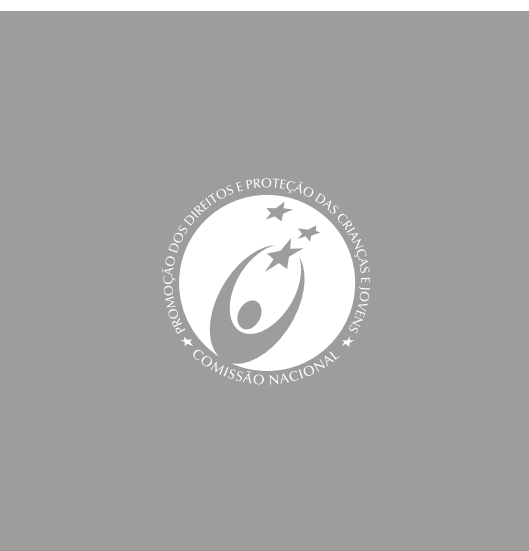




EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITY OF THE LOCAL COMMISSIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2024 ANNUAL REPORT





Title: Executive summary and selected highlights of the 2024 Annual Report

Revision: CNPDPCJ

Page layout: CNPDPCJ

Cover design: CNPDPCJ

ISSN: 2184-559X

May 2025

National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection
of Children and Young People (CNPDPJ)

[information in English available at <https://www.cnpdpcj.gov.pt/about-us>]

Praça de Londres, n.º 2 – 2.º

1049-056 Lisboa

Tel. (+351) 300 509 717 | 300 509 738

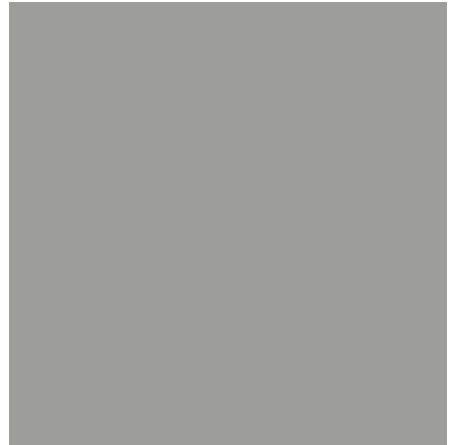
E-mail: apoio.presidencia@cnpdpcj.pt

Website www.cnpdpcj.gov.pt

Facebook www.facebook.com/CNPDPJ

Instagram www.instagram.com/cnpdpcj

Youtube www.youtube.com/c/CNPDPJ



The 2024 annual report on the evaluation of the activity of the local Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCJ) reflects, once again, the commitment of the CPCJ to collect and report the essential data to understand the preventive and protective activities of the second level of intervention of the promotion and protection system.

The reality stated in this document - abridged in the executive summary - regarding the situations of danger monitored through the intervention of the CPCJ does not differ substantially from the trends revealed by the data collected in the most recent years.

From the outset, these data contribute importantly to understanding a very relevant part of the reality of children and young people and their family in what concerns the situations of danger, as well as to a critical analysis of the possible responses of the promotion and protection system to those situations and of the actual responses provided.

All these elements, to which the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People is attentive, reinforce the sense of its mission to promote a transversal, systemic and holistic quality intervention in the joint search for the realization of a Culture of the Child as an Autonomous Subject of Rights.

The analysis of this report shows an increase in the number of children accompanied by the CPCJ in 2024 and of the reports of situations of danger.

For this reason, and for all that the figures reveal, we thank and are grateful to all the professionals of the CPCJ for their commitment, professionalism and dedication to the effective promotion and protection of children's rights.

We also thank the Technical Team of the National Commission for everything it does in articulation with the local Commissions and other entities involved in the promotion and protection system.

May the data let us continue to draw attention to the thousands of children in danger in our country and to the importance of not staying indifferent to the situations around us, since we all can and shall be active in promoting and protecting their rights, because, as a matter of fact, #Protecting Children is everyone's responsibility.

EXECUTIVE



SUMMARY

THE CPCJ

In 2024, 305 out of 308 municipalities of Portugal had (a) local CPCJ. Since the CPCJ of Mora was set up, but the publication of the ordinance regarding its establishment was still being awaited, its data did not feed into this report. The municipalities of Montemor-o-Novo and Arraiolos, in the district of Évora, do not have a Commission yet. Therefore, this report includes the data of **312 CPCJ**.

The analysis of the **composition and representation of the entities** that integrate the CPCJ shows that only 85 of them (27%) operated with a full composition, which includes representatives of: the municipality, the social security, education and health sectors, private institutions of social security, non-governmental organizations (NGO), the Institute for the Employment and Vocational Training, parents' associations, sports and cultural associations, the Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth and the security forces.

In total, only 4.111 of the 4.611 members who should be part of the CPCJ were actually appointed, leaving a **deficit of 500 members** in the local Commissions.

It shall be noted that 182 CPCJ co-opted a total of 417 additional members from the civil society.

The CPCJ had a total of **4.528 members**, **2.695 of which (59,5%)** carried out **preventive duties** exclusively and **1.833 (40,5%) accumulated protective duties**. In terms of technical training, 20,6% of the members had a degree in education, 18,2% in social service, 10,8% in psychology, 8% in health, 5,4% in law and 3,3% in sociology. The remaining members (33,7%) had training backgrounds in a variety of other areas.

In 2024, **117 members were part of more than one CPCJ** by indication of their organization of origin, with the sector of social security standing out with 41 representatives performing duties in multiple local Commissions.

PREVENTIVE ACTIVITY AND OF THE PROMOTION OF RIGHTS

In 2024, the CPCJ carried out **3.320 initiatives** aimed at preventing situations of risk or danger and at promoting children's rights.

