



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Combined fourth to sixth periodic reports submitted by Greece under article 44 of the Convention, due in 2017^{*,**}

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

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Introduction

1. The drafting of the report was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in close cooperation with all Ministries involved in the protection on the rights of the child. The draft report was submitted to the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR); its views have been taken into consideration in view of the finalization of the report.

I. Report on the implementation of the CRC

General measures of implementation

Legislation (para. 10¹)

2. Law 4511/2018 amended article 5 of Law No. 1920/1991 concerning the Muslim Religious Officers in Thrace and provided that Greek Muslims, members of the Muslim minority in Thrace, have the option between civil law (implemented by civil courts) and Sharia law, in matters of family and/or inheritance law.

3. More specifically, matters of family law of members of the Muslim minority in Thrace are regulated by the ordinary Civil Law provisions and only exceptionally may fall under the jurisdiction of the Muftis, provided that both parties agree to submit their case to the latter, in accordance with the Sharia Law.

4. Matters of inheritance are also ruled by the provisions of the Civil Code, unless the testator draws a declaration of last will, whose sole content would be the expression of his wish to submit his succession to the Sharia Law.

5. Furthermore, it is to be stressed that judgments of the Muftis are not enforceable unless they are declared so by local Civil Courts. The latter, first, examine whether the judgments fall within the Mufti's jurisdiction, second, whether the provisions applied by the Mufti violate the Greek Constitution, and especially Article 4 par. 2 (gender equality), as well as the European Convention on Human Rights and other international human rights treaties.

6. More generally, regarding early/forced marriages, it is to be noted that public policies to tackle violence against women are relatively recent in Greece, although lately the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (hereinafter: GSGE) has developed a wide range of targeted actions and institutional interventions with significant results. However, there are areas related to various types of violence against women which need further consideration, analysis and strengthening through the adoption of measures and the development of actions. Women and young girls are often exposed to serious incidents and acts of violence such as rape, coercion to marriage, female genital mutilation, which constitute serious violations of their human rights and a major barrier to genuinely achieving gender equality.

7. In 2018, Parliament ratified the "Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence" of the Council of Europe, known as the Istanbul Convention (Law 4531/2018). The law ratifying the Convention also adjusts domestic legislation, in particular in the field of criminal law, with the provisions of the latter. The new law, among others, enhances victims' protection and strengthens the relevant criminal legislation on FGM and forced marriage and designates as "co-ordinating body", in accordance with Article 10 of the Convention, the GSGE.

8. As envisaged in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2016-2020, article 323A of the Penal Code on trafficking in human beings has been amended, to include trafficking for the purposes of forced marriage. Furthermore, there are proposals to conduct educational campaigns targeting Roma, as well as migrant and refugee communities, on the effects of early/forced marriages on girls and boys (cooperation between the Ministry of Interior, the GSGE, the Ministry for Immigration Policy, Local Authorities and Civil Society by the end of the 2020). There are also proposals to strengthen awareness-raising activities in education to encourage girls and boys to resist early/forced marriages (cooperation

¹ The paras.referred to are those of the 2012 CRC's Concluding Observations.

between the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and the GSGE), and about training of intercultural mediators to inform parents about the prohibition of early/forced marriages based on current legislation (cooperation between the Ministry of Interior, the GSGE, Local Authorities and Civil Society).

Coordination (para. 12)

9. Law 4491/2017 ("Legal recognition of gender identity - National Mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of Action Plans for the Rights of the Child") created a National Mechanism with the following responsibilities:

- Preparation of Action Plans for the Rights of the Child;
- Consultation with the representatives of civil society during the drafting of the Action Plans. The National Mechanism ensures that children are involved in the consultation process;
- Promotion of the Action Plans;
- Monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plans. To this end, the Mechanism prepares interim reports on the basis of updated data sent by the implementing bodies within the deadlines set by the National Mechanism;
- Evaluation of the Action Plans, in particular with regard to the degree of their implementation (on the basis of relevant indicators), as well as their overall effectiveness;
- Preparation of next Action Plans.

10. The Law also provides, in article 12, that the National Mechanism can also invite to its meetings experts and NGOs for consultation (art. 12 of L. 4491/2017).

11. Furthermore, Law 4356/2015 provided for the establishment of a "National Council against Racism and Intolerance" (NCRI - in Greek: ESRM) with the participation, inter alia, of NGOs and other actors of civil society. Among its main goals is the drafting of an Integrated National Action Plan against Racism and Intolerance. Children victims of racism (on the grounds of race, colour, religion, descent, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability) are also benefited by the provisions of the law.

National Plan of Action (para. 14)

12. A National Action Plan on the Rights of the Child is being elaborated, under the coordination of the General Secretariat of Human Rights of the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights, with the participation of all sectors of the Administration involved and the Children's Ombudsman, following a public consultation process. The Action Plan focuses on the following priorities: (1) Combating child poverty and alleviating the negative impact of the economic crisis on children, (2) protecting children in the context of the refugee - migration crisis, (3) ensuring children's health, (4) safeguarding children's rights in education, culture and sports (5) strengthening community child protection mechanisms and institutions, (6) child - friendly justice, (7) horizontal actions for the rights of children with disabilities.

13. The priorities of the Action Plan were submitted to the Youth Parliament, in its 2016 session, for consultation. The results of the consultation process were taken into consideration in the drafting of the revised Action Plan. As already mentioned, a monitoring mechanism was also established by Law 4491/2017 (see para. 9).

14. It should also be noted that the Secretary General for Human Rights has specifically requested from all Ministries to take into consideration the concluding observations of the CRC on Greece (2012) in the actions which will be included in the Action Plan, incorporating specific and prioritized commitments on the part of the authorities. Moreover, the structure of the Action Plan includes specific time frames for the implementation of each action, specific stages of implementation, expected outcome, budget and sources of funding for each action. In November 2018, an updated version of the Action Plan was approved by the Government Council for Social Policy as a basis for further elaboration and strengthening.

The Council stressed the importance of interministerial cooperation to respond to contemporary challenges in the field of the protection of the rights of the child as well as the need to systematically monitor and assess the effectiveness of policies and actions in the course of their implementation, on the basis of quantitative and qualitative indicators. The NCHR adopted, in December 2018, detailed comments on the draft Action Plan. The Commission identified as priority thematic issues the severe economic and social effects of the economic crisis, the refugee crisis and the rights of children with additional vulnerabilities, in particular children with disabilities and chronic diseases. In the light of such prioritization, the NCHR recalled its relevant recommendations and placed special emphasis on methodological issues, and in particular on the development of indicators for the assessment of the positive or negative impact of public or private policies and practices on the rights of the child and the importance of “child budgeting”.

Allocation of Resources (para. 18)

15. The social welfare system in Greece has undergone a wide reform following the introduction of means-tested family benefits in 2013 and with the launch and gradually roll-out of the new Social Solidarity Income. There is an effort to rationalize existing smaller and less effective benefits in order to streamline the system and reduce fragmentation.

16. The Unified Child Benefit (UCB), introduced by Law 4512/2018, is the main financial support for families. It is granted to all families with children that qualify according to the means test. The newly introduced benefit and the abolition of many other smaller benefits along with the Large Family Benefit previously granted, focuses more on children in need, by giving a greater weight to dependent children (especially those aged 18 to 24 who are more likely to live in poverty), improves equity and fairness, since it is provided to all families having at least one child, so that all poor children are treated similarly, by abolishing the benefit in respect of families whose income is in the upper deciles, and tackles fragmentation. It also simplifies the procedure since there is only one consolidated family benefit.

17. For more details on the UCB and the allocation of resources, see Annex 1.

Data collection (para. 20)

18. Data on child trafficking are currently collected by the Hellenic Police. The Hellenic Police, through the “Police on Line” information system, possesses a statistical database, which is used appropriately for the design / redesign of targeted actions.

19. The Ministry of Justice collects data on cases, inter alia, of child trafficking that have been referred to the courts. However, due to the fact that all criminal case files before the courts are formed based on the defendant, it is very difficult to extract data concerning the victims. Nevertheless, other services, such as the Police, keep data based on the characteristics of the victim of the crime. Moreover, it should be noted that personal data concerning the ethnic or socioeconomic background of the person concerned cannot be recorded, except if they are in some way relevant to the case concerned.

20. In order to develop human trafficking indicators to be included in the database, the Ministry of Justice collaborated with the Office of the National Rapporteur on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (ONR). In 2018, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), a formal national identification and referral system for victims and presumed victims of trafficking (Ministerial Decision 30840/20.9.2016), will be fully implemented. The NRM will operate a database on victims of human trafficking including underage victims, according to the directives of the Hellenic Authority of Data Protection. The database will include information such as age, sex, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, form of exploitation, services offered and services used, among others. The database to operate in the context of the NRM will, thus, provide more aggregated data on child trafficking.

21. In 2015, the Department of Mental Health and Social Welfare, Institute of Child Health, Ministry of Health, has developed a first-level identification tool entitled SESN (South East Safe Net), specifically to facilitate first-level identification of underage victims of trafficking in different settings (e.g. refugee camps, hotspots, hospitals, shelters, etc.). A database was accordingly created, specifically planned to gather data on children on the move

aiming to evaluate each child's current situation and needs, developmental stage and vulnerability status; especially, to evaluate whether the child is vulnerable to human trafficking. For this reason, specific indicators on child trafficking were created and included in the database. Four hundred professionals (e.g. border police, coastguards, psychologists, social workers, etc.) received training on the SESN tool and its database. The database was then handed in to the First Reception and Identification Service (RIS), Ministry for Migration Policy. Currently, RIS collaborates with the Office of the National Rapporteur and the Institute of Child Health to start operating the SESN database to collect data on unaccompanied refugee and migrant minors hosted at First Reception and Identification Centres (RICs). The database is expected to be fully functional in 2018.

22. Furthermore, the GSGE is implementing a flagship project on service organization for the integration, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality policies in all aspects of public sector action. The Project is divided in the twelve priority areas of the Beijing Platform for Action. The aim is to support public administration and local authorities in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies with detailed data on equality issues. One of the twelve areas is the girl-child. The GSGE, in cooperation with the Hellenic Statistical Authority, publishes monthly e-bulletins supported by lively graphs, diagrams and charts.

Cooperation with civil society (para. 21)

23. The GSGE, in cooperation with the Research Center for Gender Equality and other public/civil agencies and NGOs, specialized and active in the field of refugee support, coordinates its actions towards the effective handling of the refugee – migration crisis in Greece. In this framework, the GSGE provides additional protection to refugee women who belong to extremely vulnerable groups, specified in Law 4375/2016. The participation of NGOs to this work is essential, due to their presence and help in different stages of the procedure. Their opinions are also taken into consideration, as they are the key actors in the field.

24. Law 4198/2013 ascribes to the ONR the responsibility to coordinate an inclusive Network of competent State and NGO stakeholders that are collaborating towards the implementation of a large-scale Action Plan against trafficking in human beings, in the fields of Prevention, Prosecution, Protection and Partnership. This provision gives an official mandate of accountability to the informal Coordination Mechanism of competent Ministries, International Organizations and accredited NGOs. Particularly, specialized NGOs maintain a stable collaboration with the ONR in all the abovementioned aspects of action against THB.

25. Moreover, there is a continuous collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Intergovernmental Organizations, as well as with various NGOs, to implement actions for the provision of healthcare services, such as vaccination of children of refugees and migrants residing in accommodation centers and in urban accommodation places.

26. The Directorates of primary and secondary education studies of the Ministry of Education often cooperate with many NGOs and IOs to implement programmes on children's rights, in which primary and secondary schools of the country are involved. The Institute of Educational Policy (IEP), a body supervised by the Ministry of Education, gives the Ministry its opinion and approval of these programmes. Its scientific staff is often involved in relevant research, briefings and various NGO events. Additionally, NGOs, in cooperation with IOs, provide non-formal education programmes for refugee-migrant children, after approval.

27. To facilitate collaboration of the NGOs with the Ministry of Education, the Scientific Unit for Minority and Intercultural Education of the IEP has established an NGO accreditation process, developing a special platform.

28. The Ministry of Labour provides guidelines on the operation of NGOs and non-profitable entities within Greece's social welfare system and the services they provide for the protection of children. All these entities may apply to receive financial support by the State budget in accordance with the relevant rules and conditions. The Ministry handles with great sensitivity all these applications. The NGOs are the main providers of shelters for unaccompanied children. The National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA), a public entity of the Ministry of Labour, coordinates the network of 48 shelters for unaccompanied minors run by NGOs.

