



# COUNCIL OF EUROPE CHILD CONSULTATIONS

TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE STRATEGY FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 2022-2027

## SHORT VERSION REPORT

This report provides a general overview on the child consultation process to inform the development of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027, coordinated by Defence for Children International. This short report aims to provide the Steering Committee on the Rights of the Child with a concise compilation of the approach, methodology, implementation and results of the child consultations. This document represents a preliminary working document to be further developed and refined. The full report on the child consultation process around the drafting of the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) will be submitted in December 2021.

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This paper has been prepared by Defence for Children International – Italy in the context of consultancy services provided to prepare, implement and follow-up the child consultation process to inform the drafting of the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027).

The opinions expressed in this work represent only the views of the authors and are their sole responsibility. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe.

# INTRODUCTION

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The Council of Europe is currently developing the new Strategy for the Rights of the Child for the period 2022-2027 and has undertaken to consult children to inform the drafting process. In continuity to the present Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021), the new Strategy will set the organisation's priorities in this area and the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) will oversee its implementation. The Steering Committee has identified child consultations in a number of member States as a necessary input to the drafting process. Defence for Children International (DCI) – Italy has been selected to cooperate with the Council of Europe in the planning and coordination of the consultative process carried out by ten national delegations. Between March and July 2021, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovak Republic and Spain carried out the consultations aimed at informing the activities of the Council of Europe in the area of the rights of the child during the next 5 years. The new Strategy shall thereby address the priorities and emerging challenges identified by children, in particular in relation to the six strategic objectives identified by the Steering Committee (CDENF): freedom from violence for all children, equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children, access to and safe use of technologies for all children, child-friendly justice for all children, giving a voice to every child and children's rights in crisis and emergency situations.

Under the Programme “Building a Europe for and with children”, the Children's Rights Division (CRD) of the Council of Europe has established a tradition of involving children in its work in all the relevant areas of its international cooperation – standard-setting on the rights of the child, monitoring member States' progressive implementation of these standards and developing cooperation and capacity-building activities to support implementation. In accordance with priority area 2 of the current Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child, which aims to promote “the participation of all children”, the organisation has consulted with children on several occasions and various topics, such as child-friendly justice, sexual violence, child-friendly health care and migration. It has also invited children to major events and reached out to them in the production of child-friendly material, for example Roma and Traveller children, or children acting in the digital environment.

DCI Italy has a long-standing experience in engaging children in its work, including as a coordinator of multi-country initiatives. For over a decade, the organisation has consulted with children in the context of research and policy analysis, programming and advocacy, and involved children and young people as co-trainers in capacity-building initiatives targeting national and local stakeholders. In light of this experience, DCI Italy has elaborated a compendium of methods for consulting boys and girls of different age groups, in different life situations and from different social and national backgrounds. Although consulting with children is each and every time a sensitive and challenging task, DCI Italy has been able to inspire together with children significant processes of change in policymaking, research, service practice and training across many thematic fields, at the national, regional and local levels in Italy, and at the European and international levels.

The overall goal of the present consultation process with children was to ensure that the new Strategy for the Rights of the Child considers and addresses the main challenges faced by children and responds to children's priorities as perceived and expressed by the participants in the consultations. The specific objectives of the process included i) ensuring continuity of the work promoted by the Council of Europe Children's Rights Division concerning children's participation and, in particular, priority area 2 of the current Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) on “the participation of all children”; ii) creating a space for children in member States and facilitate a process for children to become involved in the development and implementation of the new Strategy from the onset; and iii) advising the CDENF on how to further include children's voices in its work, in particular in the implementation and monitoring of the new Strategy.

# PHILOSOPHY OF THE ACTION

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DCI Italy invited the Council of Europe and National Delegations to approach the consultations with children as a consultative participation exercise that is dynamic and complex and stimulates a process of change. Change refers not only to the thematic priorities as such, and the way they will be reflected in the new Strategy, but also in relation to the capacity of listening and engaging in an open-minded dialogue with the children. The common methodology embraced this understanding, guided National Delegations in this dynamic process through an active listening approach and openness for the participating children and facilitators, and encouraged National Delegations and the Council of Europe to discover new perspectives. Whereas the thematic priorities had been proposed as the fields where conversations with children should take place, the children's statements and contributions, as anticipated, reached beyond this pre-determined field.

