

United Nations Study on Violence against Children

Response to questionnaire received from the
Government of Republic of BULGARIA

United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children

Questionnaire

I. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This part of the questionnaire aims to determine how your country's legal framework addresses violence against children, including prevention of violence, protection of children from violence, redress for victims of violence, penalties for perpetrators and reintegration and rehabilitation of victims.

1. Describe any developments with respect to violence against children which have resulted from your country's acceptance of international human rights instruments, including, for example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols, the Palermo Protocol or regional human rights instruments. Provide information on cases concerning violence against children in which your country's courts or tribunals have referred to international or regional human rights standards.

In 1991 the Republic of Bulgaria ratified the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**. In subsequent years the following were also ratified:

In 1992 – the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;

In 1994 – the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

In 2001 – by an Act of Parliament the Republic of Bulgaria ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, as well as Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour;

In 2002 – the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption;

In 2003 – the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, and the European Convention on Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions Concerning Custody of Children and on Restoration of Custody of Children;

[Legal provisions on violence against children](#)

2. Describe how forms of violence against children are addressed in your country's constitution, legislation and subsidiary legislation, and, where appropriate, customary law.
3. Provide details of any specific legislative provisions on:

- Prevention of all forms of physical, sexual and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, and sexual abuse;
 - Protection of children from all forms of violence;
 - Redress, including compensation, for child victims of violence;
 - Penalties for perpetrators of violence against children;
 - Reintegration and rehabilitation of child victims of violence.
4. Indicate whether any specific legislative provisions address all forms of violence including physical, sexual and psychological violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment and sexual exploitation against children which take place in:
- The family/ home;
 - Schools and pre-school care and education (both formal and non-formal, state and private);
 - Military schools;
 - Institutions including care, residential, health and mental health;
 - The context of law and public order enforcement including in detention facilities or prisons;
 - The neighbourhood, street and the community, including in rural areas;
 - The workplace (informal and formal);
 - Sports and sporting facilities.

A legal definition of ‘violence against children’ is contained in the **Regulation on the Implementation of the Child Protection Act:**

1. ‘Violence’ against children is any act of physical, mental or sexual violence, neglect, commercial or other exploitation, entailing an actual or likely damage to the health, life, development or dignity of children, which may occur in any of the family, school or social environment.
2. ‘Physical violence’ is the infliction of bodily injury, including pain or suffering, without damage being caused to health.
3. ‘Mental violence’ are all the acts, which may have a harmful impact on the mental health and development of children, such as underestimation, derision, threat, discrimination, neglect or other forms of negative treatment, as well as the lack of capacity in parents, custodians and guardians, or caretakers, to provide for the care of and ensure an appropriate support environment to the children.
4. ‘Sexual violence’ is the use of children for the purpose of obtaining sexual gratification.

Other provisions concerning violence are also contained in:

The Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, adopted in 2001 (subsequently amended in 2003), specifies that every citizen shall have the right to life and that infringement upon human life shall be punished as a most serious criminal offence (Art. 28). Nobody shall be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or forced assimilation (Art. 29, para 1).

Bulgarian legislation has been constantly changing after 1990 in order to allow guarantees for the rights and protection of children.

The Penal Code (PC) of the Republic of Bulgaria specifies that children¹ (under the age of 14) are criminally irresponsible. Young persons² (who have turned 14 years of age, but who are under 18) are criminally responsible, reduced periods being envisaged for the service of ‘imprisonment’, as a sentence to which they are subject, as well as possibilities for its substitution for suspended or less serious sentences.

By virtue of the latest amendments to PC from 2002 and 2003, aggrieved criminal liability and increased sentence periods have been envisaged with regard to the:

- murder of a child or person under 18 years of age, committed by their parents (Art. 116);
- murder of a newborn child (Art. 120);
- assistance for or incitement to the suicide of a child or young person (Art. 127);
- bodily injury of a child (Art. 131);
- communication of a sexually transmitted disease to a child or young person (Art. 135);
- abduction (Art. 142) and illegal deprivation of liberty (Art. 142a) of a child or young person;
- sexual assault of a child (Art. 149) and of a young person (Art. 150);
- intercourse with a child or young person, insofar the act committed does not qualify under Art. 152 as rape (Art. 151);
- rape of a female person under 18 years of age (Art. 152);
- incitement to prostitution, sexual assault or intercourse with a child or young person (Art. 155);

¹ *Remark of Translator:* or *minors*, the two terms being used interchangeably, according to context.

² *Remark of Translator:* or *underage*, the two terms being used interchangeably, according to context.

- abduction of a female person under 18 years of age, to the purpose of making her available for indecent activities (Art. 156);
- homosexual activities with a child and with a young person (Art. 157);
- the production, distribution and possession of material containing pornography, involving a child or a young person, or a person who has the appearance of a child or young person (Art. 159);
- trafficking of persons under 18 years of age (Art. 159a);
- leaving a person in parental care or legal guardianship without supervision or sufficient care, thereby placing at risk his or her physical, mental or moral development (Art. 182);
- torture of a child or young person remanded in the care of the perpetrator or whose upbringing has been assigned to the latter (Art. 187);
- forcing a child or young person to commit a criminal offence or prostitute (Art. 188);
- systemic use, by a parent or legal guardian, of a child as a beggar (Art. 189);
- parent who forces his or her own child under 16 years of age to live together with an adult person as his or her spouse (Art. 190);
- inciting or facilitating a young person under 16 years of age or of a child to live together with the perpetrator as his or her spouse (Art. 191);
- parent or another relative who receives ransom in order to allow his daughter or female relative who is under 16 years of age to live with another as his spouse (Art. 192);
- inebriation of or sale of alcoholic drinks to a person under 18 years of age (Art. 193);
- incitement to or assistance for the use of narcotic substances by a child or young person (Art. 354b).

Measures have been mapped out and amendments to the **Labour Code** are adopted, in view of institutionalising the reduction of the serious forms of child labour.

The Civil Procedure Code (CPC) envisages special judicial proceedings for the restoration of child custody and the exercise of the right to personal contact, proceeding at the implementation of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

In 2000 a **Child Protection Act** (CPA, as amended in 2003) was adopted in the Republic of Bulgaria. CPA defines a child as any person under the age of 18. CPA specifies the need to ensure special protection by the state in respect of children at risk (Art. 5). Art. 11 regulates the right of every child to protection against violence. On the basis of CPA and a special **Ordinance on the Terms and**

Conditions for Affording Police Protection to Children adopted in 2001, police authorities afford police protection to children who make the object of criminal offences, for the life and health of whom an imminent threat or the risk of being involved in the commission of criminal offences exist, or who are lost or in a helpless condition or left without supervision. Police protection is afforded by police authorities in district police directorates for a period not to exceed 48 hours (as per an amendment to the Ordinance from 2003).

A **Regulation on the Implementation of the Child Protection Act** came in force in 2003. The following secondary pieces of legislation associated with CPA were also adopted in the same year: an **Ordinance on Specialised Protection of Children in Public Areas**, an **Ordinance on Criteria and Standards for Child Social Services**, an **Ordinance on the Terms and Conditions for Implementation of Measures to Prevent the Abandonment of Children and Their Placement in Institutions**, an **Ordinance on the Terms and Conditions for the Applications, Selection and Approval of Foster Families** and an **Ordinance on the Protection of Children with Manifest Talents**.

