rights and take immediate action to remedy them, the 24-hour "111" helpline for children providing free emergency assistance was established in November 2016.

96. The operations of the 111 State Contact Centre for family matters and the protection of women's and children's rights were formally established in law in 2024. Coordination is carried out by the Commissioner for Children's Rights.

97. The number "111" is included in the list of emergency medical, law enforcement, fire, rescue and other services, which users can contact free of charge.

98. Since 1 November 2024, students can submit text-based applications for help through online chat platforms accessed via QR codes displayed in all schools and colleges, where they receive psychological support and further assistance.

99. This tool ensures access to support regardless of region of residence, social status or circumstances, creating a safe digital space.

100. Reasons for seeking help include psychological and emotional distress resulting from feelings of loneliness, parent-child relationships, violence and abuse, suicidal thoughts, and other issues. There is an effective support programme for victims of violence and bullying.

101. The applications are considered and processed in collaboration with central authorities, local authorities, regional representatives and NGOs.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 7 (d)**

102. Since April 2022, in collaboration with local authorities and NGOs, comprehensive support, including medical, psychological, social and legal assistance, has been provided to victims of sexual violence at various crisis centres.

103. This initiative is based on the findings of a study of international best practice in law enforcement (South Korea and Germany).

104. These centres, coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, provide accommodation, food and medical care for victims. Psychologists and social workers are also made available where necessary. If an incident of violence is confirmed, a female investigator will conduct all necessary investigative procedures with the victim, inviting a teacher and a lawyer to be present. A forensic medical examination will be carried out by a specialist at the same centre.

105. The results showed that the implementation of these measures helps to prevent the retraumatization of victims of criminal offences and facilitates the timely and thorough investigation of the circumstances and the detection of crimes.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 7 (e)**

106. The Marriage and the Family Code sets the minimum age for marriage at 18. If there are valid reasons (pregnancy, the birth of a child), the minimum age for marriage may be lowered by one year (to 17) upon application by the parties to the marriage and with the consent of their parents or guardians. In other cases, marriage before the age of 17 is prohibited by law.

107. The Code prohibits marriages between close relatives and to persons deemed legally incompetent. It also prohibits polygamous marriages.

108. In 2025, article 125-1 (Forced marriage) was added to the Code. This offence is punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to 10 years. Any form of bride kidnapping is classified as abduction (Criminal Code, art. 125). Criminal proceedings for such offences can be initiated without a complaint from the victim, and reconciliation between the parties is not an option.

109. Courses on the basics of law are being introduced into school curricula, and training sessions are organized for adolescents and parents. Opinion leaders are involved in awareness-raising campaigns.

110. The Government provides support to victims of abduction and forced marriage. There is a network of crisis centres where young women who have been victims of abduction or forced marriage can seek help, and where they are provided with legal, psychological and social support.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 8 (a)**

111. Over the past five years, the number of children in residential care institutions has fallen by 19%, while the number of such institutions has dropped by 16%.

112. A mentoring programme has been established to prepare orphaned children for independent living.

113. To protect children in difficult circumstances, there are 111 organizations operating within the education, health and social protection system (34 child support centres, 14 children's villages, 11 youth centres, 10 juvenile rehabilitation centres, 4 children's homes, 20 children's shelters and 18 centres providing special social services).

114. These organizations provide an environment conducive to upbringing and education. They offer residential care for orphans, children without parental care, neglected and homeless children and children in need of special social services, including those who have suffered abuse leading to social exclusion and deprivation.

115. The foster care system has been introduced as a temporary arrangement for children in need of special social services.

116. To strengthen the child protection system, legislation introduced in 2024 established a staffing ratio for guardianship bodies of at least one staff member per 5,000 children, and departments for the protection of children's rights are being established within the regional and district authorities (*akimats*).

117. This has significantly strengthened the framework for the protection of children's rights.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 8 (b)**

118. In care homes for orphans and children without parental care, "111" QR codes have been displayed to enable residents to submit applications and communications.

119. The law contains provisions that prohibit assault, torture and ill-treatment (Criminal Code, arts. 109, 110 and 146).

120. A national preventive mechanism has been in operation since 2013. Members of national preventive mechanism carry out regular visits as part of the independent public monitoring system to ensure respect for human rights in detention facilities and special detention facilities. Any violations are referred to the local authorities for action and are included in the consolidated report of the national preventive mechanism at the end of the year.

121. In addition, guardianship councils have been set up in institutions for orphans to ensure that the protection of the children's rights is publicly monitored. The councils include representatives from government bodies, NGOs, members of parliament and social partners.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 8 (c)**

122. The law establishes the priority right of relatives to care for orphaned children and children without parental care, including the right to adopt them.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 8 (d)**

123. The Act on Combating Trafficking in Persons of 2024 established a set of definitions, including the terms "victim of trafficking in persons", "potential victim of trafficking in persons" and "actors involved in combating trafficking in persons."

124. According to the Code on Marriage and the Family, independent intermediaries are prohibited and adoption is only permitted through accredited foreign agencies.

125. In 2025, 203 crimes related to trafficking in persons were recorded (152 in 2023, 207 in 2024), including 31 cases (19 in 2023, 8 in 2024) under article 135 of the Criminal Code for trafficking in minors. In 2025, 16 individuals were convicted under article 135 of the Criminal Code.

