



Europe and Central Asia

# OVERVIEW OF THE DATA-RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

January 2024

This report was produced by the UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (ECARO), based on the [Dashboard on the Recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child](#). This interactive dashboard offers a systemic approach to analyzing the Committee's most recent recommendations to 54 State parties in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region.

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# 1. BACKGROUND

The [Committee on the Rights of the Child](#) is the UN body of independent experts responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols. In the ambit of this process, the Committee examines periodic reports prepared by governments and independent stakeholders from each State party and engages in constructive dialogue with them to obtain an accurate assessment of the situation of children. The Committee indicates the progress achieved, addresses its concerns and provides corresponding recommendations to the State parties through adopting [country-specific Concluding Observations](#).

This paper provides a brief overview of the Committee's most recent recommendations to

State parties in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region, issued by the end of 2023, which concern the collection, analysis, dissemination and use of data on children. It aims to facilitate the identification of recurring challenges and areas of concern in this field, as well as common approaches that the Committee recommends in overcoming them and achieving coherent data collection and its effective application in informing policy development for children.

Collection of sufficient and reliable data on children, disaggregated to determine discrimination and/or disparities in the realisation of rights, is considered an essential component of child rights realisation. Namely, in its [General Comment No. 5 \(2003\)](#), the Committee has recognised *data collection and analysis and development of indicators* among





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the key administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights guaranteed by the CRC. General Comment No. 5 (2003) also provides basic guidelines on the scope, management, stakeholders involvement and other data collection-related aspects that State parties should consider.

The Committee's country-specific Concluding Observations, among others, assess the extent to which the respective State party has incorporated these guidelines in the national context. The observations and recommendations on data collection are commonly presented under the title *Data collection*, within the cluster on *General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6))*. However, data-collection-related recommendations can be found under other clusters of the Concluding Observations.

The analysis for this paper encompassed all data-related recommendations, regardless of their cluster. Subsequently, the key findings of the analysis are organised according to the following topics: data collection systems; children with disabilities; education; family environment and alternative care; health and nutrition; environment and climate change; violence against children and harmful practices; standard of living; and special protection measures. Each topic comprises an exploration of the recurrent themes, a list and a map of all the countries that have received recommendations in the pertinent topic.

## 2. SCOPE

Concluding Observations from 54 countries in the ECA region were collected and compiled for this analysis. Availability of the most recent Concluding Observations for each country varies from 2003 to 2023.

The list of countries and their last available Concluding Observations used for this overview is presented in the table below.

COUNTRY NAME	DOCUMENT	YEAR
<b>Albania</b>	CRC/C/ALB/CO/5-6	2023
<b>Andorra</b>	CRC/C/AND/CO/3-5	2023
<b>Armenia</b>	CRC/C/ARM/CO/3-4	2013
<b>Austria</b>	CRC/C/AUT/CO/5-6	2020
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	CRC/C/AZE/CO/5-6	2023
<b>Belarus</b>	CRC/C/BLR/CO/5-6	2020
<b>Belgium</b>	CRC/C/BEL/CO/5-6	2019
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	CRC/C/BIH/CO/5-6	2019
<b>Bulgaria</b>	CRC/C/BGR/CO/3-5	2016
<b>Croatia</b>	CRC/C/HRV/CO/5-6	2022
<b>Cyprus</b>	CRC/C/CYP/CO/5-6	2022
<b>Czech Republic</b>	CRC/C/CZE/CO/5-6	2021
<b>Denmark</b>	CRC/C/DNK/CO/5	2017
<b>Estonia</b>	CRC/C/EST/CO/2-4	2017
<b>Finland</b>	CRC/C/FIN/CO/4	2023
<b>France</b>	CRC/C/FRA/CO/5	2023
<b>Georgia</b>	CRC/C/GEO/CO/4	2017
<b>Germany</b>	CRC/C/DEU/CO/5-6	2022
<b>Greece</b>	CRC/C/GRC/CO/4-6	2022
<b>Holy See</b>	CRC/C/VAT/CO/2	2014
<b>Hungary</b>	CRC/C/HUN/CO/6	2020
<b>Iceland</b>	CRC/C/ISL/CO/5-6	2022
<b>Ireland</b>	CRC/C/IRL/CO/5-6	2023
<b>Italy</b>	CRC/C/ITA/CO/5-6	2019
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	CRC/C/KAZ/CO/4	2015
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	CRC/C/KGZ/CO/5-6	2023