In accordance with the **Sentence Enforcement Act** (latest amendments from 2002), young persons currently serve sentences of ‘imprisonment’ separately from adults, under a less stringent regime. At the beginning of next year it has been envisaged that courts will start applying the sentence of ‘probation’ in respect of young persons who have committed criminal offences.

In 2003 the **Fight against Trafficking of Human Beings Act** was adopted, whereby measures for the protection of and assistance to victims of trafficking have been regulated, especially women and children. Secondary legislation thereto has also been adopted, i.e. a **Regulation on Hostels for Provisional Placement and on Protection and Assistance Centres for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings**, as well as a **Regulation on the Structure and Operations of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**. A central body to combat trafficking in human beings, as well as local structures attached to it, have been set up by virtue of these legal provisions.

In 2004 amendments to the **Fight against Anti-Social Acts of Children and Young Persons Act** will be adopted. By virtue of this Act educational measures (Art. 13) in respect of children and young persons, authors of anti-social acts, are applied. Educational measures are applied with a view to prevent anti-social acts of children and young persons and ensure their normal development and education.

On 30 June 2004, at first reading, the National Assembly adopted the **Protection against Domestic Violence Act** and the **Protection of Persons under Threat in Relation to Criminal Proceedings Act**.

Legislation in the field of education also guarantees child protection against violence, at different levels and in respect of specific criteria. The general legal

framework is binding on all types of kindergartens, schools and service units of the education system.

In accordance with the **National Education Act**, art. 4, para 1, citizens have the right to education. They may continually heighten their education and qualifications. Under para 2, no restrictions or privileges are admitted, based on race, ethnicity, sex, ethnic or social origins, religion or social status.

In the **Regulation on the Implementation of the National Education Act** the roles and responsibilities of the various participants in the teaching and school education processes, including those of students, have been set out.

Art. 128 and Art. 129 provide that a teacher:

- must protect the life and health of students and children during the teaching and school education processes and other activities organised by him or her, the school or kindergarten;
- may not violate the rights of children and students, degrade their personal dignity, or apply any forms of physical or mental violence against them;
- has no right to remove a student from classes or any extra-curricular or out-of-school activities.

Art. 132 specifies the conditions for upbringing, training and education of children and students, which guarantee:

- equal opportunities for physical, mental and social development;
- their rights, freedom and security;
- respect for their dignity, deference and affection to children;
- training in a spirit of understanding, peace and tolerance;
- involvement with national traditions and cultural values.

Art. 133 and Art. 134 provide for the rights of students and their opportunity to take part, as partners, in school education, having an active role in the achievement of training and education process objectives.

A student has the right to:

- receive information from teachers on issues of relevance to his or her training;
- receive consultations from teachers in organising the way he or she independently prepares his or her lessons;
- receive individual support from teachers, in accordance with his or her specific pedagogical needs;
- be guided, encouraged or assisted to receive support for the development of his or her talents, mental or physical abilities;

- receive protection from the school, service unit or regional education inspectorate attached to the Ministry of Education and Science, in the event his or her personal dignity has been degraded or his or her human rights have been infringed upon;
- submit opinions and proposals to the school headmaster, concerning the organisation and overall conduct of school operations;
- take part in deliberations of the Pedagogical Council concerning student training results, awards or sanctions.

Art. 139 specifies the procedures for the service of sanctions on students in the event of failure to perform their obligations set out in the Regulation on the Implementation of the National Education Act and the Regulation on School Operations. It expressly indicates that:

- prior to serving a sanction, the class master must inform the parent or legal guardian of the student concerned, as well as the Social Assistance Directorate at his or her place of residence, of the offence committed, in view of undertaking measures to address the problematic behaviour in question;
- before a sanction is served, a student has the right to be informed and consulted by a representative of the Social Assistance Directorate, at his or her place of residence, in view of protecting his or her interests;
- before a sanction is served the headmaster must hear the student, check the facts and circumstances associated with the offence, hear a teacher or another student, as indicated by the student concerned, who will take the role of defence;
- the parent or legal guardian of the student may attend the session of the Pedagogical Council at which a decision will be made about the service of a sanction.

Subsequent provisions deal with the possibilities available to students to appeal against sanctioning decisions at school, regional education inspectorate and Ministry of Education and Science level.

Documents adopted in recent months, guaranteeing the rights of children with disabilities and of children from ethnic minorities, are of particular importance. These are:

1. The National Plan for Integration of Children with Special Training Needs;
2. The Strategy for Integration of Students from Ethnic Minorities in Education.

Job descriptions for specialists working with children also include a **Code of Professional Ethics** for those working with children.

In 2002 a **National Programme for the Children of Bulgaria** was adopted, which regulates interagency efforts for protection of the rights, life and health of children, as well as cooperation of state institutions with non-governmental organisations.

In 2003 a **National Strategy for the Protection of Street Children**, a **National Action Plan against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children** and the **2003 – 2005 Plan for Reduction of the Number of Children Raised in Specialised Institutions in the Republic of Bulgaria** were adopted and are currently implemented.

A **Plan for Work with Child Beggars, envisaging measures for the protection of children used for begging and for the reduction of begging in larger populated areas** was also adopted in 2004.

5. Indicate if corporal punishment of children, in any setting, including in the family, is explicitly prohibited in your legal system. Provide details of any legal defences available to those who administer corporal punishment to children, including in the family. Provide information on penalties applicable to those who administer corporal punishment to children, including in the family.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in the Republic of Bulgaria, in respect of all citizens.

6. Provide information on whether the penal code permits corporal punishment and/or capital punishment as a sentence for crimes committed by under 18 year olds.

No such sanctions exist under the Penal Code. Capital punishment has been abolished.

Question 7.

7. Provide details on whether bullying/hazing and sexual harassment are explicitly addressed by legislation.

An **Anti-Discrimination Act** was also adopted in 2003, whereby all forms of discrimination are prohibited. Art. 4, para 1 thereof provides:

“Any form of direct or indirect discrimination based on sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, citizenship, origin, religion or belief, education, convictions, political affiliations, personal or social status, disability, age, sexual orientation, family status, financial situation or any other indicators provided for by law or an

international agreement to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party, shall be prohibited”.

8. Provide information on the way in which harmful or violent traditional practices, including but not limited to female genital mutilation, child marriage or honour crimes are addressed in your country.

Bulgarian customs and traditions are not associated with violence or child mutilation. There are no traditions of dishonouring young girls.

9. Provide information on the applicability of specific provisions to address all forms of violence against children to non-citizens and stateless children, including asylum seekers and displaced children. If specific provisions do not apply to such children, provide details of protection offered to them.

The system for the protection of children also applies to children who are foreign nationals, refugees or who have no particular status.

10. Provide information on the applicability of specific provisions to address all forms of violence against children to non-citizens and stateless children, including asylum seekers and displaced children. If specific provisions do not apply to such children, provide details of protection offered to them.

10.1 There is no difference based on sex in the definition of violence, some criminal offences, however, only concern child victims of the female sex, e.g. Art. 177³ Penal Code.