126. All crimes relating to the trafficking of children have been committed within the country under the guise of adoption.

127. No reports have been received regarding the sale of children or their exploitation abroad.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 8 (e)**

128. As part of efforts to uphold children's rights, a children's home operates within penal institution No. 10 (Zhaugashty settlement, a medium-security facility for women), housing 28 inmates and 28 children under the age of 3. To ensure high-quality medical care, a paediatrician has been assigned to the children's home.

129. With the written consent of the convicted woman, her child may be placed in the care of her spouse, relatives or other persons as ordered by the court. Alternatively, once the child reaches the age of 3, he or she may be placed in appropriate childcare facilities.

130. To help inmates maintain and rebuild family ties, penal institution No. 10 is equipped with video phones that allow inmates to communicate with their relatives and children via video calls.

131. The Department of the Penal System for Almaty Oblast and Zhetisu Oblast has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Human Rights Lawyers Foundation, under which humanitarian assistance is provided to the children of inmates.

132. Arrangements have been made for children in children's homes to speak by phone with their parents who are serving sentences in penal institutions. These measures are designed to safeguard the child's right to maintain contact with their parents and preserve family ties.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 8 (f)**

133. Kazakhstan was one of the first countries, and the first in the Central Asian region, to carry out large-scale operations to repatriate its citizens from areas of armed conflict in Iraq and Syria. Operation Zhusan was conducted from January 2019 to March 2020, and Operation Rusafa in November 2019. A total of 572 children have been returned as part of repatriation and reintegration operations.

134. The decision to repatriate children from areas of armed conflict was made at the highest political level in Kazakhstan and formally initiated by a presidential decree.

135. In 2020, the Government of Kazakhstan introduced regulations establishing a procedure for the social reintegration of children affected by terrorist activities through the adoption of the standards for the provision of social services for the rehabilitation of returnee children.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 9 (a)**

136. In accordance with international standards, the term "invalid" has been replaced with "person with a disability".

137. Measures are being taken to adopt a human rights-based approach to disability and to develop a system for the early identification of developmental disorders and comprehensive rehabilitation. Access to medical and rehabilitation services for children with disabilities, including refugee children and children separated from their parents, is being expanded. Services are being developed to support children with autism spectrum disorders and their families. Cooperation with the education system is carried out to ensure inclusive education.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 9 (b)**

138. In recent years, Kazakhstan has made significant progress in advancing inclusive education. In June 2021, the Inclusive Education Act was signed into law, establishing State guarantees for access to education.

139. The Inclusive Policy Framework for 2025–2030 has been approved, providing for a shift from treating illnesses to creating conditions that enable people to lead full lives in society (ramps, elevators, accessible bathrooms, specialized equipment, educational materials and available staffing).

140. The conditions for inclusive education have been established in over 95% of schools and 80% of preschools. In 17 regions across the country, 27 early support services have been established within psychological and special education centres, paediatric departments have been set up, and 336 childhood development and early intervention centres have been

organized, which has had a positive impact on coordination efforts to assess children's educational potential, provide special education and facilitate medical and social rehabilitation.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 9 (c)**

141. Pursuant to article 175 (2) of the Social Code, Kazakh citizens, foreign nationals and stateless persons who are permanent residents of Kazakhstan are entitled to State disability benefits, unless national laws or ratified international instruments provide otherwise.

142. The amount of the benefit depends on the category and cause of the disability and the subsistence level established by the national budget law for the relevant fiscal year; total family income does not affect the calculation of the disability benefit.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 9 (d)**

143. According to data from psychological, medical and educational advisory services, there are more than 20,000 children with autism and autism spectrum disorders living in the country. More than 10,000 special education teachers provide special psychological and educational support in educational institutions, while more than 3,500 teaching assistants provide individual support. Twelve support centres for children with autism are in operation to provide specialized psychological and educational support to 1,500 children. In 2025, more than 3,000 children received support.

144. Parents are offered counselling and psychological support.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (a)**

145. Measures are being taken to reduce the under-5 mortality rate by improving perinatal care and maternal and child health services and ensuring access to free medical care and vaccinations for all children.

146. As part of the Salauatty Ana programme, boarding houses have been established in 15 oblasts to facilitate the early admission of high-risk pregnant women and women who have experienced complicated births to hospital, particularly those from remote and hard-to-reach rural areas (3,000 women).

147. An antenatal care programme is being implemented in 22 oblast perinatal centres. To facilitate the early detection of congenital birth defects, outpatient clinics have been established at 18 perinatal centres across the country. Eighteen perinatal centres have been renovated (to ensure uniform service standards).

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (b)**

148. Vaccination is a priority public health goal and contributes to the country's national security.

149. A list of 21 diseases for which compulsory preventive vaccinations are given under the guaranteed package of free healthcare has been approved.