COUNTRY NAME	DOCUMENT	YEAR
Latvia	CRC/C/LVA/CO/3-5	2016
Liechtenstein	CRC/C/LIE/CO/3-4	2023
Lithuania	CRC/C/LTU/CO/3-4	2013
Luxembourg	CRC/C/LUX/CO/5-6	2021
Malta	CRC/C/MLT/CO/3-6	2019
Monaco	CRC/C/MCO/CO/2-3	2013
Montenegro	CRC/C/MNE/CO/2-3	2018
Netherlands	CRC/C/NLD/CO/5-6	2022
North Macedonia	CRC/C/MKD/CO/3-6	2022
Norway	CRC/C/NOR/CO/5-6	2018
Poland	CRC/C/POL/CO/5-6	2021
Portugal	CRC/C/PRT/CO/5-6	2019
Republic of Moldova	CRC/C/MDA/CO/4-5	2017
Romania	CRC/C/ROU/CO/5	2017
Russian Federation	CRC/C/RUS/CO/4-5	2014
San Marino	CRC/C/15/Add.214	2003
Serbia	CRC/C/SRB/CO/2-3	2017
Slovakia	CRC/C/SVK/CO/3-5	2016
Slovenia	CRC/C/SVN/CO/3-4	2013
Spain	CRC/C/ESP/CO/5-6	2018
Sweden	CRC/C/SWE/CO/6-7	2023
Switzerland	CRC/C/CHE/CO/5-6	2021
Tajikistan	CRC/C/TJK/CO/3-5	2017
Turkmenistan	CRC/C/TKM/CO/2-4	2015
Türkiye	CRC/C/TUR/CO/4-5	2023
United Kingdom	CRC/C/GBR/CO/6-7	2023
Ukraine	CRC/C/UKR/CO/5-6	2022
Uzbekistan	CRC/C/UZB/CO/5	2022

## 3. KEY FINDINGS

### 3.1. Data collection systems

While the Committee recognises the State parties' data collection efforts, the most common recommendations concern either the establishment of data collection systems, where such are non-existent, or the improvement of the systems, where such are in place. The Committee emphasises that the systems should be centralised, integrated and comprehensive, i.e., cover all areas of the Convention and its Optional Protocols, extend over the whole period of childhood, and reach all regions/territories of the country.

Particular attention is being paid to the availability of data disaggregated by, inter alia, age, sex, disability, ethnicity, national origin, geographic location, and socio-economic background, in order to facilitate analysis of the situation of all children, especially of those in vulnerable situations.

Depending on the dominant factors of vulnerability in the specific countries, the Committee singles out specific groups of children that should be included in data collection, such as children from disadvantaged households, children who are victims of violence, rural children, children belonging to minority groups, migrant and refugee children, children without regular residence status, children with disabilities, children in alternative care, children at risk of family separation, children deprived of their liberty, and children of incarcerated parents.

The Committee advises governments to actively seek support and establish collaboration with strategic partners, including technical cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund and regional mechanisms. In regards to defining, collecting and disseminating statistical information, it is

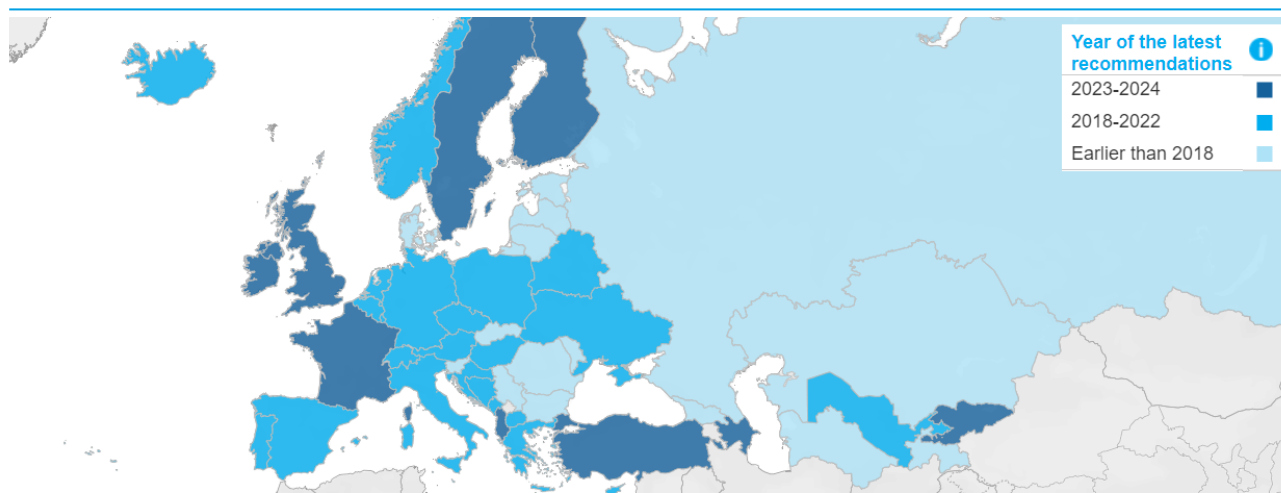




recommended that governments take into account the conceptual and methodological framework set out in the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled “Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation.” In several instances, the Committee also recommends including qualitative indicators in addition to quantitative ones.

The Committee reminds State parties of the importance of sharing data among relevant ministries and entities, professional groups and civil society and the use of data for the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and projects on children’s rights.