Asking children to express themselves on such big matters, matters for which we, as adults and professionals, do not always have convincing answers or solutions, should be accompanied by an openness and willingness to question our way of thinking, our language and our methods and to recognise that this is not at all an easy task to be undertaken. Approaching the consultation process with an open attitude and the willingness to listen, to wonder and be astonished, is probably a key dimension to be explored, in addition to questions of efficiency in implementing a pre-determined task.

Throughout the consultation process, the aspiration was to place the child at the centre. The consultations were carried out in full respect of ethical standards for research with children and were inspired by the Philosophy for Children movement.<sup>1</sup> The final goal of such an approach is that the rights of the child are upheld, and that each individual child is recognised as an agent of his/her own life and is empowered throughout the process.

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<sup>1</sup> Philosophy for Children is an educational model originally developed by Matthew Lipman. It is based on collaborative inquiry-based teaching and learning, treating the classroom (or group of children) as an inquiring community, where emphasis is placed on critical, creative, and caring thinking and the development of associated cognitive and social skills, abilities, and dispositions. For more on Philosophy of children see: <<https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396577/obo-9780195396577-0387.xml>>.

# METHODOLOGY

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The methodology of the action was primarily based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the desk review of previous experiences of child participation initiatives carried out in Council of Europe member States, the Council of Europe Recommendation on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18,<sup>2</sup> international guidelines and recommendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, as well as other international documents of relevance.

The involvement of children in the development of the new Strategy for the Rights of the Child can be understood as consultative participation, meaning that the Council of Europe, through National Delegations, sought children's views, perspectives and suggestions and will work with the results in a way that is transparent to the children and all actors involved. A consultative participation initiative allows children more influence in contributing to a process than a single event of child participation would.

The methodology for the consultations with children is based on the assumption that the children should be able to participate in a way that reflects their personal views, thoughts and experiences, placing the child at the centre of all processes, taking into account the child's personality, individual characteristics, life circumstances, experiences and other relevant factors.<sup>3</sup> In practice, this requires from the organisers and facilitators the capacity to create a space and opportunities where children are able to discuss the thematic priorities openly and constructively in accordance with their own characteristics – as individuals and as children – and, to the greatest extent possible, free from adult constructed perceptions or predetermined expectations.

The methodology is organised as a progressive and structured interaction between the facilitator and the children with the aim to share information and thoughts and to enable discussion. This structure enables children to familiarise themselves with the theme and understand the current situation concerning the specific thematic priority. This understanding is a necessary precondition for the children to be in a better position to form their own opinions and to exchange their thoughts and considerations and to propose actions to improve the situation. Through this progressive interaction, the children are enabled to inform the new Strategy in a meaningful way.

The sessions were held online and/or face-to-face, depending on the COVID-19 restrictions in the participating countries. The methodology included considerations regarding the timing of the sessions, preparations and supporting materials, as well as the facilitators and participants. DCI Italy developed a Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing Protocol to be applied throughout all activities directly or indirectly involving children in the framework of the consultations.

DCI Italy proposed an agenda for the consultations, which consisted ideally of three sessions of 1.5 to 2 hours each. The process was structured according to seven main steps aimed at clarifying the purpose of the consultation, establishing a "field" of reference related to the specific theme, while allowing children to engage in an informed conversation on the theme that could eventually lead to possible suggestions, recommendations and even questions to be addressed by the new Strategy and its subsequent implementation.

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<sup>2</sup> Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18 (Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 28 March 2012 at the 1138th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies).

<sup>3</sup> For the complete methodology, child safeguarding and wellbeing protocol and factsheets for the thematic priorities please refer to the Methodological Package available upon request.

The first step, **introduction of participants**, aimed to create an informal, safe and child-friendly common framework allowing the children to feel safe and at ease. The second phase, **setting the scene**, had the objective to clarify the purpose and objectives of the consultations, while answering questions such as “Why are we here? What is the Council of Europe? What is the Strategy for the Rights of the Child? What are we expected to do?”. The third step, dedicated to the **thematic priorities and key definitions**, followed an open discussion approach, based on active listening. In particular, the facilitators were asked not to provide the children with a definition of the thematic priority, but to rather engage the group in a brainstorming exercise, using a Flipchart if in presence, or jambord (or other similar platforms) if online. After discussing the thematic priority and arriving at a definition that all participants agreed with, the facilitator presented a brief situation overview concerning the thematic priority. The methodology guided the facilitators in making the presentation and guiding the discussion in an accessible way, using child-friendly language.