Among these initiatives, **1.374 (53,3%) were part of the celebration of European or international ephemeris**, such as the anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, on November 20, which was marked in 341 events and involved 196.968 participants, including 38.215 children and young people. The Day for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, marked annually on 18 November, mobilized 67.549 participants in 88 events.

The campaign April - Month for the Prevention of Child Ill-Treatment was implemented through 115 events organized by the CPCJ, involving a total of 1.147.321 participants, of which 82.375 were children and young people.

In what concerns the functioning of the CPCJ, **128 CPCJ have fulfilled the legal obligation to hold at least 12 meetings per year**, with 99,1% of members dedicated to their duties exactly eight hours a month. Of the 312 CPCJ, **98,7% have internal regulations duly approved**, and **301 CPCJ have drawn up and approved their activity plan** for 2024.

The analysis of the 2024 Activity Plan reveals the significant effort of the CPCJ to implement and evaluate a wide

range of initiatives. Of the **3.320 actions registered by the CPCJ**, **2.560 were foreseen in the annual plan**, mostly within the scope of the preventive dimension of their action.

PROTECTIVE ACTIVITY

In 2024, the CPCJ received 58.436 communications of situations of danger, which represents an increase of 6,7%, a lesser increase than in previous years.

The **Security Forces [National Republican Guard (GNR), the Public Security Police (PSP), and the Portuguese Criminal Investigation Police (PJ)]** are the entities that reported most situations of children in danger, corresponding to 42% of the total of reports received by the CPCJ, followed by the Educational Establishments, which were responsible for 18,5% of the reports at stake.

Anonymous communications accounted for 10,6% of the global number of communications, an upward trend also shown as regards the community, neighbours and private individuals, followed by the family members of the child themselves, including parents.

As of the contact methods with the CPCJ, **the majority of the reports were made in written form**.

The distribution of communications by sex of the child or young person is relatively uniform. Girls are the focus of 45,3% of the reports while boys are the subject in 54,7 %.

As of the **distribution by age groups**, 16.045 communications (27,5%) referred to children aged 15 to 18, 14.843 reports (25,4%) focused on children aged 11 to 14, 13.229 reports (22,6 %) were about children aged 0 to 5, and 13.023 communications (22,3%) referred to children aged 6 to 10.

A single communication of a child in danger may encompass more than one category of danger. In other words, a single communication may alert the CPCJ that the same child is facing a situation in which it is exposed to several categories of danger. This explains why a total of **58.436 communications received by the CPCJ in 2024 corresponded to 64.851 situations of danger**.

In 2024, **Neglect** was the category of danger that was most reported, with 19.107 cases, accounting for 30,4% of the total of communications received, followed by Domestic Violence, with 17.295 cases communicated, corresponding to 27,5% of the total, representing a decrease of 1,6% compared to the communications of this category of danger received in 2023.

Reports regarding **Behaviours of Danger in Childhood and Youth** increased in 2024, with 11.795 cases, representing 18,8% of the total. There were 7.246 cases (11,5%) concerning the category of danger Right to Education.

The number of communications regarding **Physical Maltreatment** increased to 3.282, representing 5,2% of the total. There were 1.981 communications concerning **Psychological Maltreatment**, accounting for 3,2% of the total.

The category of danger **Sexual Abuse** originated 1.329 communications (2,1%), representing an increase of 67 communications in comparison with 2023.

There were 702 reports of **Abandonment**, which represents 1,1% of the total.

Regarding **Child Labour Exploitation**, a subcategory of the category of danger Child Exploitation, the percentual account remained unchanged at 0,1%, despite the fact that there were an additional 39 reports in 2024 in comparison with 2023. As of the category of danger **Child Coming from a Context of Armed Conflict**, there was a decrease of 9 communications compared to 2023.

The restricted format of the CPCJ is responsible for deciding on whether to open and conduct the Process of

Promotion and Protection (PPP) and for making a preliminary assessment of the situations of which the CPCJ is aware, and may decide the immediate closure of the case when there is a clear absence of the need to intervene.

In addition, the CPCJ must ensure that it has the territorial jurisdiction to intervene (*i.e.*, that it operates in the area of residence of the child at stake) and that the principle of subsidiarity is observed, namely by checking out the existence of an active process regarding the same child, either in a CPCJ or in a Court. Thus, the communications received by a CPCJ may: lead to the opening of a new PPP; be incorporated into an existing one; or result in the reopening of a process, should a previous one have been filed at the CPCJ and not been sent to the Court.

In 2024, the **CPCJ decided not to pursue the intervention in 8.799 cases** upon the analysis of the corresponding communication.

The majority of cases in which the intervention of the CPCJ has ceased at this point are **closed outright and remain within the CPCJ**, corresponding to 4.587 cases (52,1%).

The main ground for the **closure of the case by the CPCJ** was the lack of legitimacy for intervention, within the scope of Article 3 of the Law for the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger ([Law no. 147/99, of September 1](#), and subsequent amendments. Other grounds included: in 636 cases (7,2%), the existence of a PPP in another CPCJ; in 370 cases (4,2%), the unduly opening of the case due to incorrect information in the referral; and, in 367 cases (4,2%), the moving of the child/young person abroad.

On the other hand, **3.041 processes (34,6%) were forwarded by the CPCJ to the Court**, which corresponds to a significant part of the total. The main grounds for the CPCJ to cease the intervention and forward the case to the Court included: in 1.551 processes (17,6%), Joinder to Judicial Proceedings under the terms of Article 81; and, 1.052 processes, (12%), the referral to Court due to Prior Existence of Judicial PPP, under the terms of Article 78. Other, less frequent, grounds included: in 216 cases (2,5%), the request of the Public Prosecutor in the situations provided for in Article 11(2), under proposal of the CPCJ; and, in 137 cases (1,6%), the referral to the Public Prosecutor – cases of sexual abuse in the situations provided for in Article 11(b).