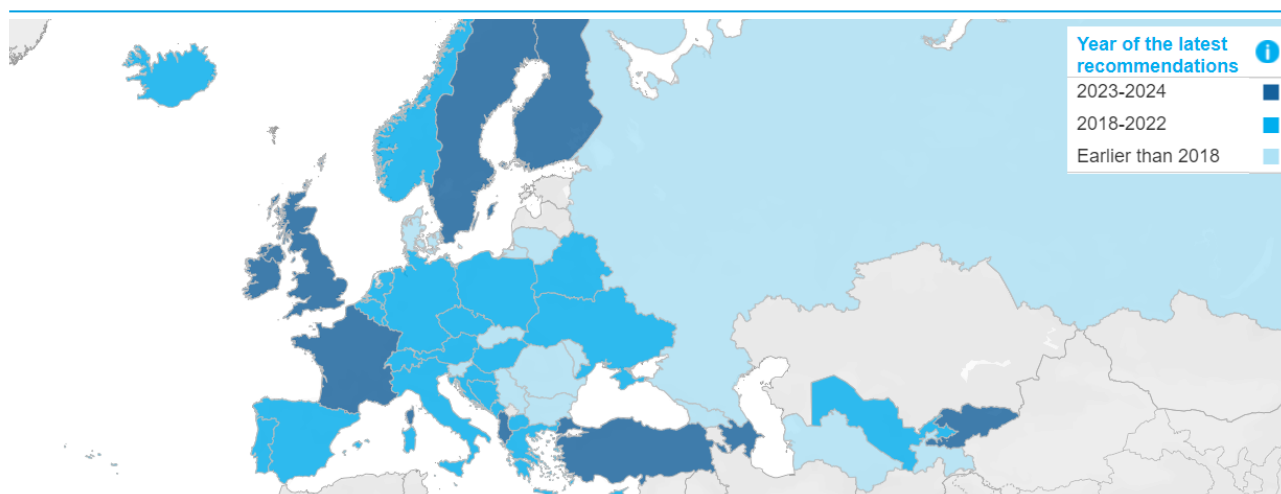
**Figure 1.1: Countries that have received data collection systems recommendations**



Number of countries: 51

List of countries: Albania; Andorra; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malta; Monaco; Montenegro; Netherlands; North Macedonia; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Tajikistan; Türkiye; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Uzbekistan.

**Figure 1.2: Countries that have received recommendations on data disaggregation**



Number of countries: 48

List of countries: Albania; Andorra; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Kyrgyzstan; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malta; Monaco; Montenegro; Netherlands; North Macedonia; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Tajikistan; Türkiye; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Uzbekistan.

### 3.2. Children with disabilities

Upon reviewing State party reports, the Committee has accumulated a wealth of evidence regarding the challenges encountered by children with disabilities and the impediments hindering their full enjoyment of rights enshrined in the CRC.

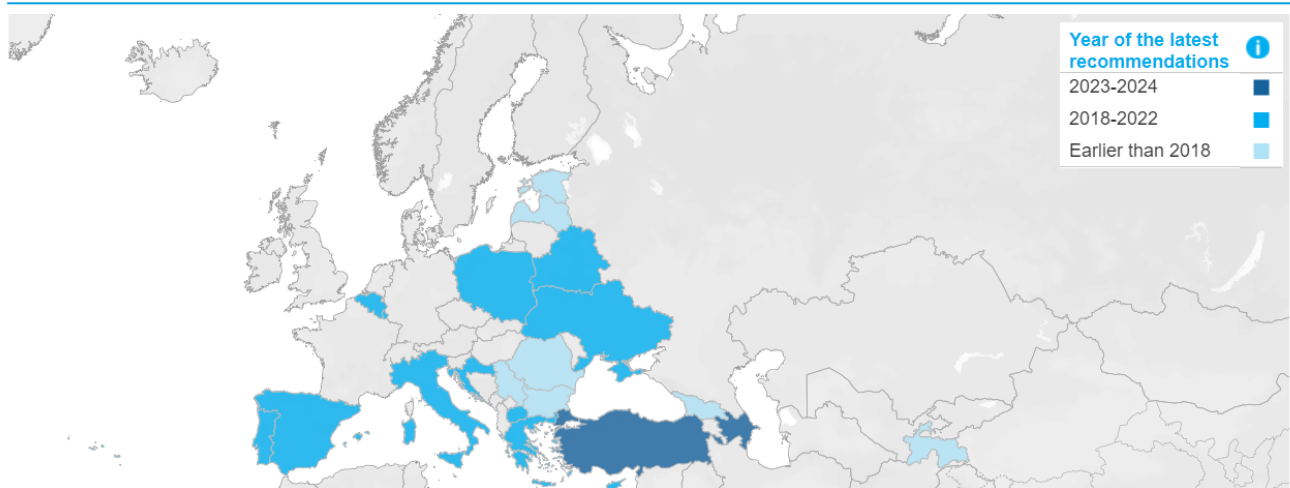
In a significant number of ECA countries, the Committee has directly addressed gaps in data concerning children with disabilities, underscoring the imperative to give specific attention to and explicitly incorporate children with disabilities in national data collection mechanisms. The recommendations stress the significance of enhancing data collection on children with disabilities, aiming to inform policies and programmes and facilitate access to services such as education, health, social protection, and support.