After the presentation of the evidence and the sharing of experiences, it was time to compare the outcomes of these first steps of the consultation with human rights principles and the rights of the child. The fifth step aimed therefore to present some key **human rights and child rights principles** and norms, related to the thematic priority, in a child-friendly language and an accessible manner for the participating children. The objective was to contribute to the empowerment of participants and information about their own rights, while preparing the ground for them to form and share their opinions on “what should be in place for all children”. In the sixth phase, “**And now what? Recommendations, considerations and proposals**”, the children developed and discussed their own proposals, expectations and recommendations, as well as questions, with regard to the improvement of the identified issues to be addressed. At this stage, the facilitators gathered children’s contributions, which were to inform subsequently the drafting process of the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child. The last step was dedicated to **closing the consultation**, inviting the participants to share their thoughts on how they experienced their participation in the consultation, and explaining the next steps.

The National Delegations received a template for the preparation of country reports, which informed this short report and will be consolidated in the complete report to be submitted later this year.



Figure 1: Steps of the consultation process

# IMPLEMENTATION

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DCI Italy dedicated the first weeks of the process to the development of the materials aimed at guiding the National Delegations through the consultation process. A methodological package containing the common methodology, the child safeguarding and wellbeing protocol and the factsheets for the thematic priorities was sent to the delegations on May 14th, 2021. The National Delegations were invited to contribute to a desk review, providing an input of their respective countries in what concerns child participation activities and initiatives at the national level.

DCI Italy held an orientation session for facilitators on 17 May 2021 to present the common methodology and foster the cooperation between all National Delegations throughout the process. During this session, delegations had the opportunity to discuss the methodology and their adaptability to the national context and were invited to cooperate with other national delegations who had chosen the same thematic priority, to maximize the results and scope of the consultations. Moreover, in order to ensure that the consultation process was carried out with full respect to the ethical standards of conducting research with children, DCI Italy provided guidance on child wellbeing and safeguarding, based on the document “Safeguarding and Wellbeing in Child Consultations”, prepared specifically for this purpose. Several aspects, such as the necessity to obtain the informed consent of the participating children, as well as their parents and/or guardians, was highlighted during the session. Together with the national delegations, DCI Italy explored questions relating to obtaining informed consent, the applicable laws and regulations concerning data protection, the use, storage and sharing of personal data, and the right to opt-out from the consultations at any given moment, and how to explain these matters to the children in a language they can understand. Following the general orientation session for facilitators, DCI Italy held bilateral meetings with several National Delegations in order to assist in the adaptation of the methodological approach to the national context and the modality of the consultations (online, face-to-face or hybrid).

From May to July 2021, the ten National Delegations consulted 220 children on the thematic priorities, with the aim of developing specific contributions and recommendations to be included in the new Strategy for the Rights of the Child. In particular, France, Slovakia and Spain consulted 43 children on the thematic priority freedom from violence for all children. Belgium and Italy focused on access to and safe use of technologies for all children, having consulted 28 children. The thematic priority giving a voice to every child was followed by Bulgaria and Finland, which consulted 42 children. Montenegro and Portugal focused on equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children, and consulted 68 children. In Greece, the Ministry of Justice consulted 17 children on child-friendly justice for all children and the Ministry of Migration and Asylum consulted 22 children on the thematic priority of children’s rights in crisis and emergency situations.

Regarding the composition of the groups, DCI Italy suggested that diversity should be achieved naturally, without forcing it to the point of creating discomfort for children or creating artificial dynamics that could prevent meaningful, genuine and free participation of all members in the group. In practice, participants included children from a wide range of cultural, social and national backgrounds. Gender balance was achieved and on average, the age of the participating children ranged from 13 to 17 years old. Some National Delegations, given their previous experience in consulting children, involved children from 9 years old. The Greek Ministry of Justice, on the other hand, consulted children and young people up to 20 years old, in light of the subject of their consultations (child-friendly justice for all children).

