



Strasbourg, 26 February 2010

**Council of Europe Policy Guidelines on National Integrated Strategies  
for the Protection of Children from Violence**

*Panel Discussion*

In the framework of the Annual full-day discussion on the Rights of the Child  
by the UN Human Rights Council

Concept paper

**MAIN ISSUES:**

- Presenting Council of Europe Policy Guidelines on National Integrated Strategies for the Protection of Children from Violence
- Promoting the adoption and implementation of national integrated strategies on children's rights and violence against children worldwide

**Background:**

The Warsaw Summit (2005) of Heads of State and Government asked the Council Europe to:

- effectively promote children's rights and to fully comply with the obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- mainstream children's rights in all Council of Europe policies and co-ordinate all Council of Europe activities related to children; and
- eradicate all forms of violence against children, in particular through the launching of a three year plan of action and specific measures against sexual exploitation of children.

The 2009-2011 Stockholm Strategy<sup>1</sup> reaffirmed Council of Europe's mandate to combat violence against children. The main objective of its actions in this field has been to help decision makers and stakeholders set up and implement **comprehensive national strategies and policies** to promote children's rights and eradicate all forms of violence

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to "Building a Europe for and with children – 2009 – 2011 Strategy" at [www.coe.int/children](http://www.coe.int/children)

against children, in compliance with the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and of the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children.

To formulate recommendations at European level, the programme started **reviewing national policies and practices** in Council of Europe member States. A methodology developed by the programme included the in-depth analysis of the scale and nature of violence against children, the legal and institutional frameworks put in place to counter this phenomenon, the recent trends in policy making, the national and local prevention strategies and their implementation. Four countries volunteered for the first national policy reviews: Italy, Norway, Portugal and Romania.

Broad consultations in each pilot country resulted in the production of four national reports containing proposals for a model strategy against violence, and suggesting examples of national, regional and local good practices for inclusion therein.<sup>2</sup> Based upon the reports' conclusions and the recommendations contained in the UN Study on Violence against Children, as well as bearing in mind, more generally, Council of Europe's work on the rights of the child, the Council of Europe Policy Guidelines on National Integrated Strategies for the Protection of Children from Violence propose a **multidisciplinary and systematic national framework** to prevent and respond to all acts of violence against children. The Guidelines are also expected to stimulate a much needed cultural change in the perception of children as actors of change and of childhood in society as a whole.

Although primarily intended for the decision makers at national, regional and local levels, the guidelines are also addressed to professionals, families, civil society, communities, the media, and children themselves.

The Guidelines were developed by an Editorial Group chaired by Ms Marta Santos Pais and composed of representatives of the four pilot countries, local and international experts, representatives of UNICEF, OHCHR, the European Commission, Ombudspersons for children, and NGOs. During the drafting process, the guidelines were presented to numerous partners, first on the occasion of a high level conference in Stockholm, Sweden (September 8-10, 2008), and later in the Council of Europe Platform on Children's Rights in Strasbourg (June 1-2, 2009), ensuring a wide consultation process with key stakeholders.

### **Objectives of the panel discussion**

- to present the Council of Europe Policy Guidelines on National Integrated Strategies for the protection of children from violence, and the process leading to their adoption;

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<sup>2</sup> For the complete account of this project, please refer to:  
[http://www.coe.int/t/transversalprojects/children/violence/NationalPolicy\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/transversalprojects/children/violence/NationalPolicy_en.asp)

- to seek individual states' commitment for the adoption and implementation of such strategies at national level, and review progress in Europe;
- to promote the development of similar approaches in other regions in the world;
- to suggest ways for a cross-sectoral exchange of experiences between countries and regions with regard to effective methods of protecting children from all forms of violence;
- to discuss follow up to the recommendations included in the UN Study on Violence against Children, in co-operation with the UN Secretary-General Special Representative on violence against children.

**Date and venue of the event:**

March 9th, 2010, from 1 to 3 pm, room XXI at the Palais des Nations, Geneva.

**Format**

A panel discussion including contributions by renowned experts in the field.

**Organising team in the Council of Europe "Building a Europe for and with children" programme**

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