Dissemination and awareness-raising (para. 23)

29. First of all, with reference to para. 22 of the Committee's Concluding Observations, we would like to reiterate that Greece does not recognize that a distinct national, ethnic, or linguistic minority exists in its territory by the name 'Macedonian'. In fact, there are a small number of people in the Greek region of Macedonia, who, apart from Greek, speak a Slav dialect. These persons fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms under the Hellenic Constitution and international treaties, including the CRC. Furthermore, it is to be clarified that the name 'Macedonian' is commonly used in the cultural/regional sense by 2.5 million Greek Macedonians living in the region of Greek Macedonia. Greece reiterates that it does not recognize the existence of a 'Macedonian' minority as well as of a 'Macedonian' language spoken 'by some sectors of the population' in Greece.

30. The Institute of Educational Policy (IEP) of the Ministry of Education is the competent body for the design of school curricula of primary and secondary education and seeks to develop qualitative curricula of modern perception, which will tackle all cutting-edge issues, including the rights of the child.

31. In particular, in primary education curricula, texts making particular reference to children's rights have been incorporated in various subjects (for example Environmental Study, Social and Civic Education, where Article 24 of the Convention is mentioned). To further promote children's rights in schools, the Ministry has also established the celebration of: The "Children's Rights Day" (20 November); the "Day against School Violence" (6 March); the "Day against Racist Violence" (21 March); and the "World Day for Persons with Disabilities" (3 December). Additionally, on the occasion of the above Days the Ministry of Education urges primary and secondary teachers to organize actions on children's rights within schools (information events, campaigns).

32. The Ministry also encourages teachers to design and implement projects dedicated either as a whole or partly to children's issues. e.g.: projects on Environmental Education, Social and Civic Education, as well as in extra curricula activities in the first four grades of primary school.

33. Finally, in compliance with a 2017 Ministerial Decision entitled "School activities", teachers of primary and secondary education participate in various programmes, projects, actions and campaigns on children's rights implemented by the Ministry in cooperation with the European Union, the Council of Europe, UNESCO and Unicef, as well as with NGOs, aiming at better informing and raising students' and society's awareness on human rights, children's rights, democratic values, tackling issues of war and refugee crisis, the sale of human beings, active citizenship, civil society, etc., responding thus to today's socio-educational needs.

Training (para. 25)

34. According to Presidential Decree 45/1999, teacher training is organized by the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with IEP. During their professional career, teachers participate in either mandatory or optional in-service training, organized by the Ministry or other public entities, such as the Institute of Training (INEP), the National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA) and, in some cases, by International Organizations, in cooperation with the Ministry (e.g.: Council of Europe, EU, UN, etc.). The latter offer short training for primary and secondary school teachers on human, including children's, rights.

35. Additionally, in order to empower educators in preschool, primary and secondary education on Intercultural Education and educational integration of refugee/migrant children, a national teacher training programme on Refugee Education is currently being implemented by the Ministry in cooperation with IEP. Modules on human and children's rights and democratic principles form part of it.

36. The National Centre for Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA), a public entity supervised by the Ministry of Interior, provides a wide range of short in-service certified training to public employees, teachers included. Some of its thematic units are the following: "Sensitizing teachers of primary and secondary education against

discriminations”, “Innovative workshop on justice and mediation for minors”, “The violation of children’s rights, phenomenology and child protection framework”, “The management of diversity”, etc.

37. Moreover, the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights (General Secretariat for Crime Policy) is now renovating the School Of Introductory Education for Prison Staff (which was not fully operating for years). The School's aim and orientation has changed in order to educate and train the relevant personnel (including Probation Officers and personnel working in alternative care units and the Institution for Education of Juvenile Boys in Volos) in a mandatory, systematic and ongoing way. The new School under a new curriculum is going to operate during 2018 near the Women Prison in Elaionas, Thebes.

38. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights (General Secretariat for Crime Policy) took the initiative of running three separate training projects for professionals working with and for children, during the years 2016 and 2017. For more details, see Annex 2.

39. Additionally, during the on-the-job training, all employees of the Asylum Service receive training on Human Rights, Refugee Law and the Greek Asylum Procedure. Furthermore, a selected number of caseworkers responsible for conducting the international protection interview and to adjudicate on the asylum claim in the first instance of examination receive specialized training on the handling of cases of unaccompanied children and/or of vulnerable persons (besides the inherent vulnerability of (under)age, traumatic experiences of children raises the level of vulnerability). To the extent possible, the Asylum Service assigns the handling of cases of unaccompanied children to caseworkers who have been especially trained in the "Interviewing Children" and/or the "Interviewing Vulnerable Persons" Modules developed by the European Asylum Support Office. The training of reception officers working for or with children is a priority for the Reception and Identification Service (hereinafter RIS). RIS employees take part in specialized seminars on this issue, in cooperation with competent national authorities (the State Institute of Training of the National Centre of Public Administration and Local Government), Greek NGOs and with European and international organizations and NGOs, such as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the UNHCR.

40. The Ministry of Health, aiming to enhance the implementation of the rights of the recipients of health services, including children, issued, in 2017, a Ministerial Decision providing for the establishment in every National Health Service hospital of an Office for the Protection of Health Services Recipients’ Rights. Pursuant to Article 3 of the same Decision, the abovementioned Offices are responsible for providing information and training to hospital’s staff about the rights of healthcare recipients, as well as good practices, based on legislation and medical ethics, through information material, training programs and events. In this respect, they distribute relevant brochures, and some of them have already organized workshops about the protection of the rights of healthcare recipients.

41. In addition, the Department for the protection of health services recipients’ rights of the Ministry of Health is responsible for the planning and implementation of health awareness programs.

General principles

Non-Discrimination (para. 27)

42. No official complaint has been made by members of the Muslim minority in Thrace with regard to any obstacles or problems of access to education. In Thrace, there are operating over 120 minority primary schools, 2 minority high schools and 2 Koranic schools. The same applies to health and social services.

43. With regard to children of undocumented migrant parents and their equal access to health and social services and to quality education, it should be highlighted that according to art. 21 of the Migration and Social Integration Code, migrants who legally reside in Greece are subject to obligatory school attendance, under the same conditions as Greek nationals. Minor migrants, who attend all levels of education, have, without any restriction, access to

school and educational community activities. These rights are not restricted for refugee or asylum-seeking minors or for those whose legal residence status is still pending. Additionally, according to article 26 of the same Code, migrants legally residing in Greece have access to the National Health System. Hospitals, health centres and clinics are bound to supply their services to migrants who need to be hospitalized or minors.

44. With a view to strengthening the country's criminal anti-racism legislation and adjusting the relevant legislative framework with EU Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, Law 927/1979 was amended by Law 4285/2014. For more details, see Annex 3. Moreover, the "National Council against Racism and Intolerance" (NCRI) which was recently created, has identified the need for awareness raising activities, public information and pro-active measures against racism and intolerance. To this end, it is preparing, for example, an information leaflet for civil servants to raise awareness on hate crimes and victims' support and has produced an awareness-raising television, radio and web spot concerning refugee children's integration in national education.

45. Additionally, following monitoring bodies' recommendations, Law 3304/2005 on equal treatment has been replaced by Law 4443/2016. A significant amendment is the expansion of the "grounds of discrimination", now including race, colour, national or ethnic origin, descent, religion or belief, disability or chronic condition (illness), age, marital or social status, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender characteristics. In addition, notions such as "multiple discrimination", "discrimination by association", "discrimination by perception" have been introduced for the first time in the national legal order, expanding the scope of implementation of the principle of equal treatment.

46. Most importantly, the new Law assigns overall powers to the Greek Ombudsman, (an independent authority according to the Greek Constitution) to receive and examine complaints on discrimination both in the public and the private sector, and in cooperation with the Labor Inspectorate in matters of employment. The Committee for Equal Treatment which has been inoperative has been abolished.

47. The Greek Constitution assures to all students living on Greek territory equal and easy access to education, with full respect for their human rights. Law 1566/1985 on primary and secondary education provides to all children living on Greek territory equal rights without discrimination on any ground; Law 4186/2013 establishes, in Article 1, respect for human rights and diversity as one of the main objectives of education, in the context of a multicultural society.

48. On this legislative basis, all pupils, independently of their race, origin, language, religion and sex have the right to access primary and secondary education, on equal terms as native students, so that they can fully develop their personality and live creatively.

49. In Greece, nine-year education is mandatory for all children. Students' parents or custodians who neglect children's enrolment in school may be subject to prosecution (Article 458 of the Penal Code).

50. Additionally, in order to support the educational needs of various groups living in the country the Ministry has taken special measures aiming at assuring their smooth integration in education.

51. More specifically:

Roma children education

52. The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Special Secretariat for the Roma of the Ministry of Labour and other competent bodies, have developed a National Strategy Plan for the implementation of policies aiming at their integration into school structures and a minimum nine-year education.

53. Additionally, special support is provided to Roma students: apart from regular funds, special funds are being allocated (ESF/NSRF funds) for the education of Roma children (as well as children of the Muslim minority in Thrace and refugee-migrant children), assuring them equal access to quality education. Such support includes specific legislative provisions, the development of special curricula, textbooks and other material (developed by IEP), the

employment of additional teaching and other personnel (psychologists and social workers for special cases), special teacher training, special programmes and actions, public and pupils' awareness campaigns, etc.

54. IEP, through its Unit for Minority and Intercultural Education dealing with Roma education (among others), has developed a repository of educational material covering the educational needs of Roma children (as well children of the Muslim minority in Thrace and refugee/migrant children), accessible via IEP's platform.

55. The Student Dropout Observatory (Law 4186/2013) monitors school attendance and dropout rates, including for Roma children.

The education of the children of the Muslim minority in Thrace

56. According to the 1923 Peace Treaty of Lausanne, minority education in Greece refers to the Muslim minority living in Thrace, which includes persons of Pomak, Roma and Turkish origin, holding Greek nationality and following the Muslim religion.

57. The Muslim minority in Thrace is therefore defined on the basis of the religion of its members and is the only recognized minority in Greece. The education of its children is based on the Lausanne Treaty, as well as in relevant Educational Protocols and national legislation.

58. Both majority and minority education are based on the same constitutional principles and are public and free of charge for all students.

59. Parents of the Muslim minority of Thrace may opt to enrol their children either in ordinary public schools or in minority schools. In both cases, the special cultural, religious and linguistic characteristics of the Muslim minority are protected.

60. In the light of the above, a bilingual teaching programme is offered to students enrolled in minority schools, sharing equally teaching time between two languages (Greek and Turkish). Both languages are taught on equal terms. Minority schools' curricula are bilingual, similar in concept to the curricula of the other public schools.

61. Aiming at further upgrading minority education giving equal access to all its students, public schools offer to Muslim minority students: All-Day Primary Schools, remedial teaching, meals in primary (and in certain cases in secondary) schools, free transportation of students, inclusive education for students with disabilities and students with special needs, compensatory teaching through "integration classes" also for students with disabilities and students with special needs, participation of secondary school students in the "Youth Parliament", visits to the Greek Parliament for secondary education students, etc.

62. Students of the Muslim minority can also participate in any Programme and action devised by international and civil society organisations (Council of Europe, E.U./Comenius, UN/UNESCO, UNICEF, NGOs, etc.).

63. Exclusively for the Muslim minority schools, special measures have been designed and put in place by the Ministry, in cooperation with other entities:

(a) Since 1997, the University of Athens in cooperation with the Ministry, is implementing a Programme for the education of children of the Muslim minority in Thrace, with the aim to improve the education of this community (upgrading their education, helping children's integration into society through school, supporting their linguistic integration providing Greek language lessons, taking special measures to keep students in schools until completion of mandatory education, reducing consequently school dropout rates);

(b) The Centers for Muslim children educational support (KESPEN) were established, as open cultural centers for minority children and their parents, equipped with PCs, lending libraries, etc. In these Centers, Greek language lessons and various other activities are offered by a mixed teaching staff, giving young people equal access to learning, through a pleasant and modern way and in a mixed environment;

(c) The creation of mobile KESPEN units, an innovative measure that brings PCs, modern technologies, electronic games, etc., close even to the most remote corners of Thrace, approaching thus all children, adolescents and their parents in their own environment and offering them alternative education and supportive educational materials;

(d) At the end of the academic year 2017-2018, a pilot programme for pre-school education has been launched in six kindergartens of Xanthi and Komotini.. In this programme, the school teacher is assisted in the classroom by a second teacher, graduate of University and member of the Muslim minority, in order to support children in their mother tongue, involving also their parents, if needed. The two teachers are further supported by a special scientific team. In 2018-19, the above programme will be extended to twelve (12) schools;

(e) Various programmes (of the Technological Institution of Athens, regional directorates and other bodies).

64. Further measures including awareness campaigns and actions against racism, xenophobia, extremism, school violence, bullying, etc. are widely promoted.