There were **1.171 processes (13,3%)** that, at this stage, were forwarded or returned the intervention to an **entity with competence in matters of childhood and youth** (first line of intervention, *e.g.*, schools, health, social security): 792 cases (9%) involved forwarding the intervention under the terms set out in Article 8, while 379 cases (4,3%) corresponded to returning the process to an entity with competence in matters of childhood and youth that integrates the first line of intervention in the protection of children, under the provisions of Article 7.

As a result of the analysis of the communications received, 1.013 processes were also transferred due to the lack of territorial competence of the CPCJ that received the report (due to the fact that the residency of the child at stake lies within the area of territorial jurisdiction of another CPCJ) or due to the existence of an active process regarding the same child in another CPCJ, although, in the later case, it is not a closure of the process, but a transfer to the CPCJ with territorial competence to intervene in the protection of the child.

The CPCJ decided to open or reopen 47.712 PPP since their intervention was legitimized under the terms set out in Article 3 of the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger, *i.e.*, given that the circumstances that would, directly or indirectly, expose the child to behaviours that affect seriously the child's safety or emotional balance [Article 3(2)(f)].

The second situation that was mentioned the most is provided for in Article 3(2)(g), *i.e.*, the child "behaves or engages in activities or consumptions that harm seriously the child's health, safety, training, education or development and the parents, legal representative or other adult that has the *de facto* guardianship of the child do not oppose adequately to prevent that situation.

Once the conduction of the process is decided, it moves on to the stage of Assessment and Diagnosis and is

assigned to a case manager, who will be responsible for elaborating a report with the diagnosis of the situation of the child and a technical opinion on how to proceed from that point on. Some situations may take place that make it impossible for the CPCJ to complete their assessment and diagnosis, thus making the intervention of the CPCJ cease in the Assessment and Diagnosis phase, which happened in **11.550 cases**.

At this procedural phase, **2.292 processes were closed**, corresponding to 19,8% since the CPCJ was no longer competent to intervene, namely due to reasons such as: the child/young person moved abroad; emancipation of the young person; death of the child/young person; and the fact that the young person who was the subject of the intervention reached the age of majority and did not request the continuation of the intervention.

Of the total number of processes that ended at this procedural stage, in **9.258 PPP (80,2%)**, the **intervention ceased due to the forwarding of the process to the Public Prosecutor/Court**.

Once the diagnosis had been completed, the CPCJ decided that **13.373 children and young people were in need of a Promotion and Protection Measure (PPM)**. Children aged 15 to 17 were applied most of the measures, followed by children aged 11 to 14, then children aged 0 to 5, followed by children aged 6 to 10 and, finally, young people aged 18 to 21.

In comparison with the totals of 2023, **there was a decrease of 911 children and young people whose situation was diagnosed with the need for the application of a PPM**.

The need to apply a measure to protect the child is associated with one or more situations of danger the child is in, which the measure is intended to remove. **Neglect** was the category of danger that was most diagnosed, corresponding to 5.123 cases and accounting for 33% of the communications received by the CPCJ. **Domestic violence** assumes the second position, diagnosed in 3.969 cases, corresponding to 25,5% of the total.

The third category of danger most diagnosed was **Dangerous Behaviours in Childhood and Youth**, in 2.853 cases (18,4%). The **Right to Education** was compromised in 2.441 situations reported (15,7%). The categories **Physical maltreatment** and **Psychological maltreatment** are less common, and were diagnosed in 431 (2,8%) and 357 (2,3%) cases, respectively.

The categories **Sexual Abuse** and **Abandonment** show up in a smaller number of situations, corresponding to 204 (1,3%) and 159 (1%) cases, respectively. **Child Labour Exploitation** is the rarest situation of danger, with only 0,1% of the total cases.

It is therefore important to have a better understanding of the specific situations of danger diagnosed, namely, and whenever possible, through the subcategories provided for each of the categories, as well as by analyzing the most relevant values in terms of the age and gender of the children and young people in danger.

Within the category of danger **Neglect**, the **lack of family supervision and accompaniment** was the prevailing subcategory, representing 28%, of the total cases concerning **Neglect**, followed by the subcategories **neglect in health care**, **neglect in educational care**, **psycho-affective neglect**, and **exposure to alcohol and drug consumption**.

Serious Neglect was diagnosed in 446 cases, accounting for 9% of the total. Since this category of danger is a crime, it is mandatory that the CPCJ reports it to the competent judicial authorities, should the CPCJ diagnose it.

The analysis of the incidence of the category of danger **Neglect** in face of the age group and sex of the child made it possible to conclude that the incidence of neglect is inversely proportional to the age, with higher rates among younger children, and lower rates as children get older.

Domestic Violence is another category of danger whose incidence is inversely proportional to the age of the child, showing a higher incidence among younger children. In other words, the incidence decreases as the age

of children increases.

The analysis of data regarding **Dangerous Behaviour in Childhood and Youth** shows that **serious antisocial behaviour and/or indiscipline prevails, accounting for 45,9%** of the cases. The incidence of dangerous behaviour in childhood and youth varies significantly according to the age group and the sex of the children.

There were **2.441 situations of dangerous behaviour affecting the right of children and young people to education. School absenteeism** is the prevailing situation, accounting for 78,2%. **School failure and school drop out** show significantly lower percentages.

Data on **Physical Maltreatment** are available for the subcategories of physical assault and corporal punishment only. The CPCJ registered 230 cases of physical assault and 201 cases of corporal punishment.

In a detailed overview of the incidence of **Psychological Maltreatment**, divided in several subcategories, it can be seen that the most frequent subcategory is deprivation of emotional relationships and of social contact, which represents 24,9% of the total, followed by: harassment and threats, belittlement/humiliation, abuse of authority, non-corporal punishment that affects the well-being and integrity of the child, incitement of the child to behave in a manner contrary to moral and social values, and discrimination.

