



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

## Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports submitted by Georgia under article 44 of the Convention, due in 2023\*

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



## **I. Introduction and background information**

1. The Combined fifth and sixth Reports of Georgia on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter – the “Convention”) and its Optional Protocols were prepared in accordance with the list of issues prior to submission of the combined fifth and sixth reports of Georgia adopted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child on 1 October 2021.
2. The preparation of the reports was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. All relevant agencies were involved in this process: Human Rights Secretariat of the Administration of the Government of Georgia, Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, Ministry of Justice of Georgia, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia, Ministry of Finance of Georgia, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia, Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth of Georgia, Ministry of Defense of Georgia, Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civil Equality, General Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia, State Security Service of Georgia, Special Investigation Service of Georgia, Personal Data Protection Service of Georgia, Supreme Court of Georgia, High Council of Justice of Georgia, High School of Justice of Georgia, National Communications Commission of Georgia, Legal Aid Service, National Statistics Office of Georgia, Levan Samkharauli National Forensic Bureau.
3. The draft of the combined reports were also submitted to the Public Defender’s Office of Georgia, UNICEF in Georgia and non-governmental organizations for their views and recommendations. The combined reports were discussed with the relevant stakeholders within the framework of Interagency Commission on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. According to the amendments made to the regulations of the Parliament of Georgia in 2016, the draft reports was submitted to the Parliament for review. As a result of this process, the document was updated and finalized to reflect the received feedback.

## **II. Replies to the list of issues prior to reporting (CRC/C/GEO/QPR/5-6)**

### **Replies to paragraphs 2 (a), 4, 5 and 6 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

4. In 2017–2018, important constitutional reform was implemented placing particular emphasis on social rights, children’s rights, rights of persons with disabilities, gender equality, the right to access public information.
5. In 2016, Georgia acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Communication Procedures.
6. The Code on the Rights of the Child is a comprehensive document reflecting the unified state policy for the protection of children’s rights. The Code, which was adopted in 2019, was developed in close cooperation with the UNICEF in Georgia and with the support of the EU.
7. In 2023, the second National Strategy for the Protection of Human Rights was approved, which covers the developments for 2022–2030 years and derives from the first national strategy (2014–2020). The Strategy, which is a comprehensive document, was developed with the participation of international organizations and the non-governmental sector and it covers all basic rights and freedoms. Important part of the Strategy is the protection of the rights of children and ensuring their well-being. Accordingly, it aims to protect the rights of the child, prevent violence, improve the mechanisms for their well-being taking account of their best interests and define specific tasks to achieve the set goal. The

relevant action plan for the implementation of the new Strategy is in the process of development.

8. Chapter 16 of the National Action Plan for 2018–2020 addresses the goals, objectives, outcome indicators, activities and other criteria necessary for the protection and strengthening of the rights of the child. The prevention of violence against children takes an important place in the plan.

9. The Human Rights Council under the Prime Minister supervises the effective implementation of the action plans. Council consists of the ministers as well as representatives of civil society and international organizations with the deliberative voting right. The Council is accountable to the Parliament by annual reporting. The mandate of the Council also includes coordinating the implementation of recommendations made by the UN human rights monitoring mechanisms. In 2020, four priorities of the Council were determined: gender equality and women's rights; children's rights; combating discrimination and establishing equality policies; protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

10. Interagency Governmental Commission on Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child established in 2016, coordinates and monitors unified policy on the protection of the rights of the child. The main goal of the Commission is also to ensure compliance of Georgian legislation with the Convention and other international standards. The Commission is led by the head of Human Rights Secretariat of the Administration of the Government and is comprised of the representatives of the line ministries, the Parliament, the Supreme Court, the Public Defender's Office, UNICEF in Georgia and non-governmental organizations working on the protection of children's rights. The Commission meets regularly in accordance with the priority determined by it. The execution of Commission decisions is ensured by the respective agency represented in it within the scope of the competence. The Human Rights Secretariat of the Administration of the Georgia supports the activities of the Commission and coordinates the implementation of its decisions.

11. The Permanent Parliamentary Council for the Protection of the Rights of the Child consists of 14 members of the Parliament, including representatives of the opposition parties, the chairperson of which is also the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament. The Secretariat of the Council provides organizational, analytical and information support to the work of the Council. For further information, see the response to paragraph 4.

12. In 2020, the Government approved the „Referral and Enforcement Procedures for the Return of a Wrongfully Removed or Retained Child or Exercise of the Right of Access to the Child”, which aims to establish a coordinated and effective referral and enforcement system.

13. In 2019, Georgia joined the open pledge on the Protection of the Rights of the Child in Armed Conflict at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

14. One of the key mechanisms of civil equality and integration policy is the State Strategy for Civic Equality and Integration for 2021–2030 and the respective Action Plans, which aim at further strengthening of democratic society based on equality and creating equal opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, for full participation in all spheres of public life, personal and professional development. The policy document defines five inter-related priorities: state language to support integration; access to quality education; equality, civic and political participation; social and economic integration; intercultural dialogue, with special focus on women and youth.

15. The Civil Code of Georgia was amended to define the legal age for marriage and from January 1, 2017, marriage is allowed only for persons who attained the age of 18.

16. According to the amendments to Article 1261 of the Criminal Code of Georgia in 2017, domestic violence against his/her family member by one family member in the presence of a minor was established as an aggravating circumstance.

### **Reply to paragraph 2 (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting**

17. The human rights situation in Georgian regions occupied by Russia deteriorates on a daily basis. The human rights are grossly violated amid the unlawful occupation of Abkhazia

and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia by the Russian Federation, steps taken towards factual annexation, increased militarization, construction of barbed wire fences and creation of other artificial barriers along the occupation line as well as other illegal steps.

18. Hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons and refugees expelled from their homes by multiple waves of ethnic cleansing are still not allowed to return to their homes in safety and dignity.

19. The violation of the right to life of Georgian citizens continues in the occupied territories, which is proved by the death of Davit Basharuli in 2014, Giga Otkhзорia in 2016, and Archil Tatumashvili in 2018. Representatives of the occupation regimes directly participated in all these killings. In 2019, Georgian citizen Irakli Kvaratskhelia, illegally detained by the Russian occupation forces, died at the Russian military base illegally deployed in Abkhazia. It is alarming that despite numerous calls from international community and constructive cooperation from Georgian Government, justice cannot be enforced on the mentioned cases. Thus, the offenders remain unpunished.

20. Russian occupation forces continue to strengthen the occupation line in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia by erecting barbed wire fences and various artificial barriers. Accordingly, locals living near the occupation line cannot visit their families, do not have access to their own property, agricultural lands, religious monuments or cemeteries, and are limited in their ability to receive healthcare and education services in the territory controlled by the Government.

21. The freedom of movement has been restricted by Russia with installment of the so-called crossing points along the occupation line. The occupation force periodically further restricts freedom of movement by permanent or lengthy closure of the so-called crossing points. In 2016–17, four out of six so-called crossing points were closed in the occupied Abkhazia region. The occupation regime uses various artificial pretexts to close the remaining so-called crossing points, preventing Georgian youth living in the occupied region from studying in the territory controlled by the Government of Georgia. In occupied Tskhinvali region, all so-called crossing points have been permanently closed since September 4, 2019, which resulted in the complete isolation and humanitarian crisis with shortage of food and medications. Vulnerable groups including children and the elderly have become victims as they faced impediments to receive medical treatment or a pension on the territory controlled by the Government of Georgia. Since August 2022 Russian occupation regime in Tskhinvali region announced that it would open two so-called crossing points for 10 days every month. However, imposed restrictions create further impediments for crossing the occupation line.

22. Illegal detentions and abductions on the occupation line have a systematic character, in particular, 337 people have been detained in occupied Abkhazia region by the Russian occupation regime, and 627 people have been detained in the occupied Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia since 2016, including children, women, the elderly, doctors.

23. Georgians living in the occupied territories experience discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity. The occupation regime of Abkhazia has been forcing local Georgians to register as “foreigners” in their homeland since 2016. Despite being registered as “foreigners”, the Georgian population is still restricted in their rights to live, work and own property. More than 4,000 school and 600 kindergarten children are restricted to have access to education in their native language each year in both occupied regions. Teaching in the Georgian language has been banned in Abkhazia since 2015, while in the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia since 2017. The educational process gradually switched to the Russian language in Georgian kindergartens and schools. Children in kindergartens and schools are victims of Russian propaganda and its occupation regimes. Particularly, they thrust upon false historical narratives, while schoolchildren are forbidden to use books and notebooks with the Georgian flag.

24. The property rights of ethnic Georgians are grossly violated in the occupied territories. During Russia’s military aggression against Georgia in 2008, tens of thousands of houses owned by ethnic Georgians were deliberately burned and destroyed.

25. It is particularly concerning that in such severe circumstances, the international human rights organizations are constantly denied the access to the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions. Even the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) is deprived of the possibility to enter Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions, despite its mandate covers the entire territory of Georgia.

26. The Russian Federation, exercising effective control, bears the full responsibility for all human rights violations in the occupied territories of Georgia. The Judgement of January 21, 2021 of the European Court of Human Rights confirmed Russia's occupation and effective control over Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions as well as Russia's responsibility for the mass violations of human rights in these regions and for deprivation of right of IDPs and refugees to return to their homes.

27. The Government consistently implements the policy of peaceful conflict resolution and uses all possible diplomatic, political, legal and other levers to ensure the protection of human rights in the occupied territories. The Government is actively using Geneva International Discussions and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms under the GID. The mentioned issues are actively discussed in all relevant bilateral and multilateral formats and are reflected in numerous documents adopted by both individual countries and international organizations.

28. The Government continues its efforts to promote the improvement of the humanitarian and socio-economic conditions of the population living in the occupied regions and adjacent zones as part of the reconciliation and engagement policy as well as the restoration of contacts, dialogue, and trust between the population divided by the occupation lines, access to quality education and to healthcare services.

### **Reply to paragraphs 2 (b) and 7 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

29. Children's hotline 111 was established for rapid reaction to mitigate the adverse impacts of the pandemic caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The service has been operational since May 2020 and serves to increase the access of children and their families to available state programs. Beneficiaries will be provided counselling in relation with social, healthcare, education, violence, psychological, legal and other issues for calls made to 111.

30. The different target groups were provided social assistance within the framework of the "Targeted State Program to Mitigate the Damage Caused by the Novel Corona Virus", in two stages (May–October 2020 and January–June 2021). Particularly, families with a rating score of 65001 - 100001 registered in the database of socially vulnerable families obtained the right to receive compensation according to the number of family members (the amount of compensation for one-member families was GEL 70, for two-member families GEL 90 and in other cases, compensation was given according to the number of family members, in the amount of GEL 35 for each family member). Additionally, families registered in the database of socially vulnerable families with a rating score of up to 100,001, who have 3 or more children including children under 17, received monthly assistance in the amount of GEL 100 per month (the total disbursed sums amounted to GEL 29.8 million). Persons with severe disabilities and children with disabilities under the age of 18 received additional GEL 100 in addition to the assistance established by the social package.

31. In 2020, a one-time universal benefit in the amount of GEL 200 was disbursed for all children (the amount disbursed for this purpose reached GEL 188.0 million). Additionally, students living in socially disadvantaged families with a rating score under 150,001 were funded for one semester's tuition fee, in the amount of GEL 1125 and assistance was provided for the self-employed and those who lost their jobs.

32. The framework document for the delivery of remote services was developed and service delivery to the beneficiaries of different sub-programs (including early development promotion sub-program, children's habilitation/rehabilitation sub-program, provision of day care centers sub-program, etc.) continued remotely.

33. As part of the social assistance campaign, parcels with food and hygiene items were delivered to socially vulnerable multiple children families, orphans, children with disabilities and Roma community in the municipalities densely populated by ethnic minorities: Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions (605 packages in 2020; 729 packages in 2021; overall- 1334 packages).

34. During the pandemic, unimpeded legal proceedings were ensured including with respect to cases of violence against children. The prosecutor's office switched to the remote mode of operation immediately after the declaration of the state of emergency.

35. In June 2020, a legislative amendment was implemented and distance learning was recognized as one of the forms of education by the Law on General Education.

36. The Ministry of Education immediately introduced distance learning in 2020, different distance learning platforms were offered to schools. Virtual classrooms were created for grades and subjects of all public schools. More than 580,000 user profiles of Microsoft Office 365 were created for students and teachers. A bank of complex digital tasks was created and published on the el.ge portal. Schools were instructed to develop an individual plan for students who necessitated specific distance learning conditions.

37. In 2021, the educational process went on in a hybrid mode in schools, periodically remotely, and mostly in face-to-face mode.

38. The creation of the project TV School (Teleskola) in cooperation with the Georgian Public Broadcaster is of paramount importance among the methods of distance learning, which provides TV-lessons for schoolchildren in all subjects provided by experienced teachers in accordance with the national curriculum. Within the framework of TV School, creative and developmental activities were created for students with special educational needs. The videos on the exercises developing cognitive skills were recorded to support parents. A separate set of lessons has been created for national minority students (Armenian and Azerbaijani), and all lessons for students with hearing problems were adapted to sign language.