150. Awareness-raising activities are being carried out to boost public confidence in vaccination and to promote a healthy lifestyle.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (c)**

151. In collaboration with the Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development, a project on breastfeeding and the promotion of child-friendly hospitals has been developed and is being implemented across all of the country's regions.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (d)**

152. With support from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), dietary standards have been improved and a ban has been imposed on the sale and distribution of unhealthy foods in schools. From September 2025, all primary school pupils will be provided with one free hot meal a day. Programmes are being implemented to improve nutrition among pregnant women and prevent micronutrient deficiencies.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (e)**

153. In accordance with article 196 (1) of the Code on Public Health and the Healthcare System, foreign nationals and stateless persons are provided with the guaranteed package of free healthcare on an equal basis with Kazakh nationals, unless national laws or international instruments to which Kazakhstan is a party provide otherwise.

154. Under article 83 (2), foreign nationals and stateless persons temporarily residing in Kazakhstan and asylum-seekers are entitled to the guaranteed package of free healthcare for illnesses that present a risk to others, in accordance with the list of diseases covered and to the extent specified by the competent authority.

155. Consequently, entitlement to the full package of free healthcare, including preventive care, is directly linked to holding permanent resident status (a residence permit).

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (f)**

156. A system for safeguarding the mental health of children and adolescents is being developed, including measures to prevent suicidal behaviour and improve access to psychological support.

157. In 2024, the work of psychological services was overhauled and a regulatory framework for their activities was adopted. Their role is to carry out assessments, identify at-risk groups and provide targeted support for children.

158. The 20 psychological support centres coordinate and provide methodological guidance to school psychological services and offer counselling to students and parents.

159. The result was a high rating of children’s psychological well-being – 96% according to 2024 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – which reflects the lasting impact of government policy.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (g)**

160. A special role is assigned to the 85 youth health centres, which focus on providing medical, psychological and social services to adolescents and young people. The availability of services provided by these centres depends directly on the compulsory health insurance scheme.

161. Under current law, pregnant women and new mothers are guaranteed their constitutional right to education.

162. In addition, pursuant to article 69 (2) of the Marriage and the Family Code, minor parents are entitled to exercise parental rights independently once they reach the age of 16.

163. A guardian is appointed by the authorities until the child reaches the age of 16.

164. The national curriculum provides for the teaching of topics relating to moral and sex education, including reproductive health, hygiene and personal safety.

165. In addition, as part of the Ómire salauatty qadam project under the Adal Azamat programme, initiatives are being implemented to promote a healthy lifestyle, including aspects of reproductive health.

166. Awareness-raising activities are being carried out in collaboration with the relevant authorities.

167. Overall, the measures being taken help to improve the protection of children from unlawful acts, promote sex education and prevent early pregnancy.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (h)**

168. In 2024, a law was passed on gambling, lotteries, healthcare, State labour inspection, State monitoring and reducing overregulation. Under the law, the minimum age for participating in gambling and lotteries has been raised from 21 to 25; stricter rules have been introduced for bookmakers and lottery operators, including administrative penalties for allowing persons under the age of 25 to gamble; and outdoor advertising for bookmakers and betting agencies has been banned.

169. In 2024, the Healthcare Act prohibited and criminalized the import, manufacture, sale and distribution of smokeless tobacco products, electronic smoking devices (vapes), and flavourings and liquids for such devices. A ban has been introduced on the sale of energy drinks to people under the age of 21.

170. In 2025, a national study under the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs was conducted among adolescents aged 13–18. The study was carried out in 125 schools and colleges with the consent of parents. The survey covered nearly 10,000 children (the final report is expected in the first quarter of 2026).

171. Twenty-two minors are serving sentences for the unlawful acquisition, possession, transport for the purpose of sale, transfer or sale of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their analogues.

172. Analysis of data from the past three years shows an increase in the number of offences committed by children (13 in 2022, 19 in 2023 and 42 in 2024). This fact confirms that adolescents are involved not only as consumers but also as dealers.

173. In 2024, the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education jointly issued an order launching the World Health Organization (WHO) health-promoting schools initiative, which involved 1,677 schools. Preventive programmes are being implemented to prevent substance abuse and gambling addiction.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 10 (i)**

174. Kazakhstan is taking consistent measures to protect children's rights and foster a healthy environment. These measures are being implemented in accordance with international commitments, including the Paris Agreement, and are integrated into national environmental and climate policy. The primary focus is on reducing the impact of air, water and soil pollution on public health and ensuring environmentally sound waste management, including waste reduction, separation and disposal in areas where children live and learn.

175. A total of 120,008 people were rescued and evacuated during the 2024 floods, including 354 persons with disabilities and 45,152 children (4,811 in Aktobe Oblast; 1,810 in Kostanay Oblast; 5,813 in West Kazakhstan Oblast; 73 in Ulytau Oblast; 57 in Abai Oblast; 623 in Akmola Oblast; 9,787 in Atyrau Oblast; 156 in Karaganda Oblast; 3,596 in North Kazakhstan Oblast; 4 in Turkistan Oblast; 26 in Pavlodar Oblast; 18,389 in Mangistau Oblast; and 7 in East Kazakhstan Oblast).

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 11 (a)**

176. In the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Kazakhstan demonstrated improved performance, raising its rankings among 81 countries to achieve forty-sixth place in mathematics (up from fifty-fourth place), forty-ninth place in science (up from sixty-ninth place) and sixty-first place in reading (up from sixty-ninth place).

177. There has been a positive trend in educational achievement, with a narrowing of the gap between urban and rural students.