Sexual abuse was identified in 204 cases, accounting for a lower percentage of the total number of situations diagnosed in 2024. The analysis of the subcategories of sexual grooming, sexual harassment and rape or other sexual acts reveals distinct patterns of incidence according to the age and the sex of the child.

Regarding the category **Abandonment**, 101 cases of **temporary absence of family support** or other support make it the prevailing situation. The incidence of **abandonment** in childhood and youth varies according to the age and the sex of the child.

There were 10 cases of **Child Exploitation**, distributed per subcategory as follows: 4 cases regarding the practice of begging, 3 cases of the use of children in the practice of begging and 3 cases concerning the exploitation of child labour.

Whenever it is necessary to ensure the safety of the child while the CPCJ assesses the situation of the child or young person, the CPCJ may apply a precautionary measure. In 2024, **1.032 children and young people benefited from the application of 1.037 precautionary measures.**

The characterization by sex and age group reveals that most precautionary measures regarded male children, mainly aged 0 to 5 years old. The analysis of the type of the precautionary measures that were implemented reveals that 935 (90,2%) were measures applied in the natural living environment and 102 were placement measures (9,8%).

Of the 935 measures in the natural living environment, 698 were measures of support with parents, 207 were measures of support with another family member, 29 measures of entrustment to a suitable person, and one measure of support to autonomous living.

On the other hand, even though at a small scale, placement measures have been implemented in situations in which it is deemed unsafe or inadequate for the child to remain in the family environment. This corresponded to 12 measures of placement in foster care, and 90 measures of placement in residential care.

The CPCJ concluded the diagnostic of 29.295 cases, 15.922 of which without proposal of implementation of PPM by the technical manager, leading to the decision of the restricted format of the CPCJ to consider the inexistence of danger in the cases at stake. In the remaining situations, the implementation of a PPM was proposed and duly justified in the assessment report produced by the technical manager, thus forwarding the case to the deliberation and contractualization phase.

The phase that lies between the decision of the restricted format of the CPCJ to implement a measure and its contractualization and conclusion of the agreement is called **Deliberation and Contractualization**.

The **13.373 children whose need for PPM was ascertained were subject to the implementation of 13.813 PPM**, with 13.106 measures in the natural living environment prevailing (94,9%) over the others.

In 2024, 707 placement measures (5,1%) were implemented. The measures of placement in Residential Care decreased from 688 (4,8%) in 2023 to 611 (4,4%) in 2024. This represents a decrease of 7,15%, if percentages are to be taken.

On the other hand, the implementation of measures of Placement in Foster Care increased a significant 73,8%, having risen from 53 in 2023 to 96 in 2024. Nevertheless, its representativeness against the backdrop of the total number of PPM implemented is still low, having risen from 0,4% to 0,7%.

The analysis of the data reveals that **domestic violence** and **neglect due to the lack of supervision and monitoring by the family** are the most frequent situations of danger leading to the implementation of measures by the CPCJ.

Domestic violence is particularly prevalent in measures of support with the parents and other family members, while neglect due to lack of supervision and monitoring by the family is common to all measures.

Serious anti-social and/or undisciplined behaviours are a significant cause underlying the implementation of PPM of placement in residential care.

In 2024, **the articulation between the local Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People and other entities regarding the implementation of promotion and protection measures** shows some changes in comparison with 2023.

Upon a diagnosis of danger, the objective is to remove it. Therefore, the domain of life affected by the danger must be included in the plan to implement the measure, particularly its extent and the concrete actions that will be taken to remove it.

The domain that is most represented is that of the Developmental needs of the child/young person, accounting for 43,1% of the actions. The domain at stake includes several essential areas for the healthy development of the child, such as education (33,3%), emotional and behavioural development (28%), health (15,4%), family and social relationships (13,2%), capacity for autonomy (5,5%), identity (2,6%) and social presentation (2,1%).

The domain that is represented in second place is Parenting Skills, which covers 42,9% of the actions. It includes stability (23,9%), the establishment of rules and boundaries (23,6%), basic care (20,8%), safety (15,7%), affection (9,1%) and stimulation (7%).

The domain represented in the third position is Family and Ecological Factors, which regards 14% of the actions. It includes housing conditions (29,7%), professional situation (17,9%), family income (15,5%), social and family integration (14,9%), extended family (11,2%) and community resources (10,9%).

The CPCJ decided to terminate their intervention during the Deliberation and Contractualization phase in 17.360 cases by closing 16.045 cases on several grounds, of which the prevalent ones are highlighted: in 10.867 cases due to the fact that the Situation of Danger no longer exists, and in 4.644 cases because the Situation of Danger is not confirmed.

The CPCJ ceased their intervention in 1.315 cases and forwarded them to the judicial level, mainly due to the Absence of a Promotion and Protection Agreement and to the Withdrawal of Consent for Intervention.

In 2024, the CPCJ **accompanied 27.215 children and young people who were subject to a PPM**, which corre-

sponds to a total of 27.703 cases, as a result of the flow (transfer) of cases between CPCJ and of the fact that a child or young person might have had their case reopened more than once.

In terms of the age distribution of the children who were subject to PPM, most of them – 7.427, *i.e.*, 27,3% – are aged 15 to 17, followed by 6.553 (*i.e.*, 24,1%) aged 11 to 14.

Regarding the distribution by sex in all age groups, there is a tendency for more boys to be subject to PPM than girls. There were 14.691 boys, which accounted for 54% of the total. The difference is greater in the group of children aged 15-17, which counts 641 more boys than girls.

In addition, considering as well that the same child may be subject to more than one measure in the same year as a result of the review and replacement of measures, **these children and young people were subject to a total of 31.671 PPM** in 2024, a greater number than that ascertained in 2023.