The Committee also underscores the importance of including very young children and those with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in data collection efforts. Additionally, the Committee recommends conducting in-depth studies and analyses to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of CRC implementation, as well as

assessing the efficacy of existing laws and policies. Importantly, the Committee emphasises the need for data to be easily accessible.



**Figure 2: Countries that have received data-related recommendations regarding children with disabilities**



Number of countries: 23

List of countries: Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Estonia; Georgia; Greece; Italy; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Luxembourg; Malta; North Macedonia; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Serbia; Spain; Tajikistan; Türkiye; Ukraine.

### 3.3. Education

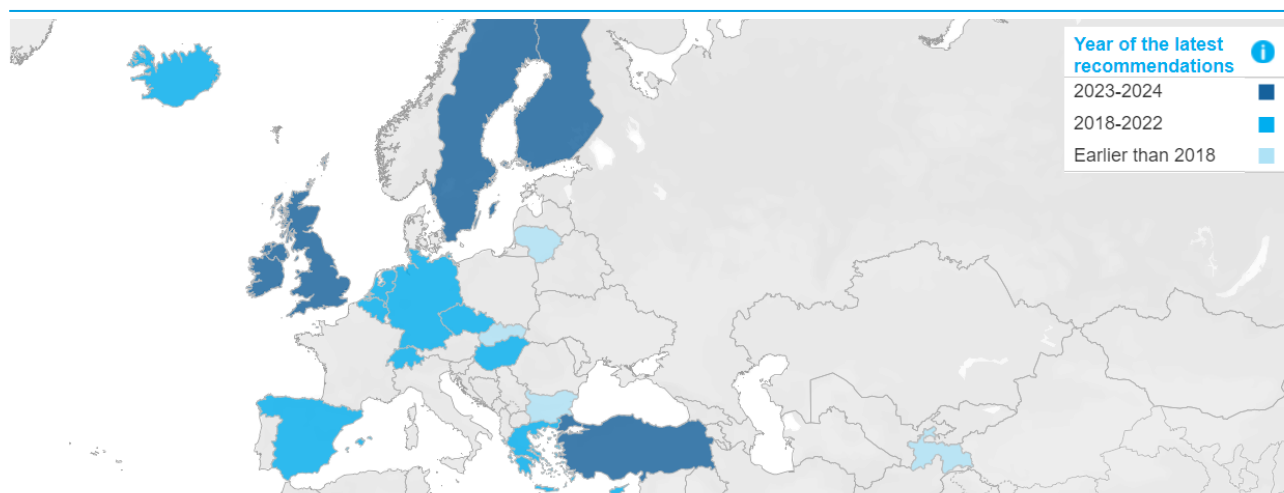
A significant portion of the data-related recommendations on education focuses on children’s access to education and various factors that can impede a child’s ability to derive maximum benefit from educational opportunities. Within these recommendations, the Committee underscores the importance of collecting and analysing data on attendance and completion rates, dropout rates, and educational outcomes for all children. However, particular emphasis is placed on the crucial need to disaggregate the data based on factors such as ethnic origin, socio-economic background, disability, residence status, and other relevant criteria.

The Committee strongly advises countries to conduct studies on the underlying causes of low attendance rates and dropout rates among children in disadvantaged groups. The aim is to gather insights that can inform policies and programmes geared towards ensuring equal access to quality education.

Additionally, acknowledging the detrimental effects of bullying, which frequently occurs in the school environment, several countries are recommended to enhance data collection on this phenomenon, including the acquisition of case-related data.



**Figure 3: Countries that have received data-related recommendations regarding education**



Number of countries: 19

List of countries: Belgium; Bulgaria; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Finland; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland; Lithuania; Netherlands; Slovakia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Tajikistan; Türkiye; United Kingdom.

### 3.4. Family environment and alternative care

Several countries in the region have been advised to focus on data collection pertinent to comprehending the underlying causes of children’s placement in alternative care. This includes gaining insights into the existing conditions surrounding alternative care and protection systems, considering their intricate nature.

Furthermore, the Committee has emphasised the importance of collecting detailed statistical data and relevant information, with a specific focus on disaggregation, related to domestic and intercountry adoptions. Additionally, there are recommendations for the operationalisation of databases that encompass information about children eligible for adoption and families declared suitable for adoption.



**Figure 4: Countries that have received data-related recommendations regarding family environment and alternative care**



Number of countries: 10

List of countries: Andorra; Austria; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Cyprus; France; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Liechtenstein; Montenegro.