178. The Government is continuing to modernize the education system with the aim of improving the quality of education, promoting digitalization and improving the conditions and raising the status of teachers. Major infrastructure projects are in progress, and updated standards governing education and the school environment are being implemented.

179. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted in 2024 revealed regional disparities in access to preschool education. The enrolment rate is 64.1% in rural areas and 71.7% in urban areas.

180. Since 2020, improvements in the quality and conditions of education, including the introduction of a new system of teacher appraisal and a system for monitoring students' academic attainment, have helped to place Kazakhstan among the top 50 countries in mathematics and science.

181. The main current trends in education are outlined in the Policy Framework for the Development of Preschool, Secondary, Technical and Vocational Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan for the period 2023–2029.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 11 (b)**

182. According to the PISA 2022 results, children in Kazakhstan who attended preschool for at least three years scored an average of 433 points, while those who attended for less than one year scored only 391 points. It is therefore not only a social but also a strategic priority for the State to ensure that every child has access to high-quality preschool education.

183. Children with special educational needs account for only about 1.4% of students, which is a significantly lower percentage than expected. A lack of assistants, adapted environments and specialized teaching methods hinders their full participation in preschool education, even though their right to such education is guaranteed on an equal footing with that of other children.

184. As of the start of the 2025/26 school year, there were 11,909 preschools in the country (5,383 of which were public and 6,526 of which were private) serving more than 1 million children, with an enrolment rate of 95.9% of the children aged between 2 and 6 on the waiting list.

185. To address shortages of available places, the Government is taking measures to establish preschool groups on the ground floors of residential buildings and day-care centres attached to companies and governmental bodies.

186. Since 2025, the Government has been introducing a mechanism for personalized, voucher-based funding in several regions in accordance with the “Funding follows the child” principle. Parents are given the opportunity to choose a preschool themselves, and State funding is allocated to that institution provided that it meets the established standards.

187. Since 1 September 2023, children from socially vulnerable groups have been provided with free meals. In 2027, the introduction of a mandatory licensing system for preschools will strengthen infrastructure, personnel and safety requirements for day-care centres, establish uniform quality standards and enhance government oversight of private and public preschools.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 11 (c)**

188. Overall, the Government is implementing a social support system comprising 49 types of assistance.

189. In 2025, a total of 1,427,504 people received 818.1 billion tenge in benefits for families with children from the national budget. The amount of the government benefits received by families with children is calculated on the basis of the subsistence level and the monthly calculation index. Since the beginning of 2025, all government benefits have been indexed at 6.5%.

190. Every year, children from socially vulnerable families receive support from a universal compulsory education fund. Rural children are provided with free transport to school, and the school bus fleet has been renewed with more than 500 buses.

191. The Government is implementing the “Social Wallet” project, which is making it possible to automatically track the provision of free hot meals.

192. Starting from 1 January 2020, a guaranteed social package was introduced for children from low-income families aged up to 18. This package includes free school meals, reduced-fare travel, school uniforms and supplies and, in the case of preschool children, food packages and household cleaning products.

193. Schools are being built or renovated on a large scale. Between 2019 and 2025, more than 1,300 new schools were built, creating more than 1 million student places. This includes the construction of 217 schools, with a total capacity of 460,400 student places, under the national “Keleshek Mektepteri” project.

#### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 11 (d)**

194. The Education Development Policy Framework includes an indicator for monitoring the proportion of preschools with access to basic drinking water, single-sex basic sanitation facilities and basic handwashing facilities, with the target of achieving 100% by 2026, while the child well-being index includes an indicator for monitoring the proportion of preschools and general education schools without access to basic drinking water, heated sanitation facilities and handwashing facilities.

#### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 (a)**

195. The legal status of asylum-seekers and refugees in Kazakhstan is governed by article 18 of the Refugees Act, which prohibits the return or expulsion of asylum-seekers and refugees to a country where their life or freedom would be endangered on the grounds of race, religion, nationality, citizenship, membership of a particular social group or political conviction.

#### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 (b)**

196. Article 10 of the Refugees Act provides that asylum-seekers have the right to submit a written application for refugee status to the local authorities at their place of residence within five calendar days of arriving in Kazakhstan or from the time that a threat of persecution arises.

197. Pursuant to article 11 of the Act, the refugee status of minors who have arrived without parents or legal guardians is decided in a child-sensitive manner once information on the parents or legal guardians has been obtained.

198. Kazakhstan continues to see a steady increase in the inflow of migrants, including families with children and unaccompanied minors. Over the previous three years, the number of immigrant minors has risen from 1,029 in 2022 to 3,272 in 2024.

199. A significant proportion of children arrive with their parents or accompanied by other legal representatives, and there are also cases of arrivals of unaccompanied minors.

200. The Constitution provides that foreign nationals and stateless persons in the country are to enjoy the rights and freedoms and assume the responsibilities established for citizens unless otherwise provided for by the Constitution, laws and international treaties.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 (c)**

201. Pursuant to article 23-3 of the Refugees Act, unaccompanied children are referred to the tutorship or guardianship agency at the location where they were found, which undertakes to place them in the care of an institution for orphaned children. The set of services provided includes social, medical, psychological, educational, employment, cultural and economic support.