65. In addition, legal institutional interventions have been made with regard to the Muslim minority schools in Thrace:

- In conformity with Law 4115/2013, the teaching of the Quran is offered to Muslim minority students, in full respect for their religious beliefs, rights and freedoms. Furthermore, under Law 4310/2014, measures restructuring and modernizing the administrative organization of the Muslim minority education of Thrace and teaching staff have been taken.
- An additional 0,5% percentage for admission in various University Departments is yearly offered to candidates from the Muslim minority in Thrace.
- In order to give equal access to education to all students of the Muslim minority in Thrace, minority schools can operate even in the most remote settlements-villages of the region, provided that a minimum number of pupils of school age is enrolled.

66. For a detailed account of special measures for the Muslim minority religious education, see Annex 4.

Other measures in the field of education

67. Regarding education for students with disabilities and students with special needs, the Ministry of Education in full compliance with the Greek Constitution and articles 28 and 29 CRC provides to children with disabilities equal access, free of charge, to public education, at all levels.

68. Additional legislative initiatives have been taken (Law 3899/2008, par. 1) to promote the integration of children with disabilities in regular school classes of general and professional/vocational education. See also *infra*, paras. 155 et seq.

69. The reference to “children identifying themselves as belonging to the Macedonian minority” has properly been answered by the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office in its Note Verbale Ref: Nr. 6171.3/71/AS 1194/7 August 2012, par. 3 and 4.

70. Accordingly, it has to be underlined that Greece does not recognize that a distinct national, ethnic, or linguistic minority exists in its territory by the name ‘Macedonian’. In fact, there are a small number of people in the Greek region of Macedonia, who, apart from Greek, speak a Slav dialect. These persons fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms under the Hellenic Constitution and international treaties, including the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, it is to be clarified that the name ‘Macedonian’ is commonly used in the cultural/regional sense by 2.5 million Greek Macedonians living in the region of Greek Macedonia.

71. Greece reiterates that it does not recognize the existence of a ‘Macedonian’ minority as well as of a ‘Macedonian’ language spoken ‘by some sectors of the population’ in Greece’. Furthermore it has to be noted that it is not clear on the basis on what information the Committee expressed concern on the ‘persistent discrimination’ against ‘children from groups identifying themselves as belonging to the Macedonian minority, particularly in their access to education and essential services’ (para. 26), and formulated a recommendation to ensure ‘equal access to health and social services and quality education’ and ‘that relevant services used by these children are allocated sufficient financial and human resources’

(para. 27b). Such an assessment is not only unsubstantiated to the extent that it asserts the existence of a ‘Macedonian’ minority in Greece-as already explained above-, but it is also lacking any factual basis.

72. Regarding children of undocumented migrant parents, it is noted that, in order to support vulnerable social groups, including refugee-migrant children, the Ministry of Education has taken legislative initiatives, offering them equal opportunities and conditions in the field of education.

73. All children, including children of undocumented parents, are accepted to all schools of the country, even in cases of incomplete official documents or lack thereof, in any period of the school year and have the right to a nine-year minimum compulsory education, according to article 40 of Law 2910/2001 and relevant Presidential Decrees.

74. For the education of refugee and migrant children an emergency Action Plan was set up by the Ministry of Education in school year 2016-2017. Currently, in the Ministry of Education a Special Office for refugee education is in place, to deal with refugee education issues. The objective is to ensure the integration of refugee children in the Greek educational system, through psychosocial support after a preparatory, transitional period.

75. The Action plan is differentiated according to the age groups of children and is adapted to the special needs and conditions of children, taking into consideration the types of accommodation for refugee population. It is either “site-based”, in refugee Accommodation Centers, for people placed temporarily in temporary sites or “off-site”, for people residing in rented apartments, hotels or shelters (beneficiaries of the UNHCR accommodation scheme or other accommodations supported by NGOs and municipalities).

76. The Zones of Educational Priority (ZEP) have been introduced to offer special classes of Greek language to children needing support in Greek language (Roma, foreign children, Greek repatriates, refugees – migrants, vulnerable children, etc.) in real classroom environment. In general, alternative and flexible education approaches of differentiated teaching are provided, assuring equal integration in the educational system of pupils coming from countries/regions with low socioeconomic and education status.

77. As regards children living in refugee Accommodation Centers, starting from the school year 2016-2017, the Ministry of Education, has established the Reception School Annexes for Refugee Education (RSARE).

78. RSARE are specially designed as a preparatory transitional intervention scheme aiming to ensure the gradual integration of refugee children into the educational system, whether in Greece or in other countries. RSARE are run in school districts in which operate refugee accommodation centers and form part of existing primary (for children aged 7 to 12 years old) and secondary schools (for children aged 12 to 15 years old). Their curriculum includes Greek language courses, Mathematics, Foreign language courses (English, etc.), Computer Science, Physical Education and Arts classes. For the teaching and learning of the Greek Language, textbooks are used that had been developed and used in the Schools of Intercultural Education for teaching Greek as a second language, after they have been duly amended.

79. Children living in “off-site” accommodations, (in flats, hotels etc.) are attending morning classes of mainstream Greek public schools close to their residence, in Reception Classes, where supplementary teaching and tutorial support is being provided. Refugee children also enroll to Schools of Intercultural Education, where special programmes are applied, emphasizing on intercultural communication and on the educational and cultural particularities of the students. Teachers for these schools are selected on the basis of their knowledge of intercultural education theory and practices, the students’ mother tongues, as well as additional qualifications related to teaching Greek as a foreign language. Moreover, refugee children can be enrolled in All-Day Schools with no requirements. Special teacher training, curricula, textbooks and other material have been designed to support refugee education.

80. Despite the financial crisis, the right of uninsured persons and those belonging in vulnerable social groups to free access to all public health facilities for the provision of nursing and healthcare without any discrimination has been established, based on article 33

of Law 4368/2016. This implies the universal coverage, for the first time in a sustainable manner, of the health needs of these population groups, including minors up to 18 years of age, irrespective of their legal status and the possession of legal residence documents in the country. In addition, all citizens, irrespective of their nationality, legal status or possession of legal residence documents, are accepted to the Primary Health Structures and Emergency Departments of the Hospitals.

81. The Department of Protection of Health Service Recipients' Rights of the Ministry contributes to the organization of programs and social health policies, concerning inequalities, discrimination, specific categories of population, vulnerable population groups, while the Office for the Protection of Health Services Recipients' Rights of NHS Hospitals takes special care to protect children's rights.

82. Moreover actions are in progress concerning the reinforcement, with the assistance of EU funds, National Strategic Reference Framework 2014-2020 (Regional Operational Programmes), of the existing mobile mental health units with qualified staff to provide mental health services to children and adolescents in each Region, in order to cover the existing service shortage as well as to ensure the latter's access to mental health services.

83. In addition, Law 4486/2017 introduced the Reform of Primary Health Care and regulated issues related to the development and organization of children and maternity healthcare services, ensuring universal and equal access for children and their families to prevention, treatment, promotion and health education in public health facilities and in the community. More specifically, Article 1 (2) defines the relevant services, while paragraph 3 of the same Article describes the general principles and the rights of the recipients of health services. In articles 4 (1) on Health Centers and 5 (2) on Local Health Units, the responsibilities related to childcare are mentioned. In Articles 6 on the Family Doctor and 7 on the Health Team, the individual tasks and the role of healthcare professionals regarding children's health and maternity care are described. Moreover the institution of family pediatrician is introduced. In addition, Articles 12 and 13 regulate issues regarding Midwives and Health Visitors, with a view to developing networks for healthcare provision, and describe their role concerning prenatal care, breastfeeding, health education and prevention.

84. In cooperation with the Child's Health Institute, the existing Health Booklet of the Child was replaced, and, as from 1.7.2017, a new Booklet is distributed free of charge to the institutions and families, which contains modern scientific data, in accordance with WHO standards, as well as pediatric guidelines. The objective of the new Booklet is to be a tool for organizing and implementing a systematic monitoring of children's health and to support parents in the upbringing of the children, taking into account age-specific characteristics, in relation to the biological, emotional, psychological and social needs of the child and the family. Each year, 100,000 copies will be printed at a cost of approximately 30,000 €.

85. The Ministry of Interior, through the Directorate of Economic and Development Policy, allocates to local authorities the appropriations from the central independent funds following a proposal by the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece to cover, among others, operating costs of schools, transportation costs of pupils, maintenance and repairs expenses of primary and secondary education schools and costs for free meals for pupils attending musical and artistic schools of secondary education.

86. Moreover, the action "Harmonization of Family and Professional Life", financed by national resources and the National Strategic Reference Framework 2014-2020, provides day care services for infants, young children, children and adolescents with disabilities in public and private kindergartens, day nurseries of integrated care, day care centers for children and creative childcare centers, thus contributing to increasing employment and helping low income beneficiaries keep their jobs.

87. Finally, the Ministry of Interior, through the Independent Department of International and European Relations, is among the bodies implementing the Joint EU - Council of Europe Programme on the Access of Roma women to justice. Running for a 18-month period since 1.10.2016, the programme aims, among others, at informing Roma women and girls about their rights, improving and strengthening their access to justice by addressing themselves to legal clinics which are in the process of being set up, obtaining an increased number of

registered cases of violence against Roma woman and girls and enhancing cooperation among the competent bodies involved.

88. Furthermore, in relation to voting rights and the acquisition of citizenship, article 1 of Law 4406/2016 lowers the voting age of Greek citizens by one year, to 17 from 18 years of age.

89. Concerning the acquisition of Greek citizenship, Law 4332/2015 amended the provisions of the Greek Citizenship Code (Law 3284/2004), settling the pending issue of the possibility for children of foreigners who are born and study in Greece, as well as for foreigners who have graduated from Greek schools in Greece or from the Universities and Technological Educational Institutions of the country to acquire Greek citizenship. This amendment offers to children born by foreign parents in Greece or abroad the opportunity to apply for Greek citizenship, depending on the legal status of their parents in the country and/or in connection with certain educational obligations relating to the child. In particular, a child of foreign parents, who is/was born in Greece by a parent who has resided on a permanent and regular basis in the country for a period of five years before the birth of the child or in case the child is born/ was born before the completion of the five year period required for the parent, after a period of a permanent regular residence of ten years is completed, has the right to obtain the citizenship when he /she is registered in the first year course of the primary school in Greece and provided he/she is attending on a permanent basis a Greek school. Also, a child of foreign parents, who is/was born in Greece or abroad and he/she resides permanently and regularly in Greece, is entitled to acquire the Greek citizenship, provided he/ she has completed either nine-years school attendance in the primary and secondary education or six-years school attendance in the Secondary education or if he/she has a secondary education degree issued by a Greek school in Greece and he/she is a graduate of a Greek University or a Greek Technological Educational Institution. These provisions concern a large number of foreign children, namely children under 18 years of age. The above mentioned provisions brought a series of important improvements in the Code of Greek Citizenship, mainly with a view to ensuring the smooth development and integration into the Greek society of foreign children born or grown up in Greece. Through criteria provided by law, adequate and essential ties of the parents and the children with the Greek society are certified, which ensure their smooth inclusion into the social and economic life of the country and the Greek society.

90. With regard to Greek Roma children, it is important to note that the latter constitute an integral part of the Greek population, enjoy all rights enshrined in the Constitution and the laws of the country for the entire population and do not constitute a minority group. However, inappropriate living conditions, both at the practical level, due to housing, health and environmental problems, and at the social level, due to difficulties in achieving their social inclusion, create conditions for their exclusion from a large number of society's activities and their entrapment in a vicious circle of poverty.

91. The policy designed by the Special Secretariat for Roma Inclusion takes into account the importance of safeguarding Roma children's access to health and social services and to quality education through activities aiming at improving hygienic conditions and ensuring environmental health care and the creation of relevant teams.

92. In several Roma settlements, particularly in Type I and Type II (mixed settlements), there is an urgent need for the provision of individual and environmental hygiene facilities, their connection to the municipal waste collection system, interventions that will improve living conditions, and in particular create the conditions for Roma children, mainly, to have access to hygiene facilities in environmentally sound conditions, both for their own health and for their successful inclusion in the educational system.

93. Article 159 (8) of Law 4483/2017 provides for the creation of temporary or mobile structures/ facilities for personal hygiene, such as public baths and areas for the cleaning of clothing, and other related interventions, depending on the particular circumstances of each particular camp. Interventions can be carried out either at the site of the settlement, when the conditions allow it, or in an easily accessible place or within a neighbouring area within the residential areas of the municipality.

94. The provision of services and the operation of personal hygiene facilities will be developed via a management team that will cooperate with all social and other local services, facilitate the work and action of health and waste collection services and take care of public spaces.

Right to life, survival and development (para. 29)

95. The Ministry of Education, taking into consideration the eventual effects of the crisis on children's future and development, takes all the necessary measures to offer equal access to quality education for all, through the necessary funds coming from both the ordinary state budget and the European Social Fund /NSRF.