10.2 Criminal law operates an age distinction between children and young persons, both in respect of perpetrators and victims of crime. As regards the age of perpetrators, children (under the age of 14, in accordance with Bulgarian legislation) are criminally irresponsible, whereas special rules apply to young persons (PC, Fight against the Anti-Social Acts of Children and Young Persons Act). In certain cases PC envisages for a criminal offence committed by a young person to be heard and a sanction to be served not by a court, but by a specialised administrative commission, pursuant to a special procedure under the FAASACYPA. Only this Commission rules with regard to crimes and other

³ *Remark of Translator:* Art. 177 (1) The one who, through duress, incites another to enter marriage, and said marriage is thereafter declared invalid on account thereof, shall be punished by deprivation of liberty of up to three years.

(2) The one who abducts a female person with the purpose of forcing her to enter marriage shall be punished by deprivation of liberty of up to three years, and where the victim is a young person, the punishment shall be deprivation of liberty of up to five years.

offences committed by a child (aged 8 – 14), since children are criminally irresponsible.

10.3 PC criminalises the violence of parents against children, incest, various offences committed by a woman in child-birth, and the murder of a parent/legal guardian. At the same time PC allows for the offender not to be punished or for the sentence imposed not to be served where a perpetrator of a forced sexual intercourse or of acts aimed at obtaining sexual gratification and a victim subsequently enter marriage.

11. Provide information on any recent comprehensive review of the legal framework to address violence against children.

No specific review of the legal framework has been made.

12. Provide information on any recent comprehensive review of the legal framework to address violence against children.

No official information is available.

Courts tasked with addressing violence against children

13. Identify those parts of the court structure in your country tasked with addressing violence against children. Indicate if your family or juvenile courts have specific responsibility for this issue.

There are no specialised courts. Cases are heard by the general courts, some special rules in the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) applying to the interrogation of young persons, a possibility being envisaged for examination of the case behind closed doors, where this is required to protect good morals or prevent disclosing facts pertaining to the private life of citizens (Art. 262 CPC). A witness who is a young person (including the victim of violence) is interrogated, upon decision of the pre-trial body, in presence of a pedagogue or psychologist, and where necessary – in presence of a parent or legal guardian.

Minimum age for sexual activity

14. Provide information on any legislatively defined minimum age required for valid consent to sexual activity. Is this age different for girls and boys? Is this age different in respect of heterosexual and homosexual activities?

The minimum age of valid consent to sexual activity is 14 years and it is identical for girls and boys. By virtue of the 2004 amendments to CPC it has also been made identical for heterosexual and homosexual contacts. In accordance with PC, intercourse with children under the age of 14 is punishable. A punishable act is

also committed by an adult person (over 18 years) who has sexual contact with a person over 14 years of age where the latter does not understand the nature and implications of the act.

15. [Provide information on the minimum age of marriage for women and men.](#)

In accordance with the provisions of the Family Code, a person aged eighteen may enter marriage. The Family Code also allows a young person, who has turned 16 years, to enter marriage, by way of exception, where important reasons so require. The regional court at the place of residence of the young person issues an authorisation to this effect. The age is the same for persons of both sexes.

[Sexual exploitation of children](#)

16. [Provide information on legislation and other measures to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children, including through prostitution and other unlawful sexual activities. Provide details on means to ensure that child victims of such exploitation are not criminalized. Provide information on legislation or other measures to prohibit all forms of sale or trafficking in children, including by their parents.](#)

The legal framework is constituted by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the second Optional Protocol thereto, PC, CPA, and FATHBA. The National Action Plan against Sexual Commercial Exploitation of Children adopted in 2003 sets out the basic measures for the prevention, protection, recovery and rehabilitation of child victims. Under Bulgarian legislation children involved in sexual exploitation are not considered as offenders.

[Pornography and harmful information](#)

17. [Provide information on legislation and other measures to prohibit the production, possession and dissemination of child pornography. In particular, please provide information on any controls on pornography produced and/or disseminated via the internet.](#)

The legal framework is constituted by Art. 159 PC.

Art. 159 (1) The one who produces, displays, presents, broadcasts, distributes, sells, rents or otherwise circulates works with a pornographic content, shall be punished by deprivation of liberty of up to one year and a fine of one thousand to three thousand Bulgarian Leva.

(2) The one who displays, presents, distributes, sells or rents works with a pornographic content to a person who has not turned 16 years of age, shall be punished by deprivation of liberty of up to three years and a fine of up to five thousand Bulgarian Leva.

(3) Where a child, young person or an individual presenting the appearance of such has been used in creating the works, punishment for acts under paras. 1 and 2 shall be deprivation of liberty of up to five years and a fine of up to eight thousand Bulgarian Leva.

(4) Where acts under paras. 1 – 3 have been committed at the orders or in implementing a decision of an organised criminal group, punishment shall be deprivation of liberty from two to eight years and a fine of up to ten thousand Bulgarian Leva, the court being also competent to impose confiscation of some or all the possessions of perpetrator.

(5) The one who possesses a pornographic work in whose creation a child or a young person has been used or an individual presenting the appearance of such, shall be punished by deprivation of liberty of up to one year or a fine of up to two thousand Bulgarian Leva.

(6) The object of criminal activity shall be forfeited to the benefit of the State, and where absent or alienated, its equivalent shall be awarded.

18. [Provide information on any legislation or guidelines to protect children from injurious information and material transmitted through the media, Internet, videos, electronic games, etc.](#)

Starting in Academic Year 2003 – 2004, School Internal Regulations introduced rules for the safe work of students in the school network and Internet.

[Reporting obligations relating to violence against children](#)

19. [Provide information on legislation, regulations or administrative directives requiring reporting of all forms of violence against and abuse of children in all settings to appropriate bodies. If reporting legislation, regulations or administrative directives exist, please indicate whether all citizens are required to report, or whether the obligation falls on certain professional groups only. Provide details of any sanctions for non-reporting.](#)

Tip-offs about violent crimes against children are filed in pursuance of general CPC rules– Art. 186 and Art. 187. All citizens and public officials have a general obligation to report crime – Art. 174 CPC.

CPA also contains a provision introducing the obligation to provide assistance:

Art. 7 (1) A person who becomes aware that a child is in need of protection is obligated to immediately notify the Social Assistance Directorate, the Child Protection State Agency and the Ministry of Interior.

(2) The same obligation also applies to every person, who has become aware of the above, in relation to the exercise of his or her profession or occupation, even where such person might be bound by rules of professional secret.

(3) Central and local bodies of the executive branch of government and specialised child institutions are obligated to provide timely assistance and give information to the Child Protection State Agency and the Social Assistance Directorates in the discharge of their official obligations, following the terms and conditions of the Personal Data Protection Act.

Complaints procedures

20. Provide information on any complaints procedures relating to all forms of violence against children perpetrated in:

- The family/ home;
- Schools and pre-school care and education (both formal and non-formal, state and private);
- Military schools;
- Institutions, state and private, including care, residential, health and mental health;
- The context of law and public order enforcement including in detention facilities or prisons;
- The neighbourhood, street and the community, including in rural areas;
- The workplace (informal and formal);
- Sports and sporting facilities.