202. Kazakh immigration law prohibits the detention of children.

203. Minors may only be detained for committing serious and especially serious offences that are unrelated to migration. Detention is imposed by courts as an exceptional preventive measure.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 (d)**

204. Kazakh law guarantees the right of all children, including refugee and asylum-seeking children and stateless children permanently residing in Kazakhstan, to free preschool, primary and general secondary education, in addition to higher and postgraduate education on a competitive basis.

205. The right to education is governed by the Education Act and the relevant regulations concerning admission to educational institutions. Local authorities ensure that migrant and refugee children have access to schools and preschools.

206. Unaccompanied children are placed in juvenile adaptation centres and support centres for children in difficult circumstances, where they receive special social services in accordance with the Special Social Services Act and standards for the provision of social services.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 (e)**

207. Children in street situations are considered to be in need of protection and support. The Children's Rights Act and the Social Code establish that such children are entitled to special social assistance.

208. Local authorities carry out initiatives in collaboration with guardianship agencies and support centres for children in difficult circumstances to identify children in street situations, temporarily register them and ensure that they are placed in juvenile adaptation centres and support centres. The Government is implementing a comprehensive reintegration programme that includes vocational training and education, psychological and social support, measures to re-establish family ties and measures to return children to their families or, in the absence of their parents, place them with foster families.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 (f)**

209. Child labour is regulated by a set of national laws and regulations.

210. Article 31 of the Labour Code sets the minimum age for concluding an employment contract at 16. Exceptions are permitted from the age of 15 for persons with a secondary education and from the age of 14 for light work performed during free time with parental consent. Children under the age of 14 may participate in arts activities, such as film, theatre and circus productions, provided that this does not harm their health or development.

211. Children may not be employed in heavy or hazardous work, work in harmful conditions or positions that entail full financial liability to the employer for losses. Restrictions also apply to working arrangements; every child has the right to protection from economic exploitation (art. 16-1). Violations are punishable by administrative and criminal penalties.

212. The statistics reveal isolated cases of administrative proceedings (three for illegal recruitment in 2023 and two in 2024).

213. Children are most often involved in work during the summer holidays. Primary areas of employment for teenagers include the agricultural, car washing, retail and courier services sectors.

214. Police officers conduct annual monitoring activities in cotton-growing regions (Turkistan, Zhambyl and Almaty Oblasts) before and during the harvest in collaboration with authorized representatives of local authorities; they also carry out awareness-raising campaigns on the prohibition of child labour and explain the legal consequences of violations.

215. Adolescent migrants aged between 15 and 17 often engage in informal employment without contracts or oversight of working conditions. The lack of oversight mechanisms and legal protection gives rise to risks of labour and sexual exploitation, trafficking in persons and involvement in illegal activities.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 (g)**

216. Under the Act on Combating Trafficking in Persons the definitions of “trafficking in persons” and “exploitation of a person” have been brought into line with the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Trafficking in Persons Protocol).

217. The Act establishes the competent authorities and their rights and obligations, identifies the bodies responsible for combating trafficking in persons and their competences and sets out the rights of victims of that crime, including minors and foreign nationals.

218. Article 17 of the Act incorporates all of the rights of victims of trafficking in persons set out in article 6 of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. These include the provision of shelter, legal, medical, psychological and material assistance and opportunities for employment and education, efforts to ensure the physical safety of victims of trafficking in persons and compensation for harm suffered.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 13 (a) (i)–(v)**

219. Since 2018, the Kazakh judicial system has transitioned to a fundamentally new and progressive model for juvenile courts.

220. Pursuant to the Act of 27 March 2023 amending certain legislative acts concerning the improvement of procedural law and the reform of the justice system, the jurisdiction of specialized inter-district juvenile courts has been expanded, and they have been assigned cases involving marriage and family disputes that affect children.

221. In their work, the courts take into account age-related, psychological and emotional considerations particular to minors to ensure an individualized and fair approach to each case.

222. The steps taken to achieve a progressive model include the specialization of 127 judges, the adaptation of court facilities to meet the needs and prevent the retraumatization of children, with features such as interview rooms and rooms fitted with one-way mirrors, and the adoption of a restorative approach that incorporates social reintegration and mediation measures.

223. Courtrooms have no bars or special barriers to separate teenagers from other participants in proceedings. Separate rooms have been set up for juvenile witnesses and victims. To prevent psychological pressure and foster a supportive environment for minors, no video cameras are installed in children’s rooms.

224. Pursuant to articles 80 and 82 of the Criminal Code, courts imposing sentences on minors prioritize opportunities to rehabilitate them through non-custodial measures.

225. Article 83 of the Criminal Code provides that minors who have committed a minor offence or an ordinary offence for the first time may be exempted from criminal liability subject to the application of compulsory educational measures.

226. For example, in 2025, the courts convicted 753 minors aged 14 and older for criminal offences. A total of 580 of them, or 77%, received non-custodial sentences, which clearly demonstrates the shift from a punitive to a restorative model.

227. Under the Family Court project, judges are working with specialists, including psychologists, mediators and addiction specialists, to develop pretrial conflict resolution procedures and steps to establish a child-friendly justice system.

228. In 2025, the Human Rights Commissioner produced a special report on parole and commutation of sentence.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 13 (b)**

229. To make special provision for the upbringing, education and social adaptation of minors at risk of delinquency and antisocial behaviour, the education system includes special educational institutions for children with deviant behaviour and secure facilities.