39. The Government has provided significant assistance to the occupied regions of Georgia during the Covid-19 pandemic. A number of measures were immediately planned and implemented. The Georgian side offered humanitarian aid to Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, but the occupation regime refused to accept it. In order to treat patients from Abkhazia region, the Government ensured the speedy opening of Rukhi Hospital near the occupation line. Information on the recommendations and rules for protection against coronavirus was spread in Abkhazian and Ossetian languages, medical equipment, medications and hygiene commodities were regularly supplied to Abkhazia by the Georgian authorities and international organizations. Online consultations were regularly provided for Abkhazian doctors, nearly 1,000 infected patients from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions were treated in the Georgian controlled territory. The anti-covid immunization program was extended to the population living in the occupied territories.

40. The programs, events and services related to the rights of the child are carried out by the relevant state institutions within the framework of the funding allocated through the annual state budget.

### **Reply to paragraph 3 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

41. Considering the challenges facing the country and the national context, all 17 goals and 93 targets of the UN sustainable development are defined as national priorities.

42. The commitments made by Georgia in terms of sustainable development goals are reflected both through their integration into national policies and the national document of sustainable development goals, which was approved by the Government in 2019. The document was prepared in close cooperation with governmental, non-governmental, private, academic, and international organizations. The document provides timelines for implementation of each sectoral objective and establishes baselines and targets for 201

indicators (by 2030). The objectives and indicators of the document also cover issues related to the rights of the child.

43. In order to promote the introduction of sustainable development goals and monitoring of their implementation, the Prime Minister created the Council of Sustainable Development Goals in which the representatives of relevant state agencies, the Public Defender's Office, international organizations and NGOs are involved.

44. Voluntary National Review (VNR) report of the country on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is submitted to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) every 4 years. Furthermore, the final report will be developed by 2030. Presently, 2 VNR reports have been developed for 2016 and 2020.

#### **Reply to paragraph 4 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

45. Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia uses different supervisory mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the Code on the Rights of the Child. The Committee cooperates with international and local organizations, primarily with UNICEF, in order to support the implementation of the Code as well as to further improve the existing legislation on the rights of the child. The Committee also analyzes the data on juvenile justice issues.

46. The Permanent Parliamentary Council for the Protection of the Rights of the Child has been functioning to ensure coordinated work on the issues related to the protection of the rights of a child as well as to develop relevant legislation and to supervise the implementation of decisions on the issues related to children's rights, in line with the Code and the Rules the Parliament.

47. In accordance with the Code, structural units for child protection and support are created within the municipalities, whose activities include: development and implementation of municipal programs, social work, coordination with the relevant institutions and organizations, etc.

48. The relevant amendments were made to the "Law on Broadcasting" based on the Code on the Rights of the Child, in order to protect children from harmful impact in broadcasting. Additionally, any citizen or organization has the opportunity to appeal to the Communications Commission, inform about the violation of the norms stipulated by the "Law on Broadcasting" and request an adequate response. The Commission has a number of times discussed the issues related to the harmful impact of broadcasting on children and made adequate decisions.

49. Pursuant to the requirements of the Code, in 2020 the High Council of Justice approved the template child-friendly form for filling a complaint (lawsuit) and template of child-friendly summons. The form of a complaint includes child-friendly information on how to fill out the complaint form, where to submit/send the completed complaint, what the court does after filing the complaint. The forms of the summons explain the purpose of the summons, the purpose of appearing in a court and who the child should contact with in case of questions.

50. In 2020, the High Council of Justice also approved the "Standard for specialization of a judge working in the field of the rights of a child", which means that civil and administrative cases related to or involving a child may be adjudicated only by a judge who has completed a mandatory training course.

51. The mandate of the Legal Aid Service has been fully extended to all minors since 2020 and any minor has been given the right to legal advice and legal assistance in criminal, civil and administrative cases. Pursuant to Article 41 of the Law of Georgia on Legal Aid, as well as Articles 70 and 79, Part 2 of the Code on the Rights of the Child, all minors (including witnesses) are assigned a lawyer via the Legal Aid Service.

52. Free legal services became equally available to all minors regardless of their financial status as a result expansion of legislative mandate. The number of the application of minors to the legal aid services increased by 27% following the legal amendments.

53. In order to improve interagency coordination when implementing the Code, 2023 legislative amendments defines institutional mechanism of interagency cooperation. Special electronic system will be developed to facilitate the relevant agencies to discharge obligations under the Code in a coordinated manner with maximum protection of the child's personal data.

### **Reply to paragraph 8 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

54. The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (hereinafter – “MOH”) prepared a draft resolution – “On the Approval of the Guide for the Implementation of Social Work at the Local Level” in cooperation with donor organizations, which describes the role of different agencies in the system of child protection, including the role of municipal services, the obligations of the municipalities in accordance with the need for well-being and the risk of harm, the principles of inter-agency cooperation.

55. Information-Analytical Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (hereinafter – “MIA”) processes statistical data according to the articles of the Criminal Code, including also those articles where crimes committed against minor is an independent qualifying circumstance of the crime.

56. The Secretariat of the Inter-Agency Council Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (Anti-Trafficking Council) at the Ministry of Justice has been producing a unified database of trafficking. The integrated database contains data on criminal cases, on accused and convicted persons, on injured and victims of trafficking, on mutual legal assistance and police cooperation in the field of criminal law.

### **Reply to paragraph 9 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

57. The Training Center of Justice of Georgia provides training for persons involved in the field of juvenile justice (investigators of the Ministry of Justice, social workers, mediators, probation officers, personnel of juvenile rehabilitation institutions, penitentiary institutions and State Inspector Service (former)). In 2017–2021, 25 persons and 155 persons involved in juvenile justice completed the training of trainers. Topics of training: psychological aspects of antisocial behavior, child abuse and its impact on child development, victim and witness child interrogation/questioning (protocol), international standards of juvenile justice, Juvenile Justice Code.

58. The Training Center of Justice pays special attention to raising public awareness on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols. To this end, 3.5-hour trainings were conducted for any stakeholder within the framework of free legal trainings during 2017–2021. A total of 217 participants completed the training.

59. The Training Center of Justice provided training to 60 employees of the National Agency of Public Registry of the Ministry of Justice and 20 employees of the Public Service Development Agency in 2021, whose area of expertise included issues related to the rights of the child. Furthermore, 64 employees of the Public Service Development Agency were trained.

60. The Agency is actively participating in TV programs concerning the issues of social services and children's rights, which results in awareness raising of vulnerable groups. Moreover, a video was prepared about the mechanism of protection against violence and existing services, which was streamed on TV.

61. Legal Aid Service holds nearly 100 on-field consultation meetings in different regions annually with a view to raising legal awareness of the population, the topics of which are children's rights.

62. Legal Aid Service created a child-friendly website: [www.children.las.ge](http://www.children.las.ge) which makes information accessible to children of any age about legal services.

63. Legal Aid Service was conducting face-to-face meetings with children and teachers in schools within the framework of the Project “Be Aware of Your Rights under 18”, however, the meetings were transferred to the Zoom platform due to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic and the project continued successfully online. During the meetings, children are provided with the information about their rights and their practical application in the child-friendly language.

64. Once the Code on the Rights of the Child entered into force, public lawyers were repeatedly trained on the innovations introduced by the Code, as well as on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.

65. The Academy of the MIA constantly provides and promotes the training and professional development of the employees and police officers, including on children’s rights. The issues related to domestic/child abuse and legal issues relating to minors are included in the training programs of the MIA Academy.

66. The MIA is constantly carrying out campaigns, informational meetings with target groups and trainings for police officers. The relevant information was provided to approximately 5,500 citizens and 3,000 police officers were trained in 2018–2020. The information was provided to approximately 1,500 police officers in 2021. More than 2,500 law enforcement officers were trained in 2022. The information was provided to 6,000 participants of different target groups as a result of awareness-raising campaigns. Furthermore, the information campaign initiated by the MIA “Do not Deprive Childhood” was carried out between 2019–2022, the purpose of which was to eliminate crimes promoting child marriage and to raise public awareness on the matter. In the framework of the mentioned campaign, informative meetings were held with different stakeholders, including school children in different regions, and overall reached nearly 4000 beneficiaries.

67. It is worth mentioning that the Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department of the MIA monitors all criminal cases where marriage with a minor can be identified as the probable ground for committing an act. The department monitored approximately 134 criminal cases in 2020, 212 in 2021, and 171 in 2022, where marriage with a minor was identified as the probable ground for committing an act.

68. In order to raise awareness on children’s personal data protection, the Personal Data Protection Service held 11 thematic public lectures/meetings for school staff and students between March to December 2022, which were attended by 327 people.

69. 44% of Special Investigation Service investigators (24 employees) have completed “International Standards of Juvenile Justice, Restorative Justice and Diversion Programs” and a specialization course in juvenile justice and mastered all the skills to interview a minor (including a disabled child).

70. During 2022–2023, workshops were organized for the members and staff of the Parliament, including on the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and national child protection mechanisms.

### **Reply to paragraph 10 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

71. The Government actively cooperates with the non-governmental sector in different formats in order to establish higher standards of human rights within the country. As it was mentioned above, representatives of civil society actively participate in the creation of all important policy documents or the work of different commissions and councils established by the State.

72. In order to ensure participation of relevant representatives in the development process of the second consecutive National Strategy of Human Rights of Georgia for 2022–2030, the Government established a high-level interagency working group, which was assigned to regularly cooperate with international and local non-governmental organizations in the process of developing the document. International and local experts were involved in the process from the very first stage of strategy development. Children’s rights are the most important part of the strategy, therefore, representatives of civil society actively participated

in the process of developing the issues on children's rights. The civil society is also actively involved in the development of human rights Action Plans.

73. The Resolution N629 of the Government on "Rules for Development, Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Documents" was approved in 2019. The Rules define mandatory methodology for policy development, providing for participation of the civil society representatives and organization of public discussions.

### **Reply to paragraph 11 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting**

74. The Human Rights Protection Department of the MIA was established in January 2018, the mandate of which was extended in February 2019 and it transformed into Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department. Since the day of the establishment, the Department ensures timely response to the crimes committed by and against minors, along with other categories of crimes and the effectiveness of investigation.

75. The monitoring is carried out through internal and external control mechanisms by the department. The internal control mechanism involves daily monitoring of the investigation quality by the employees of the department through the electronic investigation program. The external control mechanism involves receiving information concerning specific cases from non-governmental organizations, the Public Defender's Office, citizens, as well as from different state agencies.

76. In order to improve the quality of the investigation, the manuals for the investigation of the above-mentioned crimes are developed, recommendations are prepared and implemented in practice, as well as they are periodically renewed taking into account the legislative changes and existing challenges.

### **Reply to paragraph 12 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

77. The Constitution recognizes the equality of all people before the law and prohibits discrimination. Any discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex, origin, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other views, social affiliation, property or titular status, place of residence or on any other grounds is prohibited. According to the Constitution, the State is responsible for creating special conditions for persons with disabilities to exercise their rights and interests (Article 11.).

78. All forms of discrimination are prohibited by the Law on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of 2014, the implementation of which is monitored by the Public Defender's Office. The legislative changes implemented in 2019, significantly extended the mandate of the public defender, who was granted the power to appeal to the court with a lawsuit if any legal entity or any other entity of private law did not respond to or did not accept her/his recommendation.

79. In order to effectively carry out the tasks assigned, the funding of the Public Defender's Office has significantly increased in recent years: namely, the approved budget of the Public Defender's Office amounted to GEL 2.380 million in 2014; GEL 4 million in 2015; GEL 4.5 million – in 2016; GEL 4.8 million – in 2017; GEL 5.5 million – in 2018; GEL 6.4 million – In 2019, GEL 7 million – in 2020, GEL 8.5 million – in 2021 and GEL 8.869 million in 2022.

80. Moreover, the Code on the Rights of the Child guarantees children's equality and protection from all forms of discrimination.

81. One of the priorities of the Human Rights Protection and Investigation Quality Monitoring Department of the MIA is to monitor the quality of investigation on crimes committed by and against minors on the ground of discrimination with the motive of intolerance.

### **Reply to paragraph 13 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

82. The implementation of measures against gender discrimination was defined as an objective of the Action Plan for 2018–2020.

83. The Ordinance of 7 October 2014 on “Approval of the Procedures for Artificial Termination of Pregnancy” of the Minister of MOH defines the procedure for pre-abortion consultation/interview, which serves to fully inform a patient about the complications expected due to abortion.

84. The provision on prohibiting sex-selective abortion is included in the same ordinance: “Artificial termination of pregnancy for the purpose of sex selection is prohibited except for the cases when it is necessary to avoid a sex-linked hereditary disease.”

85. A standard ultrasound examination algorithm for the first trimester of pregnancy (up to 14 weeks) was developed according to which the evaluation of the fetus’s genital organs and the determination of the sex of the fetus is not recommended before 14 weeks of pregnancy due to the possibility of inaccuracy.

86. The information brochure and communication guide were created and distributed to medical professionals between 2017–2018 in order to raise awareness of the medical community on the issue of prevention of sex-selection on the grounds of gender. The information brochure was developed for future parents and their family members, which clearly explains the low accuracy of fetal sex determination before 14 weeks of pregnancy.

87. The updated action plan of the national strategy for 2017–2030 was prepared and approved for 2021–2023 with a view to promoting maternal and newborn health in Georgia, one of the priorities of which is to monitor the accessibility of family planning and reproductive health services, improvement of the regulating environment for the prevention of selective abortion and its implementation in practice.

### **Reply to paragraph 14 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

88. The core principle of the Code on the Rights of the Child is to consider the best interests of the child in all legal and administrative proceedings.

89. In line with the aims of the Code, the subsequent legislative amendments were implemented to increase the standard of substantiation of draft laws taking account the best interests of the child. In particular, the initiator is obliged to reflect the assessment of the impact of the normative act on the rights of a child in the explanatory note of the draft legislation.