During June and July 2021, DCI Italy hosted two follow-up meetings with the National Delegations aimed at exchanging on the results of the consultations and the next steps.

# RESULTS

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After receiving the feedback of the National Delegations and the country reports, it is possible to say with certainty that the consultations were extremely successful. The ten National Delegations reported that all children were highly motivated and happy to be part of this initiative and that, on a general basis, all children expressed their willingness to continue the process, and their wish to be involved in other similar activities in the future. In fact, the common denominator in all the consultations was the expectation of children to be heard and included in consultations on a more regular basis, contributing to the policies that will shape their future. Many participants observed that, even where consultations effectively take place, the recommendations of children are often not embraced by adults and that there is a lack of feedback and follow-up. The participants shared several ideas on how children could be involved in decision-making processes, for example through the creation of web platforms where it would be possible to directly participate in public consultations on specific subjects, including the development of legislation and policies concerning them.

In accordance with the structure of the new Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of the Child, the children were requested to develop proposals with regard to three aspects: **challenges to be urgently addressed, possible action to be taken, and how children can be involved**. This structured approach allowed the contributions of children to be specific and as concrete as possible, avoiding unnecessary and excessive processing of their statements, which could change the words they chose and undermine their proposals.

The thematic priority **freedom from violence for all children** was analysed by 43 children from **France, Slovakia and Spain**. The children identified as challenges to be urgently addressed the number of cases of violence and gender-based violence and the low level of attention to issues of neglect and emotional or psychological violence. The participants felt that adults should listen to the voices of children and take children's complaints seriously. Laws and procedures should be more accessible to children and easier for them to understand, so that they are not dependent on adults, especially where children are afraid of the reaction of their parents or other adults of reference. Children should learn about their rights from a young age and adults should be reminded of rights of the child, for instance through dedicated campaigns. In school, the children recommended to introduce compulsory workshops on gender-equality and the prevention of gender-based violence for students, teachers and families to help them detect violence in their families and communities and to learn how to help people experiencing these forms of violence. Children suggested that psychological check-ups should be added to regular medical check-ups and that the public health system should be equipped with a higher number of psychologists and psychiatrists so that children and young people can receive immediate help if they need it. Students could be trained as mediators or peace agents to make it easier for those who are victims of violence to ask for help, since it is easier for them to confide in someone their own age. The children proposed to set up regular meetings, preferably in school, as peer groups or groups with facilitators, where they can talk about their rights, about experiences with respect or disrespect of their rights, support each other and keep asking questions and offer ideas to authorities. The children suggested to develop and disseminate widely an online quiz for children "Do you know your rights?" and/or a survey questionnaire "Are my rights respected?".

**Belgium and Italy** focused on **access to and safe use of technologies for all children**, and consulted 28 children. It emerges clearly from the children's contributions that the younger generation is very aware of the hazards and downsides of technologies. In fact, the challenges participants suggested should be urgently addressed are connected mainly with safeguarding and protection, inequalities in accessing the internet and



risks of exposure to “people with bad intentions”<sup>4</sup>. As risks for children in the digital environment, the participants identified cyberbullying, stalking, sexting, identity fraud/theft, chatting with strangers and the easiness with which children share sensitive and personal data, as well as the risk of becoming addicted to social media and internet games. The children recommended that the new Council of Europe Strategy should include specific measures to promote education, reduce inequalities, and raise awareness on how to use technologies safely, including mandatory courses for children, teachers, and parents on technologies and social media. In what concerns the possible actions, participants shared several concrete ideas. Regarding equity of access, the group underlined the importance of the Council of Europe - and all the relevant European and national institutions - making a considerable effort to ensure broader and more widespread access to the internet and technologies for all children, by removing inequalities and the digital divide. Over the past year, with distance learning, children experienced how social differences still exist and how they affected children, such as digital disparities, lack of devices, a reduced possibility and ability to attend and participate in school, and receive an adequate education. Many children received digital devices during the pandemic. Still, many others - among those present at the consultation or among their friends - did not receive them or had severe difficulties using them. The participants noted that there must be guidelines from the European level for national and local or regional actions regarding distance learning. Moreover, the children recommended that national and European institutions should establish parameters and regulations to protect children’s right to privacy, limiting to the power of the multinationals of the internet, and to contrast the phenomena of abuse, especially in social networks. Children suggested that a regulated and verified platform be developed for all children to access. After the first registration, children can access media and social networks according to their age. In this way, protecting the privacy of the single user, it would be possible to verify who accesses what. In particular, the children were strongly concerned about false or unidentifiable profiles in social media. They felt it was necessary to create spaces for a stable exchange between adults and children, integrating intergenerational perspectives. The children observed a need for consultation processes for children to inform policymaking, to identify priorities, understand emerging needs and define relevant measures and interventions. As an example, they recommended setting up groups of adolescents who act as representatives of their regions and who can interact with authorities at local, national, and European levels. This could be done through the creation of web platforms. Through these dedicated tools, it would be possible for children to interact and participate in discussions and decision-making on issues that directly concern them.