### 3.5. Health and nutrition

The availability of relevant and reliable data is at the heart of the development, implementation and monitoring of policies, programmes and services that aim to realise children’s right to health. Thus, a number of countries have received recommendations related to carrying out data collection and situation analyses of the existing issues pertinent to children’s health, as well as the institutional capacity and the availability of human, financial, and technical resources in the health sector.

These recommendations concern health-related data in the context of the continuum of care for reproductive, maternal, newborn, child’ and adolescent health. They range from undertaking measures for monitoring key determinants of maternal health, perinatal mortality rates and mortality rates of children under 1 year of age and children under 5 years of age, the incidence of drug use by children and adolescents, to adolescent morbidity and mortality.

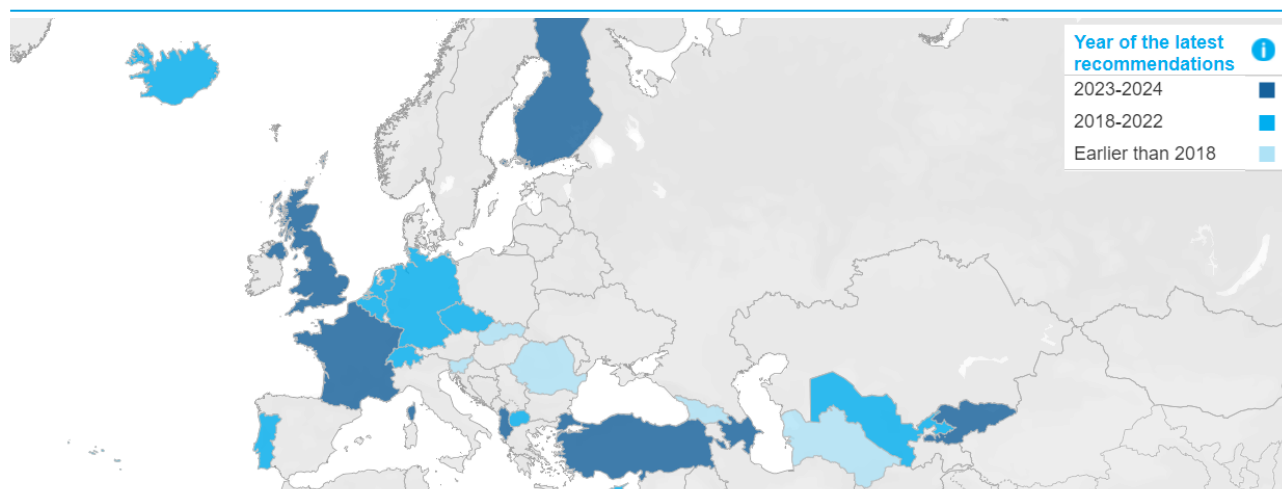
Notably, there is a growing emphasis on enhancing data collection concerning mental health issues and the accessibility of related services for children. This involves tracking the number of practising child psychologists and psychiatrists, as well as scrutinising practices related to prescribing psychosocial disorder medications to children. There is a highlighted need to collect disaggregated data on occurrences of suicide

and conduct situational analyses to identify causative factors.

Recommendations regarding reproductive health concentrate on examining the causes of early pregnancies, collecting data on girls’ access to legal reproductive health services, and monitoring the provision of sexual and reproductive health education in schools. In its recommendations, the Committee also urges State parties to systematically collect data on breastfeeding, infant and child’ nutrition, including those relevant to overweight and obesity, as well as data on food security, with a view to identify the root causes of child malnutrition and food insecurity.



**Figure 5: Countries that have received data-related recommendations regarding health and nutrition**



Number of countries: 25

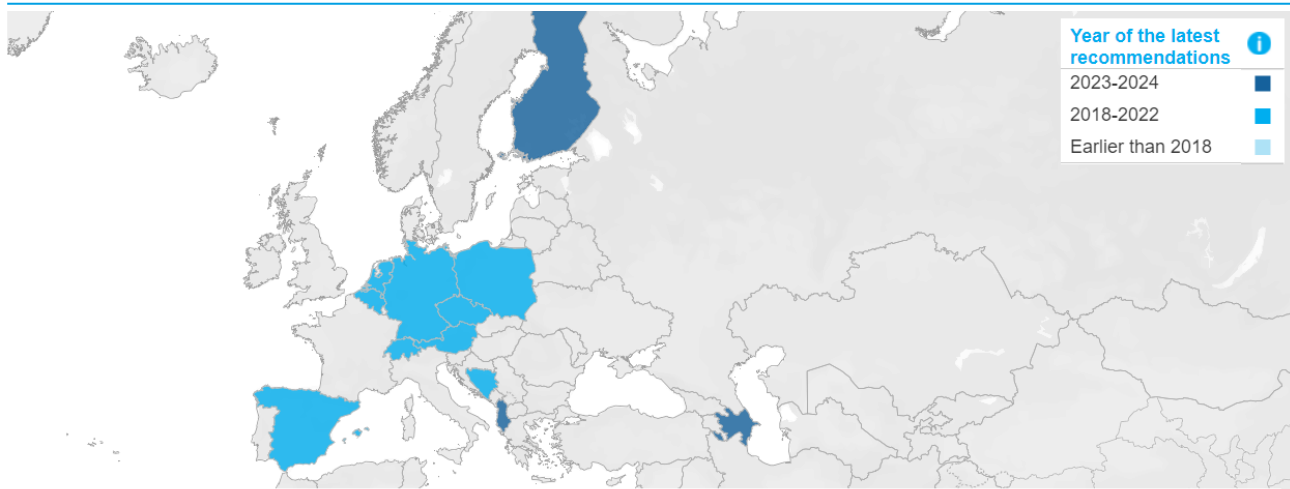
List of countries: Albania; Andorra; Azerbaijan; Belgium; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Iceland; Kyrgyzstan; Liechtenstein; Monaco; Netherlands; North Macedonia; Portugal; Romania; Slovakia; Slovenia; Switzerland; Türkiye; Turkmenistan; United Kingdom; Uzbekistan.