90. Social workers together with other participating specialists, in the course of assessment the minor, her/his family and the environment, apply holistic and systemic approaches, identify biological, psychological as well as social aspects, evaluate and define an action plan. It should be noted that the number of social workers and psychologists is increasing year after year. According to the data for 2022, 300 social workers and 24 psychologists are employed by the Agency.

91. The concept of a child-friendly environment within the justice system was elaborated with the support of UNICEF in 2017–2018. In line with the mentioned model, a child-friendly space was piloted at the Rustavi City Court in compliance with international standards. Establishing child-friendly spaces in courts has been continued thereafter.

92. The Juvenile Affairs Division of Tbilisi Police Department is responsible to investigate only those crimes which are committed by and against minors in the given geographical area. Furthermore, the Division is also responsible for timely and effective response to cases of administrative offenses by/against minors. The Division is staffed by specialized investigators and detectives and it has investigated registered crimes – 2,046 cases since 2020 from the day of establishment. Creation of juvenile divisions is planned in different regions of Georgia.

93. Infrastructural projects have been implemented in the territorial divisions of the MIA since 2018, as a result of which child-friendly spaces were created and put into operation. The space is provided with rooms and audio/video equipment necessary for the interrogation of a minor, with a separate entrance and a waiting room. These spaces were created in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Adjara, Pankisi and Rustavi.

94. The MIA ensures the realization of the right of the child to be heard at any stage of proceedings where a child appears (in any status), taking into account the best interest of the child in compliance with applicable international treaties and national legislation.

95. The specialized investigators of the Special Investigation Service are involved in investigative and procedural actions related to minors. Additionally, special spaces tailored to the interests of the child were created. Presently, the works are underway with donors to create child-friendly spaces for two new offices of the Service (Telavi, Zugdidi).

96. The Prosecutor's Office is actively working on introduction of child-friendly spaces with the support of UNICEF. A child-friendly space was created in Rustavi, Khelvachauri, Senaki and Sachkhere Prosecutor's District Offices in 2018–2021. The concept of a child-friendly space is planned to be expanded step by step in other structural units.

97. Presently, the Prosecutor's Office has 104 managers, 183 prosecutors, 27 investigators and 12 coordinators of witness and victim specialized in juvenile justice. The training course on Juvenile Justice, Psychology and Methods for Relations with Juveniles was developed for prosecutors and investigators, which covers legal and psychological issues.

98. The Academy of the MIA has been implementing the training program for specialized police officers and investigators implementing the juvenile justice since 2015.

## **Reply to paragraph 15 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

### **1. Suicide prevention**

99. Works on the suicide prevention protocol have been finalized which will be soon piloted. The protocol is designed for both social workers and other support professionals. Following the implementation of the protocol, the relevant agency will have a clear tool focused on effective and rapid management of suicide cases, risk assessment, timely referral, available services and follow-up measures.

100. The suicide prevention program for accused/convicts has been implemented in all penitentiary establishments of the Special Penitentiary Service, including the N11 Juvenile Rehabilitation Establishment since February 2016, which was aimed to identify accused/convicts who are prone to suicide in order to ensure the provision of assistance based on holistic principles and to decrease the mortality caused by suicide.

101. Overall, 12 child beneficiaries were included in the suicide prevention program in 2017–2021.

102. The MIA has launched information and educational campaign since September 2022 – Befriend to the Police, within the framework of which representatives of different divisions of the MIA held meetings in schools across Georgia on different topics, including children's rights, early marriage and the harm caused by it, bullying, violence, and organized crime.

### **2. Reducing maternal and newborn mortality**

103. The National Strategy for the Promotion of Maternal and Newborn Health was developed for years 2017–2030 with the aim to reduce the maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality and increasing access to reproductive health services. The Strategy defines the country's policy in terms of maternal and newborn health as well as family planning, sexual and reproductive health.

104. Since 2017, eight antenatal visits of pregnant women instead of four are fully financed by the Government in accordance with WHO guidelines. High-risk pregnancy, childbirth, and caesarean sections are funded by the State within the framework of the Universal Health Care program. Pregnant mothers are provided with folate and iron supplements.

105. Within the framework of the State program of maternal and child health, the treatment of mother-to-fetus syphilis has started since 2017. Within the framework of the State program of HIV infection, the treatment of mother-to-fetus HIV infection has started since 2003. A draft strategy to eliminate the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases from mother to fetus has been prepared. In addition, the State provides prevention of 13 diseases as per the national vaccination calendar.

### **Reply to paragraph 16 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

106. Professional standards of social work for social workers was approved by the Order 01-53/N of June 04, 2021, which together with other legislative and subordinate normative acts, clearly states that the participation of target groups, consideration of their opinion, vision and desires is essential in any matter related to them. Social workers and other specialists protect one of the fundamental rights of the child to be heard as much as possible and to make decisions taking account of his/her view and wish.

### **Reply to paragraph 17**

107. In the past years, a number of legal amendments were made to the Order N18 of the Minister of Justice of Georgia on the Procedure of Registration of Civil Status Acts for the purposes of birth registration of children born through extracorporeal fertilization in order to protect their best interests and safety. In particular, medical certificate on extracorporeal fertilization should be issued no later than the second day of implantation. The timeline for conclusion of the contract between the parties was determined. The application should be submitted by both persons to be designated as parents except for the death of one of the persons to be designated as a parent and/or recognition as a beneficiary of support. The final deadline for submission of application and documents for birth registration of a child born through extracorporeal fertilization was defined (7 days). A form of medical certificate to be issued immediately after embryo implantation or no later than the next working day has been approved. The form of contract verification was established – public notary act. The parties to the agreement were specified. The procedure for stillbirth registration was established.

108. The certification of documents with a qualified electronic signature/qualified electronic stamp immediately after the embryo implantation has become mandatory for medical institutions since September 2020. The mentioned change serves to protect the maximum accuracy of the birth registration process of children born through extracorporeal fertilization to ensure fulfillment of the conditions required by the law.

109. The party of a contract can be a couple consisting of a man and a woman, who are committed to raise a child born through extracorporeal fertilization.

110. Submission of the certificate drawn up before cryopreservation (freezing) to the Agency has become mandatory in case of embryo freezing, which identifies the couple who will be indicated as the parents of the child after birth.

111. The changes have also affected the procedure for drawing up a contract on extracorporeal fertilization by notaries. In particular, signing of a contract by the parties to the contract has become mandatory in the presence of a notary. Participation of the surrogate mother through the representative in the contract has been forbidden. Submission of the donation acknowledgment letter to a notary became mandatory by the donor and if the notary is suspicious, she/he is obliged to refuse to draw up the contract. The submission of the document conforming the couple's factual marriage or their cohabiting outside marriage within the last year has become mandatory for the couple.

112. A person born through surrogacy is not limited in her/his right to receive information about her/his origin.

113. The Organic Law of Georgia on Citizenship of Georgia establishes mechanisms to prevent and reduce the statelessness of minors.

114. The minor refugees born in Georgia are granted Georgian citizenship under a simplified procedure. According to the Organic Law of Georgia on Citizenship of Georgia, Article 13 (3), a minor having a refugee status born on the territory of Georgia who has been residing in Georgia for at least 5 years shall be granted Georgian citizenship in ordinary manner without checking the grounds for refusing naturalization provided for in the same law.

### **Reply to paragraph 18 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting**

#### **1. The existing situation in Ninotsminda boarding school**

115. The State Care Agency under MOH is the body of guardianship and custodianship operating in the entire territory of Georgia. Accordingly, the agency offers legal representation for all children placed under state care.

116. The Georgian Patriarchate's Ninotsminda boarding school for Orphans (hereinafter – the "Boarding School") was licensed in 2016. A social worker periodically visited minors and monitored their situation.

117. In April 2021, the State Care Agency was informed that the representatives of the public defender's office were not permitted to enter the Boarding School (on April 15). On April 19, a written appeal was immediately sent to the administration of the Boarding School in which the Boarding School was asked to allow the public defender to carry out monitoring and not to interfere in her/his activities. In response to interim measures regarding the admission of the Public Defender adopted by the CRC on May 7, 2021, the Government provided the Committee with detailed information about the existing situation in Boarding School. The Government also informed the Committee about the monitoring carried out by the Public Defender together with the new management Boarding School.

118. A number of violations against the children were revealed once the existing situation was assessed in the Boarding School due to which 30 out of 50 caregivers were dismissed.

119. On June 3, 2021, Samtskhe-Javakheti Police Department initiated criminal investigation concerning the possible violence against a minor beneficiary of the Boarding School by the caregivers. Within the framework of the investigation, nearly 400 investigative and procedural actions were conducted. The investigation was conducted by the law enforcement officers specialized in juvenile justice bearing the best interests of the minors in mind, in an adequate environment, with participation of a specialized law enforcement officials, legal representatives and psychologists. Within the framework of the children's rights protection and support, the coordinator of the witness and victim of the MIA was also involved in the criminal case.

120. The separate investigation is ongoing concerning a criminal case initiated in 2019 on the fact of an alleged sex crime committed against a former beneficiary of the Boarding School.

121. On June 5, 2021, Tbilisi City Court made a temporary decision, according to which the agency was assigned to carry out a specific action, specifically, to place children with disabilities enrolled in the institution in another form of state care (foster care, small family-type home) or in reintegration.

122. According to the court decision, the representatives of the agency took 6 children with disabilities away from the Boarding School within 24 hours.

123. As of June 4, 2021, in pursuance to the court decision, social workers and psychologists were providing 24-hour monitoring over the safety of 15 minors residing in the Boarding School on a daily basis. As of February 2022, the monitoring has been carried out twice a month.

124. The views and opinions of a child concerning her/his future are considered at every stage. Additionally, the work is underway to determine the further forms of care for 15 beneficiaries of the Boarding School taking account of their opinion and best interests.

Presently, the environment in the Boarding School is suitable for the normal upbringing and development of minors.

125. In 2022, only 11 minors, based on their own wish, stayed at the Boarding School. In 2023, two juveniles were transferred to alternative care services.

126. The State Inspector's Service imposed an administrative responsibility on the Boarding School in the form of a fine in 2021 for disclosing minors' data disproportionately and for non-fulfillment of the requirements set by the Service.

## **2. Prevention of violence against children, including online violence and cyberbullying**

127. In order to protect children from all kinds of violence, in 2006, the Government approved the referral procedures for child, which expanded the circle of agencies involved in the process (it encompassed all circles that may have contact with children). Administrative responsibility was established for those involved in the process who fail to fulfill the obligation to provide information on child abuse to the relevant authority.

128. The Office of Resource Officers of Educational Institutions identifies the initial signs of violence/alleged violence in schools and, if necessary, refers the victim/alleged victim to the Agency for State Care and Assistance for the (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking (hereinafter – "Agency for State Care") or to "122-operator" or to the Psycho-social Service Center at the Office of Resource Officers of Educational Institutions. Within the framework of the service delivery and referral mechanism for schoolchildren, the Office closely cooperates with relevant state and non-governmental agencies.

129. The services of the Psycho-social Service Center are free of charge. The Center has an operational 24-hour hotline. A new website [befriend.mes.gov.ge](http://befriend.mes.gov.ge) has been launched since October 2021, which allows users to receive qualified psychological counseling through an online chat with full confidentiality. In 2019, two more Centers were opened. Presently, 10 centers operate across the country.

130. Resource Officers were represented in 458 public schools across the country before 2019. Resource Officers were represented additionally in 153 Georgian public schools during 2019–2021. Overall, the resource officers of the educational institutions are distributed in 611 public schools across the country as of 2021 (covering 85% of schoolchildren in the country). In those schools where there is no resource officer of the educational institution, security is ensured by the authorized persons designated by the schools who complete retraining under the specially training module.

131. A Crisis Intervention Team operates under the Office of Resource Officers which aims to assess critical cases on the spot, ensure initial management of the situation and make relevant recommendations and plan further measures.

132. In 2021, the resource officers conducted 6408 informational online meetings with students of grades VII–XII on the effects of violence and cyberbullying, its prevention and response.

133. One of the important tasks of the Human Rights Protection Department of the MIA is to ensure timely response to the cases of domestic violence, violence against women, discrimination based on intolerance, trafficking, crimes committed by/against minors and effectiveness of ongoing investigations.

134. The project "Community Policing Initiative in Minority Regions of Georgia" (CPI) has been implemented in the Region of Samtskhe-Javakheti as of 2022, in frames of which nearly 60 legal lessons related to sexual violence and cybercrime were delivered in 15 schools.

135. The project "School, Community and Police Engagement program SCOPE" was implemented during 2017–2021. The program aimed to reduce the crime among teenagers and raise their legal awareness.

136. The institute of community officers was created as a part of the community-oriented police reform, which is committed to take appropriate measures for the prevention of crimes committed against minors. The community-oriented policing strategy for 2020–2023 was

approved. The institute of community officers operates in the cities of Tbilisi and Rustavi, while the other large cities of Georgia will be reached in the nearest future.

137. The State Inspector's Service prepared two recommendations in 2020 – "How to protect yourself from cyberbullying" and "the risks associated with the application Tik Tok", which was designed to inform children and parents about the risks associated with the use of the Internet and social networks and provide advice on protection against cyberbullying. Recommendations were disseminated across the Service's social accounts and website.