The measure Placement in Foster Care increased from 0,4% in 2023 to 0,5% in 2024. On the other hand, the measure Placement in Residential Care decreased from 6,9% in 2023 to 6,4% in 2024.

In terms of pre-school education and school attendance, most children and young people monitored by the CPCJ are in the educational situation expected for their age group. Considering children aged 0 to 5, the majority attends nurseries or pre-school establishments.

Concerning the **Nationality of the 27.215 children and young people monitored** by the CPCJ, 23.773 (87,4%) were Portuguese and 3.442 (12,6%) were foreign nationals.

According to the replies to the annual survey, 1.053 (3,9%) children and young people monitored by the CPCJ had some kind of disability or impairment. Mental or intellectual disability and language impairments were the conditions most commonly reported.

The CPCJ also identified 346 children or young people who had **a case pending in court in parallel with the CPCJ proceedings**. Regarding these, it shall be highlighted that 305 children (88,4%) were subjects in civil guardianship proceedings [with a focus on the regulation of the exercise of parental responsibilities (matters such as regular visits, alimony, among others)], and 40 children (11,6%) were involved in educational guardianship proceedings.

As of the household in which the children accompanied by the CPCJ live and the main caregivers, 45.963 children (94,5%) are cared for by their biological/adoptive family. There were 2.024 children (4,2%) who lived in families with whom they shared kinship ties, 360 children (0,7%) were cared for by their legal representatives/person with the *de facto* responsibility, and 213 children (0,4%) were living in families with whom they had no kinship ties. These figures remained practically unchanged in comparison with 2023.

The **profile of the caregivers of children and young people** monitored by CPCJ in 2024 is predominantly female, aged between 35 and 44. Most have secondary education and are employed. Their income derives mainly from work and most live in flats or apartments. This profile reflects a family structure in which care responsibilities are mostly assigned to women of working age, with a level of education that is appropriate to their age group and with a relatively stable situation at the financial level.

In 2024, the CPCJ determined the termination of 12.700 cases with ongoing measures, of which 8.857 were closed by the CPCJ.

In 7.782 cases (61,3%), the closure resulted from the fact that the danger no longer existed. In 6.401 cases of these, the danger was removed before the measure reached its due end, while in 1.381 cases, the danger no longer existed by the end of the measure's term.

A total of **3.843 cases (30,25%) were forwarded to the judicial level**, either by referral to the Public Prosecutor's

Office or to the Court, of which 3.191 cases due to the lack of legitimacy of the CPCJ to continue its intervention as a result of the: withdrawal of consent and non-opposition to the intervention; non-acceptance regarding the implementation of a new measure proposed upon the review of the measure that was being implemented; or, most frequently, failure to comply with the actions set out in the Agreement.

The CPCJ approved two **Civil sponsorship** commitments in the year under review.

In 2024, the CPCJ ceased their intervention and referred the case to the Public Prosecutor's Office by means of an **Urgent Procedure in 255 cases**.

In 2024, **121 children and young people** were the focus of **requests for international intervention** received by the CPCJ in 2024, which represents a decrease in comparison with the total of 141 in 2023. France continues to rank first as the country from/to which most children targeted in requests for international intervention come/go.

Concerning the procedural movement by procedural phase during 2024, the CPCJ handled a total of 89.008 Promotion and Protection Proceedings (PPP), which represents an increase of 5,5% over 2023.

Of these, 34.301 cases were carried over from 2023, while 54.707 cases were initiated in 2024. Among the cases initiated in 2024, 9.002 resulted from the reopening of previous cases while 45.705 were new ones. There were 86.023 cases whose handling did not involve their transfer between CPCJ on the grounds of territorial jurisdiction.

Phase of Assessment and Diagnosis: in addition to the 45.421 cases regarding which an inquiry was conducted, there were 17.174 that had been carried over from 2023, which were already in the stage of assessment and diagnosis. Of the total 62.595 cases, there were 18.854 whose assessment was awaiting completion, 11.550 were filed or referred to the Court without a complete assessment, and 32.191 proceeded to the phase of Deliberation and Contractualization.

Phase of Deliberation and Contractualization: adding to the 1.593 cases that were under deliberation and contractualization phase in the beginning of 2024, there were 32.191 that entered this phase during the year, making up a total of 33.784 cases. Of these, 17.360 were closed due to dismissal or referral, and 2.294 were awaiting deliberation by the CPCJ. A total of 14.130 cases moved on to the phase of implementation (execution and monitoring).

Phase of Execution and Monitoring: in the beginning of 2024, there were 13.573 cases in the execution and monitoring phase by the CPCJ, in addition to the 14.130 cases that entered in execution in 2024, totalling 27.703 cases monitored in the context of the implementation of a measure. The CPCJ ceased intervention at this stage **in 12.700 cases, while 11.804 cases remained in execution and monitoring**.

In 2024, **50.409 cases were closed**, representing 56,6% of the cases handled, while **35.400 cases remained active and were carried over to 2025**.

The participation of children and young people in cultural, artistic or advertising activities is legally regulated, in a way which gives the CPCJ the power to authorize or reject such participation. In 2024, 86 authorization requests were submitted to the CPCJ, a decrease compared to the 101 requests handled in 2023. Of the CPCJ that received requests, most – 13 – are located in the District of Lisbon, followed by Porto and other districts.

The analysis of data of 2024 reveals that around 60% of the children authorized to participate in cultural, artistic or advertising activities are girls, with a predominance of children in the first Cycle of Basic Education and Pre-school Education. The activities took place mainly during school terms and school holidays - a distinction required by law, since different kinds of needs have to be fulfilled according to the features of each period at stake -, with most lasting an average 1 to 6 months.