96. The Ministry supports in every way a minimum nine-year mandatory education for all children living on Greek territory through the operation of school units in even the most remote regions of the country, employment of the necessary teaching staff, free transportation of all students to and from school, meals in primary and in some cases in secondary schools, remedial teaching for lower secondary education students who need it, support to students with disabilities through inclusive education within the regular school classes and additional necessary measures, support to the education of vulnerable social groups.

97. According to the Survey on the Income and Living Condition of Households, with 2015 as the reference income period, conducted by the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), material deprivation concerning children was 25,7% in 2015 and around 26,7% in 2016.

98. The fight against child poverty is one of the major priorities in the implementation of the relevant policies. The main actions taken in order to achieve this aim are the following:

99. The Special Program of School Meals launched by the Ministry of Labour, Social Insurance and Social Solidarity, funded by the state budget, was implemented on a pilot basis (April-June 2017), for pupils of 60 schools located in the western part of Thessaloniki, an extremely poor part of the city, due to the financial crisis and the deindustrialization. During the school year 2017-2018, the Ministry of Labour, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, provided hot meals to 130.000 pupils in 750 schools.

100. The National Strategy for Social Inclusion (NSSI) and its second Operational Axes focus on the protection of children from the extremely harmful consequences of poverty to their physical, intellectual and psychological development. The main actions for achieving this aim are related to the provision of access: a) to economic recourses through the Unified Child Benefit (UCB), as described above, b) to affordable and quality services, through a holistic package of basic services, such as access to preschool education services to all, to after-school creative, leisure and recreation services, to community-based care services, to legal aid, improvement of the quality of in-house care services etc., c) to compulsory education, by launching programs especially targeting the Roma children, children with disabilities and by combating school dropout, d) to kindergarten for all children.

101. Programs launched by Social Protection Centers of the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity, aiming at combating social exclusion of children at risk of poverty. An illustrative example is the program «Eagles», launched by the Social Protection Centre of Central Macedonia, at the western part of Thessaloniki, an especially poor part of the city. That provides meals, creative activities, help with school reading and care services to children at risk of poverty, social exclusion, as well as psychological support to families.

102. Concerning the increasing school drop-out rates, especially among Roma children, it is worth mentioning the Social Solidarity Income, a new welfare programme, complementary to the policies implemented to tackle poverty and social exclusion, which targets households living in extreme poverty, under the condition of regular and uninterrupted school attendance of the children, thus constituting a motive for school attendance (Article 235 of Law 4389/2016).

Respect of the views of the child (para. 31)

103. All students can participate in the Youth Parliament. However, taking into consideration that participants are drawn by lot, it cannot be guaranteed that children from

all distinct ethnic, religious, linguistic or cultural groups, etc. of the school community are being represented.

104. In conformity with a Ministerial Decision of 22.1.2018, at the beginning of the school year, teacher Councils, together with students, set up the rules of organization of school life through the election of Student Councils, based, in particular, on the principles of the Constitution. The main objectives of Student Councils are described in a Ministerial Decision of 23.9.1986. All students can be elected in Student Councils, whereas Council members are elected by all their peers. Council members can participate in both regular and extraordinary school assemblies, have the right to vote and to express freely their views in a spirit of dialogue and democracy.

105. All children are heard in the procedures concerning the exercise of parental care in case of divorce, without any discrimination. More specifically, regarding cases related to article 1511 of the Civil Code (CC - exercise of parental care in case of divorce), the child's opinion is taken into consideration according to his or her maturity, before any decision is taken by the Court.

106. According to article 70 of Law 4478/2017, on the training of professionals for the support and protection of victims of crime:

107. The Ministry of Justice, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity, the Institute for Training of the National Public Administration Center and the National School of Judges, ensures special training for the judges and prosecutors, child psychologists, child psychiatrists, psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers who are staffing the Juvenile Victims' Protection Offices or are appointed as experts for the purposes of Article 226A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, juvenile probation officers and social workers, employees working in victim support and care services and restorative justice and general and special investigators and pre-trial officers on matters relating to the protection of victims and the principles contained in the Law.

108. Bar Associations shall enhance the training and awareness of their members on the principles of victim protection contained in the Law.

109. In the abovementioned education and training programs, particular emphasis is placed on victims in need of special protection.

110. Furthermore, the National School of Judges has included in its Study Programme/Section for Civil and Criminal Justice, the teaching of selected thematic issues, concerning appropriate training on hearing and taking into account children's views in all decisions affecting them.

Civil Rights and freedoms

Name and nationality (para. 33)

111. A Joint Ministerial Decision of 28.12.2017 provides for the establishment of a Project Management Group responsible for the arrangement of civil status issues of the Roma population. An action plan will be prepared and proposals will be elaborated to resolve relevant problems and, should the need arise, a draft law will be elaborated.

112. Furthermore, in relation to the registration of children, including Roma children, it is to be noted that the birth registration of children, regardless of their citizenship, is made in accordance with provisions of Law 344/1976 "on civil status acts" as amended and applicable. In the Civil Registration Offices within the Municipalities of the country, civil status documents are drawn up by the Registrars, certifying vital events, such as births, deaths, marriages, etc. of Greek citizens and foreign nationals. Also, the registration of a child's surname in the Civil Registration Offices is mandatory, according to the relevant provisions of the Civil Code.

113. It is obvious that the registration of the Roma population in the civil registers is a prerequisite, so that the Greek citizenship can be proved, in accordance with article 6 of

Presidential Decree 497/1991 as well as article 1 of a Ministerial Decision of 10.3.1992. However, many people among the Roma population fail to register the birth of a child, and, as a result, the registration in the Civil Registration Offices in such cases becomes difficult, if not impossible. In case there is no birth registration document, because the birth did not take place in a maternity hospital, nor a certificate issued by a doctor or a midwife, certifying the birth, (which would enable the late issuance of a birth registration document), the constant practice applied by the Roma is to have a decision issued in the context of the non-contentious jurisdiction, which certifies the birth event in Greece, as children of parents holding unknown citizenship. In this way the provision of the Code of the Greek Citizenship will apply, according to which it will be considered that the Roma children concerned have acquired the Greek citizenship by birth, as children of parents holding unknown citizenship, however, always after the adoption of a declaratory act defining citizenship.

Freedom of Religion (para. 35)

114. In conformity with Article 20 of Presidential Decree 79/2017 and Article 11 of a Ministerial Decision of 22-1-2018, school authorities do not keep records of students' religious beliefs, respecting thus their personal data. Exceptionally, only on parents' request, religion can be mentioned in minor students' school records.

115. Moreover, students' religion is not mentioned in students' leaving certificates, as well as in any other official document issued by the school for students' enrolment in secondary schools or at the University.

116. According to Article 25 (3) of a Ministerial Decision of 22-1-2018, students may be exempted from the class of religious education, in conformity with a 2015 Ministerial Circular. Therefore, non-Orthodox Christian students, e.g. minors belonging to other Christian denominations, religions, faiths or beliefs, can request their exemption from this class, with the consent of their parents or custodians, unless they are adults. In the same Circular, it is mentioned, however, that religious education is mandatory for all students and is taught in primary and secondary education schools, in conformity with Art. 16 (2) of the Constitution.

117. Thus, all students' religious beliefs (or lack thereof) are fully protected. Moreover, through students' participation in School Councils and the cultivation of democratic values, their views and beliefs are heard on an equal basis.

118. Additionally, Article 1 of Presidential Decree 114/2014 on the current Organizational Structure of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs defines the protection of religious conscience and religious observance and practice as one of the main objectives of the Ministry.

119. Furthermore, Article 41 of the same Decree establishes that the aim of the General Secretariat for Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs is to supervise the religious education system and to connect religion and culture, while at the same time promoting actions against intolerance and supporting interfaith relations.

120. Finally, Article 43 of the same Decree established the Department for Religious Freedoms and Interfaith Relations within the Directorate for Religious Education of the Ministry, which is competent for: "...a) matters relating to religious freedom, irrespective of religion and denomination, the supervision and monitoring of lawful exercise of religious freedom and its protection from infringements, the promotion of dialogue between the state and religious communities or of interfaith dialogue, the support of international religious relations as well as all other relevant matters".

121. Among the main objectives of the Secretariat General for Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Education, is planning and implementing policies which counter general biases in public attitudes (religious intolerance, racism, anti-Semitism, etc.), as well as encouraging and promoting interfaith dialogue. To this effect, the Ministry and its Secretariat General for Religious Affairs aspire, among others, to map out and implement a comprehensive strategy to combat racism and anti-Semitism and raise awareness, especially among students and teachers.

Right to privacy (para. 37)

122. Concerning the protection of the privacy of minor victims in all stages of the proceedings, article 352B of the Penal Code provides that "Whoever publicizes in any way incidents that could lead to the disclosure of the identity of the minor victim, from the reporting of an action that pertains to crimes against sexual freedom and economic exploitation of sexual life until an irrevocable judgment is issued, shall be punished with imprisonment of up to two years."

123. Moreover, article 330 of the Code of Penal Procedure provides that: "If the publicity of the hearing is detrimental to morality or there are special reasons for protecting the private or family life of the parties, in particular if publicity of a trial for crimes against sexual freedom and economic exploitation of sexual life results in particular psychological discomfort or defamation of the victim, especially if the victim is a minor, the court shall order the trial or part of it to be conducted without publicity".

124. Concerning child perpetrators of crimes and the protection of their privacy in all stages of the proceedings, a Special Law Drafting Committee was set up in the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights (August 2016), which had as a mandate the transposition into national law of Directive 2016/800/EU on procedural safeguards for children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings. The specific directive provides, among others, for the protection of the privacy of children during all criminal proceedings (article 14).

Access to appropriate information (paras. 38 and 39)

125. Over the last 3 years, Greece has created more than 20 centers of education for children in Thrace, and, in particular, in isolated areas where access is difficult. In these centers, specifically designed for minority children, there is unhindered access to information and material concerning child's development. (A4 Δ/νση).

Family environment and alternative care**Family environment (para. 41)**

126. As for children deprived of their family environment, it is worth mentioning the issuance of a circular in 24.11.2017 by the Public Prosecutor at the Supreme Court entitled 'Provision of legal aid to citizens of low income, according to Law 3226/2004' addressing cases of unregistered, without ID documents, Roma women who give birth to their children in public hospitals and are unable to leave the hospital with their baby child as they lack the necessary personal identification documents; as a result, such women are deprived of their baby child, who may remain for months in the hospital or be transferred to public institutions. The objective of the circular was to provide free legal aid to citizens of low income, in order to assist them in the issuance of the lacking identification documents. See also paras. 97 et seq., 128 et seq.

Children deprived of a family environment (para. 44) – Adoption (para. 46)

127. In order to assist children of imprisoned parents (detained in Greek correctional institutions), the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights (General Secretariat for Crime Policy) has undertaken the initiative of publishing a book in the form of a fairy tale, psychologically appropriate to explain the situation their parents are in. This book under the title "We will meet in a dream" has already been ordered at the National Printing House and will be published in 2018 in 5.000 copies and disseminated in the Greek prisons. With the help of the Social Prison Services the books will be given to the children by their imprisoned parents during their visits in the Greek prisons. Newly made places appropriate for these children visits are operating in many prisons since 2016.

128. In order to serve the best interest of the children of convicted parents, Law 4356/ 2015 extended the provisions of Article 56 para. 2 of the Penal Code and introduced the alternative measure of home detention for mothers whose children have not reached the age of 8. This alternative is provided for female offenders convicted to imprisonment not exceeding ten

years and may be imposed by the sentencing court or, in case the offender is imprisoned, following application to the competent council of the Court of First Instance.

129. A National Strategy for the Deinstitutionalization has not yet been developed, although during the last two years the Ministry of Labour has been preparing such a Strategy in cooperation with all the competent Services. Nevertheless, many actions are taken in order to promote deinstitutionalization and develop alternative, family-based care placements. The NCHR has made a number of concrete proposals to fill the remaining gaps and to further develop an open child protection system.

- A National Registry for Foster Children was established in 2014, setting up a database in order to collect and monitor the data of the children in foster care and to evaluate the implementing policies.
- A Program called "First Hug" was introduced in 2016 by the Social Welfare Centre of the Prefecture of Attica focusing on the most vulnerable children, young babies abandoned in hospitals. For the first time in years, all the babies concerned were put in foster families, without being institutionalized until the legal matters were solved; as a result, for the first time the institutions of the Welfare Centers for babies have vacancies. The program was accompanied by a big awareness campaign, aiming at attracting prospective foster parents.
- Many awareness-raising campaigns and training sessions were organized by all the stakeholders involved in the foster care system, public institutions, non-public entities /NGOs, Social Services of the 13 Prefectures, civil society etc.
- Foster care programs run by the Social Services of the Prefectures (regional level), aiming (a) at developing foster care services, by preparing prospective foster parents as temporary caregivers and, in cooperation with the Prosecutor's Office, placing children in need in foster care and (b) at providing guidance and help to NGOs that host children to proceed with deinstitutionalization and to place the children concerned in alternative family- based care placements.
- The first step for the development of community-based services has been made with the establishment of Community Centers, where everybody can go and have access to social services (provision of information, applications for benefits, etc.)