Existent legislation provides for general procedures, i.e. no special complaints procedure has been envisaged in respect of violence and, therefore, the general rules apply. A fundamental piece of legislation is the **Proposals, Tip-Offs, Complaints and Applications Act**. Below, the relevant provisions of the **Ordinance on Criteria and Standards for Social Services to Children** are found:

Art. 6 (1) Providers of social services for children shall be obligated to make a procedure available for the submission and examination of complaints filed by children, their parents, legal custodians/guardians or child caretakers and by staff.

(2) A procedure under para shall include:

1. rules for the registration and examination of complaints;
2. a fixed period of examination;
3. rules affording children the possibility to consult an adult of their choice when they wish to file a complaint.

(3) Providers of social services for children shall be obligated to examine and rule on each complaint within the set period, in an objective and lawful way.

(4) Files shall be kept of all complaints and action taken by a provider of social services to eliminate violations, which shall be accessible for inspection by the Social Assistance Agency and the Child Protection State Agency.

(5) The Head of the Social Assistance Directorate at the Social Assistance Agency shall inform the Chair of the Child Protection State Agency of all tip-offs received against a provider of social services.

21. Indicate whether children or persons acting on their behalf can access these procedures. Indicate whether legal aid is available to facilitate submission of complaints, and the circumstances in which legal aid will be available.

Under CPA, one of the measures for protection of children is legal aid provided by the state.

Under CPC, a defendant young person is mandatorily appointed, within the context of criminal proceedings, a defence counsel who is a lawyer – Art. 70, para 1, item 1 CPC; s. also, for legal aid, Art. 15 Child Protection Act. Under Art. 76 CPC, pre-trial or trial judicial bodies appoint a special representatives, acting for a child or young person, victim of a crime, where his or her interests contradict those of a parent/legal guardian, e.g. where a parent or legal guardian has been indicted of a violent crime against the child.

Art. 76 CPC

Para (2) (*New, SG No 70/1999*) Where the interests of a child or young person, victims of crime, contradict those of their parent, custodian or guardian, the relevant body shall appoint a lawyer to act as their special representative who shall, on behalf of the child or young person, exercise the rights under Art. 52 and 60. A special representative shall take part in criminal proceedings as mandatarly.

Under the draft Domestic Violence Act a special procedure is envisaged, which will be carried out before the regional court, for the provision of injunctive relief, imposing measures for protection against violence, social protection and rehabilitation.

22. Describe steps which have been taken to raise awareness of possibilities to submit complaints about violence against children.

Public awareness raising with regard to complaint and tip-off procedures is achieved through the training of the following target audiences:

- Staff in institutions and schooling establishments;
- Providers of social services;
- Children.

The procedure for submission of complaints and tip-offs is extremely simplified.

23. Provide information on any special procedural or evidentiary rules which may apply in proceedings with respect to violence against children.

Existent legislation provides for the following rules for children and their participation in various proceedings:

The interrogation of a child or young person is regulated in CPC – Art. 99. Witness protection makes the object of Art. 97a CPC, as well as of the Protection of Persons under Threat in Relation to Criminal Proceedings Act adopted at first reading. The Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings Act contains special provisions, whereby, if the victim provides assistance for the detection of offenders, under Art. 25 FATHBA it may be afforded a status of special protection.

Interrogation of a child or young person witness

Art. 99 (1) Children shall be interrogated as witnesses in the presence of a pedagogue or psychologist, and where necessary, also in the presence of their parent or legal guardian.

(2) Young person witnesses shall be interrogated in the presence of persons under the preceding paragraph, if the respective body finds this necessary.

(3) By authorisation of the body conducting the interrogation, the persons under paragraph (1) may put questions to the witness.

(4) The body conducting the interrogation shall explain to the child witness the necessity of giving true testimony, without warning about responsibility.

Art. 76 CPC – pre-trial or trial judicial bodies appoint a special representative for the child or young person, victim of a criminal offence, where his or her interests contradict those of his or her parent/legal guardian, e.g. a parent or legal guardian is indicted of a violent offence against the child.

Art. 76, para 2. Where the interests of a child or young person, victims of crime, contradict those of their parent, custodian or legal guardian, the relevant body shall appoint a lawyer to act as his or her special representative who shall, on behalf of the child or young person, exercise the rights under Art. 52 and 60. The special representative shall take part in criminal proceedings as mandatory.

Art. 47, para 5 CPC. A public prosecutor may also file civil action for the benefit of persons who, being underage or due to mental or physical disabilities, are unable to defend their rights and lawful interests.

24. Provide information on the usual outcome of complaints of violence against children (e.g. compensation, punishment of perpetrators, perpetrator rehabilitation, family therapy).

Legislation provides not only for punishment of offenders, but also for the compensation of damages sustained by a child or young person. Where the latter have also filed for civil action within criminal proceedings, compensation is

awarded to them at the same time the sentence is issued. Where no such action has been filed, compensation may be sought before civil courts, following termination of criminal proceedings for the offence.

Rehabilitation and integration measures have been provided by FATHBAS, the draft law on protection against domestic violence and a chapter of the National Action Plan against Sexual Commercial Exploitation of Children, setting out the action required for the recovery and rehabilitation of child victims.

25. Provide information on the usual outcome of legal proceedings in which children and juveniles are found guilty of perpetrating violence (e.g. imprisonment, corporal punishment, community service, perpetrator rehabilitation, family therapy).

Offences of children and young persons exempted from criminal liability pursuant to Art. 61 PC, on whom educational measures have been imposed, are examined under FAASACYPA. The following educational measures are served on them:

- a) reprimand;
- b) obligation to submit apologies to the victim;
- c) warning;
- d) remand to parents or their legal substitutes with an obligation to take special care;
- e) (*Amended, SG No 110/1996*) remand in educative supervision of the respective work team;
- f) remand in educational supervision of a public tutor;
- g) obligation for the young persons to eliminate, of their own efforts, the damage inflicted, provided it is within their abilities to do so;
- h) obligation to take a certain type of action to the benefit of the community;
- i) (*Amended, SG No 110/1996*) placement in a social pedagogical boarding house;
- j) (*New, SG No 110/1996*) warning of a placement in a correctional boarding school with a probation term of 6 months;
- k) (*New, SG No 110/1996*) placement in a correctional boarding school.

CPC envisages special rules for the examination of criminal cases in respect of defendant young persons who have not been exempted from criminal liability with the imposition of educational measures under Art. 61 CC, i.e. mandatory participation of a defence lawyer, preliminary investigation by an investigator with appropriate qualifications, mandatory examination of the case by court assessors who are teachers or tutors, possible participation of their parents in criminal proceedings, special remand measures, i.e. supervision by parents or legal guardians; supervision by the administration of the schooling establishment in which the young person is placed; supervision by the inspector at the child

pedagogical facility or by a member of the respective local commission for combating anti-social acts of children and young persons; remand in custody; as a remand measure, custody is imposed in extreme cases. Cases against young persons are examined behind closed doors.

Criminal offences committed by an individual at the time he or she qualified as a young person, are not taken into consideration in the application of PC provisions on dangerous recidivism.