### 3.6. Environment and climate change

In some of its more recent Concluding Observations, the Committee has emphasised the urgent need to generate data for assessing the impact and the adverse effects of environmental harm and climate change on children. This is considered a crucial step in formulating measures to address the situation and guarantee that children live in a clean, green, healthy, and sustainable environment.

In this context, the Committee has recommended the assessment of policies and practices within relevant sectors, including aviation and transport. Moreover, it has urged the evaluation of the impact of atmospheric pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change on children’s rights, among other considerations.

**Figure 6: Countries that have received data-related recommendations regarding environment and climate change**



Number of countries: 12

List of countries: Albania; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Czech Republic; Finland; Germany; Netherlands; Poland; Spain; Switzerland.



### 3.7. Violence against children and harmful practices

Recommendations concerning the development and implementation of systematic and ongoing data collection and analysis on violence against children make a significant part of the data-related recommendations.

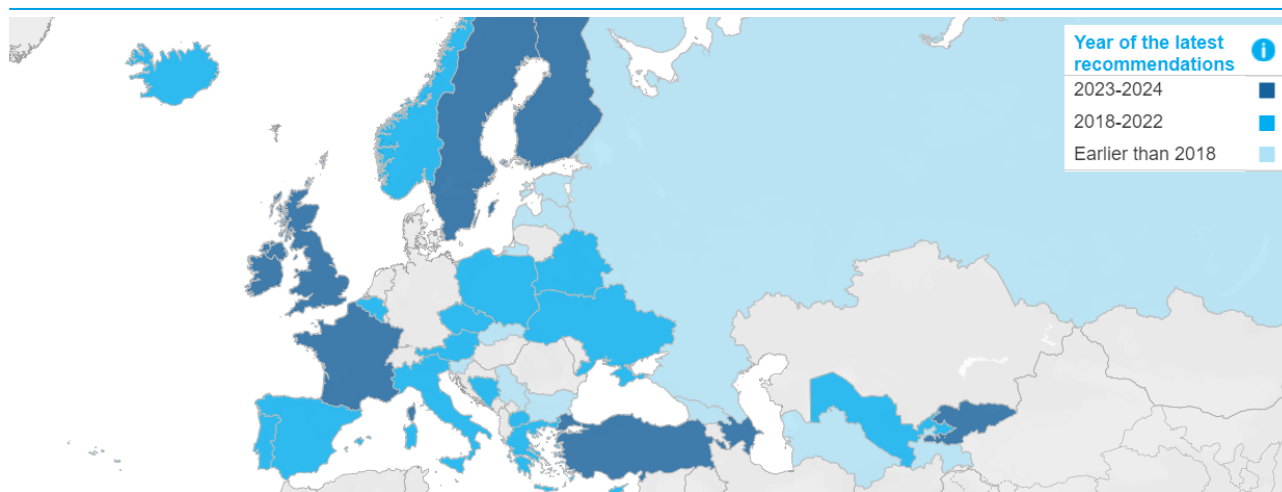
Specifically, the Committee frequently suggests that State parties either establish a national database encompassing all cases of violence against children or enhance existing databases. Additionally, there is an emphasis on conducting comprehensive assessments of the prevalence, causes, and nature of various forms of violence against children, such as corporal punishment, domestic violence, bullying, sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as assessments of cases that have been investigated and prosecuted, the sanctions that have been imposed on perpetrators and the nature of interventions in child welfare cases.

In several instances, the Committee also urges State parties to improve the cooperation, coordination and data-sharing between child protection services, the police and the justice system as a prerequisite for effective child rights protection.



Several countries have been recommended to strengthen their efforts in gathering data to understand the extent of harmful practices, such as child marriage and unnecessary medical or surgical treatment performed on intersex children.