230. There are four special educational institutions for children with deviant behaviour and one secure facility. These institutions provide education, behavioural change, rehabilitation and social and vocational adaptation services to minors who have been referred to them by court order.

231. The Children of Kazakhstan Policy Framework provides for the phased transformation of special education institutions, including special schools for children with deviant behaviour.

232. This transformation is focused on movement away from a predominantly punitive and custodial approach towards a supportive, educational and rehabilitative model focused on children's rehabilitation and personal development.

233. Special educational institutions are viewed in the long term not as penal institutions but as rehabilitation and educational centres that protect children's rights, prevent reoffending and facilitate the successful reintegration of minors into society.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 13 (c)**

234. The national preventative mechanism carries out its mission through a system of regular preventive visits to closed institutions.

235. The situation in such institutions is monitored through annual consolidated reports on visits to institutions under the mechanism's mandate. Since 2019, these have included children's institutions, namely, 183 facilities under the Ministry of Education, including 86 boarding schools, 35 support centres for children in difficult circumstances, 10 juvenile adaptation centres and 15 children's villages.

236. In the 11 years since the national preventive mechanism was established, it has monitored 764 different closed institutions, and since 2020, it has issued more than 3,000 recommendations.

237. In follow-up to the recommendations, between 2023 and 2025, a new special facility meeting all international standards of detention was built under a public-private partnership with the participation of an investor; awareness-raising activities to prevent offences are being conducted among convicted minors; and cultural and sporting events are being held in collaboration with local authorities, NGOs and higher education institutions.

238. In 2025, members of the national preventive mechanism visited institution No. 11, a medium-security facility for minors in Almaty, on two occasions, having last visited it once in 2023.

239. On the basis of its findings, the national preventive mechanism recommended that a comprehensive inspection of the children's home at institution No. 10 of the Almaty Oblast Department for Penalty Enforcement be carried out to ensure the availability of medications and compliance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), and that all of the children be provided with a comprehensive medical examination at the Paediatrics and Paediatric Surgery Research Centre or another national medical facility.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 14**

240. In 2018, the Criminal Code was amended to provide for heavier punishments for child-related offences, including by stiffening penalties for involving minors in prostitution, establishing and significantly expanding provisions regarding child pornography and its distribution and establishing penalties for corrupting, exploiting or involving children in unlawful activities that threaten their rights and safety.

241. Under the Act on Combating Trafficking in Persons, a new category of offences related to trafficking in persons and a new concept, "other sexual services", which include those provided remotely in real time over the Internet, were introduced into the Criminal Code.

242. Reconciliation can no longer be used to avoid criminal liability for offences involving trafficking in persons.

243. Officials of medical facilities and child protection institutions are now liable if they fail to inform a tutorship or guardianship body and the procurator's office of cases of abandoned newborn children or the admission or transfer of orphaned children and children deprived of parental care.

244. There are NGOs operating in the country that provide special social services to victims of trafficking in persons under State social procurement contracts.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 15 (a)**

245. In 2018, Kazakhstan adopted the Act on the Protection of Children from Information Harmful to Their Health and Development, which provides for the protection of children from harmful information.

246. In 2019, the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning the activities of children's rights organizations was adopted, pursuant to which six codes and six laws were amended.

247. In May 2020, Kazakhstan adopted the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning the protection of mothers and children and the Code on Public Health and the Healthcare System, which include measures to ensure children's rights to healthcare, disease prevention and access to medical services.

248. In 2022, the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning the protection of children's rights, education, information, and information technology was adopted, pursuant to which 2 codes and 10 laws were amended.

249. The Policy Framework for the Development of Preschool, Secondary, Technical and Vocational Education for the period 2023–2029 has been approved, which sets out priority areas for the development of education.

250. In 2023, Kazakhstan enacted the Social Code, which establishes a system of social guarantees, including separate support measures for vulnerable groups.

251. In 2023, the Online Platforms and Online Advertising Act, which regulates the activities of online platforms and the use of online advertising in the country, was adopted.

252. In 2024, Kazakhstan adopted the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning education, mentorship and child safety, which governs the implementation of a mentorship

scheme; the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning the protection of women's rights and child safety, which includes provisions to stiffen penalties for violence against children, strengthen the institution of the family and enhance child safety; and the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning State awards, education and the protection of children's rights, which establishes the procedure for the creation of professional foster families and regulates the provision of material and financial assistance to students from socially vulnerable families at both State and private schools.

253. In 2025, Kazakhstan adopted the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning culture, education and mentorship, which governs the requirements concerning conditions of detention for minors at juvenile adaptation centres and support centres for children in difficult circumstances; the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning compulsory health insurance and the provision of medical services, which regulates the placement of newly identified orphaned children and children deprived of parental care in healthcare facilities; the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning culture, education, family and State oversight, which provides that tutors, guardians, foster carers and foster parents must provide every year information on their criminal record, health status, income and housing situation; the Prevention of Offences Act, which provides for the establishment of support centres for child victims of violence and establishes procedures for the formation and operation of commissions for minors and their rights; and the Act amending certain legislative acts concerning crime prevention and the improvement of specific areas of Kazakh legislation, which regulates the formation and functioning of regional bodies for the protection of children's rights; the Act also establishes administrative liability for violations of legislation in the field of child rights protection.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 15 (b)**

254. Offices for the Protection of Children's Rights are being established in all oblasts, and their mandate and functions to protect children from violence are established in law.