130. All these actions along with those taken for tackling children's poverty, as mentioned under para. 29 of the Committee's Concluding Observations are provided in order to assist parents to properly take care of their children, so that they do not put them in institutions due to poverty or a lack of access to community-based services.

131. Recently, Law 4538/2018 entitled "Measures for the Promotion of Guardianship and Adoption and other Provisions" was adopted, the provisions of which cover all minors in Greek territory. The Law seeks to coordinate the institutions implementing foster care and adoptions, as it establishes the National Foster Care and Adoption Council (ESANY). It also aims at speeding up procedures, collecting valid national data, updating and enriching regulations concerning National Registers (of children in institutional care, foster care, adoption), and also provides for sanctions for failure to send data to the body competent for the maintenance of Registers, namely the National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA). It also aims at controlling private adoptions through the establishment of the National Register of Prospective Adoptive Parents.

Violence against children, including abuse and neglect (paras. 48, 49)

132. School principals, school advisors and teaching staff, acting upon explicit instructions of the Ministry of Education, report immediately to school authorities (including social services and the police, if necessary) cases of abuse, neglect, domestic or school violence, child abduction and other.

133. School principals, in cooperation with teachers, are called upon to take drastic pedagogic and other initiatives to resolve abuse and violence issues inside and outside the school, involving also parents and others, when required.

134. The Ministry of Education encourages a plethora of Programmes on Health Education, School Activities and Career Guidance, actions and awareness activities for school teachers and students on the following thematic categories: human and children's rights, school bullying, violence in schools (the E.U. Programme ENABLE, Council of Europe ACT, Human rights in action, etc.), addictions and prevention, risks from the use of Internet, issues of psychological and mental health, sex education, etc.

135. The Ministry of Education is currently being implementing the actions "Development and Operation of the Network for informing, training, preventing and dealing with bullying and school violence phenomena" of the Operational Programme "Education and Lifelong Learning", NSRF 2007-2013, in the general context of the Ministry's initiatives towards the prevention and treatment of bullying and school violence.

136. The main objectives are the development of a permanent structure for the prevention and treatment of bullying and school violence at national level; the training of the executive educational staff as well as of the educators who will form the foundation for the development and sustainability of the structure for the prevention and treatment of bullying and school violence; the recording, prevention, early diagnosis and treatment at an early stage of instances of bullying and school violence; and awareness-raising and participation of the educational community, family and the wider local community.

137. Additionally, a working group called "Central Scientific Committee" (KEE) has been set up in 13.01.2016) by the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and is responsible for the scientific supervision aiming at preventing and responding to school violence in primary and secondary education schools. KEE supports the relevant departments of the Ministry of Education in the organization of a democratic school on issues such as: prevention and response to bullying, school violence, xenophobia, racism, hooliganism, homophobia, the rights of the child, etc.

138. The Central Scientific Council for the prevention and combating of victimization and criminality of minors (HESATHEA) is working since the beginning of 2018 on an Information Guide for the Identification and Management of Child Abuse Cases. This publication, which will be completed in the next months, is aiming to ensure that professionals working with children (including teachers) will receive information related to their legal obligation (Law 3500/2006) to report and take appropriate action in suspected cases of abuse, domestic violence etc. More specifically, Law 3500/2006 on domestic violence provides that teachers of primary or secondary education who are informed or identify, during the exercise of their work, that a crime of domestic violence has been committed against a student, are obliged to inform the Director of the school, who is obliged to inform the competent Prosecutor. It should also be mentioned that all crimes of domestic violence are prosecuted ex officio.

139. Of relevant importance are actions proposed in the National Action Plan on Gender Equality, regarding training of professional working with children:

140. The GSGE, in cooperation with the Research Center for Gender Equality (KETHI) and the National Center of Public Administration and Local Government (EKDDA), is implementing awareness-raising seminars for teachers on the recognition, management and referral of girl victims of violence to competent bodies.

141. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health/ Hospitals and EKDDA, training of health units' staff (doctors, nurses, social workers, etc.) on violence against women and girls is also planned.

142. The GSGE, in collaboration with EKDDA and the Ministry of Migration Policy (Asylum Service and Reception and Identification Service), implements training of the Asylum and First Reception Service staff and the Shelters for refugees' interpreters and administrators on existing cultural differences, child and gender issues and sexuality. Specific reference is made to cases of unaccompanied or unrelated girls.

143. Furthermore, the non-profit organization "ELIZA", in collaboration with the Medical Schools of Yale and Iowa Universities and the 2nd Pediatric Clinic of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens at the Children's Hospital "P. and A. Kyriakou"

implements the 1st Doctor Training Programme for the management of cases of children in Greece who are physically abused.

144. Already in 2016-2017, at 12 University Pediatric Clinics of the country, a training programme was organized, primarily for doctors of all pediatric specialties, who are the front line group that manages incidents of physically abused children and is able to activate the necessary procedures for their protection. Through this programme 1,220 healthcare professionals who take care of children were trained, mainly doctors, pediatrician specialists and medical students in seven cities in Greece. A similar program addressed to nurses will be held in 12 University Pediatric Clinics in the country during the biennium 2018-2019.

145. Article 226 A of the Code of Criminal Procedure provides that children who are victims or witnesses of crimes of sexual violence, trafficking etc. are examined under a special procedure during criminal proceedings. This provision has been recently improved by Law 4478/2017 (Transposition of Directive 2012/29/EU, establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime). The new provision stipulates that the aforementioned victims are examined in special offices (which are established to this end by the said Law), called "Children's Houses". Moreover, it provides that the examination of the victim is conducted by the competent authority (Prosecutor, Investigative Judge etc.) through a specialized psychologist or psychiatrist, who has received appropriate training. Additionally, it stipulates that the testimony of the child is always audiovisually recorded, so that such recorded testimony is used as evidence and the child doesn't have to testify again in the following proceedings.

146. The "Children's Houses" (articles 74, 75 and 77 of Law 4478/2017) are also competent for the individual assessment and the evaluation of the perceptual ability and the mental condition of under-age victims, the provision of general support services, the assistance to all competent authorities for the proper and child-friendly examination of the victim during criminal proceedings, as well as for the development of proper conditions and spaces for their examination and for the audiovisual recording of the child's testimony. Law 4478/2017 provides for an interdisciplinary approach to be applied to the "Children's Houses". The Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights is currently working on the establishment and operation of the "Children's Houses".

147. The most important provisions of the Penal Code that criminalize various forms of violence against children are the following:

148. Art. 323A §1 and 4 (Trafficking in human beings), Art. 323B (Conducting trips whose purpose is to engage in intercourse or other indecent acts against children (sex tourism) Art. 337 (Sexual abuse) Art. 339 (Seduction of Children) Art. 342 (Abuse of minors in lewdness) Art. 348 (Facilitate the lewdness of others) Art. 348A (Child pornography) Art. 348B (Attracting children for sexual purposes) Art. 348C PC (Pornographic performances of minors, article added with Law 4267/2014) Art. 349 (Prostitution) Art. 351 (Human Trafficking) Art. 352B (Protection of the privacy of the minor victim).

149. It should be noted that the Penal Code includes a number of provisions in different Chapters for the protection of minors, which provide that the commission of the respective crime against a minor is considered to be an aggravating circumstance (e.g. articles 323A par. 1 and 4 and 351 PC).

150. Moreover, article 4 of Law 3500/2006, concerning domestic violence, provides that the corporal punishment of children constitutes a case of improper exercise of parental care which leads to the application of Article 1532 of the Civil Code (loss of parental care). Corporal punishment includes any act of punishment or causing physical discomfort to a minor for the purpose of correcting or controlling his or her behavior. This provision was drafted according to the recommendations of CRC and other human rights bodies for the abolition of corporal punishment.

151. Moreover, under Law 4322/2015, Article 312 PC was amended and "bullying against children" (Bodily Harm inflicted on Minors) was penalized. According to para. 1 of this article, an act of continuous tough behavior between minors is not punished unless the age-difference between them is longer than three (3) years, and, in such case, only reformatory or therapeutic measures are imposed. According to para. 2 of the same Article, if the victim

is younger than 18 years old, a punishment of at least six (6) months imprisonment is imposed on the perpetrator, depending on the relationship existing between them (i.e. custodian, educational, etc.) under certain circumstances provided by the law, if a heavier offence had not been committed.

152. Finally, the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) has been recently ratified. Among others, Law 3500/2006 on domestic violence was amended, in order to improve its implementation.

153. See also paras. 12-14.

Disability, basic health, and welfare

Children with disabilities (para. 51)

154. The Ministry of Education, in compliance with the Constitution and Articles 28 and 29 CRC, provides to children with disabilities equal access, free of charge, to public education at all levels.

155. Additional legislative initiatives have been taken (Law 3699/2008) to promote the integration of children with disabilities in regular school classes of general and professional/vocational education.

156. The so-called “integration classes” have been introduced in the above schools to support appropriately the needs of children with disabilities and children with special needs who attend both programmes, the regular and the specialized programme with extended timetable. Only in exceptional cases, where attendance of regular school or integration classes is very difficult, attendance of special units is being provided.

157. Until today, 3.082 “integration classes” have been established in general primary schools, as well as 808 “integration classes” in general and in professional/vocational secondary schools, in order to support attendance of regular schools.

158. At the same time, “parallel support”, on an individualized basis, for students with disabilities in regular schools, as well as individualized support to special auxiliary personnel and school nurses, are provided.

159. Moreover, diagnostic, evaluation and support services have been set up at Regional or at School unit level (Diagnostic centers, Diagnosis and support services for special educational needs at Regional level and Diagnosis, evaluation and support services’ committees in general schools).

160. Additional steps that have been taken include design and application of individualized education programmes for special education; teacher training and special education teacher training; design and development of accessible educational and other material for students with disabilities and students with special needs; design of measures against discrimination.

161. Law 4368/2016 regulates special education issues, putting emphasis on the need to support children with disabilities and children with special needs, mainly in regular schools classes. Art. 3 of the same law provides for the adoption of co-education programmes, between regular general education units and special education units, to avoid segregation practices and promote integration and equal opportunities, the development of skills of students with disabilities and students with special needs, as well as awareness-raising of students of regular schools on human rights. The NCHR has made detailed proposals to improve policies and practices in favour of persons with special education needs and to ensure full implementation of the relevant legislative framework.

162. Law 4415/2016 and relative Ministerial Decisions provide for the restructuring and upgrading of the professional/vocational special education. Moreover, the organization and management of a database with statistical information on special and inclusive education is being adopted.

163. Determined to eliminate inequalities regarding equal access of students with disabilities and students with special needs, the Ministry of Education has increased by 20% the number of teaching staff working in education units for special needs, integration classes and other supportive structures in general education.

164. In school year 2016-17, 10.628 substitute special education teachers were hired, whereas in school year 2017-18, 11.600 substitute special education teachers were hired.

165. Moreover, 412 new integration classes in primary education and 126 in secondary education schools were established to support: the design and implementation of special individualized programmes infrastructures; the design of education programmes for teachers and special education staff focusing on differentiated teaching issues; the design and development of accessible educational and other materials for students with disabilities and students with special needs; the development of interstate cooperation and networks against discrimination and the dissemination of good practices and know-how.

166. More interventions in the field of special needs are actually being designed and developed by the Ministry of Education. Among them, the establishment of a permanent cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, focusing on special education, psychological and mental health issues of children and adolescents.

167. The “World Day for People with Disabilities” has been established, so that students can adopt positive attitudes towards diversity and vulnerable groups living in our country.

168. The main actions of the Ministry of Labour concerning children with disabilities are the following:

- The creation of Centers of Creative Employment of children with disabilities, which provide after- school creative, leisure and recreation activities for children with special needs, and education and support to their families, through community-based services. This program is being developed and run at the municipal level by public or private companies and is co-funded by the European Social Fund and the state budget, through the action «Harmonization of family and professional life».
- The establishment of Day Centers for children with special needs. These Centers provide services such as: parents' counseling, psychological support for children and parents, psychotherapeutic intervention, educational assistance to children with learning difficulties, speech therapy, physical therapy, referral services-networking in order to resolve social, health, legal and other problems related to the child etc. This program is being developed and run at the municipal level by public or private companies and is also co-funded by European funds and the State budget.
- Efforts are been taken by the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity to promote the de-institutionalization of persons with disabilities. The latest legislative interventions (Ministerial decision 60135/1579 of 27-12-2017) promote the development of an adequate supportive framework that will enhance community-based living to achieve the optimum degree of autonomy, personality development and a comfortable presence in the social environment for both children and adults with disabilities.