Art. 62 CC – The following sentences only may be served on young persons: deprivation of liberty; probation – for those who have turned 16 year of age; public reprimand; withdrawal of title to exercise a certain profession or occupation under Art. 37, item 7.

A sentence to deprivation of liberty is served in special correctional institutions.

Following majority, offenders are moved into a prison or labour corrective hostel. In order to complete their education or obtain qualifications, at the proposal of the pedagogical council and following authorisation by a public prosecutor, they may be left in the corrective institution until they complete twenty years of age.

II. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND RESOURCES TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

The aim of this section is to establish if your country has an institution coordinating multi-sectoral activities concerning violence against children, which include prevention, protection, redress, reintegration and rehabilitation.

26. Are there any Governmental authorities, structures and mechanisms, including at federal, state/provincial, municipal and local level which are currently responsible for addressing violence against children?

If YES, identify these authorities, structures and mechanisms and describe how coordination is ensured.

27. Is there a lead Government authority tasked with responsibility for addressing violence against children?

If YES, provide details.

There is no distinct state authority with a statutory mandate to address violence against children.

Since 2003 prevention of violence against children has been among the priorities of state policy for the protection of children. The realisation of this priority is within the competence of various central and local authorities, the main

coordinating role being given to the Child Protection State Agency and the Ministry of Interior.

The Child Protection State Agency has statutory powers to observe the full enjoyment by children of the **right to protection against involvement in activities, which are not favourable to their physical, mental, ethical and educational growth (Art. 11, para 1 Child Protection Act)**. The Agency was established on 1 January 2001, in accordance with the requirements of the Child Protection Act adopted on 31 May 2000.

Special units working to provide child protection at local level have been set up within Social Assistance Directorates across the country, which in turn belong to the structure of the Social Assistance Agency. Child Protection Departments exist in all municipalities of Bulgaria (272). They develop municipal strategies for child protection, determining local level priorities in child protection policy, including the priority of 'prevention of violence'. Child Protection Commissions with advisory functions are also established within Social Assistance Directorates, in which take part representatives of municipal administration, Social Assistance Directorates, regional units of the National Police Service, regional education inspectorates with the Ministry of Education and Science, district healthcare centres, local commissions for combating anti-social acts of children and young persons, as well as of legal not-for-profit entities, which carry out child protection activities and deal in particular with the prevention of violence against them.

After 2003 the **right to protection against the use of children for begging, prostitution, distribution of pornographic material and the obtainment of illegal financial income, as well as against sexual violence (Art. 11, para 3 Child Protection Act)** is guaranteed by the Minister of Interior who is the central body for the protection of children and is also competent to address, within his competence, violence against children.

The right of children to protection against education methods degrading their dignity, against physical, mental or other forms of violence or impact contrary to their interests (Art. 11, para 2 Child Protection Act)

There is also a Central Commission for Combating Anti-Social Acts of Children and Young Persons attached to the Council of Ministers. In accordance with the Act, educational measures (Art. 13) are applied in respect of children and young persons who have committed anti-social acts. Educational measures are applied with a view to prevent the anti-social acts of children and young persons and to ensure their normal development and upbringing. The National Assembly is currently discussing draft amendments to the Fight against Anti-Social Acts of Children and Young Persons Act.

28. Does your country allocate specific financial and/or human resources to activities to address violence against children?

If YES, provide details.

No. Until now all operations to counter violence against children have been funded through the approved budgets of institutions.

29. Do international or bilateral donors provide resources to your country for activities to address violence against children?

If YES, indicate the extent of these resources and the way in which they are used.

No.

30. Do international or bilateral donors provide resources to your country for activities to address violence against children?

If YES, indicate the extent of these resources and the way in which they are used.

The main partner working together with the Child Protection State Agency in the prevention of violence, and in particular on the National Action Plan against Sexual Commercial Exploitation of Children, is **UNICEF**, the Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltics. The following activities took place with the financial aid provided to us by UNICEF:

- Two national conferences on the sexual commercial exploitation of children were held;
- A collection containing the National Action Plan against Sexual Commercial Exploitation of Children and basic international instruments was prepared and published. It was circulated in 2,550 copies, which allowed for its nationwide distribution;
- An Interpol Manual of best practices of the experts dealing with criminal offences against children will be translated and published soon; The Child Protection State Agency has the idea to organise trainings for the use of the Manual which will involve all professionals working with child victims;
- A specialised website on the topic of ‘sexual commercial exploitation of children’ was set up and updated;
- A manual on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was translated and published.

Cooperation with the **International Organisation for Migration** in the field of combating trafficking in children is of particular importance. Currently a pilot IOM project is implemented with funding from the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, for the return and reintegration of unaccompanied children and young persons residing abroad.

31. Does your country provide any assistance to other countries' efforts to respond to the problem of violence against children?

If YES, provide details.

No.

32. If your country has a national human rights institution, such as a human rights commission or ombudsman, or a child-specific human rights institution, does it have any role or competence in the area of violence against children, including receiving complaints?

If YES, provide details.

The Chair of the Child Protection State Agency (CPSA) is a specialised authority for management, coordination and control in the field of child protection. Authorities providing protection are:

- The Chair of CPSA and the administration, which supports him in the discharge of his powers;
- Social Assistance Directorates;
- The Minister of Interior and the administration, which supports him in the discharge of his powers.

There is a specialised Directorate for Control over Children's rights within CPSA, where tip-offs about violations of children's rights are received, among which not infrequently there also are those about violence against children.

In 2003 the **Ombudsman Act** was adopted and the election of a national Ombudsman is forthcoming.

33. Are there any particular parliamentary structures (for example special committees) to address violence against children?

If YES, provide details.

There is a Human Rights and Religious Denominations Committee in the National Assembly, to which is also attached the **Children's rights Sub-Committee**, as well as a Committee on Children, Youth and Sports Issues.

A Child Council has been established with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria.

34. Have there been any recent parliamentary initiatives to address violence against children?

If YES, please give details.

No official information is available.

III. ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

The aim of this section is to elicit information on civil society activities relating to violence against children.

35. Describe significant civil society initiatives addressing violence against children in your country, including the types of institutions involved (such as academic institutions, professional associations, women's associations, student associations, community-based groups, faith-based groups, child and youth-led groups, trade unions, employer's organizations, national non-governmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations) and the major activities engaged in (including advocacy, awareness raising, research, prevention, rehabilitation and treatment of children harmed by violence, provision of services, provision of resources).

The third sector has also a fundamental role in initiatives addressing violence against children. There are approximately 130 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Bulgaria, actively working on child issues, some of which are specialised in various aspects of violence against children. Their main activities are focused on the prevention of violence, information campaigning, and some also provide recovery and reintegration services for children victims of violence. Organisations whose campaigns have been the most successful are:

- The 'Animus Association' Foundation has produced and circulated prevention material (the 'Small Booklet for a Big World', 'A Girl Tells Her Story', 'Trafficking of Women' Information Brochures, a book entitled 'Trafficking in Women: Questions and Answers'); the Foundation also maintains a hotline for women and children victims of violence. The hotline phone number is widely circulated in public transportation across the whole country, in phone booths, and is also printed on small cosmetic bags with the motto of the prevention campaign, 'Travel. Stay safe. Know the how. Don't

become lost in trafficking of human beings'. The following initiatives were held in 2003: 10 train-the-trainers sessions in various towns across Bulgaria, in which a total of 174 social workers, psychologists and teachers working with girls at risk took part; 5 empowerment trainings for girls from childcare institutions deprived of parental care and for girls from mainstream schools in Sofia and the country – 61 girls were trained to look for jobs in a safe and efficient way, from the perspective of avoiding trafficking; a training on 'Work with Children and Teenage Victims of Violence' for representatives of the nine Child Protection Departments at the Social Assistance Directorate in Sofia.