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING

In terms of logistical, financial, and administrative support, municipalities have partially fulfilled their responsibility to provide the necessary resources and facilities for the CPCJ to function. Although many resources are adequate, there are still areas that need significant improvement to ensure that all CPCJ can perform their duties effectively and efficiently, in line with the minimum criteria defined by the CNPDPCJ.

IT Resources and Communications: many CPCJs face deficiencies in equipment such as computers, printers, and internet access.

Facilities and Accessibility: the accessibility to the premises of the CPCJ is a significant problem, since 108 CPCJ are not adapted for the access of people with reduced mobility and 165 CPCJ do not have adequate areas for hearings. In addition, 70 CPCJ do not have a space adapted for children and young people.

Logistical Support: there are gaps in logistical support, such as a lack of office supplies and adequate furniture, which affects the service provided in 27 CPCJ. In addition, 24 CPCJ do not have insurance for their members and 11 CPCJ do not have vehicles.

SUPPORT TO THE CPCJ

The analysis of the articulation between the CPCJ and entities with competences in matters of childhood and youth reveal that the Security Forces stand out due to their collaboration with all 312 CPCJ, achieving an effectiveness rate of 99,7%. All CPCJ articulate with schools, with an effectiveness rate of 98,4%. Articulation with municipalities was considered 98,1% effective. There were 293 CPCJ which articulated with Private Institutions of Social Security (IPSS) with an effectiveness rate of 98%.

The effectiveness rate of the articulation between the CPCJ and: Social Security was 97,7%; Parishes was 97,3%; and Sports and Recreational Associations was 92,4%. The Health Services articulated with 311 CPCJ, achieving an effectiveness rate of 90,7%. The articulation with Parents' Associations had an effectiveness rate of 87,1%. The articulation between the CPCJ and Youth Associations was considered to be 84,3% effective.

Still regarding the articulation with entities with competences in matters of childhood and youth, 70 CPCJ (22,4%) reported having experienced difficulties or constraints, which represents an increase regarding the 17,36% ascertained in 2023.



The nature of the difficulties and/or constraints reported by the CPCJ with the several entities include:

- With the Ministry of Health: lack of responses; delays and difficulties in communication; coordination and representation issues; and lack of resources and procedures in the area of mental health.
- With the Ministry of Education: lack of responses; delays and difficulties in communication; coordination and representation issues; and lack of resources and procedures.
- With the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security: lack of specialized positions; difficulty integrating young people in residential care; lack of representation; limited number of vacancies in day-care and pre-school establishments, difficulties regarding rules and access to housing; and difficulties with telephone service and support to intervention.
- With the Municipalities: difficulties with administrative support; absence of representation; constraints with transport availability; difficulties in operational support, collaboration in facilities, housing, and school meals; failure to comply with the assignment time of the representatives; limitations in social action responses, compliance with actions in Integration Contracts; non-compliance with internal regulations, and insufficient social responses.
- With the Private Institutions of Social Solidarity (IPSS) that provide responses of non-residential nature: lack of compliance with the assignment time of the representatives; delays or lack of response to requests for information; unavailability of representatives; and slow response times in following-up referred cases.
- With the Parents' Associations: absence of representation; failure to fulfil the requirement of 8 monthly hours of effective work at the CPCJ; and low adherence and participation in the proposed activities.
- With the National Republican Guard (GNR): lack of reporting to the CPCJ, which leads to the latter learning about certain incidents via the Public Prosecutor's Office; inadequate information on reports; difficulty in understanding the role of the CPCJ; failure to fulfil the requirement of 8 monthly hours of effective work at the CPCJ; lack of training in the area of promotion and protection; specific situations of being excused in the action requested by schools in cases of absenteeism/dropout; and lack of data collection regarding parents and children in most cases.
- With the Public Security Police (PSP): information provided in the referrals is often insufficient; difficulty in accessing case files at an early stage of the promotion and protection process; lack of reporting to the CPCJ, which leads to the latter learning about certain incidents via the Public Prosecutor's Office.
- With the IPSS/non-governmental organizations that provide responses of residential nature: difficulties in the articulation on decision-making; lack of response to the reception of young people; unavailability of vacancies; representation only in the meetings of the extended format of the CPCJ; absence of representation in the restricted format of the CPCJ; and lack of responses to the implementation of measures of placement in residential care in the municipality of Lisbon.

- With Youth Associations and the Portuguese Institute for Sports and Youth: absence of representation; and failure to fulfil the requirement of 8 monthly hours of effective work at the CPCJ.
- With the Portuguese Institute for Employment and Vocational Training: absence of representation for a long period of time; lack of attendance of the meetings; lack of communication; failure to fulfil the requirement of 8 monthly hours of effective work at the CPCJ; unavailability of eligible responses for children who have not completed the 9th grade under the age of 18.

Despite the constraints, the reported highlights the ability of the CPCJ to liaise effectively with various entities in pursuing the aim to ensure the promotion and protection of children and young people.

MONITORING OF THE CPCJ

The CNPDPCJ is composed of an Operational Technical Team (ETO) and five Regional Technical Teams (ETR), each of which is responsible for monitoring the CPCJ of a particular region of the country. The ETO encompasses areas such as legal support, training and communication, which are essential for the functioning of the CPCJ. In 2024, **301 of the 312 CPCJ assessed their articulation with the CNPDPCJ as “Positive”**, with 156 CPCJ considering this coordination to be “Very Positive”.

The CPCJ that assessed the articulation with the CNPDPCJ as “Insufficient” mentioned several issues, such as the lack of effective response to requests, insufficient local monitoring and team training, and communication problems, such as delayed replies to e-mails and calls.

Of the 312 CPCJ, 227 did not point out areas for improvement, but 85 CPCJ **suggested improvements in the clarity and availability of the information**. Other suggestions include: closer monitoring with regular meetings, effective response to problems of lack of human resources, and standardization of procedures.