138. The State Inspector's Service conducted a photo competition "My personal data is mine" for schoolchildren throughout the country in 2021, which aimed to raise the awareness of children on personal data protection and their development. Approximately 100 school children took part in the competition from different regions of Georgia.

139. A Parent's Guide to the Digital World was created in 2020 at the National Center for Teachers Professional Development under the Ministry of Education and Science in order to help to identify the signs of violence against children. A short glossary of cyber-awareness terminology was published in 2019. Both documents are available on the website of the Center.

140. The Center has been actively implementing the training module on "Cyberbullying Prevention" since 2021 with the participation of the school community which is designed to prevent prevailing internet radicalization with the involvement of the school community.

141. As of 2020, the telecommunication operators are equipped with the function that permits a subscriber to block unwanted websites in accordance with predefined categories.

142. Personal Data Protection Service studied 39 cases of processing personal data of minors in 2022 (March–December), (27 carried out on the initiative of the Service, and 12 based on citizens' statements/reports), on the basis of which administrative responsibility was imposed on 19 persons for committing 20 offenses. A warning was imposed against 9 persons as a sanction, while a fine was imposed against 10 persons. The Service issued 2 recommendations and 44 mandatory assignments.

143. On June 1, 2022, the Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted view on the case "N.B. vs Georgia", which addressed the physical abuse and application of punitive measures against N.B by the kindergarten teacher on January 24, 2017. The investigative and procedural actions were taken to ensure further investigation of the case following the decision of the Committee. At the same time, the representative of N.B appealed to the court for compensation.

### **Reply to paragraph 19 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

144. On March 17, 2020, the Law of Georgia on Combating Crime against Sexual Freedom and Inviolability was adopted which permitted the court to deprive a person of specific rights who is convicted, among others, in crimes committed against the sexual freedom and inviolability of a minor (including the right to work in training, educational institutions).

145. The law established the register of convicted persons and persons deprived of their rights. The register is kept for the purpose of crime prevention and to facilitate the identification of the offender in the case of commission of a new crime by a person.

146. Sex crimes are given priority during the investigation by specialized investigators of the MIA. In 2021, approximately 240 investigators completed the specialization course on sex crimes, including juvenile justice investigators.

147. The case managers of the crimes against sexual inviolability and sexual freedom ensure the effective enforcement of measures in order to prevent recommitment of crimes by persons who are convicted/deprived of rights for sex crimes. In 2022, 90 case managers completed training courses.

148. The prosecutors and investigators of the Prosecutor's Office who completed a special training course have been exercising investigative and prosecutorial powers concerning the crimes against sexual freedom and inviolability since 2021.

149. Investigators and prosecutors are given a recommendation to ensure the participation of a psychologist in the cases concerning sex crimes committed against minors, taking account of the best interests of the child, as well as to plan and conduct investigative and procedural actions affecting the child in accordance with her/his recommendations.

150. The expert examination on the cases of violence against children is mostly initiated by investigative agencies at Levan Samkharauli National Forensic Bureau. If the child confirms the case of violence committed against her/him during the expert examination, the Bureau is officially obligated to inform the investigative agency about it.

151. In most cases related to the cases of child abuse, the investigator initiates medical forensic examination, which is conducted by the Forensic Medical Examination Division. Furthermore, there are frequent cases when a forensic psychological evaluation is conducted by the Psychiatric Forensic Division. In rare cases, a psychological-psychiatric examination is conducted.

152. During the medical forensic examination, an expert is of the same gender as the child as per the law. Depending on the circumstances of the case, if suspicion raises on sexual violence, the forensic examination is conducted by the commission i.e. with the participation of at least 2 experts. The number of female experts increased by 2 in different cities of Georgia in the current year: in Kutaisi and Batumi.

153. Shelters and Crisis Centers for Trafficking Victims operate under the Agency for State Care where social workers, psychologists and lawyers are equipped with the necessary skills and professional knowledge to provide effective services including for the child victims of sexual violence. Additionally, specialists at the Agency cooperate with different non-governmental organizations within the process of provision of services related to therapy and recovery.

154. The Special Investigation Service in cooperation with the Office of Resource Officers of Educational Institutions provides psychological services to the child victims and witnesses participating in the investigation process with a view to protecting the rights of children participating in the investigation process as well as to preventing their additional trauma and secondary victimization.

155. On September 17, 2020, the concept of the Center for Psychological and Social Services for Children Victims of Violence was approved by the Government. Based on the mentioned concept, Center for Psychological and Social Services for Children Victims of Violence (BARNAHUS) was launched in March 2022 in Tbilisi under the Agency for State Care. The Center is committed to prevent secondary victimization of sexually abused children during the progression of the investigation actions as well as their psychological and social rehabilitation in a child-friendly environment. The Center is adapted to the best interests of the child both in terms of infrastructure and content, and serves children who are victims of sexual violence in a pilot mode in accordance with the “one window principle” (Barnahus model). Standard Operating Procedures have been developed for professionals participating in the activities of the Center. Another center is planned to be launched in Kutaisi in the nearest future.

156. Georgian association of social workers in cooperation with the Agency is working on the development of guidelines and standards for professionals working on cases of sexual abuse against children. The development of the document is in the final stage and will be piloted in the nearest future. The purpose of the guidelines is to promote unified practice, the roles and competencies of specialists participating in all stages, including the referral and rehabilitation process. The protocol is designed for both social workers and other support specialists employed in the Agency.

157. In 2020, “Standard Operating Procedures for the Protection of Children against Abuse and Neglect” (SOP) was prepared and approved, which includes the procedures for medical examination and identification by a doctor if there is some suspicion related to violence.

158. In 2019, the Witness and Victim Coordinator Service was launched with a view to providing psychological and emotional support to the witness/victim, preventing secondary victimization, protecting the rights of the victims and increasing the quality of the investigation. The witness and victim coordinator works with minors giving special priority

to them, especially in terms of providing psychological and emotional support to minors who have been exposed to sexual abuse. The Service was expanded in 2020 and included all police divisions of the MIA. According to the amendment made to the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia on June 22, 2021, the investigator of the MIA was given the power to involve a coordinator in the criminal case by her/his own decision before the case is brought to the court.

159. In accordance with anti-trafficking Action Plans, relevant awareness-raising campaigns were conducted in cooperation with the non-governmental sector during 2017–2021.

### **Reply to paragraph 20 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

160. The sub-programs of the State Program of Social Rehabilitation and Child Care envisage the improvement of the physical and social conditions of children with disabilities, children deprived of family care, socially vulnerable, homeless and at risk of abandonment and their integration into the society, assistance of families with children in a crisis situation as well as preparation/promotion of young people aged 18 to 21 for independent life who enjoy the state care services or who have left such services. The program includes both preventive and family support sub-programs, which are implemented in the best interest of the child.

161. The Code on the Rights of the Child raises the standard for separation of a child from her/his family and explicitly recognizes its inadmissibility only on the ground of poverty except for the cases when the measures taken are ineffective and do not serve the best interests of the child.

162. Accordingly, social workers try their best to improve family conditions and keep the child in the family with all the resources at hand with the participation of the governmental and the non-governmental sector.

163. Based on the Code on the Rights of the Child, a working group has been created on the issues related to deinstitutionalization which works to develop the deinstitutionalization strategy. The group brings together the state, international civil society organizations.

164. Kojori Boarding School for Children with Disabilities was closed by the end of 2021 and the children were transferred to small family-type homes. In 2022, Tbilisi Infant Home was deinstitutionalized. 3 small family-type homes of alternative care were created where 7-7 children are placed.

165. Unlicensed institutions were notified by MOH on the necessity of fulfilling the requirements of the Law of Georgia on Licensing of Educational Activities.

166. All children placed in alternative care are periodically reviewed. The individual development plan is reviewed every 6 months unless otherwise determined by the court. Furthermore, according to Code on the Rights of the Child, the court periodically examines all cases with a view to introducing a holistic approach in relation to all children.

167. The Agency for State Care tries constantly works to improve alternative care services. The regular meetings are held with service providers. The training and retraining courses are offered for the staff of the small family type home as well as for the foster parents.

### **Reply to paragraph 21 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

168. In 2020, the Parliament adopted the Law of Georgia on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which aims to harmonize national legislation with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. According to the new law, the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities (hereinafter – “PwD”) is based on the approach of the social model which is focused on identifying the real needs of these persons and responding to them respectively. According to the law, the status of a PwD is determined on the basis of the biopsychosocial model. Concurrently, the new law established a timeframe for a gradual transition to the biopsychosocial model.

169. In 2021, the Government created the interagency Committee for the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a national mechanism responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Convention. The Committee is accountable to the Government. The Advisory Board was created with a view to actively involving PwD and their representatives in the work of the committee, which was staffed by interested parties.

170. MOH in cooperation with the international partner organizations have developed an action plan for the years 2022–2023, which addresses the measures to be taken in connection with the implementation of the bio-psycho-social model of the mechanism for determining the status of disability. The action plan encompasses the measures to be taken for the introduction/expansion of the mentioned model.

171. The state program for early detection and screening of diseases envisages prevention of mild and moderate mental developmental disorders in children aged 1 to 6 years as well as early diagnosis and prevention of mental retardation.

172. The number of referrals and funded visits annually increases in the “Early Child Development Support Subprogram” of “State Program of Social Rehabilitation and Child Care”. For example, in 2021, the number of visits was limited to 20,432 (2,554 beneficiaries), and in 2022, the limit increased to 31,512 visits (3,939 beneficiaries).

173. Mental health care of children and adolescents, their support and well-being of their families is one of the main priorities of the Mental Health Strategy of Georgia for 2022–2030.

174. Introduction of inclusive education in all public schools of Georgia started in 2005.

175. The positions of inclusive education support specialists have emerged in public schools: inclusive education coordinator, special teacher, psychologist. A multidisciplinary team was created, which consists of 47 members and covers the whole Georgia. The team consists of different specialists (psychologist, special teacher, occupational therapist, psychiatrist), whose function is to determine special educational needs (SEN) in accordance with standardized tests and develop recommendations for schools in teaching and learning.

176. More than 1000 PwD/SEN were included in vocational education as a result of the introduction of inclusive education at the vocational education level.

177. The number of SEN students is increasing in public schools. In the beginning, the number of SEN students was only a few hundred, while the number has reached 10,482 in public schools by December 2021.

178. The model of school funding has changed since September 1, 2013, and the schools where SEN students are enrolled receive additional funding to ensure their education. In 2013, funding amounted to GEL 350 for every six SEN students and in 2021, the funding has increased to GEL 700 for every five students.

179. In 2018, amendments were made to the Law of Georgia on General Education, determining the special teacher as one of the types of teachers. The standard of special teacher was approved as well as the career advancement and professional development scheme was defined. Teacher qualification exam of a special teacher was held in 2021, as a result of which about 1000 working special teachers obtained the status of a senior special teacher and the corresponding supplement to the status.

180. The procedure for the introduction, development and monitoring of inclusive education were approved as well as the mechanism for the identification of students with special educational needs. The mechanism regulated the progression of inclusive education in the school as well as the process of determining the status of SEN students by a multidisciplinary team. The additional specialists who should work with the SEN student were defined – psychologist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, sign language interpreter, sign language specialist, orientation and mobility specialist, assistant of a person with special educational needs.

181. The Ministry is developing numerous auxiliary resources, guides, manuals, which serve to promote the education of the SEN student and are intended for specialists, teachers, and parents. An alternative curriculum was prepared for students with severe to profound

general learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, sensory curriculum, mobility and orientation standard, extended curriculum for visually impaired students, standard for teaching Georgian sign language. Textbooks are printed in Braille for visually impaired students, and audio versions of the textbooks are also prepared. The Ministry ensures purchase of technical equipment in order to support the education of visually impaired students. Furthermore, infrastructural projects are implemented, and educational institutions are adapted. The SEN students are provided with transportation services.

182. The introduction of inclusive education in the vocational education and retraining system began in 2013. An alternative approach to vocational testing was developed in 2013. Different types of support are defined to facilitate the learning process for children with special educational needs and children with disabilities such as: services of inclusive education specialist, adapted learning material, individual curriculum, transportation and others. Children with special educational needs and children with disabilities have been provided with additional funding in the amount of 1000.0 GEL on a quarterly voucher since 2017. All public educational institutions are adapted to the needs of children with disabilities and children with special educational needs, while the physical environment is adapted in line with the principles of universal design in 4 vocational educational institutions. Educational resources have been created such as the electronic bank of Georgian sign language and its phone app, audios of manuals, guides related to vocational education.

### **Reply to paragraph 22 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

183. In order to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 and to ensure access to health care services, both scheduled and emergency services were provided in a non-stop mode in frames of State Universal Healthcare and other vertical state programs.

184. In November 2021, the action plan to improve the health of mothers and newborns for 2021–2023 was approved.

185. In order to improve the delivery of public healthcare services, the budget of the state immunization program was increased by 17.1 million GEL in 2021, the safe blood program from 4.1 GEL to 5.7 million GEL. The budget of maternal and child healthcare program from 6.9 million GEL to 7.0 million GEL.

186. The State Program for Early Detection and Screening of Diseases encompasses a blood lead biomonitoring component, which includes blood lead screening of children under 7 years on the basis of referral by a family physician and/or a pediatrician. According to the mentioned study, the program also ensures provision of appropriate medical services and medications if the child's blood lead content is 5 mcg/dL or more, as well as examination of her/his family members (children under 18 and pregnant women) and, if necessary, provision with appropriate medical services. Furthermore, if the blood lead content is 10 mcg/dL during the third and/or fourth trimester of pregnancy, testing of the newborns for lead and provision of appropriate medical services and medication is ensured if the child's blood lead content is 5 mcg/dL or more.