169. Additionally, Law 4488/2017 established a general regulatory framework in accordance with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Law aims to remove the obstacles that impede persons with disabilities to fully and equitably participate in the social, economic and political life. To this end, the General Secretariat for Human Rights (of the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights) has been designated as Central Focal Point, for issues related to the application of the Convention. Within its responsibility is a) the reception and handling of issues relating to the implementation of the Convention at central, regional and local level, b) the cooperation with other individual Focal Points, c) the interconnection with the Framework of Promotion of the Convention (i.e. the Greek Ombudsman), d) the consultation with the recognized representative organizations of the disability movement and with individuals or other groups, organized or not, who have a legitimate interest in the rights of persons with disabilities, e) the provision of information and guidance on issues related to the rights of persons with

disabilities, f) the preparation and submission to the Parliament of a National Action Plan for the Persons with Disabilities.

Health and health services (para. 53)

170. Pursuant to article 33 of Law 4368/2016 and the Joint Ministerial Decision of 4.4.2016, access to public health facilities of uninsured children or children belonging to vulnerable groups (such as Roma children, refugees, migrants) to receive nursing, medical and pharmaceutical care without discrimination, is established in a sustainable manner.

171. In addition, through the EU programme "PHILOS - Emergency Health Response for the Refugee Crisis", integrated services are provided, covering the health and psychosocial needs of migrant/refugee children residing in open hospitality structures in the mainland. The capacity of the Public Health System - at primary and secondary level- is also being strengthened, as healthcare professionals have been recruited and posted in public hospitals, primary health care structures, the National Health Operations Centre, the Hellenic Centre for Diseases Control and Prevention, the National Center for Emergency Care, as well as the accommodation places of the refugees. Along with the vaccination of children of refugees and migrants, the Ministry of Health has provided healthcare services as well as medicines and sanitary material in order to cover the needs of these vulnerable groups.

172. Since 1.7.2017, the Upgraded Children's Health Booklet is available to all children without discrimination. Additionally, six guidelines were approved for primary healthcare professionals to systematically monitor the health and growing of children and to treat common respiratory infections.

173. The Offices for the Protection of the Health Services Recipients' Rights of National Health System (NHS) Hospitals, take special care for the protection of underage health service recipients, of prisoners, asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, since they belong to vulnerable social groups.

174. As for health services paid in cash or in advance, it is worth mentioning that according to Law 4238/2014, within the NHS, a Primary National Health Network is set up operating in the Health Regions of the country and providing services on an equal footing, including vaccination and preventive medical checkups to all citizens, including Roma children, regardless of their financial, social and professional situation, insurance coverage or place of residence, without excluding the uninsured persons. Persons uninsured or belonging to vulnerable social groups, in accordance with article 33 of law 4368/2016, are entitled to free access to Public Health Structures and to nursing and health care services.

175. In addition, mobile vaccination units of the Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention of Diseases, in cooperation with the Regional Directorates of Health vaccinate Roma persons residing in settlements in an effort to limit the disease cases recorded within the Roma population.

176. According to article 26 of the Migration and Social Integration Code, minor foreign children have access to hospitals, health centres and clinics, regardless of their residence status or that of their parents.

Breastfeeding (para. 55)

177. The promotion of breastfeeding due to its proven importance for the healthy growth and development of infants was included in Article 3 of Law 4316/2014, as amended by Article 80 (3) of Law 4386/2016. For this reason, following the proposal of the Ministry of Health, a question regarding breastfeeding was included in the ELSTAT research on "Factors Affecting Health: Year 2014". According to the relevant results, more than 8 out of 10 (84.1%) mothers of a minor under two years of age said that they had nursed their child / children. Of these, 7 out of 10 (66.3%) breastfed exclusively with breast milk and 3 out of 10 (33.7%) in a mixed manner (breast milk and mother substitute).

178. The Ministry issued, in 15.06.2017, a Joint Ministerial Decision "establishing the mother's written consent for the supply of breast milk substitute to newborns in hospitals and maternity hospitals", providing that the grant of breast-milk substitutes to infants in public hospitals and private clinics in the country is permitted for acceptable medical reasons or

with the mother's written consent. For this purpose, an appropriate form is signed and kept in the nursing and maternal medical records.

179. The General Directorate of Public Health, in collaboration with the General Directorate of Health Services, issues annually an informative circular about the benefits of breastfeeding on the occasion of the World Breastfeeding Week organized by "the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action". With the above-mentioned circular, the competent bodies are called upon to design and implement actions related to the promotion of breastfeeding

180. Additionally, a supplementary budget of 37.000 € was recently granted to the Institute for Child's Health in order to cover the cost of breastfeeding promotion actions in our country; training seminars are held for health professionals on breastfeeding; a private and three public hospitals have been certified as "baby friendly hospitals".

181. In cooperation with the Ministry of Labor, efforts are being made for the operation of special places for breastfeeding at work settings and the facilitation of working for this purpose.

182. By virtue of Law 4486/2017, "Reform of Primary Health Care", particular attention is paid to the development and organization of services especially for mother and child, ensuring universal and equal access of children and their families in prevention, treatment, promotion and health education in primary public health settings and in the community. In particular, articles 12 and 13 regulate issues of midwives and nurses, with a view to developing service provision networks and a description of the role of prenatal care, breastfeeding promotion, health education and prevention.

183. Moreover, a special reference to the benefits of breastfeeding has already been included in the updated Health Book of the Child aiming to inform the mother, while information materials and posters have been published and distributed, so that young people, young families and mothers, as well as the general public, are informed about breastfeeding.

184. In addition, by a decision of the Minister of Health, a competition for Artistic Expression and Creation took place from October to December 2017. Its subject was: "Particular Family: Right-Expression-Health" and the creations (painting, photography, broadcasting, cartoon, short film - video, music composition) will be used for breastfeeding promotion.

185. Through the Joint Ministerial Decision of 28.7.2008, the national legislation was harmonized with the provisions of EU Directive 2006/141/EC on "infant formulae and follow-on formulae". In case of infringement of the provisions of the ministerial decision, the provisions of article 19 of Law 96/1973 "on the marketing and general pharmaceutical, dietary cosmetic products" are applied as they are in force.

Adolescent health (para. 57)

186. The Ministry of Health has taken actions and made interventions to raise awareness and inform the student population, in the context of health education at national level, including on sexual and reproductive health. For the first time at High Schools of the country are carried out interventions with standardized material to students, with relevant instructions to health professionals who are employed in the public health care settings and hospitals of the NHS (circular of 4.12.2017).

187. At the same time, actions are being carried out by the Hellenic Centre for Diseases Control and Prevention (HCDCP), in the context of primary prevention, with the main aim to inform, raise awareness and educate the general population, specific population groups and especially pupils and students between 10 and 22 years of age belonging to the school and university community about diseases (sexually transmitted and not) and individual behaviors that determine health.

188. Since 2008, HCDCP has been implementing informative and educational campaigns in secondary schools, parents' and guardians' associations, as well as in higher education campuses with specially designed interactive and audiovisual educational material.

189. During the school years 2010-2015, a total of 119,000 students and teachers have followed such activities in more than 352 schools in Attica and in other Prefectures of Greece, while the number for the school year 2015-2016 was 21,212 students.

190. The target groups are informed by specialized scientific staff, who raise awareness about HIV/AIDS prevention, systematic use of condoms and the adoption of safer sexual behaviors.

191. In addition, the Health Regions implement actions and interventions to raise awareness and inform high school students on "Sexual and Reproductive Health" in cooperation with the Health Centers, Local Health Units and Hospitals within their area of competence.

192. At the same time, the Regions and their Regional Public Health Departments carry out similar programmes in secondary schools with the participation of Public Health Doctors and other Health Professionals. The thematic axes of these awareness-raising programmes include individual hygiene and the prevention of infectious diseases and especially of sexually transmitted diseases, physical changes in adolescence, sexual and reproductive health, etc.

193. To address drug abuse, alcoholism and the use of tobacco by adolescents, a number of steps have been taken, in particular in the field of prevention. For more details, see Annex 5.

Standard of living (para. 59)

194. According to the Constitution, public education is offered, free of charge to all students of primary and secondary schools, including textbooks and other services:

(a) The Ministry of Education has put in place all necessary legal, financial and other measures to respond to current social needs. Thus, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, the Programme "School meals" has been introduced, offering to primary students one healthy meal per day, to cover the needs of students from vulnerable population groups. Through this initiative, school attendance is supported (until completion of mandatory education, if possible) contributing to the reduction of school dropout, social inequalities and exclusion;

(b) The Ministry of Education has issued a Joint Ministerial Decision, last modified in 15.6.2017, on primary and secondary students' transportation free of charge to and from school (including Roma, refugee-migrant children, Muslim minority in Thrace students), when the distance between their school and their residence requires so. A student card for public transportation is provided to students of secondary schools, to move from and to their school;

(c) Remedial and supportive teaching is also offered to all vulnerable students of lower secondary education in order to support the completion of nine-year mandatory education and reduce school drop-out and exclusion. As already mentioned, special measures have been taken for Roma, refugee, and children from the Muslim minority of Thrace;

(d) All-Day Primary Schools offer an extended timetable to primary school children with working parents;

(e) Formal education is provided to minors in prisons, in order to offer them the opportunity to integrate into society;

(f) Counselling Centers for the young and most vulnerable operate in the Directorates of Secondary Education.

195. For the right to free access to public health structures, see *supra*, paras. 81, 175.

Education, leisure and cultural activities

Education (para. 61)

196. The Ministry of Education works closely with the Ministry of Labour and other bodies in the context of the Operational Plan of National Strategy of the Ministry of Labour for social integration of the Roma, in order to attract Roma children to school until completion of the nine-year mandatory education.

197. The enrolment of all children of mandatory school age by competent school authorities is compulsory. Roma children can be enrolled in schools of any region of the country at any period of school year, with no prior prerequisites, taking into consideration their mobility. Additionally, Roma children can also be enrolled in All-Day Primary Schools (schools of extended operation).

198. In application of the programme entitled “Roma children education” (2010-2018), addressed to marginalized Roma, the Ministry, in cooperation with various Higher Education Institutions (the Universities of Athens, Thessaloniki and Thessaly and the Technological Institution of Athens) seeks to reduce inequalities, social exclusion and school drop-outs.

199. With this in mind, school authorities are requested to access Roma settlements, attract Roma children to school environment and supervise properly their regular school attendance.

200. In order to assure equal access of all Roma children to education, without discrimination and exclusion, as provided for in Law 3304/2005, schools also offer creational activities in and out of school facilities and supportive teaching after school timetable. Information actions and training and awareness campaigns for teachers and other educational personnel, parents, and local community, as well as psychological and social support to Roma children and adult Roma along with actions to combat adults’ illiteracy are often organised, with the aim to inform and combat discrimination, school drop-out and social exclusion. Emphasis is given to regions where Roma populations present great density.

201. The establishment and operation of “Reception Classes” in the Zones of Educational Priority (ZEP) in Greek schools aims at achieving active and participatory education of students from various social groups with no or little knowledge of Greek (Roma, foreigners, Greek repatriates, refugees and migrants, vulnerable groups, etc.), so that they can later attend regular schools.

202. Through the implementation of a large variety of programmes, projects, actions and campaigns, school authorities, in cooperation with state and other entities (NGOs, IOs, the European Union, the Council of Europe, private bodies) work intensively to combat all forms of violence and bullying, promoting a culture of democratic values, dialogue and respect to the others. For more details, see *supra*, paras. 135 et seq.

203. In addition to the actions already mentioned under para. 59 of the CRC’s Concluding Observations, the Special Secretariat on Roma Social Inclusion, within its competence of elaborating guidelines for each policy area related to the social inclusion of Roma, requests jointly responsible authorities to develop policies towards Roma pupils’ school inclusion and their regular attendance, through the adoption of actions and interventions in and outside school units that support children to fulfill school requirements and to be gradually integrated.

204. It is important to mention the following current education actions:

(a) Direct actions in 42 primary schools with Roma student population for the school year 2017-18 providing in particular for: a) the reduction of the number of pupils from 25 to 15 in 52 primary schools in the country, attended by pupils from families belonging to vulnerable social groups, b) the placement of social workers in such school units, c) the unconditional access to the all-day program in all schools across the country for pupils belonging to families of vulnerable social groups, including Roma, and d) the pilot operation of Parent Schools in some schools;

(b) Roma Children Inclusion and Education Programme, a pilot program undertaken by Greek universities, in order to avoid school drop-outs, increase Roma pupils’

school attendance, enhance the relation of Roma with school and retain them within the educational environmental, so as to complete their studies at the highest possible degree.