**Figure 7: Countries that have received data-related recommendations regarding violence against children**



Number of countries: 40

List of countries: Andorra; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Greece; Holy See; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Kyrgyzstan; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Malta; Monaco; North Macedonia; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Russian Federation; San Marino; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Tajikistan; Türkiye; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Uzbekistan.

### 3.8. Standard of living

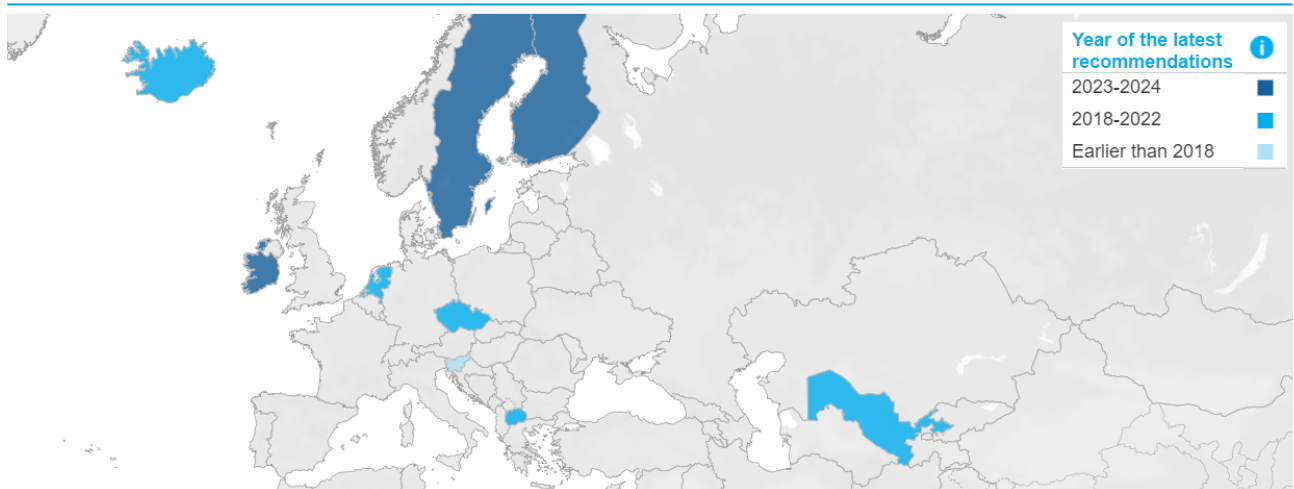
Several countries have received recommendations of relevance to children’s right to adequate standard of living. These recommendations mainly refer to improving the collection and analysis of data on children living in poverty, conducting studies to understand the root causes of child poverty and

assessing the impact of policies, programmes and projects to address child poverty. The Committee also highlights that State parties should use the data to inform reforms of the social protection system to ensure that it adequately protects children in vulnerable situations and their families.



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**Figure 8: Countries that have received data-related recommendations regarding standard of living**



Number of countries: 10

List of countries: Andorra; Czech Republic; Finland; Iceland; Ireland; Netherlands; North Macedonia; Slovenia; Sweden; Uzbekistan.

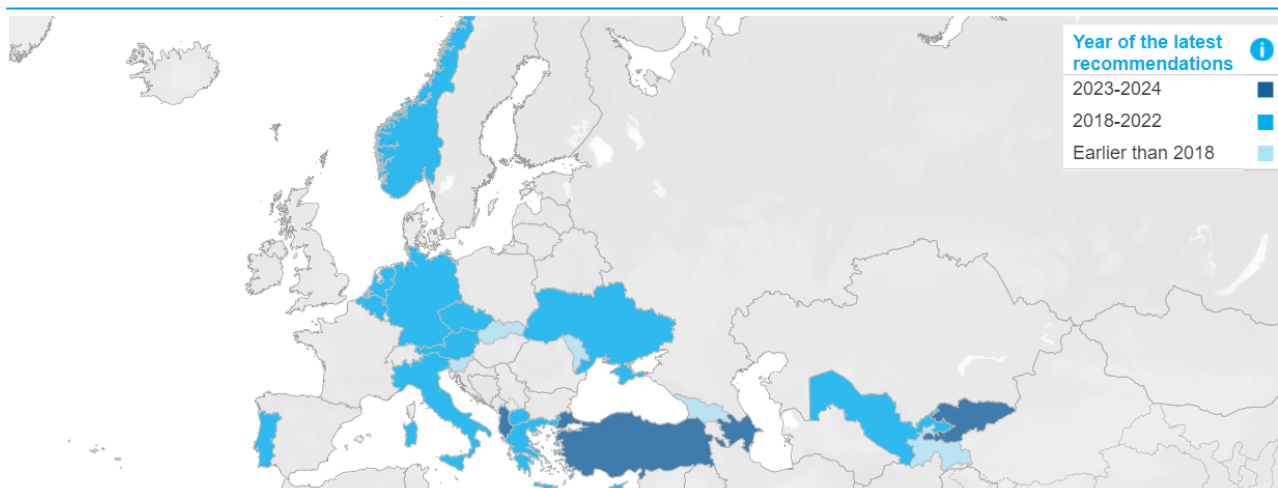


### 3.9. Special protection measures

In regards to the implementation of the special protection measures, the most common data-related recommendations concern the following:

- ▶ improving the data system for *unaccompanied or separated children* outside their country of origin and strengthening their identification and registration;
- ▶ collecting data on and assessing the situation of *children* who may have been involved or used in *armed conflict*;
- ▶ collecting and analysing data on *children belonging to indigenous and minority groups*;
- ▶ ensuring disaggregated data on *children victims of economic exploitation*, including child labour;
- ▶ carrying out comprehensive studies to assess the scope, nature and root causes of the presence of *children in street situations*;
- ▶ collecting disaggregated data on *children in contact with the criminal justice system*;
- ▶ establishing a scentralised and comprehensive data system on *trafficking and sexual exploitation of children*.

**Figure 9: Countries that have received data-related recommendations regarding special protection measures**



Number of countries: 22

List of countries: Albania; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belgium; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Italy; Kyrgyzstan; Netherlands; North Macedonia; Norway; Portugal; Republic of Moldova; Slovakia; Slovenia; Tajikistan; Türkiye; Ukraine; Uzbekistan.

**Table 1: Data-related recommendations regarding special protection measures, breakdown by sub-topic**

<b>Asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children</b>	Italy; Netherlands; Slovakia; Ukraine; Türkiye.
<b>Children in armed conflicts</b>	Croatia; Cyprus; Germany; Greece; Liechtenstein; North Macedonia; Uzbekistan.
<b>Children belonging to indigenous and minority groups</b>	Czech Republic.
<b>Children in street situations</b>	Azerbaijan; Georgia; Greece; Uzbekistan.
<b>Economic exploitation</b>	Cyprus; Kyrgyzstan; Republic of Moldova; Slovenia.
<b>Children in contact with justice system</b>	Greece; Tajikistan; Türkiye.
<b>Sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography</b>	Austria; Belgium; Cyprus; Czech Republic; North Macedonia; Norway; Portugal.

## 4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its examination of reports from 54 countries in ECA region, has consistently emphasised the critical role of data collection in ensuring the realisation of children's rights. This analysis provides an overview of the key findings derived from the Committee's recent recommendations, spanning diverse aspects impacting children.

▶ **Data collection systems:**

The Committee underscores the need for centralised, integrated, and comprehensive data collection systems that cover all areas of the CRC and its Optional Protocols. Emphasis is placed on disaggregated data, considering factors like age, disability, ethnicity, and socio-economic background, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of the situation of all children.

▶ **Children with disabilities:**

Recommendations highlight the necessity of explicitly incorporating children with disabilities in national data collection mechanisms. The Committee stresses the importance of accessible data, including very young children and those with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities.

▶ **Education:**

Data-related recommendations focus on access to education, urging the collection and analysis of data on attendance, completion rates, and educational outcomes. Disaggregation based on factors such as ethnicity, disability, and socio-economic background is emphasised. Specific attention is given to understanding and addressing low attendance rates and dropout rates among children in disadvantaged groups.

▶ **Family environment and alternative care:**

Countries are advised to focus on data collection to understand the root causes of children's placement in alternative care. Recommendations also include detailed statistical data on domestic and intercountry adoptions, emphasising disaggregation and the operationalisation of adoption databases.

▶ **Health and nutrition:**

Relevant and reliable data are deemed crucial for realising children's right to health. The Committee's

recommendations underscore the need for comprehensive data on children's health, spanning reproductive, maternal, newborn, and adolescent health. Notably, a heightened focus on mental health data collection is evident, along with an emphasis on nutrition, including breastfeeding, infant health, and food security.

▶ **Environment and climate change:**

Urgent calls are made to assess the impact of environmental harm and climate change on children. Recommendations include evaluating policies in sectors like aviation and transport and understanding the impact of atmospheric pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change on children's rights.

▶ **Violence against children and harmful practices:**

A significant portion of recommendations centres on systematic data collection and analysis on violence against children. Countries are advised to establish or enhance national databases on violence against children, with a focus on understanding prevalence, causes, and nature.

▶ **Standard of living:**

Several countries receive recommendations on improving the collection and analysis of data on children living in poverty. The Committee emphasises using this data to inform reforms in the social protection system, ensuring adequate protection for children in vulnerable situations.

▶ **Special protection measures:**

Data-related recommendations in this category encompass a range of issues, including unaccompanied or separated children, children in armed conflicts, those in street situations, those belonging to indigenous and minority groups, victims of economic exploitation, and those in contact with the justice system.

This analysis provides valuable insights into common challenges and recommendations, facilitating a nuanced understanding of the evolving data collection efforts on children's rights in the ECA region. It underscores the integral role of robust data collection in shaping policies and programs that safeguard and promote the well-being of all children.

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