187. The Center shall conduct an examination of the living environment for the users whose blood lead concentration is 10 µg/dL or more within 30 calendar days upon receipt of notification in order to determine potential sources of lead, while the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and shall examine the food and external environmental risk factors (air, water, soil) – along with the agencies operating under the Ministry.

188. Within the framework of the State Mental Health Program, state has been providing funding for children's mental health services. Mental health service providers were fully compliant with the protocols for the safe management of patients in inpatient and outpatient mental health services amid COVID-19.

189. The process of regionalization of antenatal services has started which includes training of medical personnel and awareness-raising of pregnant women on the importance of breastfeeding.

### Reply to paragraph 23 of the list of issues prior to reporting

190. Ensuring access to public healthcare programs and services for the people, including for children, living in the occupied territory without any hindrance is a priority for the Government. To this end, “State Referral Healthcare Program” has been operating since 2010, which ensures the provision of free medical services to patients from the occupied regions in the medical facilities located in the territory controlled by the Government. In 2018–2022, 584 children benefited from this program:

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (by 20 January)
173 children	153 children	111 children	142 children	5 children

191. Moreover, essential medicines and medical supplies, including vaccines and immunization, diabetes medications, anti-tuberculosis medications and HIV/AIDS drugs, have been regularly delivered to Abkhazia region, which is estimated more than 1 million GEL annually.

192. The information on the measures implemented during the pandemic of Covid-19 is provided above.

193. UNDP provides vaccines and injection equipment to the occupied territory of Abkhazia as a part of the Project “Dialogue” in accordance with the annual request from the Ministry of Health of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, considering the birth rate and age groups of the population.

194. Within the framework of the State Program of Primary and Emergency Healthcare, 18 medical facilities located in the occupied territory of Georgia and near the occupation line receive special funding in order to ensure access to medical services.

### Reply to paragraph 24 of the list of issues prior to reporting

195. The system of targeted social assistance operates within the country, which ensures the distribution of available resources to the most deprived social groups and families in urgent need. In 2015, a new assessment methodology was introduced and the administration scheme was improved. A differentiated assistance system and a child benefit were introduced, which significantly improved the program targeting.

196. The child benefit has been doubled up to GEL 100 instead of 50 since July 2021, which is given to children under 16 living in families registered in the database of socially vulnerable families with up to 120,001 rating scores. In 2022, the child benefit increased again from GEL 100 to GEL 150.

197. The threshold score has also increased from 100,000 to 120,001 to receive subsistence allowance, which means that the number of families receiving child benefit has also increased.

198. The Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia implemented a number of projects during the reporting period (2017–2022) within the competence, with a view to arranging water supply and wastewater systems, which includes both construction of new infrastructure and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure which resulted in significant accessibility of the population to water supply and wastewater services. The number of beneficiaries of the services provided by “United Water Supply Company of Georgia” operating under the management of the Ministry has approximately increased by 11% since 2017 as a result of the projects implemented within 2017–2021. Additionally, more than 585,000 beneficiaries have benefited from improved water supply and sanitation services as a result of the projects completed in 2022. A total of GEL 320 million was spent on water supply and drainage projects between 2017–2021.

## Reply to paragraph 25 of the list of issues prior to reporting

199. In 2017, the Government approved the Unified Strategy of Education and Science of 2017–2021. The strategic goals of the Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter – “MOES”) serve to ensure access to quality education for all at all levels.

200. National Center for Teacher Professional Development (hereinafter – TPDC) carries out professional development programs to increase the competences and motivation of teachers.

201. The construction of 43 new public schools was completed by the Educational and Scientific Infrastructure Development Agency under the MOES; 31 public schools were fully rehabilitated by the Agency. Within the framework of the American project and with the participation of the Agency, rehabilitation works, and land development were carried out in 86 public schools; More than 600 public schools underwent different types of rehabilitation works.

202. Currently, the construction works of 5 new public schools, full rehabilitation of 7 public schools and partial rehabilitation of about 60 public schools are underway.

203. The Municipal Development Fund of Georgia completed the construction and rehabilitation of 134 schools between 2017–2022, while the construction and rehabilitation works of 90 schools are currently being carried out and planned. As referred to kindergartens, the Fund completed the construction and rehabilitation of 40 kindergartens between 2017–2022, while the ongoing and planned projects envisage the construction of 23 new kindergartens. Additionally, the kindergarten construction-rehabilitation program initiated by the Prime-Minister of Georgia will begin in 2023, within the framework of which 885 kindergartens will be constructed and rehabilitated. To this end, GEL 100 million has already been allocated from the state budget.

204. In 2019–2021, small-scale rehabilitation/construction of schools was funded with approximately 78 million GEL. In 2017–2022, the construction/rehabilitation of kindergartens in the regions was funded with approximately 63 million GEL.

205. As a part of the Program “My First Computer”, every first-year student at a public school receives a personal computer as a gift every year. In addition to this, students and teachers of public and private schools enjoy special discounts on mobile internet packages.

206. To ensure geographic accessibility to schools, the MOES provides free transport services to 12,000 students annually.

207. Ethnic minorities in Georgia have access to all levels of education: preschool, general, vocational and higher. The State provides the opportunity for ethnic minority representatives to receive the pre-school and school education in their mother tongue as well. There are more than 100 non-Georgian preschools and up to 300 non-Georgian schools/sectors in Georgia.

208. Teaching of numerically smaller minority languages (Ossetian, Chechen, Avar, Udi, Assyrian) for schoolchildren at public schools (upon request) is ensured.

209. In 2022, the Georgian language program was developed to provide representatives of the ethnic minorities with the opportunity for enrollment in a VET program of their choice and earn relevant qualifications.

210. The program “Professional Development Support Program for Non-Georgian Language Schools”, aims to promote professional development and teaching and learning process of teachers in non-Georgian language schools located in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti regions densely populated by ethnic minorities. In 2017–2021, approximately 250 to 284 participants, consultants and assistant teachers were employed within the program.

211. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and 80 organizations operating under the Ministry (art and educational schools, folk ensembles, orchestras, theaters, museums, cultural centers) carry out numerous events to improve access to cultural-educational events of IDPs and representatives of ethnic minorities, PwD, as well as to ensure their integration into

cultural life. Eight extracurricular artistic and sports educational institutions operate under the Ministry, in which more than 2000 children receive education on average every year.

212. On December 29, 2022, the Government approved the “Youth Strategy for 2023–2026” and its Action Plan for 2023.

### **Reply to paragraph 26 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

213. In 2018, the Government approved “A Step to a Better Future” Peace Initiative, which aims to enhance quality educational opportunities for the residents of the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia at all levels, both in the territory controlled by the central Government and abroad, using status-neutral mechanisms.

214. Within the peace initiative, unprecedented secondary education preparation program was launched as a result of the relevant amendment to the law on Higher Education, which is designed to offer a special training course for young people living in the occupied regions on the basis of free preparation centers in Tbilisi and Zugdidi. After the completion of the training course, a student can continue further studies at the bachelor’s level without passing the unified national exams in case of overcoming the minimum competency test. The program also provides a monthly scholarship in the amount of GEL 150 and accommodation.

215. The first pilot program started on April 18, 2019, which covered 142 applicants from the occupied regions. 139 out of them were admitted to higher education through a simplified procedure. In 2020, 180 students from the occupied regions registered to participate in the program. The implementation of the program was delayed due to the pandemic and so-called closed check points. However, all registered applicants were allowed to be enrolled in the Georgian higher education institutions without exams by the decision of the Government.

216. A special high education “1+4 Program”, which allows representatives of ethnic minorities, including Abkhazians and Ossetians, to enroll in higher educational institutions of Georgia in simplified terms, continues to function.

217. “1+4 Program” has been further simplified for Abkhazian and Ossetian-speaking applicants. In particular, according to the amendment of 6 June 2018 to the Law of Georgia “On Higher Education”, Abkhazian and Ossetian-speaking applicants are permitted to take the Abkhaz/Ossetian language tests instead of the general aptitude test, which was difficult to pass due to some specific terms.

218. In 2017–2021, 17 people from the occupied territories of Georgia enjoyed „1+4 Program”.

219. In addition to the above-mentioned programs, students from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia can enter higher educational institutions of Georgia on the basis of a unified national exam. Their education and living expenses are funded by the State. It is noteworthy that persons who were willing to continue their studies in Georgian higher educational institutions from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia were enrolled without taking any exam over the last few years, taking into account the restrictions imposed on free movement, as well as the challenges related to the pandemic.

220. In 2019–2021, a total of 1,026 students from the occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia were enrolled in higher education institutions of Georgia.

### **Reply to paragraph 27 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

221. The Law of Georgia on International Protection was adopted in 2016, which is in compliance with 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

222. The law establishes basic principles and protection standards to be applied at each stage of the asylum procedure; defines the circle of persons with specific needs (which also includes children and unaccompanied minors) and applicable procedures. With the adoption of the law, the corresponding by-laws were also adopted.

223. According to Order No. 33 of the MIA dated April 6, 2020 (“On Approval of the Asylum Procedure”), all decisions and/or actions taken in the scope of the asylum procedure for an unaccompanied must be based on the best interest of the child.

224. If international protection is requested by an unaccompanied, a legal representative will be assigned to her/him, in whose presence the minor will be provided with complete information regarding her/his rights, in a language she/he understands, taking into account her/his age and level of development. In other cases (a minor living with a parent/parents), the MIA provides information on the rights of children to their parents.

225. Accessibility of general education was continuously ensured for minors seeking asylum, minors holding international protection and being placed in the Temporary Accommodation Center of the Migration Department of the MIA. 10-month Georgian language course is offered for asylum seekers and minors with international protection. By the end of 2021, 30 people were enrolled in the program.

226. One of the main directions of the legal aid service is the protection of the rights of asylum seekers, that includes both adults and minors.

227. The legal aid service offers free legal advice to asylum seekers who has been refused granting international protection by the MIA, to protect their rights and free legal services (representation in court) in disputes related to the protection of asylum seekers’ rights, regardless of their insolvency.

228. A register of translators will be established on the basis of the legal aid service, in which translators who know different foreign languages will join and, if necessary, will provide services to children who do not know the Georgian language. Interpreters will also be trained concerning the standards of communication with children.

### **Reply to paragraph 28 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

229. The issue related to the internally displaced persons (IDPs) are addressed in the state national social protection systems and development plans, including in the sustainable development goals, the rural development strategy and action plan, the Georgia-EU association agenda and the action plan for the integration of Georgia into the European Union.

230. The criteria defined in accordance with the “Procedure for Provision of Housing for IDPs” envisages granting of an additional score if there are child members in the family, which plays an important role in the decision-making process. In parallel with the resettlement, the state implements different programs for the provision of livelihood resources for IDPs within the framework of the strategy and action plan for the provision of livelihood resources. Furthermore, IDPs are included in the national strategy and action plan of the labor and employment policy.

231. Beneficiaries of the sub-programs of “the State programs for Social Rehabilitation and Childcare” are internally displaced children and their families.

232. In order to improve living conditions of IDPs, in 2019–2022, with the financing of Government, 2440 families were provided residential apartments. Namely, 120 families were provided with new residential apartments in 2019, 500 families in 2020, 1020 families in 2021, 3530 housing units were provided to IDPs in 2022, out of which 240 were in newly constructed buildings.

### **Reply to paragraph 29 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

233. The Government implemented an important reform of the labor legislation during the reporting period. The updated labor legislation creates strong guarantees for the protection of the labor rights of employees.

234. As a result of the reform, the Labor Inspection Service was launched on January 1, 2021, which is authorized to supervise the full range of labor rights defined by the national

legislation, with the right to use sanctions. Labor Inspection Service is authorized to provide state supervision over the protection of labor rights of children. In particular, in order to detect and prevent possible facts of child labor, forced labor and labor exploitation of children, the service checks working conditions and addresses the relevant administrative bodies for further response.

235. The Code on the Rights of the Child, Article 54, defines the right of the child to be protected from work that interferes with her/his education or is harmful to her/his health, physical, mental, moral, emotional and social development.

236. The Order No 01-126 of November 30, 2020 on “the Approval of the List of Hard, Unhealthy and Hazardous Work which is Prohibited for Persons below the Age of 18” lists hard, harmful, and dangerous jobs, as well as a prohibited jobs and risk factors which are prohibited for children.

237. Mobile inspection groups staffed by the representatives of law enforcement agencies were created to examine persons belonging to the risk group of trafficking as well as the places where the facts of child and human trafficking may take place. The process of the so-called belongingness to the risk group is carried out through checking and studying, identifying, informing the street children about the crime of human trafficking (trafficking) as well as about forced labor and sexual exploitation. Inspections are carried out to examine whether children are engaged in forced labor, including in the agricultural sector, family farms and any other business establishments.

238. Amendments to the Labor Code of Georgia in 2020 specify the duration of weekly and daily working hours of minors of different age groups and establish that the duration of working time for children from the age of 16 to 18 shall not exceed 36 hours per week, nor 6 hours per working day while the duration of working time for minors from the age of 14 to 16 shall not exceed 24 hours per week, nor 4 hours per working day.