Special protection measures

Asylum seeking and refugee children (paras. 63, 64, 65)

205. Law 4554/2018 was recently adopted to promote, on an organized basis, the implementation of the institution of guardianship of unaccompanied minors remaining in the country, to strengthen the cooperation and coordination of the actors involved and, in particular, to ensure the right of children and young people to social and legal protection, care and medical assistance, always in the light of the best interest of the child. The state is committed to responding to the ever-increasing migratory flow of unaccompanied minors entering our country. The institution of guardianship, as a legal term, includes the rights and obligations embodied in the concept of parental responsibility as defined in the Civil Code and the guardian substitutes the missing parent for the performance of his/her duties with regard to the minor.

206. In more detail, in Part C of the said Law (Article 13), issues concerning professional guardianship of unaccompanied minors (competences of the professional guardian, selection procedures, employment status, etc.) are regulated. In addition it is stipulated that a Supervisory Board of Unaccompanied Minors shall be established, Registers of: (a) Unaccompanied Minors (b) Professional Guardians (c) Hospitalization Centers for Unaccompanied Minors are laid down and a Directorate for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors shall be established in the framework of EKKA, which is responsible for coordinating and implementing this action. The NCHR welcomed the new legislation, while recalling and updating its concerns and recommendations on the effective implementation of the guardianship system and, more generally, the protection of the rights of unaccompanied children.

207. In view of the lack of national or European consensus or legal framework describing the concept of the "best interest of the child" as well as the criteria comprising proper assessment of practical implementation of the concept, the Asylum Service made use of the Best Interest Assessment Tool, that was developed by EASO, in particular by a working group consisting of delegates from Greece, Ireland and Norway, as well as from the European Commission, the Fundamental Rights Agency, the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration mainly in the process of the implementation of the relocation mechanism. The Best Interest Assessment was carried out during the first day of the full registration of the international protection application of the unaccompanied minor by experienced and specialized staff of the Asylum Service with the presence of the guardian/temporary representative of the minor depending on the case, with the aim of assessing the best procedure of international protection for the unaccompanied minors (family reunification, relocation or the national asylum procedure) to be followed in each individual case. Finally, in case the relocation request of the unaccompanied minor sent by the Greek authorities was accepted, a final BIA was carried out by the IOM (also a partner to the implementation of the relocation program) focusing on ensuring appropriate reception structures in the Member State of Relocation.

208. With regard to the conditions of reception, it is to be mentioned that since 2012, reception conditions and all procedures of Reception and Identification for unaccompanied minors and/or separated children are gradually being improved in line with the EU Reception Directive.

209. Furthermore, it is noted that the shelters run by NGO's for unaccompanied minors are obliged to offer legal representation.

210. Moreover, in light of insufficient available places in shelters and as a way to address the issue of detention and ensure that unaccompanied minors stay in protective custody the shortest period of time, the state (Ministry of Migration Policy) has created supervised designated areas ("safe zones") inside open accommodation sites that provide emergency

accommodation and care. Also, most recently, emergency accommodation in hotels in Greece's mainland in cooperation with IOM has been implemented.

211. The capacity in appropriate shelters for UAMs in Greece has increased from 423 beds in March 2016 to 1118 today. However, they are still not enough as they cover only about 1/3 of the needs.

212. Apart from the significant increase in shelter capacity, a new emergency reception/accommodation scheme for Unaccompanied Minors has been implemented since December 2017 by IOM and the Ministry of Migration Policy (FRS) moving children from the island hotspots and detention to hotels in the mainland. (A table with relevant statistics is attached.

213. Regarding the detention of children, it has to be noted that children are not being detained. They stay inside the camp until all RIS procedures are completed and until proper accommodation by the National Center of Social Solidarity) is ensured.

214. The treatment of minors by police officers is particularly cautious, in full respect of the current legislation, firstly to grant them support, and secondly for the avoidance of further victimization. In all cases where police services are called to deal with minors (victims or perpetrators), the competent Prosecutor of Juveniles is immediately informed to give directions to the police authorities.

215. Finally, minors who have disappeared involuntarily or voluntarily and are identified by the Police may be placed under protective custody at police stations until handed over to their relatives. Protective guarding is by no means a detention and efforts are made to ensure that minors are "accommodated" in an appropriate place within the police station. In all cases, the Public Prosecutor at the Supreme Court is informed and gives further instructions to the police authorities.

Administration of juvenile justice (para. 69)

216. The age of criminal responsibility of minors has been set in Greece from 8 to 18 years since 2003 (Law 3189/2003). Law 4322/2015 raised the maximum age limit of a person's non-criminal liability from the 13th to the 15th year of age (Article 126 PC). So, a punishable offense committed by persons between 8 and 15 years is not attributable to them and only reformatory or therapeutic measures may be imposed.

217. Moreover, following the amendments introduced Law by 4322/2015 (Article 127 PC) detention in a special detention facility is imposed on minors who have reached the age of fifteen (15) years but only in very restricted cases which are analyzed below. That means that in any other case of a punishable offence, regardless of its gravity, reformatory measures only are still to be imposed.

218. As regards the use of detention for minors as a last resort and for the minimum necessary time, the most radical legislative improvements were introduced by Laws 4322/2015 and 4356/2015.

219. Law 4322/2015 (Article 26) introduced strict restrictions to the availability of the measure of detention to a special facility for juveniles, allowing it only for juveniles who have reached the age of 15 years and have committed a felony which, had it been committed by an adult, would have been punishable with life imprisonment (Article 127 para. 1). Additionally, this penalty may be imposed for acts provided in Article 336 PC (rape) and only in the case of a victim below the age of 15 (Article 127 para. 1 PC). All other criminal offences committed by juveniles above 15 years of age are treated with reformatory or therapeutic measures (Article 126 para. 3).

220. Detention to a special facility for juveniles may also be imposed to minors who are older than 15 years and have been subjected to the reformatory measure of confinement to a reformatory institution if they commit a crime during the period of application of a reformatory measure, which, if committed by an adult, would be a felony (Article 127 para. 1 section 3 PC). The relevant decision must be specifically justified, based on a detailed statement of the reasons why the reformatory or therapeutic measures are not adequate in the

specific case, taking into account the particular circumstances under which the crime was committed and the personality of the juvenile.

221. The duration of the confinement of a juvenile to a special facility for juveniles cannot be extended to more than 5 years or be less than 6 months for crimes punishable with imprisonment up to ten years, while for crimes punishable with imprisonment longer than ten years or life imprisonment, the duration of detention cannot be extended to more than 10 years or be less than 2 ones (Article 2 of Chapter B of Law 4322/2015 which replaces Article 54 PC).

Separate detention facility for juveniles below 18 years of age

222. A Special Detention Establishment of Juveniles for the imprisonment of persons under 18 years old was set up in 2013. Children serving sentences in the Juveniles' department are fully separated from the adult inmates. Moreover, in the Corinth Detention Establishment there have been established schools of all three levels for the juvenile detainees. Finally, with a circular dated 2.5.2017 of the General Secretary for Crime Policy, instructions have been given to the Head of the Directorate of the Corinth Detention Establishment for the rationalization of implementation of the provisions of the Correctional Code concerning the imposition of the disciplinary punishment of isolation, which has in practice become inactive.

Alternatives to deprivation of liberty (Reformatory measures) assisting its use as a last resort

223. Although the Greek legal system provides a large number of reformatory (alternative to deprivation of liberty) measures since the amendment of the Penal Code by Law 3189/2003, not all of the above measures have been fully implemented because of the absence of special legislation needed in some cases. New regulations, either into force or pending before the Greek Parliament, are meant to contribute to their full implementation.

224. More specifically:

225. Article 18 of Law 4538/2018 regulates the systematic implementation of foster care as a reformatory measure for juveniles under the responsibility of the Juvenile Probation Services.

226. "Road-traffic education": the implementation of this reformatory measure has been enhanced following a "Memorandum of Understanding" signed in 2016 between the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights and the «Hellenic Research and Educational Institute for Road Safety, Prevention and Reduction of traffic accidents "PanosMylonas"», a non-profit Organization founded by University Institutions, private operators, auditors and individuals. Road-traffic educational programmes are now offered to juveniles.

227. "Community service by the minor": a 2017 Ministerial decision sets the regulatory framework for the implementation of the measure, in line with its educational character, the relevant legal provisions and with the careful involvement of all actors (juvenile probation officers, community placement employees, juvenile judge and prosecutor, juvenile and his/her family).

228. The "Placement in a public, municipal or private reformatory institution" is implemented in the Reformatory Institution for Juvenile Boys located in Volos, which is a regional agency of the Ministry of Justice, Transparency and Human Rights. Following the latest amendments of Laws 4322/2015 and 4356/2015, this measure may only be imposed if the juvenile has committed a punishable act which, if committed by an adult, would have been punished as a felony. The relevant court decision must include specific and detailed reasoning on why other reformatory or therapeutic measures have been judged insufficient in the specific case, taking into account, as the case may be, the particular circumstances of the act and the personality of the minor.

229. A final point should be made with regard to the modernization of the implementation of the alternative reformatory measures: a new draft Bill on "Youth care units" is being drafted with the aim to provide a full range of community-based residential facilities for the implementation of alternative reformatory and therapeutic measures provided in the Greek Penal Code. The bill aims at the modernization of the network of services available for

juvenile offenders and juveniles at risk and is expected to be presented in the Greek parliament in 2018.

230. Law 4322/2015 amended the provisions on pre-trial detention and restrictive conditions for juveniles of the Greek Code of Criminal Procedure (PPC) as follows: According to Article 282 para. 6 PPC, pre-trial detention may only be imposed on a minor who has attained the age of 15, if the act he/she is accused of, had it been committed by an adult, would be a felony punishable with life imprisonment or it is an act provided in Article 336 PC (rape) in the case of a victim below the age of 15. In this case pre-trial detention should not exceed a period of six (6) months. The violation of an imposed restrictive condition may not lead to pre-trial detention by itself.

231. The pre-trial detention warrant must contain specific and detailed reasoning on why other reformatory or therapeutic measures have been judged insufficient in the specific case, taking into account, as the case may be, the particular circumstances of the act and the personality of the minor.

232. Moreover, according to Law 4322/2015, placement in a reformatory institution, as provided for in Article 122 (1) (i) PC, may not be imposed as a restrictive condition, unless the reformatory measure initially imposed has been violated by the juvenile.

233. Finally, Law 4205/2013 on "Electronic Monitoring of remand, convicted detainees and prisoners on leave and other provisions" introduced electronic home monitoring in the Greek criminal justice system, providing inter alia for the imposition of home detention with electronic monitoring as a restrictive condition for juvenile offenders accused of offences punishable with imprisonment of more than ten years had it been committed by an adult (Article 282 para. 3f PPC). In such case, electronic home monitoring should not last for more than six (6) months and may be extended for a further three-month period only under certain circumstances set out in the law (Article 291 para. 1 PPC). This measure may be replaced by pretrial detention only in case of violation of a relevant obligation or of the commission of an act provided for in Article 173A PC (Violation of electronic home monitoring). The provision on electronic home monitoring for juveniles has not been implemented yet.

234. Regarding detention of juveniles coming from a foreign country, article 4 of Law 4322/2015 amended Article 74 PC with the aim to limit the prolonged detention of prisoners coming from a foreign country in correctional facilities, due to obstacles in the process of deportation. The new legislation specifies the measures that the penitentiary officials need to take five months before the conditional release of those detainees, in order to prepare their deportation (preparation of their travel documents) or to determine the legal or other obstacles that do not allow their deportation. Moreover, a limit of one to maximum three months of detention following the end of the sentence is established if the deportee prevents the deportation.

235. Concerning decriminalizing begging of children, it should be noted that according to the Greek PC (articles 407 and 409) begging constitutes a petty offence. Therefore, as far as minors are concerned, articles 126 and 127 are being applied (Minors criminally irresponsible).

Child victims and witnesses of crimes (para. 70)

236. See supra, paras. 146 et seq.

Children belonging to minority groups (para. 72)

237. At the outset, it has to be recalled that Greek Roma children do not constitute a minority group in Greece and form an integral part of the Greek population.

238. In addition to what has already been mentioned with regard to the protection of Roma children, it is to be noted that Law 4368/2016 and a Joint Ministerial Decision of 4.4.2016 establish the right of free access to all public health structures for the provision of nursing and healthcare to uninsured and vulnerable social groups, including Roma children. Roma children are also consistently vaccinated according to the national vaccination programme.