- the Bulgarian Gender Research Centre prepared prevention material (a brochure: 'What Every Man Can Do to Stop Violence against Women'); conducted a successful 'White Ribbon' campaign – badges, stickers, brochures and posters were circulated; training in tolerant behaviour for children at schools was also carried out.

36. Describe the support provided by your Government for these activities and the efforts made to coordinate civil society and government initiatives.

The Child Protection State Agency works in close cooperation with non-governmental organisations whose objectives cover the protection of children's rights. Through support letters given by the Agency, encouragement and commitments are expressed with regard to the development of social services provided by not-for-profit legal entities. The Agency has been licensing NGOs for the provision of social services since the beginning of 2004. A National Child Protection Council has been set up with the Agency, which is an advisory body for the coordination of policies in the field of child protection. Its members are Deputy Ministers of relevant institutions, as well as NGOs, whose objectives involve the protection of children's rights.

The following projects are implemented, as an outcome from the cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Science with NGOs:

1. Training materials are produced and basic international instruments in the field of human and children's rights are published. They are distributed to specialists who work in schools, boarding houses, child and other institutions for children. Qualification seminars preparing specialists to use training materials are organised, in order to give them assistance.
2. Joint activities are carried out for the prevention of trafficking in girls and women and for work with girls and young women victims of violence.
3. Programs to combat violence in high schools are implemented, aiming at cultivating a conscious non-violent behaviour among young people.
4. Projects are carried out among children and young people in high schools, which aim at overcoming prejudice about inter-gender relations, at

improving understanding of the cultural and social roots of gender stereotypes in the reception of a person from the opposite sex. Programmes cover basic human rights, international and Bulgarian legal provisions, instruments and institutions for rights protection, as well as topics in which students are interested and wish to hear more about.

5. Initiatives were taken to increase intercultural understanding and tolerance through the popularisation of the culture, daily life and beliefs of various ethnic communities. Various printed materials on this topic were published, which were distributed to different schools in the country. A training programme for teachers has been developed on issues of human rights and intercultural dialogue. It is applied in schools where children of different ethnic origins study. Seminars are held with school representatives to increase their competence to work in a multicultural setting, share experience, and coordinate locally the efforts of various institutions in education. Possibilities for regional cooperation are also offered.
6. Projects are implemented to guarantee an equal start for Roma children at school. This is achieved through a preliminary study of and training in the Bulgarian language, as well as through assistance in the study of curriculum material in additional training courses at school, in grades 1 through 4. Music and dance classes, art, ceramics, computers, short-hand, puppet and drama classes and other interest clubs are organised as additional training forms.
7. Projects are implemented to increase educational opportunities for Roma children through training and appointment of teacher aides in kindergartens and preparatory classes, and to improve the relations of teachers with parents.
8. Projects are implemented to integrate children of minority origins in mixed schools and classes, as well as to develop local approaches for the desegregation of Roma schools.
9. New student cards containing detailed information about the student, his or her parents and the school, have been introduced.
10. Security companies in schools exercise permanent control over admission inside school buildings, ensure control during breaks, as well as before and after classes.
11. An agreement was signed between the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Interior and the National Centre for Recreation, Rehabilitation and Sports to launch a national 'Speed and Safety' campaign.
12. Partnership between schools and the police has been established in the form of the so-called 'Police Classes' and of reinforced patrols in the vicinity of schools in certain hours where intense movement of students to and from school occurs.

Cooperation of state bodies with NGOs in countering violence against children also occurs through the involvement of experts in various forums organised by NGOs.

37. Describe the role played by the media in addressing violence against children.

Media have a central role in increasing public awareness of the issue of violence against children. The National Action Plan against Sexual Commercial Exploitation of Children determines the position of media as a partner in propagating zero tolerance for violence against children.

IV. CHILDREN AS ACTORS IN ADDRESSING VIOLENCE

This section is designed to extract information on children's activities to address violence.

38. Provide information on the involvement and consultation of children in designing activities, and in implementation and monitoring of programmes and policies to address violence against them. Provide details, including ages and other details of the children involved.

Child volunteers of the Bulgarian Youth Red Cross took part in the 2nd National Conference on Sexual Commercial Exploitation of Children.

A Child Public Council is formed within the CPSA, its representatives sitting in sessions of the National Child Protection Council and the working groups attached thereto, also taking part in initiatives organised by CPSA.

A Child Council is set up with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, through which children are free to make proposals.

The Bulgarian child and youth parliament also takes action to prevent violence.

39. Describe the involvement, if any, of children in designing special procedural or evidentiary rules applying in court proceedings with respect to hearings concerning violence against children. Provide details including ages and other details of the children involved.

Through bodies enumerated in item 38 children are allowed to influence the legislative process in Bulgaria.

40. Describe the amount and type of resources made available to support children's participation in activities to address violence against children.

No official information is available.

V. POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

A comprehensive policy for dealing with violence against children is one that addresses multiple forms of violence against children, that works across the different settings in which violence occurs, and which includes components for prevention, protection, victim medical, psychological, legal and social assistance, victim rehabilitation and reintegration, and perpetrator interventions. Such policy is distinguished from specific programmes that address selected sub-types of violence against children or its effects in specific populations and settings.

41. Does your Government have a comprehensive policy concerning violence against children?

If YES, provide details and describe any gender-specific provisions included in the policy.

The prevention of violence has always been in the focus of attention at CPSA and is the main priority of the 2004 National Child Protection Programme. Work strategy is directed at several target groups:

- Children at kindergartens and schools;
- Children in specialised institutions;
- Experts/professionals working with children – general practitioners, teachers and pedagogical councillors, social workers, policemen, etc.;
- Parents.

‘Prevention of violence’ as a priority area and the main target groups at which work is directed appeared from the analysis of information received at CPSA from reports of Child Protection Departments on the implementation of protection measures and from complaints and tip-offs of citizens and entities, directly received in the Agency.