**Bulgaria and Finland** involved 42 children in the consultation regarding the thematic priority **giving a voice to every child**. According to the participants, there is limited theoretical knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The participation of children and youth and the opportunities to discuss the rights of the child in a structured and in-depth manner are very rare. The participants reported that, at times, even children questioned basic concepts such as every child’s right to form an opinion and wondered if a child should have the right to an opinion at any age and on any topic. Children felt that in schools, adults take their opinions and views seriously, nonetheless, teachers and parents should improve the equal treatment of all children. The children recommended that parents give children space to form their own opinions. This was especially important in multicultural families where parents might have different views than their children. The children highlighted that it was crucial to create opportunities for children with special needs and disabilities to participate: “Every day we see these children closed, sad, without their peers, communicating only with the school psychologist.” Children in contact with the law should also be able to exercise their right to form an opinion and to participate, as well as children living in institutions and children from minority groups. Education and training was identified as an essential feature to promote participation, for example through peer educators, training for children in schools and training for teaching staff. The participants identified the idea of

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<sup>4</sup> This expression was used by children of both the Italian and the Belgium delegations.

a safe website where children could send their thoughts and questions, or a new digital platform offering different ways for children to participate.

The thematic priority of **equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children** was analysed by 68 children in Montenegro and Portugal. Children identified many challenges to be addressed, mainly relating to education, awareness raising and inclusion. The children recommended that education on the rights of the child should start at the earliest age, in kindergarten, through adapted content using for instance songs, games, cartoons and play, and that both parents and school staff should be trained on the rights of the child. They identified a need to increase the number of psychologists, social assistants, nutritionists and nurses in all schools and at all levels of education. With regard to the Roma population, the children noted that some Roma parents should be more closely involved in the education of their children and participation in society should be promoted. The participants underlined that children should be heard more often and in many different ways, through child consultations, through a consultative body of student representatives or student parliaments, and also through youth councils or similar organisations. Children feel that it was crucial to encourage a stronger representation of minority groups, namely by giving them a voice in the media, making their culture known more widely, and strengthening their participation in leadership positions and in the society. In addition, in the children's perspective, it could be useful to create a fund with the financial support of all 47 Member States to offer the same things and provide the same opportunities to all children of all 47 Member States.<sup>5</sup> A very specific recommendation was to build sensorial parks where children with disabilities could experience nature through their sense of smell, touch and hearing and a visual sense of colours.

The **Greek Ministry of Justice** consulted 17 children on **child-friendly justice for all children**. As challenges to be urgently addressed, the children identified mainly a lack of respect for the rights of the child during all stages of investigations and proceedings concerning children. The participants identified a need to address police attitudes and behaviour towards children, in particular with regard to the right of the child to be protected from violence, their right to non-discrimination and their right to care. Children should be timely and thoroughly informed about their rights in a child-friendly manner and should be able to freely express their opinions on issues affecting them. Training children and adults, in particular police officers, on the rights of the child and child-friendly procedures is key. To this end, strict recommendations should be sent to all police stations, and there should be control of the non-law-abiding behaviour of individual police officers, as well as punishment where the rights of the child are infringed or violated. The participants reported that the procedure to hire an interpreter for children in contact with the justice system was complicated and time consuming and this created obstacles to the children's participation, thus the interpretation process should be improved. Participants highlighted that media should be forced to respect children's privacy and personal data. Anyone who provides confidential information to journalists regarding the criminal file of the case and the children concerned, should be prosecuted and punished.