The ETR were created to strengthen the articulation between the CNPDPCJ and the CPCJ, holding regional meetings and follow-up meetings. In 2024, 95,5% of the CPCJ established contacts with the one ETR that is competent to provide support in their territorial area, thus highlighting the importance of the ETR for effective monitoring.

The training provided by the CNPDPCJ includes courses on the CPCJ protection and management system, with a total of 2.088 participants in 2024. The courses cover a wide range of areas, from the legal framework to team management, with the aim of building the capacity of CPCJ members.



THE LOCAL COMMISSIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (CPCJ)

“Together, in a democratic assumption of our respective roles, in accordance with the spirit of solidarity and service that the Promotion and Protection System presupposes and demands, we will certainly succeed in overcoming or reducing the serious difficulties of the present and, by promoting and defending tirelessly, without discouragement, the best interests of each child, we will be able to root justified hope in an increasingly fulfilled future, in which exclusion is overcome by the effective, fair and, as far as possible, happy inclusion of our children” (Leandro, 2011).

THE PROTECTION SYSTEM Brief Overview

The central axis of the entire Promotion and Protection System is the acknowledgement of children as subjects of rights – holders of human rights, based on their inalienable and inviolable dignity. Children are granted full citizenship that is not affected by their inability to exercise personally certain rights, which requires parents or other legal representatives to meet that need.

In addition to numerous Recommendations drawn up within the scope of the United Nations and the Council of Europe, one should highlight from amongst the most significant expressions of the reinforcement of the affirmation of the child as an autonomous subject of rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, adopted by

the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1959, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, approved in 1989 and ratified by Portugal on September 12, 1990, with direct application in the Portuguese legal framework regarding the aspects whose implementation does not require the intervention of the national legislators.

Historically, it is important to recall that the first initiative taken in Portugal to protect children and young people by administrative means dates back to the reform of the Jurisdictional Organisation of Minors carried out in 1978. These protection committees or, more precisely, Centres for Observation and Social Action (COAS) were responsible for applying and enforcing protection measures, whose content was identical to that of the precautionary measures determined by the courts, although COAS were only intended to protect children aged below 12. By that time, the different backgrounds of the members of the COAS already showed care for a diverse range of specific knowledge to be brought into the forum, as each COAS was composed by a psychologist, a lawyer, a social security professional and a representative associated with the areas of education and culture.

In 1983, the Centre for Judicial Studies (CEJ), which was created in 1979, established a Permanent Group for the Analysis of Issues regarding Minors. Its contribution for the creation and implementation of Commissions for the Protection of Minors (CPM) was decisive to the point that, under the terms of Article 23 of the Law No. 189/91, of May 17 - which regulates the creation, competences and functioning of these commissions -, it was assigned the periodical evaluation of their work, one of the most important roles in the process.

The provisions of the Law No. 189/91 entailed the possibility of creating or gradually establishing CPM in all districts of the country. In the CPM, the Public Prosecutor's Office had a central, direct role in coordinating and implementing protection measures. The Public Prosecutor's Office was responsible for many of the decisions and interventions deemed necessary to protect children in danger.

In 1997, through the Resolution of Council of Ministers No. 193/97, of November 3, the interministerial and interinstitutional process for the reform of the system for protecting children and young people in danger began, based on the legal reform and on the institutional framework, among other aspects.

The legal reform advocated the drafting of a law to protect children and young people in danger and the reform of the legal framework of the Commissions for the Protection of Minors.

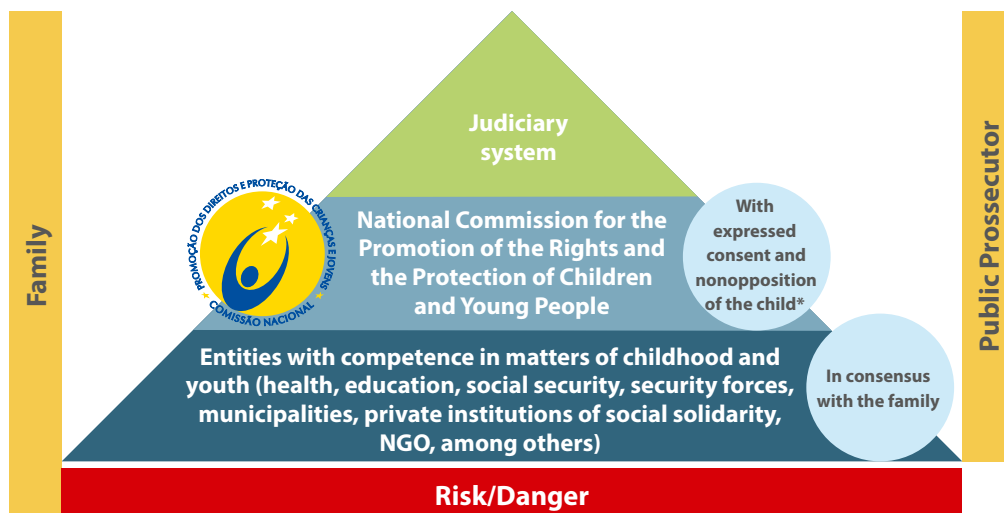
Within the scope of the institutional framework, aiming generically to the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the intervention of the State and of society in the protection of children and young people in danger, the creation of the National Commission for the Protection of Children and Young People at Risk was foreseen.

Thus, the Government committed to cover the country with Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCJ), which would involve restructuring the Commissions for the Protection of Minors (CPM) into Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCJ) and creating new Commissions.

Finally, in 1999, the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger was published as an annex to the [Law No. 147/99, of September 1](#).