It was CPSA which, for the first time in Bulgaria, submitted to a wide institutional discussion the topic of countering sexual commercial exploitation of children. Two national conferences were held to this effect, one in 2001 and the second in 2003. As a result of cooperation with domestic partners and international organisations, the Agency started developing a draft National Action Plan against Sexual Commercial Exploitation of Children, which was adopted by the Government on 5 September 2003. The main goal of the plan is to clearly set out commitments for state institutions and non-governmental organisations working in the field and to develop policies for the prevention, protection, recovery and rehabilitation of child victims. The role of CPSA is mainly focused on preventive actions directed at the various groups of users:

- Increase awareness of children and their families of the issue of violence and in particular of sexual commercial exploitation of children – CPSA initiated the publication of two booklets for children to this effect, ‘Touching with Affection’ and ‘This is My Body’, based on the concept that children need to

understand their own body, its inviolability and be able, in this sense, to refuse contact, which is unpleasant to them. This material is destined for the joint work of parents and teachers with children;

- Increase qualifications of professionals working with children – special attention is paid to training for social workers. In 2003 a total of 13 training seminars were held, involving 53 social workers from Child Protection Departments. 139 pedagogical councillors from schools on the territory of Sofia; 230 nurses from medical school-based offices on the territory of Sofia; 700 teachers and directors of kindergartens in Sofia and the country underwent training to use the two booklets, i.e. ‘Touching with Affection’ and ‘This is My Body’;
- Increase awareness of and public commitment for child safety over the Internet – a project on ‘Internet and Children’s Rights’ was implemented at the initiative of CPSA. The project was developed in response to the need for coordinated and effective state policy of reduction and prevention of abuse and crime involving children over the web. Education and information material for teachers, parents and students were published, as well as a brochure, ‘The Dark Side of Internet’ to the purpose of protecting children from abuse over the Internet; ‘Internet Work Safety Rules’ were drafted and distributed nationwide.

42. Does your Government deliver, or provide direct support for delivery by other agencies, of specific programmes aimed at preventing and responding to violence against children?

If YES, please provide available summary reports, or URLs, of these programmes, and indicate, using the table below, which settings and types of violence are addressed by these programmes:

There is no practice in the Republic of Bulgaria of direct funding from public institutions for third sector operations. Representatives of state institutions take part in donor organisation sessions and lobby for the provision of funding for operations to counter violence against children.

43. Does your Government monitor the impact of these policies and programmes directed towards violence against children?

If YES, describe the monitoring systems and provide a URL or other reference where the system and outcomes are described in greater details.

The Child Protection State Agency maintains a database of information about NGOs to which, upon request of the Agency, they submit reports on their activities. It is frequent for projects to be jointly implemented with a state institution, which guarantees their sustainability and purposefulness.

44. Does your Government participate in any internationally coordinated activities concerning violence against children?

If YES, please provide details.

Representatives of the relevant institutions, which are competent in respect of these issues, participate in international conferences, forums and seminars, funded under international agreements.

VI. DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

This section aims to provide an overview of information systems and information about violence against children that may be used to inform, plan and monitor policy, legal and programmatic interventions concerning violence against children.

45. Over the past five years, has there been any victimization, epidemiological or other population-based surveys of any forms of violence against children in your country?

If YES, provide details or references, or attach.

Beside the National Institute of Statistics, databases are kept by institutions competent in respect of specific issues.

46. Have there been any small-scale or representative interview studies with parents and children on violent victimisation of children?

If so, please give details.

An enquiry on ‘Children’s Rights – Awareness and Attitude of Students and Professional Groups Working with Children’ was commissioned and implemented with the support of CPSA in 2002. According to respondent students, the biggest threat to the health and life of children is violence in all its forms – physical, mental and sexual, both in family and school (39.1%), followed by parents dependent on alcohol and drugs (18.6%). The largest share of responses concern sexual violence, followed by mental violence in family and school, and by physical violence, also in family and school.

47. Over the past five years, has your Government conducted or commissioned any scientific research projects on the problem of violence against children?

If YES, indicate the subject of this research and where the findings of these projects may be consulted in more detail.

No.

48. Have studies or surveys been undertaken into the impact of legal measures to address violence against children?

If YES, provide details or references, or attach.

No.

49. Does your Government have a system for formal inquiries into all child deaths in which it is known or suspected that violence may have played any part?

Provide details.

No.

50. Are regular (e.g. annual) reports published describing the statistical profile of the known or suspected violent deaths investigated by the system?

If YES, what proportion of all homicide deaths are under the age 18?

.....%

Yes.

10. Children and Young Persons Victims of Crime in 2002

10. Children and Young Persons Victims of Crime in 2002						
COUNTRY TOTAL	(Number)					
	Total	Incl. women	Age			
			8 - 13 r. total	Incl. women	14 - 17 r. total	Incl. women
Total	2128	801	922	363	1206	438
Murder (consummated or attempted)	12	4	8	4	4	-
Rape (consummated)	78	78	15	15	63	63
Rape (attempted)	39	39	9	9	30	30

Wilful infliction of bodily injury	179	39	54	15	125	24
Sexual assault	126	87	94	63	32	24
Abduction	42	23	15	8	27	15
including to the purpose of making victims available for indecent activities	1	1	1	1	-	-
Theft	637	196	216	66	421	130
Robbery	223	50	72	23	151	27
Deception and blackmail	81	18	35	8	46	10
Incitement to begging	99	40	79	31	20	9
Incitement and forcing to prostitute	40	33	8	5	32	28
Incitement to homosexual activities	6	-	2	-	4	-
Family ill-treatment	180	79	134	59	46	20
Trafficking in human beings	10	10	2	2	8	8
Other	376	105	179	55	197	50

51. If reports on the national profile of known and suspected violent deaths are published by your Government, indicate how the data is broken down for the purpose of reporting (check all that apply):

Information is collected against all the indicators listed in the table.

Sex	✓
Age	✓
Ethnicity	✓
Manner of death (homicide, suicide, undetermined)	✓
External causes of death (firearm, strangulation, etc.)	✓
Geographical location of incident (address)	✓
Scene of occurrence (home, school, etc.)	✓
Time and date of incident	✓
Victim-perpetrator relationship	✓
Other:	

52. Provide the total number of reported cases of violence against children in 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003.

Data submitted by CPSA for the year 2003:

The total number of tip-offs about violence against children in the country is 1,909 and in 674 cases social workers took measures for protection.

The largest relative share is of children victims of family violence – 80%, followed by violence against children in educational institutions – 10% and in all other places – the street, specialised institutions or public areas – 10%. Depending on the type of violence, tip-offs about neglect dominate – 48.6%, about physical violence – 23.5%, emotional – 19.6% and sexual violence – 8.3%.

There is a trend showing increase in the number of tip-offs filed, which means that more and more people start using the opportunities made available to them by the Child Protection Act.

Data submitted by the Ministry of Interior for the year 2003:

Inspectors with child pedagogical facilities conducted prevention events with 543 children and young persons who have been through District Police Directorates for prostitution and with 58 children and young persons for homosexual activities. Out of these, 61 children (15 children and 46 young persons) made the object of the criminal offence of procurement. The relative share of children victims of procurement amounts to 49.19% of the total number of victims of this crime (124 individuals).

Over the same period, 32 children (19 children and 13 young persons) became victims of forced homosexuality.

Data submitted by CPSA for the year 2002:

The annual analysis of CPD operations is based on summary annual reports from 10 regions. Information about the remaining 18 regions is obtained as a summary of the quarterly reports of individual municipalities on the territory of regions.

Information on which the annual analysis effected by CPSA is based includes comparatively full data from almost all regions in the country. The exceptions are the region of Sofia, from which only 4 municipalities filed reports in the course of the entire 2002 (Zlatitsa, Pirdop, Botevgrad and Chelopechene) of a total of 22, and the Targovishte region, from which reports of only 2 out of a total of 5 municipalities in the region have been received.