239. The Labor Code of Georgia regulates issues related to the legal capacity to enter into employment agreements and minimum employment age. According to Article 10(1) of the Code, the legal capacity of natural persons to enter into an employment agreement shall commence from the age of 16. Pursuant to Article 10(3) of the Code, an employment agreement with children under the age 14 may be concluded solely for the performance of activities in the fields of sport, art, and culture, and/or to do work in advertising. It is noteworthy that the Code prohibits the employment of minors for night work (Article 28(3)). The Code prohibits worst forms of child labor, including unconditional worst forms of labor and dangerous work.

240. The revised Code of Labor prohibits the employment of a minor for overtime work without his consent. According to the Code, the total overtime work performed by minors shall not exceed 2 hours per working day and 4 hours per working week.

241. The Government attaches particular importance of raising public awareness on the issues related to children’s rights, forced labor of minors and labor exploitation. To this end, a special video clip and information booklets were prepared in 2021.

### **Reply to paragraph 30 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

242. Since 2014, the Anti-Trafficking Council has been coordinating the protection of the rights of children living and/or working on the street. In 2014–2020, 2071 children living and/or working (homeless) on the street were identified in Georgia. As a result of the changes made in 2016, the concept of “homeless child” was introduced into the legislation – a person living and/or working on the street under the age of 18, who is identified as such by a social worker exercising the relevant authority on the basis of applicant’s form. The development of the mentioned definition allowed the state to organize the identification documentation of the homeless children, which gives them the opportunity to enjoy variety of rights and wide range of state programs, including healthcare, education and social protection.

243. From January 1, 2016 to January 1, 2022, 52 temporary identification cards were issued to 33 homeless children, 17 temporary identification cards were issued to 13 children

who were victims of violence, as well as electronic ID cards to 20 children, electronic temporary residence certificates to 1 child and biometric passports of Georgian citizens to 15 children.

244. The Government implements the state program “Provision of Shelter for Homeless Children” which is designed to ensure the psycho-social rehabilitation and integration of homeless children, including children living and working on the street. Within the framework of the sub-program, 6 shelters and 7 day centers operate in Georgia. 2 mobile groups were added to the Ajara region: one in 2021, and the other in 2022. Furthermore, the services of the day care center for homeless children were launched in Adjara. The events aimed at strengthening the families of homeless children were added to the subprogram Provision of Shelter for Homeless Children of the State Program for Social Rehabilitation and Childcare for 2021. Moreover, since 2021, the sub-programs have been introduced for supporting and providing food products to young people under the age of 18–21 who left the state care system.

245. The issues related to children working and living on the street is provided for in the State Program for Social Rehabilitation and Childcare for 2022. The Agency for State Care, together with service providers, has mobile groups in four cities of Georgia that operate in the mentioned area. The goal of the mobile group is to identify homeless children, prevent, intervene with their caregivers, work in day care centers and shelters.

246. In 2021, “the 24-hour Emergency Response Mechanism” was approved by the Order of the Agency For State Care which is aimed to provide an efficient and quick response to the cases related to minors from 18:00 to 09:00 AM. Presently, the mechanism operates in two areas: 1. Violence against children; 2. Children working and living on the street. A quick response is made at night.

247. Given the legislative changes, the role of a person with relevant qualifications and experience – a social worker, who was granted the right to decide on the immediate separation of a child from an abuser in an emergency situation – has increased. Administrative responsibility was established for the noncompliance of the decision taken by the social worker regarding the separation of the child, while criminal responsibility was imposed on the person who is administratively fined for noncompliance of the decision.

248. In order to protect children living and/or working on the street from all kinds of violence, including trafficking, a unified draft state strategy for 2023–2026 and a draft action plan for 2023–2024 were developed, which will be approved in the near future.

### **Reply to paragraph 31 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

249. Social Services Agency provides legal/procedural representation of the child in compliance with the law of Georgia, Code on the Rights of the Child and Juvenile Justice Code. Social workers protect the interests of the child during the legal/investigative procedures. A number of the specialists employed by the Agency has already been trained in juvenile justice issues.

250. Juvenile Referral Center (hereinafter referred to as the Center) was established in January 1, 2020 – a structural division of the National Agency for Crime Prevention, Execution of Non-Custodial Sentences and Probation, which is committed to ensure socializations, resocialization and rehabilitation of juveniles who have not reached the age of criminal responsibility, who are in conflict with the law, and expose difficult behavior.

251. In July 2021, the regional office of the Center was opened in Kutaisi. It is planned to open regional offices of the Center in Batumi and other regions of Georgia by 2026.

252. The MIA Academy implements the “Training program for law-enforcement officers and investigators specialized in juvenile justice”. In 2017–2022, 1104 trainees completed the specialization course at the Academy.

253. The employees and mediators of the Diversion and Mediation Division of the National Agency for Crime Prevention, Enforcement of Non-custodial Sentences and Probation were also specialized in the issues related to juvenile justice.

### Reply to paragraph 32 of the list of issues prior to reporting

254. On December 2, 2020, the Anti-Trafficking Council approved a two-year national action plan to combat human trafficking, which includes activities to be implemented for 2021–2022 (during the reporting period, action plans for 2017–2018 and 2019–2020 were also in effect).

255. According to the US report on human trafficking for 2016, Georgia took the lead in the so-called first basket and stood its ground within 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. According to the report of the international research “Global Slavery Index” for 2018, Georgia is ranked 15th among 167 countries and is ranked first in the region.

256. Georgia is ranked 18th among 183 countries in the “Walk Free Foundation” report for 2019, which annually measures the Global Slavery Index – “Measurement, Action, Freedom”.

257. The reforms made in relation to anti-trafficking carried out by the Government were also positively evaluated by the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Human Trafficking in the report for 2020 and by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings of the Council of Europe (GRETA) in the report for 2021.

258. Article 1432 of the Criminal Code of Georgia, encompasses the purchase or sale of children as one of the alternative actions within the crime of child trafficking.

259. On July 13, 2020, amendments were made to the Criminal Code of Georgia, which extended the punishment provided for the crime (engagement in prostitution) under Article 253 of the Code. Within the same legislative amendments, the criminal responsibility for the promotion of prostitution of children has been increased.

260. The provision on exporting and importing of pornographic work containing images of children was added to Article 255 of the Criminal Code (illegal making or sale of a pornographic work or other items), as a result of the aforementioned legislative amendments, for which imprisonment extended from 9 to 15 years.

261. The responsibility for purchasing, storing, attending the demonstration, offering, disseminating, transferring, advertising, or providing access to pornographic work containing images of children has been tightened under the above-mentioned amendments; illegal making and selling pornographic work containing images of minors or engagement of a minor in the illegal production of a pornographic work or any other item of pornographic nature or offering a meeting of a sexual character to a minor has been tightened under the same amendments.

262. Apart from tightening the responsibility for specific crimes, legislative amendments prohibited imposition of conditional sentence for crimes against a child provided for under Articles 137–139, 141 and 253–2552 of the Criminal Code. The full release of the convicted person from the sentence has been banned in relation to the same crimes, even if a plea bargain is signed. A statute of limitations for release from criminal liability is no longer applicable in the case of committing a crime against a minor under Articles 137–141 and 253–2552 of the Code under the legislative amendments.

263. The promotion of prostitution has become a punishable crime under the legislative amendments made in 2018. According to Article 254(4), the act committed knowingly by an offender against a minor, shall be punished by the imprisonment for a term of seven to twelve years.

264. Special mobile groups have been operating within the MIA with a view to proactively identifying the cases of trafficking since 2013, the number of which has increased from 4 up to 6 groups since September 2019. The main function of the mobile groups is to proactively inspect the places carrying the risk of trafficking throughout Georgia (bars, clubs, saunas, groups living and working on the street (including children), etc.) in order to reveal the facts of trafficking.

265. In order to identify online trafficking and engagement of minors in online trafficking, the special mobile groups take relevant measures, process information, check and monitor internet space. As a result of which number of websites has been revealed and closed.

266. Georgian National Tourism Administration has been distributing anti-trafficking flyers via Tourist Information Centers across the country since 2014 in which brief information on the definition of trafficking is provided, as well as contact information for referral if the case of trafficking is detected. These flyers were prepared in Georgian, English, Russian and Turkish languages.

267. Since 2021, information leaflets in six-languages (Georgian, English, Russian, Turkish, Azerbaijani and Armenian), targeting trafficking prevention, provided by the Agency for State Care are distributed in Tourist Information Centers, which also include the above-mentioned information.

268. On April 4, 2017, 8 tourism companies and associations operating in Georgia joined the World Tourism Organization's Global Code of Ethics within the framework of the 3rd International Conference of Mountain Resorts of Europe and Asia of the United Nations World Tourism Organization held in Georgia.

269. The legislative amendment on one-off state compensation (1000 GEL) came into force on April 14, 2021, which simplifies the procedures for issuing state compensation. These amendments applies to those persons as well who were given the status of victim before their adoption. In November 2022, "the Procedure for Determining and Issuing the Amount of State Compensation for the Victims of Domestic Violence and/or Violence against Women" was approved, in order to provide state compensation to victims of such crime for the damage caused to health and to children of the victim, who died as a result of the crime.

### **Reply to paragraph 33 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

270. The Government established an Interagency Standing Commission in 2018, which was assigned to develop the national strategy on fight against terrorism and the corresponding action plan, as well as to ensure coordination and monitoring of their implementation. The Interagency Standing Commission is chaired by the Head of the State Security Service and currently brings together the representatives of 21 State agencies, including members of the government.

271. The Government approved the first document defining the country's policy on combating terrorism in 2019: National Strategy of Georgia on Fight against Terrorism and its corresponding Action Plan. The documents covered the period of 2019–2021.

272. In 2022, the Government approved the National Counterterrorism Strategy of Georgia, which is the second policy document in this field covering the period of 2022–2026. The Action Plan for 2022–2026 was also approved along with the new strategy. A special emphasis was placed on the importance of prevention of radicalization of children and adolescents as well as their deradicalization and resocialization in the new strategy.

273. According to the Law of Georgia "On Military Duty and Military Service", the decision on conscription of persons into compulsory military service is made only after attaining the age of 18. A person under the age of 18, with the consent of her/his parents, can become a junker (a student of the Bachelor's academic programs) at the National Defence Academy.

274. According to the Governmental Ordinance N238 of 2014, conscripts and women aged 18 are permitted to do contracted (professional) military service.

275. A person has the right to serve voluntarily in the military reserve service from the age of 18.

276. Violations of the provisions of the international humanitarian law are punishable under the Criminal Code of Georgia. Article 413 of the Code refers to treaties of Georgia that expand the scope of responsibility for war crimes.

277. Georgia is a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Optional Protocols, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. Therefore, Article 413 of the Criminal Code with reference to the provisions of the international documents mentioned above, makes the international crimes punishable provided for by these documents, including the conscription or use of children under the age of fifteen in the national armed forces and active participation of children in hostilities (Article 8 of the Rome Statute, etc).

278. Participation of mercenaries in armed conflicts or military actions is also criminalized by Article 410 of the Criminal Code of Georgia.

279. The Criminal Code of Georgia, using the principles of territorial, extraterritorial and universal jurisdiction, regulates the aspects of exercising jurisdiction of criminal law over crimes committed on the territory of Georgia, as well as crimes committed beyond its borders.

280. No cases of recruitment of children by members of terrorist organizations has ever been recorded in Georgia during the reporting period, which is due to the effective measures taken by the State, especially preventive measures.

## Statistical information and data

### Reply to paragraph 37 of the list of issues prior to reporting Convictions and sentences imposed by the district (city) courts for the crime of discrimination against children committed on the ground of intolerance

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of convicts</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Geographical Distribution</i>	<i>Type of sentence</i>	<i>Grounds of discrimination</i>
2020	4	4 male	18–24 years-old – 2, 30–49 years-old – 2	Tbilisi – 1, Kakheti – 1, Shida Kartli – 1, Samegrelo – 1	Deprivation of liberty – 2, non-custodial sentence – 2	3 – gender; 1 – Other signs of discrimination (clothing)
2021	12	12 male	18–24 years-old – 5, 25–29 – 3, 30 years-old 49 years-old – 1, 50 above 3,	Tbilisi – 1, Kakheti – 1, Guria – 2, Samegrelo – 1, Samtskhe- Javakheti – 1, Imereti – 2, Ajara – 3	Deprivation of liberty – 5, non-custodial sentence – 5, community service – 2	12 – Gender
2022	22	female – 2, male – 20	18–24 years-old – 10, 25–29 years-old – 1, 30–49 years-old – 10, above 50 1	Tbilisi – 3, Shida Kartli – 2, Kvemo Kartli – 2, Imereti – 2, Kakheti – 8, Samegrelo – 1, Guria – 1, Ajara – 3	Deprivation of liberty – 9, non-custodial sentence – 10, fine – 1, community service – 2	22 – Gender

### Reply to paragraph 38 of the list of issues prior to reporting Child suicide statistics

A total of 31 child suicides were recorded between the period of 2017–2020 in Georgia.  
Hence it follows that:

	2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Tbilisi								
Ajara								
Guria				1				
Imereti					2	2	1	1
Kakheti	1	1				2	1	1
Mtskheta- Mtianeti								3
Racha- Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti								
Samegrelo- Zemo Svaneti			1				1	1
Samtskhe- Javakheti						1		
Kvemo Kartli	1	1	2	1	1		2	1
Shida Kartli					1		2	1