The **Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum** consulted 22 children from two different reception centres for unaccompanied children on the thematic priority of **children's rights in crisis and emergency situations**. For these children, it was necessary to improve the registration, asylum and relocation procedures for unaccompanied children, as well as ensure a faster and less complicated family reunification procedure. In addition, the children highlighted that they should be placed immediately in specialised accommodation for children and that more child-friendly reception conditions and policies were needed. The children underlined the rights of unaccompanied children to access to education, which will allow them to fulfill their life dreams and objectives, for instance to find a good job and to move freely.

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<sup>5</sup> Children gave the example of an episode of a cartoon series revolving around the objective of creating a fund to buy balls for the children of the whole world, providing equal opportunities regarding the right of children to play and play sports.

## CONCLUSION, NEXT STEPS AND FOLLOW-UP

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It is possible to conclude from the consultations with children in the ten member States, that children are generally aware that their rights are not consistently and effectively respected and implemented. The participating children expressed their concerns about not being sufficiently heard by adults, in particular parents, and by governments. Children emphasised how the question of participation remains closely linked to the topic of education. A core recommendation was to strengthen educational processes, targeting children, parents, teachers and other service providers, as well as state officials, as this holds the potential to encourage a stronger involvement of children in all matters concerning them. The participants underlined the need to recognise the legitimacy of children's experiences, views and recommendations, while creating spaces – online and offline – for children to participate in a continuous and sustained manner.

After the child consultations, the National Delegations have kept in touch with the participating children, in order to promote further collaboration and follow-up. The Council of Europe has invited children to be present in the next CDENF plenary meeting session in October 2021 (to be held online), where the draft of the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) is expected to be approved, for subsequent submission to the Committee of Ministers by the end of the year. Given the logistical and financial impossibility of having simultaneous translation in all the languages of the participating delegations, DCI Italy coordinated with the Council of Europe in order to come up with a feasible solution allowing children to participate in a safe and meaningful way. Accordingly, each National Delegation was invited to prepare a video of children presenting the results of the consultations, to be screened during the plenary meeting. In addition, a team of child representatives will be present online during the meeting, to engage in a foreseen exchange moment with the participants of the plenary session.

It is moreover expected that a delegation composed of 10-20 participants of the consultations will be present during the public presentation of the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027, to be held in 2022.

The present child consultation process represents a pioneering milestone for meaningful and effective participation of children in policy-making processes. During the process, 220 children were heard through an inclusive and comprehensive process and their voices are effectively and transparently reflected in the draft of the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027. It is important to highlight the outstanding commitment and spirit of cooperation of the National Delegations, their facilitators and all participating children that contributed to these results.

The Council of Europe and national delegations are encouraged to reflect how the consultations with children could influence processes of change beyond the specific goal of the present process and how to ensure a stronger continuity in hearing and taking into account the views of children for decision-making processes. The consultations could be considered as the foundation for a continuous and relevant exchange with children to orient civil, cultural, political, social and economic decision-making processes.

“Violence through pandemic has been rising. Children were closed in flats or houses with threatening parents or siblings and had no place to go to and no trustful people around to talk with.”

“We have to raise the awareness of the people around us about how important mental and emotional health is.”

“It does not matter what kind of sneakers you wear, but which head wears those sneakers.”

“There are people who are left aside by certain people and in certain situations.”

“I would advise the Council of Europe to listen to all young people who, in my opinion, have many things to say.”

“Especially for children from other countries, it would be very important to exist an internet site with our rights.”

“Police officers are crueler to immigrants and refugees than to us.”

“There could be an electronic platform with our rights presented in an understandable and clear way in various languages.”

“Parents must hear the child's opinion so that the child can have self-confidence.”  
“Always try to listen instead of just hearing!”

“Talking more as equals no babytalk. Adults should trust more on children.”  
“We are not just children.”

“I want to have the right to grow up and develop. Not just survive.”

“I want to have the right to still be a child.”

“Social inclusion for all children is a magnet that attracts.”