In 2002, nationwide, 632 cases of violence against children were registered in CPD reports.

Distribution of Incidences of Violence in 2002 by Type and Relative Share

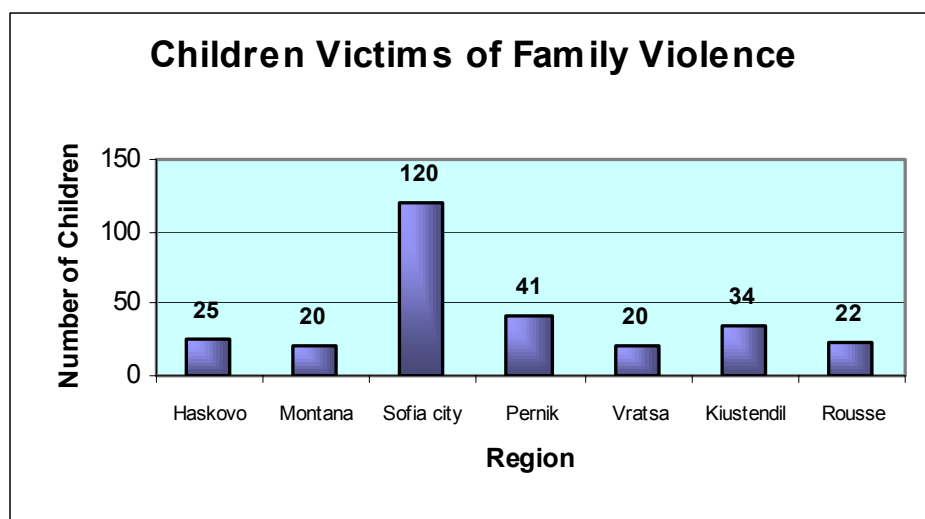
Violence against Children - Total: Of Which:	632 Incidences
---	-----------------------

• Family violence	420 (66.5%)
• Street violence	60 (9.5%)
• Violence in educational institutions	78 (12.4%)
• Violence in public areas	40 (6.3%)
• Violence in specialised institutions	34 (5.3%)

The above data strongly emphasise the fact that the highest number of registered cases are of *family violence*, which keeps the lead position over the entire 2001 and considerably outweighs all other types of registered violence. In order to reverse this trend it is necessary not only to deploy family support, but also prevention services, including the wide involvement of state institutions, non-governmental and civil organisations (parent associations, school boards, student and youth organisations). *Chart 1* presents the regions where the highest number of family violence incidences has been registered.

There is no single region without family violence incidences (in Pazardzhik region only 1 incidence was registered), which is a worrisome trend drawing the attention to the nationwide presence of this problem.

Chart 1 .



Secondly, with an altogether lower relative share (12.4%), violence in educational institutions has been reported, the same percentage (12%) being reported in 2001.

The highest number of incidences has been registered in the regions of Sofia city (12), Haskovo and Stara Zagora (9 each) and Vratsa (7).

It is interesting to note that in the course of the year the number of registered incidences of street violence and violence in public areas has progressively grown (over the last quarter street violence was reported in 25 cases and in public areas – in 18).

A possible explanation for the increased number of registered incidences of street violence and of violence in public areas is the increased sensitivity of the public and citizens to this issue and their active response in filing tip-offs with the competent authorities. The above is an indication that the system for child protection has gained in popularity.

The largest number of incidences of violence in public areas has been reported in the regions of Varna, Burgas and Smolian (5 each).

Last comes violence registered in specialised institutions, which until now has been the most frequent occurrence. In terms of comparison, in 2001 14.7% of violence incidences occurred in specialised institutions, whereas in 2002 the percentage was significantly lower – 5.3%.

Data submitted by the Child Protection State Agency for the year 2001:

Nationwide, the number of children who received protection from violence was 49. Efforts of the Child Protection Department (CPD) in Smolian Region were the most effective. Here, the number of children registered with CPDs who were exposed to violence also needs to be included, in order to allow for an objective assessment of this type of operations. The number of children exposed to violence is therefore noteworthy, i.e. 75, which indicates that this particular measure has been taken in 65.3% of the cases.

Children registered with CPDs who have been exposed to violence:

As we mentioned, their number is 75, and it varies in accordance with the different types of violence, as follows:

- Family violence – 47 cases (62.7%);
- Violence in educational institutions – 9 cases (12%);
- Violence in specialised institutions – 11 cases (14.7%);
- Violence in streets and public areas – 8 cases (10.7%).

The fact that family violence makes the highest number of registered cases is impressive, especially against the psychological barriers associated with this topic and the fact that few people, children even less, are prone to talk about it. It may

therefore be assumed that the actual scale of family violence by far outreaches the above data. Out of the sixteen regional CPDs that filed reports, in two only no cases of family violence have been registered, showing that the latter is becoming a nationwide problem. The largest number is in the following regions – Sofia city, Dobrich and Stara Zagora.

Specialised institutions prove to be another risk environment for children, since they rank second by the number of registered cases of violence, and it is difficult to ascertain these, as children are dependent on the environment, and staff – on their work positions. Here it may also be expected that the actual number is higher than reported. In contrast to family violence, which is reportedly found nationwide, cases of violence in specialised institutions are mainly registered in Smolian Region and in isolated cases in Pernik and Sofia city.

Violence against children in public areas, in the presence of witnesses, has been registered in the regions of Vidin and Plovdiv.

Violence against street children, which might occur in the absence of witnesses, has been reported in the region of Varna.

Data submitted by the Ministry of Interior for the year 2000:

The number of registered crimes against children was 1,204.

53. [Provide the total number of convictions and reported cases for the various categories of crimes of violence recorded against children in 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003.](#)

In accordance with the report of the Central Commission for Combating Anti-Social Acts of Children and Young Persons attached to the Council of Ministers, in 2002 a trend was observed showing an increase in the number of child victims of crime. The largest share is of sexual crimes against children. Over the same period a trend was observed showing an increase in the number of ill-treated minor girls and a reduction in the number of ill-treated underage girls and boys.

Based on data contained in the same report, 180 children (of which 143 were minor) became victims of family violence. 99 children were incited to begging (of which 79 were minor). 40 children were incited to prostitute by family members and 10 girls became victims of trafficking with the knowledge of their families.

VII. AWARENESS, ADVOCACY AND TRAINING

This section is aimed at gathering information on any awareness-raising, advocacy and training activities relating to violence against children which may have been conducted by your Government.

54. Over the last five years has your Government conducted or commissioned any campaigns for raising awareness of and preventing violence against children?

If YES, please describe any recent campaigns, including the settings and types of violence that were the subjects of the campaigns and the target audience (general public, caregivers, teachers, etc.).

S. the information submitted in response to Question 41.

55. How were the campaign messages and information disseminated (check all that apply)?

Yes.

Printed media	Yes
Radio	Yes
Television	Yes
Theatre	Yes
Schools	Yes
Other	Yes

56. Over the last five years, has your Government provided, commissioned or sponsored training programmes in the area of violence against children?

If YES, indicate which of the following areas were addressed by the last such training programmes and which provider groups received training (check all that apply).

S. the information submitted in response to Question 41.