281. Statistics of birth registration of children born through surrogacy in 2017–2021 are as follows:

### Reply to paragraph 39 of the list of issues prior to reporting Birth registration of children born through surrogacy

Year	Number of applications received		Total number of registered births	Registration is not possible	Total number of registration failures among applications received	All applications
	Female	Male		Female		
Citizenship						
2017	223	198	421	2	2	423
Georgia	48	31	79			79
Other	175	167	342	2	2	344
2018	263	240	503			503
Georgia	64	47	111			111
other	199	193	392			392
2019	273	287	560			560
Georgia	47	62	109			109
Other	226	225	451			451
2020	401	428	829	3	3	832
Georgia	64	56	120			120
other	337	372	709	3	3	712

Year	Number of applications received		Total number of registered births	Registration is not possible	Total number of registration failures among applications received	All applications
	Female	Male		Female		
2021	157	155	312	40	40	352
Georgia	94	83	177			177
Other	63	72	135	40	40	175
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 317</b>	<b>1 308</b>	<b>2 625</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2 670</b>

### Reply to Paragraph 40 of the list of issues prior to reporting Statistics on Stateless Persons

#### Data on stateless persons

Year	2017		
Category of the population:	Stateless persons in Georgia		
Age Group	Male	Female	Total
	Number	Number	Number
0-4	1	0	1
5-17	5	2	7
18-59	218	256	474
60 and >	37	68	105
<b>In total:</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>587</b>

Year	2018		
Category of the population:	Stateless persons in Georgia		
Age group	Male	Female	Total
	Number	Number	Number
0-4	0	0	0
5-17	6	3	9
18-59	208	240	448
60 and >	41	68	109
<b>In total:</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>566</b>

Year	2019		
Category of the population:	Stateless persons in Georgia		
Age group	Male	Female	Total
	Number	Number	Number
0-4	0	0	0
5-17	5	3	8
18-59	206	231	437

Year				2019
Category of the population:				<i>Stateless persons in Georgia</i>
	Male	Female	Total	
Age group	Number	Number	Number	
60 and	43	71	114	
<b>In total:</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>559</b>	
Major regions:				<i>Tbilisi, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli</i>

Year				2020
Category of the population:				<i>Stateless persons in Georgia</i>
	Male	Female	Total	
Age group	Number	Number	Number	
0-4	0	0	0	
5-17	5	3	8	
18-59	205	231	436	
60 and >	44	70	114	
<b>In total:</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>558</b>	
Major regions:				<i>Tbilisi, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli</i>

Year				2021
Category of the population:				<i>Stateless persons in Georgia</i>
	Male	Female	Total	
Age group	Number	Number	Number	
0-4	1	0	1	
5-17	4	3	7	
18-59	177	217	394	
60 and >	49	79	128	
<b>In total:</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>530</b>	
Major regions:				<i>Tbilisi, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli</i>

### Reply to paragraph 41 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting Statistics on the child victims of violence

Articles of Criminal Code /years	Article 117	Article 118	Article 120	Article 126	Article 126 <sup>1</sup>
2017	4	6	18	94	82
2018	8	2	16	188	166
2019	6	4	16	169	195
2020	5	9	5	136	147
2021	6	5	15	200	145

### Reply to paragraph 41 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting Statistics on the child victims of sexual violence

<i>Articles of Criminal Code /years</i>	<i>Article 137</i>	<i>Article 138</i>	<i>Article 139</i>	<i>Article 140</i>	<i>Article 141</i>
2017 year	8	7	1	142	20
2018 year	7	7	0	90	38
2019 year	13	8	5	73	58
2020 year	13	10	3	46	49
2021 year	32	27	1	68	59

### Reply to paragraph 41 (g) of the list of issues prior to reporting Statistics on the referrals by the prosecutor's office to the agency for state care

<i>Data on child victims of violence / alleged victims</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>
victims of physical violence	24	9	9
victims of psychological violence	13	17	7
Victims of physical and psychological violence	2	2	3
A victim of sexual violence	1	1	3
victims of neglect	2	2	1
Victims of physical, psychological and sexual violence	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>24</b>

### Reply to paragraph 42 of the list of issues prior to reporting

282. Presently, 145 children are in institutional care.

283. 1853 are in alternative care (foster care, small family type home).

### Reply to Paragraph 43 of the list of issues prior to reporting

284. A child with disabilities (under 18) receives a social package in the amount of GEL

285. According to the unified database of state funds administered by the Social Service Agency (as of January 2022): 13,308 children with disabilities receive the social package.

286. 448 children with disabilities were placed in state care services in 2022, including 348 in foster care, 27 in specialized small family-type homes with severe and profound disabilities, 41 in small family-type homes. Besides, 1 child with a disability status enjoys services in the educational institution operating under the Patriarchate of Georgia, and 31 children in Tbilisi Infant House which is a branch of the Agency for State Care.

287. 7 specialized schools operate in Georgia (4 students with profound mental impairment and multiple disorders, 2 hearing and 1 visual impairment), 6 out of seven provide additional boarding services on school days by the end of 2021. 509 students study in these schools.

**Number of students with special educational needs and disabilities in separate (special) schools**

<i>Academic year</i>	<i>Students with special educational needs</i>		<i>Students with disabilities</i>		<i>Students with special educational needs and disabilities</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Girl</i>	<i>Boy</i>	<i>Girl</i>	<i>Boy</i>	<i>Girl</i>	<i>Boy</i>	
2017–18	214	335					549
2018–19	86	125			119	214	544
2019–20	72	135			119	220	546
2020–21	54	96	4	1	122	246	523
2021–22	56	92			119	242	509

**Reply to paragraph 43 (d) of the list of issues prior to reporting**

288. The cases related to this type of crime were not considered in the courts of first instance of Georgia between 2018–2022.

**Reply to paragraph 44 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

289. According to the multisectoral research, blood levels of approximately 41% of children across Georgia is higher than 5 µg/dL (1 µg/dL is considered elevated, but 5 µg/dL is already elevated and requires intervention, and 10 µg/dL higher than is very elevated, higher than 35 is considered an alarmingly high index. There are 373,300 children under the age of 7 in Georgia, and if we calculate 41% of them accordingly, the problem of lead probably affects 153 thousand children. The children under 12 month old were targeted because elevated level of lead is particularly alarming among children aged 12 month as it affects their mental development.

**Reply to paragraph 45 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

290. In 2021, works began on the inclusion of sexual education in grades I–VI. In particular, a unified course on health and a healthy lifestyle is planned to be developed at the primary level, which will be a component of non-formal education added to “Doctor’s Hour” led by school doctors/tutors. The topics will cover the issues related to the parts of the body and personal hygiene, exercise, diet, relationships at school, who is a friend, acquaintance, stranger; protection of personal space (e.g. what is a personal space, how to prevent bad touching). Good and bad secrets, unexpected situations, what violence is, how to protect our security while using internet, bad habits, etc.

**Reply to paragraph 46 of the list of issues prior to reporting**

291. According to the joint database of socially vulnerable families administered by the Social Services Agency (as of February 2022): 219,473 children (under the age of 16) living in families with a rating score of 120,001 or less receive child benefit.

292. Additionally, according to data for November 2022, 249,811 children (under the age of 18) living in families with a rating score of up to 65,001 receive subsistence allowance, which is 37.51% of people who receive the allowance. Furthermore, 131,300 children (under the age of 16) receive the child benefit plus an additional GEL 150 along with the subsistence allowance designated for each family member in the target population by November 2022.

### Reply to paragraph 47 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting

293. In March 2020, a study was conducted by Education Management Information System, according to which 528,426 students were registered in the general education system, 12% of them (63,272 students) did not have access to the Internet from home, and 14% (71,796 students) did not have a computer. As referred to the survey conducted in November, distance learning was available only in large cities during the period, while learning in the regions was available in the classroom. Accordingly, the statistics presented in the report include only the results obtained in the large cities and it is as follows: 94% of students engaged in online education have no problem with access to the Internet and technology. 3.4% of students do not have internet and 2.4% do not have technology.

### Reply to paragraph 47 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting School suspension statistics<sup>1</sup>

<i>The share of students at the beginning of their studies</i>						
<i>Academic year</i>	<i>Girl</i>	<i>Boy</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Girl</i>	<i>Boy</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Primary level</b>						
2017–18	489	601	1 090	0.34%	0.38%	0.36%
2018–19	663	762	1 425	0.44%	0.46%	0.45%
2019–20	460	551	1 011	0.30%	0.33%	0.31%
2020–21	380	438	818	0.24%	0.25%	0.24%
<b>Basic level</b>						
2017–18	441	670	1 111	0.64%	0.86%	0.76%
2018–19	473	721	1 194	0.68%	0.92%	0.81%
2019–20	347	513	860	0.51%	0.69%	0.61%
2020–21	240	277	517	0.37%	0.38%	0.38%
<b>Secondary Level</b>						
2017–18	2 564	4 299	6 863	4.34%	6.77%	5.60%
2018–19	2 421	3 806	6 227	4.17%	6.14%	5.19%
2019–20	1 607	2 612	4 219	2.67%	4.03%	3.38%
2020–21	1 471	2 290	3 761	2.28%	3.27%	2.80%

### Reply to paragraph 47 (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting

294. Pre-school education is decentralized in Georgia. Municipalities offer full free services (including meals) in public kindergartens for children from the age 2 until enrolling the school. Primary school starting age is 6. Preschool education services can be extended for children with special educational needs, regardless of school age.

295. According to data for October 1, 2021, 151,729 children (71%) are included in public preschool education services.

- 148,537 receive services in the Georgian language.
- 1,106 in Azerbaijani language.
- 206 in Russian.
- 1,875 in Armenian language.

<sup>1</sup> Students with suspended status on the basis of travelling abroad with their family or death are not included.

296. The number of 5–6-year-old children registered in Georgia is 57,262, out of which 48,482 (85%) are included in the school readiness program.

**Reply to paragraph 47 (d) of the list of issues prior to reporting**  
**Number of students in schools by region, school type and gender**

Region	2017-18				2018-19				2019-20			
	Private		Public		Private		Public		Private		Public	
	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
Abkhazia			1 087	1 211			1 101	1 221			1 100	1 203
Adjara	3 194	4 266	23 287	25 419	3 389	4 564	23 886	25 963	3 430	4 516	24 431	26 597
Guria	503	539	6 531	6 901	488	526	6 408	6 832	480	521	6 419	6 754
Tbilisi	15 147	18 027	78 820	81 241	16 127	19 213	80 872	83 239	17 496	20 393	82 438	84 572
Imereti	2 706	3 364	33 423	36 672	2 810	3 497	33 750	36 567	2 835	3 449	34 063	36 662
Kakheti	453	545	19 610	22 286	471	574	19 560	22 124	451	559	19 691	22 347
Mtskheta Mtianeti	129	177	5 431	6 026	148	203	5 488	6 059	154	203	5 527	6 162
Racha- Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti	34	41	1 450	1 500	39	44	1 433	1 444	45	44	1 421	1 432
Samegrelo- Zemo Svaneti	1 405	1 813	19 329	21 035	1 504	1 889	19 289	21 031	1 479	1 882	19 434	21 062
Samtkhe- Javakheti	120	106	11 319	13 123	110	95	11 278	13 065	99	103	11 279	12 986
Kvemo Kartli	901	1 336	30 742	35 657	922	1 317	31 364	36 009	932	1 365	31 858	36 234
Shida Kartli	855	1 101	17 200	18 712	822	1 071	17 284	18 600	797	1 052	17 298	18 600
<b>Total</b>	<b>25 447</b>	<b>31 315</b>	<b>248 229</b>	<b>269 783</b>	<b>26 830</b>	<b>32 993</b>	<b>251 713</b>	<b>272 154</b>	<b>28 198</b>	<b>34 087</b>	<b>254 959</b>	<b>274 611</b>

Region	2020-21				2021-22			
	Private		Public		Private		Public	
	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
Abkhazia			1 156	1 201			1 195	1 227
Adjara	3 280	4 251	25 751	27 952	3 150	3 977	27 109	29 290
Guria	468	518	6 526	6 809	465	502	6 601	6 965
Tbilisi	17 513	20 218	85 730	88 246	17 289	19 516	89 062	92 186
Imereti	2 692	3 281	35 115	37 534	2 706	3 190	35 966	38 650
Kakheti	375	453	20 333	23 051	372	455	20 912	23 639
Mtskheta- Mtianeti	177	225	5 711	6 331	180	236	59 23	6 549
Racha- Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti	46	40	1 397	1 428	46	42	1 380	1 427
Samegrelo- Zemo Svaneti	1 488	1 870	19 878	21 418	1 462	1 807	20 457	21 915

Region	2020-21				2021-22			
	Private		Public		Private		Public	
	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
Samtskhe Javakheti	78	85	11 422	13 136	71	71	11 537	13 138
Kvemo Kartli	805	1 203	32 965	37 356	778	1 117	33 643	38 210
Shida Kartli	753	984	17 650	19 011	798	1 009	18 026	19 390
<b>Total</b>	<b>27 675</b>	<b>33 128</b>	<b>263 634</b>	<b>283 473</b>	<b>27 317</b>	<b>31 922</b>	<b>271 811</b>	<b>292 586</b>

#### According to language of instruction and age of schoolchildren

Language of instruction	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2019-20		2019-20	
	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
Azerbaijani	11 572	13 837	11 645	13 929	11 495	13 623	11 668	13 768	11 887	14 014
Russian	6 334	7 270	6 533	7 358	6 600	7 344	6 801	7 605	6 740	7 651
Armenian	6 127	7 351	6 068	7 311	6 044	7 195	6 076	7 209	6 127	7 161
Georgian	249 643	272 640	254 297	276 549	259 018	280 536	266 764	288 019	274 374	295 682
<b>Total</b>	<b>273 676</b>	<b>301 098</b>	<b>278 543</b>	<b>305 147</b>	<b>283 157</b>	<b>308 698</b>	<b>291 309</b>	<b>316 601</b>	<b>299 128</b>	<b>324 508</b>