255. The activities of family support centres are regulated by law. These are specialized agencies that provide comprehensive psychosocial, legal and counselling support to families living in difficult circumstances.

256. In 2024, education-based parental support centres were established with the aim of helping parents to develop the knowledge and skills needed for positive parenting and the harmonious development of their children.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 15 (c)**

257. On 27 January 2026, a policy framework and a plan of action for its implementation for the period 2026–2030 were approved by government decision.

258. On 1 February 2022, the child well-being index was approved by order of the Prime Minister.

### **Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 15 (d)**

259. Kazakhstan has recognized the competence of six out of eight United Nations committees to receive individual complaints from citizens regarding violations of their rights.

260. In the previous five years, Kazakhstan has steadily expanded its participation in international individual complaint mechanisms by ratifying three optional protocols, namely the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, on 2 January 2021; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which establishes the competence of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to consider individual communications, on 7 June 2023; and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights

of the Child on a communications procedure, which grants children and their legal representatives the right to submit communications to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, on 19 December 2023.

### Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 16

261. The Government has made progress in increasing public spending on priority sectors related to children.

262. Since 2018, public expenditure on healthcare, education and social protection has increased steadily as a share of both gross domestic product and the national budget. In 2025, Kazakhstan allocated 9.8 trillion tenge (\$18.8 billion), or 38% of total budget expenditure, to the social sector.

263. According to data from central and local authorities, in 2024, there was a significant increase – of 5.9% – in the share of budget expenditure allocated to children’s needs.

264. Mechanisms for analysing budgeting for children remain in need of further development to improve the effectiveness and targeting of investment in children.

### Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 17

#### (a) Child deaths due to accident, abuse and suicide

##### Child deaths due to external causes and suicide

<i>Year</i>	<i>External causes of death (accidents and abuse)</i>	<i>Suicide</i>
2022	933	–
2023	1 093	204
2024	1 040	175
2025	–	199

#### (b) Children living with HIV/AIDS

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2023	408
2024	369
2025	238

#### (c) Child marriage and adolescent pregnancy and abortions

<i>Year</i>	<i>Child marriage (number of cases)</i>	<i>Birth rate among 15–17-year-olds (per 1,000 girls)</i>	<i>Abortions (per 1,000 girls)</i>
2023	–	3.14	0.82
2024	870	2.88	0.71
2025	–	2.47	0.62

#### (d) Children left behind by migrant parents working abroad: 0

#### (e) Stateless children: 277

**(f) Asylum-seeking, refugee, unaccompanied and separated migrant children, including those in detention****Total forced migrants (refugees and asylum-seekers)**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of children</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
2023	122	58	64
2024	107	58	49
2025	100	47	53

**(g) Children belonging to ethnic minorities**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Russian</i>	<i>Ukrainian</i>	<i>Uzbek</i>	<i>Azerbaijani</i>	<i>Kyrgyz</i>	<i>Tajik</i>	<i>Armenian</i>	<i>Other</i>
2022	487	186	14	31	26	21	31	–	178
2023	521	209	14	46	23	19	52	–	158
2024	1 415	647	52	74	69	50	93	13	417

**(h) Children working, including in the informal sector****Employed population aged 15–17 years by type of economic activity**

<i>Year</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>
Employed in the economy, total including:	27 241	6 464	3 471	4 126	3 776	6 705
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	16 941	4 530	2 381	2 730	2 908	3 410
Industry	246	293	112	268	43	187
Construction	1 815	198	88	221	249	257
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	4 536	682	489	250	119	1 295
Transport and storage	999	50	–	36	–	128
Information and communications	–	11	–	–	–	–
Transport and communications	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other	2 704	700	401	621	457	1 428

**(i) Child victims of trafficking**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total number of victims</i>	<i>Induced to engage in prostitution</i>	<i>Trafficked for the purpose of adoption</i>
2023	26	5	21
2024	16	11	5
2025	42	15	27

**(j) Children in street situations**

**(k) Children living in poverty**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2023	391 238
2024	275 480
2025	196 889

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 18 (a)–(f)**

265. Annex 1

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 (a)****Children living with their families**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2022	102 862
2023	107 959
2024	113 147

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 (b)****Living in institutions**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2022	1 398
2023	1 537
2024	1 580

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 (c)****Attending preschool**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2024	20 300
2025	18 500
2026	15 700

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 (d) and (e)****Attending regular primary and secondary schools**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2024	73 200
2025	70 500
2026	94 800

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 (f)****Receiving individualized support, including home schooling**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2024	More than 13 000
2025	About 16 000
2026	13 500

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 (g)****Attending special schools**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2023	16 318
2024	16 898
2025	17 305
2026	17 186

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 (h)****Out of school**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2023	About 22 000
2024	About 15 000
2025	About 14 700

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 19 (i)****Abandoned by their families**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>
2022	1 398
2023	1 537
2024	1 580

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 20 (a)–(c)**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>
1	Arrested on charges of serious and especially serious offences (pretrial investigation)	55	90	100
2	Placed in pretrial detention	55	90	100
3	Released on parole	4	0	1
4	Sentence commuted to a lighter penalty	11	3	8

### Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 20 (d)

266. Pursuant to article 94 (1) of the Penalties Enforcement Code (Separation of convicted persons in penal institutions), the Government provides for the segregation of men and women and of juvenile and adult inmates. Children and adults remanded in custody must be held separately.

### Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 20 (e)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>
1	Total number convicted	49	65	61
1.1	For especially serious offences	12	27	21
1.2	For serious offences	27	30	39
1.3	For ordinary offences	10	8	1
2	Age composition			
2.1	15-year-olds	0	0	1
2.2	16-year-olds	24	33	9
2.3	17-year-olds	20	29	44
2.4	18-year-olds	5	3	7

#### Statistics by article of the Criminal Code (boys)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>
1	Article 99 (Murder)	10	7	2
2	Article 106 (Serious harm to health)	6	9	9
3	Article 120 (Rape)	7	12	7
4	Art. 121 (Sexual assault)	11	12	13
5	Article 124 (Corruption of minors)	0	0	1
6	Article 188 (Theft)	3	7	4
7	Article 191 (Robbery)	0	0	1
8	Article 192 (Aggravated robbery)	0	2	3
9	Other articles	12	16	21

#### By social situation (boys)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>
1	Two-parent family	17	29	28
2	Single-parent family	32	35	30
3	Cared for by guardians	0	1	3

#### Juvenile offenders in institutions (girls)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>
1	Total number of offenders	3	3	11
1.1	For especially serious offences	0	3	4
1.2	For serious offences	3	0	7
2	Age composition			
2.1	15-year-olds	2	0	3
2.2	16-year-olds	1	2	9

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>
2.3	17-year-olds	20	1	9
2.4	18-year-olds	5	3	7

#### Statistics by article of the Criminal Code (girls)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>
1	Article 106 (Serious harm to health)	0	0	1
2	Article 120 (Rape)	0	0	2
3	Art. 121 (Sexual assault)	2	0	2
4	Article 188 (Theft)	0	0	1
5	Article 192 (Aggravated robbery)	0	2	2
6	Article 297 (Drug-related offences)	1	1	3
7	Article 293 (Criminal mischief)	2	0	0

#### By social situation (girls)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>
1	Two-parent family	2	3	3
2	Single-parent family	1	0	8

#### Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 20 (f)

267. Article 132 (8) of the Penalties Enforcement Code provides that women nursing infants in a facility's children's home, women who are exempt from work because they are pregnant or have given birth and minors may not be transferred to solitary confinement or placed in a disciplinary unit. Juvenile offenders may not be placed in solitary confinement.

#### Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 20 (g)

##### Minors in institutions (additional information)

##### Repeat referral to special education institutions (over a three-year period)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
2023–2025	15	3

##### Minor boys in institutions (2025)

<i>Category of offence</i>	<i>Total</i>
Total number of boys	71
Especially serious offences	30
Serious offences	51
Ordinary offences	1

**Minor girls in institutions (2025)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Total</i>
15 years	2
16 years	2
17 years	1

Of the five girls, four were convicted for especially serious offences and one was convicted for a serious offence.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 21**

268. Kazakhstan has established an adequate legal framework for the protection of children's rights, based on international standards and agreements, and has become a party to 16 international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

269. The year 2024 has taken on special significance not only as the thirty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention but also as the thirtieth anniversary of the ratification of this fundamental international document by Kazakhstan, which marks an important milestone in the country's history.

270. In developing national strategies, the Government makes systematic efforts to fulfil the country's global commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; and 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, which directly concern the interests and well-being of children.

271. Data from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey have been used to calculate and refine national indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals in key areas such as poverty, education, health, gender equality, water supply and sanitation.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 22**

272. In 2023, the Government conducted a sociological study entitled "Kazakhstan Kids Online" in collaboration with UNICEF to assess the level of digital literacy among children. The results showed that 15% of children in Kazakhstan encounter undesirable content online every day, 21% of children reported instances of cyberbullying, 10% of children add strangers as friends online, which increases the risk of exploitation, and 5% of children go online for the first time at the age of four or younger.

- On 17 November 2025, Kazakhstan adopted the Artificial Intelligence Act, which establishes a legal framework for the development, use and regulation of artificial intelligence systems in Kazakhstan and lays down the principles of safety, transparency and accountability.

273. The Act amending certain legislative acts concerning culture, education, family and State oversight of 4 December 2025 governs State supervision, through scheduled and unscheduled inspections, of the activities of educational institutions and children's rights organizations that receive funding from the State budget for food, accommodation, medical care, education and upbringing and recreational opportunities.

**Reply to the issues raised in paragraph 23**

274. The Government has implemented the road map for strengthening the protection of children's rights, combating domestic violence and addressing suicidal tendencies among adolescents for the period 2020–2023, the Comprehensive Plan to Protect Children from Violence, Prevent Suicide and Ensure Children's Rights and Welfare for the period 2023–2025 and the Action Plan to Prevent, Suppress and Combat Crimes related to Trafficking in Persons for the period 2021–2023.

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