239. It has also to be noted that, since the establishment of the Special Secretariat on Roma Inclusion, there has been close cooperation and collaboration with the Roma community, in order to define the needs that should be addressed. In this context, two representatives of the Roma community participate in the Board of Experts established by the Minister of Labour, competent for Social Solidarity issues (article 48, Law 4430 / 2016).

240. Furthermore, the Special Secretariat, in cooperation with the Center of Security Studies (KEMEA), plans to implement an integrated / holistic intervention on police staff training on issues of preventive security and social mediation in five target regions across the country. The aim of the intervention is to support the participant police staff on the exercise of their daily professional duties and the fulfillment of their preventive and social role. Its specific objective is the establishment of a fruitful ground for the promotion of social dialogue and the management of the phenomena of Roma exclusion through the strengthening of mutual awareness- raising, interaction and mutual understanding among local communities of Roma, local societies and frontline staff of the Divisions for the Citizen's protection. Within the pilot phase of this intervention, it is planned to establish 5 mixed intervention subgroups composed of frontline police staff and Roma mediators aiming at monitoring the camps and facing racist violence incidents, in order to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of public actors for the sake of smooth social inclusion.

241. In addition, as already mentioned, the Special Secretariat for Roma Social Inclusion plans to include awareness raising campaigns in the media for Roma and non-Roma population within its interventions.

II. Report on the implementation of the OP-CRC-AC

General measures of implementation

Dissemination and awareness-raising (para. 7)

242. Training on matters pertaining to the protection of human rights is carried out at all educational institutions of the Hellenic Armed Forces. Moreover, a number of training programmes related to the law of armed conflicts have been incorporated into the curriculum of the Hellenic Military Academies. In this context, the Ministry of National Defense, in cooperation with academic institutions, regularly organizes seminars and workshops for the training of its personnel, on subjects related to the principles and the provisions of both Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law. Furthermore, in Specialized Units, such as the Multinational Peace Support Operations Training Centre and the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center, additional training is provided to the military personnel who have been selected to participate in multinational Peacekeeping and Stabilization Operations.

Data (para. 9)

243. Although the Asylum Service systematically collects data on all asylum seeking children in Greece (both accompanied and unaccompanied), presently there is no collection of data on children who may have been involved or used in armed conflict. Data on asylum seeking children are disaggregated by age group, first instance determination outcome and other referred (and not necessarily proven) vulnerabilities (biological or psychological). The data are collected in an electronic platform called "Alkyoni".

Prevention

Peace Education (para. 11)

244. In primary and secondary education curricula of various subjects (Language, Religion, Social and Civic Education) there are references on peace education and respect for human rights which promote and encourage a culture of peace and tolerance within and out of schools. For more details, see Annex 6.

Prohibition and related matters

Criminal legislation and regulation in force (para. 13)

245. The provisions of the Statute of the International Criminal Court have been incorporated into domestic legislation through Law 3948/2011, which, inter alia, regulates both the protection of minors and the prevention of their participation in war operations and armed conflicts. In particular, the recruitment of children who have not yet reached the age of 15, their participation in armed forces or groups, their coercion to be actively engaged in hostilities, with regard to an international, or non-international, armed conflict, constitutes a war crime and is punishable by a sentence of not less than ten years, according to article 9 of Law 3948/2011.

International Assistance and cooperation (para. 16)

246. The Ministry of National Defense, in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, organizes workshops and seminars for the training of its personnel regarding the principles and the provisions of both Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law.

Arms export (para. 18)

247. On June 3rd 2013, Greece signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), and ratified it by Law 4365/2016. Specific prohibitions are indicated in Articles 6 & 7 of the treaty, restricting the sale or transfer of weapons by or through Greece to States which have the intention to use them for the commission of war crimes, such as the recruitment of children. Furthermore, Greece also applies the 8 criteria of EU Common Position 944/2008, "defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment", which constitute the guidelines for the licensing process of the said goods. The above criteria, and the relevant User's Guide, provide stricter guidelines from those indicated in the above mentioned Articles 6 "Prohibitions" and Article 7 "Export Assessment" of the ATT.

Follow-up and dissemination (paras. 19-20)

248. One of the priorities set by the Ministry of National Defense is the training of its personnel on issues related to the provisions of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law and their effective implementation. As it has already been outlined, military personnel selected to participate in Peacekeeping and Stabilization Operations receive further training by Specialized Units on issues related to the provisions of IHL and HRL.

249. The experience from the Greek participation in Multinational operations such as ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION-RSM in Afghanistan and others, has shown that the personnel of the Hellenic Armed Forces fully respect the principles and the provisions of IHL and HRL, providing thus an effective environment for the protection of civilians with special regard to children who have been exposed to hostilities.

III. Report on the implementation of the OP-CRC-SC

General measures of implementation

Legislation (para. 10)

250. The definition of the sale of children under the Optional Protocol is the same as the concept of trafficking in human beings, as stipulated in art. 323A PC (concerning minor victims) and human trafficking as stipulated in art. 351 PC. It should also be noted that forced marriage has been added in the elements of trafficking in human beings (Law 4531/2018 ratifying the Istanbul Convention). Moreover, according to art. 10 of Law 2447/1996, it is a criminal offence for a parent to consent to his/her child's adoption or to mediate adoption in order to gain profit. A stricter sentence is stipulated for the person who commits such acts by profession.

Dissemination and awareness-raising (para. 16)

251. Greece systematically incorporates issues relating to the Optional Protocol in the curricula of primary and secondary schools, whereas school principals and teachers develop and participate in actions with their pupils in cooperation with local authorities and the local community to inform and raise awareness among their families and the society in general.

252. Furthermore, issues such as the sale of children and human beings, child prostitution and child pornography and various other are tackled in various ways, including information campaigns and other activities.

Training (para. 18)

253. In addition, a decisive contribution to the achievement of the objective of protecting childhood is the constantly updated training of the staff of the Hellenic Police, who are in charge of investigating relevant cases and/or are highly likely to come into contact with (potential) victims.

254. Training of professionals on first-level identification of victims of human trafficking, including underage victims, is an intrinsic part of Greece's anti-trafficking policy. The Office of the National Rapporteur (ONR) steps up efforts to facilitate capacity-building activities through a strategic partnership with the State Institute of Training (National Centre of Public Administration & Local Government). Cooperation with leading international and European organizations and agencies, such as UNODC and FRA, resulted in specialized trainings for law enforcement and other front-line professionals such as First Reception and Identification Services personnel, Labour Inspectors, etc. The ONR has also participated in trainings organized by the Asylum Service. In March 2018, the ONR participated in a training organized by FRA addressing child protection officers at the hotspots.

255. Public agencies and civil society organizations have organized trainings for professionals on identification and protection of victims. The Hellenic Police has organized a number of trainings and participated in trainings organized by other agencies. Hellenic Police Officers have been invited to national and international trainings as trainers. The General Secretariat for Gender Equality, Ministry of Interior, offered training courses to staff working at Counseling Centers, Shelters for victims of gender-based violence including victims of trafficking, the SOS telephone helpline, to lawyers and other professionals (i.e. police officers, judges, health professionals, etc.).

256. Special consideration should be given to the training offered by the Department of Mental Health and Social Welfare, Institute of Child Health, Ministry of Health, to nearly 400 front-line professionals on indicators for child trafficking. For more details, see paras. 21-22.

257. The new National Action Plan 2018 – 2023, under the second Strategic Axis, focuses on training and capacity building. Specialized trainings on the identification of underage victims of human trafficking, as well as on general management of victims of child trafficking are foreseen.

Allocation of resources (para. 20)

258. The Hellenic Police takes preventive and repressive measures to respond successfully to the particularly sensitive challenge of prevention of victimization and juvenile delinquency. More specifically:

259. (a) The "Crime Policy Program 2015-2019" includes specific actions for the protection of minors, with a view to preventing them from committing criminal acts and protecting them from victimization.

260. At the central level, within the Public Security Directorate, functions the Department of Drug Abuse and Juvenile Delinquency, a Strategic Service responsible for monitoring juvenile delinquency and victimization.

261. At the regional - operational level, there are three Sub-Directorates for the protection of minors, staffed with specialized personnel, special psychologists who assist with their expertise in the investigation of relevant cases, contributing to the cautious approach of minor victims and the avoidance of further victimization.

262. Where there are no specialized Services, the relevant responsibilities are exercised on a case-by-case basis by the Security Sub-Directorates, Safety Departments or Police Departments.

263. (b) The fight against trafficking in human beings, in all its manifestations, is also a key priority of the "Anti-Corruption Policy Program 2015-2019" and is further elaborated in individual strategic and operational axes of the five-year Strategic and Operational Program of the Greek Police.

264. For the effective investigation of human trafficking cases, the Hellenic Police has set up Anti-Trafficking Teams and Groups. At the strategic level, since September 2002, the Public Security Directorate of the Hellenic Police Headquarters has been specially dealing with trafficking in human beings and guiding regional operational Services. At the operational level, there are 12 Anti-Trafficking Teams and 2 Anti-Trafficking Departments within the Sub-Directorates for Combating Organized Crime and Trafficking in Persons at the Security Directorates of Attica and Thessaloniki, respectively, whose staff have received specialized training on the approach of (potential) victims and the investigation of cases of trafficking in human beings.

Prevention of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

Measures adopted to prevent offences prohibited under the Optional Protocol (para. 22)

265. In every institution, either public or non-profit private entities that host children, detailed personalized action plans are drawn up upon the arrival of the child, following a court or prosecutor's order, etc. The action plan is drawn by the scientific team of each institution after taking into account the specific features of each child and aiming at the social integration and psychological empowerment of the child, along with any other kind of interventions needed e.g. speech therapy, physical therapy, etc.

266. The Cyber Crime Unit (hereinafter CCU) of the Headquarters of the Hellenic Police Force, based in Athens, is the competent authority on issues concerning the Internet, involving minors. At the regional level, the Electronic Crime Division of Northern Greece operates in Thessaloniki, while in other regions of Greece, all Security Services (Directorates, Sub-Directorates and Departments) are involved in the abovementioned matters.

267. As a Special Service of the Hellenic Police Force Headquarters, CCU is tasked, among others, with the prevention and repression of crimes or anti-social behavior committed on the Internet against minors. A number of innovative actions have been developed by the Hellenic Police Headquarters through the Hellenic Police Force, aiming at informing the citizens, with emphasis on minors and especially on the student community, focusing on the dangers of their online navigation and on the ways in which such risks can be avoided.

268. In particular, the Hellenic Police Force Headquarters through CCU has been implementing a number of innovative actions, such as: organizing safe navigation conferences, teleconferencing with school units, educational visits, publication of brochures, production of television spots, the establishment of a Psychologist's Office within the Electronic Crime Investigation Division, the signing of cooperation protocols with the Ministry of Education, the National Confederation of Greek Trade, the Municipality of Marathon, the National Olympic Academy of Greece, the NGO "The Smile of the Child", the use of social media and mobile phone applications. For more details, see Annex 7.

Prohibition of the sale of children, child pornography and child prostitution and related matters

Existing criminal or penal laws and regulations (para. 27)

269. See the relevant provisions of the Penal Code in Annex 8.

Protection of the rights of child victims

Measures adopted to protect the rights and interests of child victims of offences prohibited under the Optional Protocol (para. 33)

270. Greece has established a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking, which will be fully operational in 2018. The Mechanism, supervised by the Office of the National Rapporteur and managed by the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA), Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Welfare, operates as a hub for coordinated action and partnership building, among all actors involved in combating human trafficking (state agencies, International Organizations, NGOs). It subscribes to a more inclusive identification regime that brings in additional professionals and stakeholders into the screening and identification process of mixed migratory/refugee flows (migration services, labour inspectors, health providers, local administration authorities). During the formulation of the NRM, working groups were formed to develop the NRM's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Specific SOPs have been created for the referral and protection of children.

271. The legislation against trafficking in human beings has recently been further enhanced, in particular through the transposition in our domestic legal order of relevant EU directives. For more details, see Annex 9.

Recovery and reintegration of victims (para. 36)

272. The National Center of Social Solidarity (EKKA) with the support from UNICEF has organized working groups, best practice teams and educational supervision for all professionals working with unaccompanied minors in shelters in order to homogenize the SOPs and improve case management so as to respond to a wide range of vulnerabilities for this population.

273. The National Action Plan on Gender Equality includes actions against trafficking and exploitation of women and girls such as: information and awareness-raising actions for pupils and young people by conducting an awareness campaign in cooperation with the Office of the National Rapporteur for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, and training of professionals on the identification and protection, in cooperation with competent Ministries and EKDDA.

International assistance and cooperation (para. 39)

274. The competent services of the Hellenic Police cooperate with foreign prosecution authorities through the channels of international police cooperation (INTERPOL, EUROPOL, EUROJUST, etc.), exchanging information and data whenever that it is required.