#### Schoolchildren according to age and gender

Age	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
6	18 507	19 961	18 524	20 003	1 8315	19 479	19 533	20 521	18 936	20 179
7	29 003	31 177	27 013	29 444	26 584	28 821	27 165	29 072	28 460	30 315
8	28 956	31 475	29 124	31 333	27 073	29 473	26 685	28 948	27 301	29 245
9	26 163	28 742	28 893	31 417	29 096	31 230	27 062	29 427	26 658	28 936
10	23 138	25 508	26 069	28 662	28 824	31 297	29 063	31 187	27 015	29 399
11	22 191	24 690	23 059	25 407	25 951	28 507	28 790	31 275	28 994	31 111
12	21 585	24 229	22 125	24 586	22 967	25 307	25 845	28 478	28 756	31 191
13	21 107	24 215	21 505	24 132	22 067	24 436	22 958	25 204	25 797	28 407
14	20 502	23 043	21 028	24 060	21 306	23 859	21 941	24 153	22 826	25 068
15	20 129	22 256	19 720	21 696	20 326	22 707	20 962	23 039	21 580	23 515
16	19 540	20 827	19 374	20 590	19 043	20 332	19 929	21 886	20 554	22 337
17	18 579	19 974	18 440	19 390	18 508	19 551	18 517	19 769	19 490	21 421
18	3 853	4 357	3 334	3 918	2 729	3 080	2 506	3 016	2 403	2 840
>18	423	644	335	509	368	619	353	626	358	544
<b>Total</b>	<b>273 676</b>	<b>301 098</b>	<b>278 543</b>	<b>305 147</b>	<b>283 157</b>	<b>308 698</b>	<b>291 309</b>	<b>316 601</b>	<b>299 128</b>	<b>324 508</b>

#### Number of schoolchildren at the schools run by the patriarchate

Region	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
Adjara	57	81	49	67	35	60	42	61	41	55
Guria	379	406	365	387	341	382	331	379	320	367
Tbilisi	608	747	613	767	618	767	611	748	575	657
Imereti	199	211	205	202	217	200	220	193	220	198

Region	2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21		2021-22	
	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti	273	319	273	309	240	293	231	277	234	272
Kvemo Kartli	76	117	92	110	97	113	98	112	95	115
Shida Kartli	238	313	233	295	215	283	194	257	209	266
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 830</b>	<b>2 194</b>	<b>1 830</b>	<b>2 137</b>	<b>1 763</b>	<b>2 098</b>	<b>1 727</b>	<b>20 27</b>	<b>1 694</b>	<b>1 930</b>

**Reply to paragraph 48 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting  
Statistics of children seeking asylum in 2017–2022**

Years	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of Children	195	150	205	142	131	310

297. As of December 2022, 149 children who are citizens of foreign countries enjoy the refugee status in Georgia.

	under 0–4	under 5–11	under 12–17	Total number
Male	10	34	40	84
Female	9	23	33	65

298. As of December 2022, 273 children enjoy humanitarian status in Georgia.

	under 0–4	under 5–11	under 12–17	Total number
Male	24	51	49	124
Female	27	53	69	149

**Reply to paragraph 48 (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting  
Number of children expelled from Georgia who are citizens of other states in 2019–2022**

- 2019 year – 23 minor.
- 2020 year – 4 minor.
- 2021 year – 11 minor.
- 2022 year – 16 minor.

**Reply to paragraph 48 (d) of the list of issues prior to reporting**

299. Nearly 200 asylum seekers and internationally protected persons study in the general educational institutions of Georgia. The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia closely cooperates with the Migration Department of the MIA to ensure that all minors are provided with general education services if they wish so.

### Reply to Paragraph 49 (a) of the list of issues prior to reporting Statistics of Crime of Trafficking

300. The rate of statutory child victims of trafficking in 2017–2022 under Article 143<sup>2</sup> of the Criminal Code of Georgia is as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number</i>
2017	0
2018	3
2019	29
2020	34
2021	3

301. The rate of juvenile diversion in 2017–2021 is as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number</i>
2017	475
2018	497
2019	437
2020	298
2021	359

302. Statistics on the initiation of investigation in the criminal cases related to the crime of child trafficking committed against children/minors in the reporting period:

- 2017 year – 34 case;
- 2018 year – 7 case;
- 2019 year – 9 case;
- 2020 year – 7 case;
- 2021 year – 6 case;
- 2022 year – 6 case.

### Reply to paragraph 49 (b) of the list of issues prior to reporting

303. Three child victims of human trafficking (female – 1, male – 2) enjoyed the services of the Agency in 2021. Psychological, social and legal assistance was provided to all three beneficiaries. One of them received monetary compensation.

### Reply to paragraph 49 (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting Statistics convictions under article 143<sup>2</sup> of the criminal code (child trade) in the district (city) courts

<i>Year</i>	<i>Extent of Cases</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Geogr. Distribution</i>	<i>Type of Sentence</i>
2017	0				
2018	2	2 female	25–30 – 1; Above 50 – 1	Tbilisi	Deprivation of liberty
2019	2	1 female 1 male	Above 50 – 2	Tbilisi	Deprivation of liberty

Year	Extent of Cases	Gender	Age	Geogr. Distribution	Type of Sentence
2020	20	16 female 4 male	18–24 – 3; 30–49 –15; Above 50 – 2	Tbilisi – 18, Adjara – 2	Deprivation of liberty
2021	2	2 female	30–49 – 2	Tbilisi – 2	Deprivation of liberty
2022	0				

**Reply to paragraph 49 (c) of the list of issues prior to reporting**  
**Number of convictions by the district (city) courts under article 143<sup>2</sup> of the criminal code (child trafficking) and imposed sentences**

Year	Number of convicts	Gender	Age	Geographical distribution	Type of imposed sentence
2017	0				
2018	2	2 female	25–30 – 1; Above 50 – 1	Tbilisi	Deprivation of liberty
2019	2	1 female 1 male	Above 50 – 2	Tbilisi	Deprivation of liberty
2020	20	16 female 4 male	18–24 – 3; 30–49 –15; Above 50 – 2	Tbilisi – 18, Adjara – 2	Deprivation of liberty
2021	2	2 male	30–49 – 2	Tbilisi – 2	Deprivation of liberty
2022	0				

**Reply to paragraph 50 of the list of issues prior to reporting**  
**Statistics of children in penitentiary establishments**

The database of the Special Penitentiary Service currently does not process any information regarding the duration of imprisonment of prisoners, including juveniles, in penitentiary establishments.

The number of juvenile prisoners in penitentiary establishments in 2017–2021 is as follows:

Year	Total Number	Female	Male	Accused	Convicted
2017	32	0	32	12	20
2018	44	0	44	14	30
2019	47	2	45	10	37
2020	56	5	51	17	39
2021	48	2	46	15	33

**Number of children referred to diversion and non-custodial sentences**

*Number of children (persons under 18) referred to non-custodial sentences*

Year	Tbilisi		Kvemo Kartli		Imereti		Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti		Samegrelo Svaneti		Ajara-Guria		Sum
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
2017	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	5

Year	Tbilisi		Kvemo Kartli		Imereti		Racha-Lechkhumi and Kvemo Svaneti		Samegrelo Svaneti		Ajara-Guria		Sum
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
2018	0	6	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	10
2019	0	11	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
2020	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	7
2021	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	9

### Number of diverted children

Year	Female	Male	Total number	Crime category	
				Less Severe	Severe
2017	127	785	912	589	323
2018	126	772	898	607	291
2019	95	703	798	514	284
2020	45	490	535	362	173
2021	58	568	626	364	262

### Successful mediation cases (in percentage)

Year	Percentage
2017	39%
2018	44%
2019	55%
2020	46%
2021	65%

### Reply to paragraph 51 of the list of issues prior to reporting Statistics on the initiation of investigations related to the cases of child trafficking, exploitation of children in prostitution and use of children in pornographic scenes and materials

Article of the Criminal Code	2017 year	2018 year	2019 year	2020 year	2021 year	2022 year
Criminal Code of Georgia, Art. 143 <sup>2</sup> "Child trafficking"	34	7	9	7	6	6
Criminal Code of Georgia, Art. 253 (V) "Engagement in prostitution" (committed knowingly by an offender against a minor) (enacted in 20/07/2020)	-	-	-	0	0	0
Criminal Code of Georgia, Art. 254 (IV) "Promotion of prostitution" (committed knowingly by an offender against a minor) (enacted in 20/07/2020)	-	-	-	0	0	0
Criminal Code of Georgia, Art. 254 (V) "Promotion of prostitution" (committed knowingly by an offender against a person that has not reached 14 years of age) (enacted in 20/07/2020)	-	-	-	0	0	0
Criminal Code of Georgia, Art. 255 (3) "Knowingly illegal making or selling pornographic work containing images of minors" (Knowingly making and selling pornographic work containing images of minors)	0	1	2	2	4	1

Article of the Criminal Code

2017 year

2018 year

2019 year

2020 year

2021 year

2022 year

Criminal Code of Georgia, Art. 255 (4) “Knowingly offering, importing, exporting, disseminating, transferring, advertising, or providing access to pornographic work containing images of minors” (Enacted in 20/07/2020)

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### Reply to paragraph 52(a) of the list of issues prior to reporting

304. No cases of child recruitment by members of terrorist organizations were identified in Georgia during the reporting period, which is the result of effective measures taken by the state, especially preventive measures.

### Reply to paragraph 52(b) of the list of issues prior to reporting Statistics of children seeking asylum in Georgia according to the data for 2017–2022

Nationality	2017 year	2018 year	2019 year	2020 year	2021 year	2022 year
Afghan	30	15	7	0	12	11
Armenian	2	0	0	0	0	0
Azerbaijani	2	2	0	0	3	0
Bangladeshi	1	6	2	3	0	2
Belarusian	1	1	0	0	4	1
Congolese	0	0	1	0	0	1
Egyptian	18	8	30	3	6	2
Eritrean	23	0	8	0	1	2
Ethiopian	0	1	0	0	0	1
Ghanaian	2	0	0	0	0	0
Indian	1	1	2	1	4	0
Iranian	12	24	64	35	17	22
Iraqi	8	12	2	10	7	4
Jordanian	0	0	11	13	11	11
Kazakh	0	1	3	1	2	0
Lebanese	2	2	2	5	6	5
Nigerian	1	0	0	1	1	0
Burmese						1
Pakistani	16	12	0	6	4	3
Russian	14	4	14	9	9	20
Somali	5	3	2	0	0	0
Saudi Arabian	0	0	0	0	0	3
Sri Lankan	0	0	0	3	2	0
Sudanese	3	2	3	0	0	0
Syrian	5	8	1	0	4	2
Tajik	0	0	0	1	1	0
Turkish	12	8	13	17	5	19
Ukrainian	4	5	3	2	1	160
Uzbek	0	0	3	0	0	0
Yemeni	23	25	14	0	8	2
Kuwaiti	0	0	0	0	1	0

Nationality	2017 year	2018 year	2019 year	2020 year	2021 year	2022 year
South African	0	0	0	3	1	8
Turkmenistani	0	0	1	0	2	0
Philippine	0	0	0	3	0	0
Unidentified	6	6	16	26	19	29
Stateless	4	0	3	0	0	1
Dual citizenship	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Sum</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>310</b>

### Statistics of children with refugee status in 2022:

According to the data for 2022, 149 minors have been granted a refugee status in Georgia, namely:

#### Statistics of children with a refugee status

Nationality	Female			Male		
	0-4	5-11	12-17	0-4	5-11	12-17
Afghan	0	2	3	1	3	2
Congolese	0	1	0	0	0	1
Iraqi	0	2	3	0	4	5
Iranian	0	1	2	0	1	6
Egyptian	0	4	8	2	6	6
Kazakh	0	0	1	0	0	0
Lebanese	0	1	0	0	0	1
Russian	0	10	12	0	16	15
Syrian	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sudanese	0	0	2	0	0	1
Pakistani	0	0	2	0	0	2
Yemeni	0	1	0	0	1	0
unidentified	9	1	0	7	3	0
<b>Sum:</b>			<b>65</b>			<b>84</b>

### Statistics of children with a humanitarian status in 2022:

According to the data for 2022, humanitarian status has been granted to 273 children in Georgia, namely:

#### Statistics of children with a humanitarian status

Nationality	Female			Male		
	0-4	5-11	12-17	0-4	5-11	12-17
Afghan	1	1	4	2	2	7
Egyptian	0	1	0	0	0	0
Eritrean	0	0	1	0	0	1
Iraqi	0	15	14	0	10	12
Kazakh	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lebanese	0	0	1	0	0	1
Syrian	0	0	5	0	4	3
Somali	0	0	1	0	0	0

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*Statistics of children with a humanitarian status*


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<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Female</i>			<i>Male</i>		
	<i>0-4</i>	<i>5-11</i>	<i>12-17</i>	<i>0-4</i>	<i>5-11</i>	<i>12-17</i>
Russian	0	0	2	0	0	1
Ukrainian	14	33	37	10	31	22
Yemeni	1	2	4	0	1	2
unidentified	11	1	0	12	3	0
<b>Sum:</b>			<b>149</b>			<b>124</b>

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