This Law is a clear example of how this promotion of rights is enshrined in the law and is a requirement. The intervention under the provisions of the law at stake is carried out in accordance with the well-known principle of subsidiarity (*cf.* Articles 4(j), 8, 11, 67 and 68), *i.e.*, the principle of the primacy of informal and local intervention (first-line intervention by entities with competences in matters of childhood and youth, followed by CPCJ at the second level of intervention and the court at the top level of pyramid that represents the system - see Figure 1).

Figure 1 | The pyramid of subsidiarity: the graphic representation of the Portuguese Promotion and Protection System



The principle of subsidiarity is essentially based on the observation that intervention of a more informal nature involves less risk of stigmatization and easily promotes synergies and responsibilities among the community. It implies an integrated model of intervention, with no overlaps, and requires a culture of responsibility.

Regarding intervention, the entities with competences in matters of childhood and youth stand on the first level of response, namely: municipalities; parishes; education, health and social security services; non-governmental organizations, private institutions of social solidarity, among others. Provided that it is agreed with the parents, legal representative or person who has *de facto* custody of the child or young person, the first-line intervention must be carried out with the resources of the entities involved and, where appropriate, in partnership with other entities and in compliance with the principles of intervention set out in Article 4 of the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger.

The **Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCJ)** stand on the **second level of intervention**.

According to the current concept, the CPCJ are a tool for local intervention, at the municipal level, constituting non-judicial entities with functional autonomy, composed by representatives of the municipality, public services and civil society, with responsibilities and possibilities to intervene in the area of the promotion and the protection of children's rights, while deciding with impartiality and competence. The CPCJ were created in 1991 (Decree-Law No. 189/91, of May 17), and were deeply reshaped by Law No. 147/99, of September 1, which defined their current model.

The aforementioned law established that the CPCJ are **entities with functional autonomy**, which means that they have greater independence in decision-making and in implementing protective measures, leaving the magistrate of the Public Prosecutor's Office with a supervisory role, aimed at overseeing the decisions of the CPCJ while ensuring that children's rights are respected.

The **extended format of the CPCJ**, in articulation with the social network and other community projects, is endowed with the role of promoting a policy of primary prevention, which is essential for a qualitative leap forward. This is key within a culture of acknowledgement and realization of children's rights, compatible with the civilizational challenges of the today's era and, therefore, indispensable for the future of every community.

The **restricted format** of the CPCJ acts to protect and defend children in situations of danger, in a timely manner. The intervention of the CPCJ depends on the express consent of the parents, legal representative or person who has the *de facto* custody of the child, and also on the non-opposition of the child or young person aged 12 or over 12. The opposition of children aged below 12 is relevant, should they demonstrate the capacity to understand the meaning of the intervention (Articles 9 and 10 of the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger).

The principle that each community is responsible for its children and young people, that this responsibility is shared by families, the central government and the civil society, and that the community has, within itself, sufficient energy and capacity to promote and protect its children and young people, is a principle that is found among the essential pillars upon which the design and intervention of the CPCJ are built, and the source of their immense potential.

The **Courts** are at the **third and final level of intervention**, according to the **principle of subsidiarity**. As sovereign bodies, the Courts have the power to enforce measures of promotion and protection coercively, even though priority shall be given to seeking a consensual solution (*cf.* Article 110 of the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger).

COVERAGE AND TERRITORIAL COMPETENCE

The wish of the community to establish a CPCJ is officialized through the submission of a request of the municipality to the CNPDPCJ.

In 2024, 305 of the 308 municipalities in Portugal had a CPCJ in operation. In the municipality of Mora, the CPCJ has already been established, but the ordinance regarding its establishment was being awaited by the time of the elaboration of this report, hence its data is not included in the document at hand. The municipalities of Montemor-o-Novo and Arraiolos, in the district of Évora, do not have a CPCJ yet.

Thus, in 2024, there were 312 CPCJ, since some larger municipalities have more than one CPCJ, distributed throughout Portugal as follows:

- 282 in mainland Portugal;
- 19 in the Autonomous Region of the Azores;
- 11 in the Autonomous Region of Madeira.

This information can be found on the CNPDPCJ website (<https://www.cnpdpcj.gov.pt/onde-estao>), including, among other elements, contact details and addresses of each CPCJ.

The CPCJ operate within their area of territorial competence, which, according to Article 15 of the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger, corresponds to the area of the municipality where they are based. In municipalities where there is more than one CPCJ, due to the large size of the population, the area of jurisdiction of each CPCJ is divided by the parishes, as established in the ordinance of their establishment. Currently, the territorial division into parishes occurs in four municipalities, namely:

- a) Lisbon (CPCJ of Central Lisbon, CPCJ of Northern Lisbon, CPCJ of Western Lisbon and CPCJ of Eastern Lisbon);
- b) Porto (CPCJ of Central Porto, CPCJ of Western Porto and CPCJ of Eastern Porto);
- c) Sintra (CPCJ of Western Sintra and CPCJ of Eastern Sintra); and
- d) Vila Nova de Gaia (CPCJ of Northern Vila Nova de Gaia and CPCJ of Southern Vila Nova de Gaia).

Although the legislation provides for the creation of intermunicipal commissions, as provided for in Article 15(b), namely in adjacent municipalities with a smaller number of inhabitants, there is currently no CPCJ established under these terms.

COMPOSITION AND REPRESENTATION

The local nature inherent to the CPCJ, based on the idea that the community cares for its children, is reflected in their composition through interinstitutional and multidisciplinary representation, shared by public and private entities. The CPCJ are composed of members with temporary mandates, in respect for the democratic principle, who contribute to incorporate the role of the CPCJ and disseminate knowledge about the system by feeding it back to their entity of origin and to the community, thus consolidating the promotion of children's rights.

Table 1 shows the composition of the CPCJ, in accordance with Article 17 of the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger.

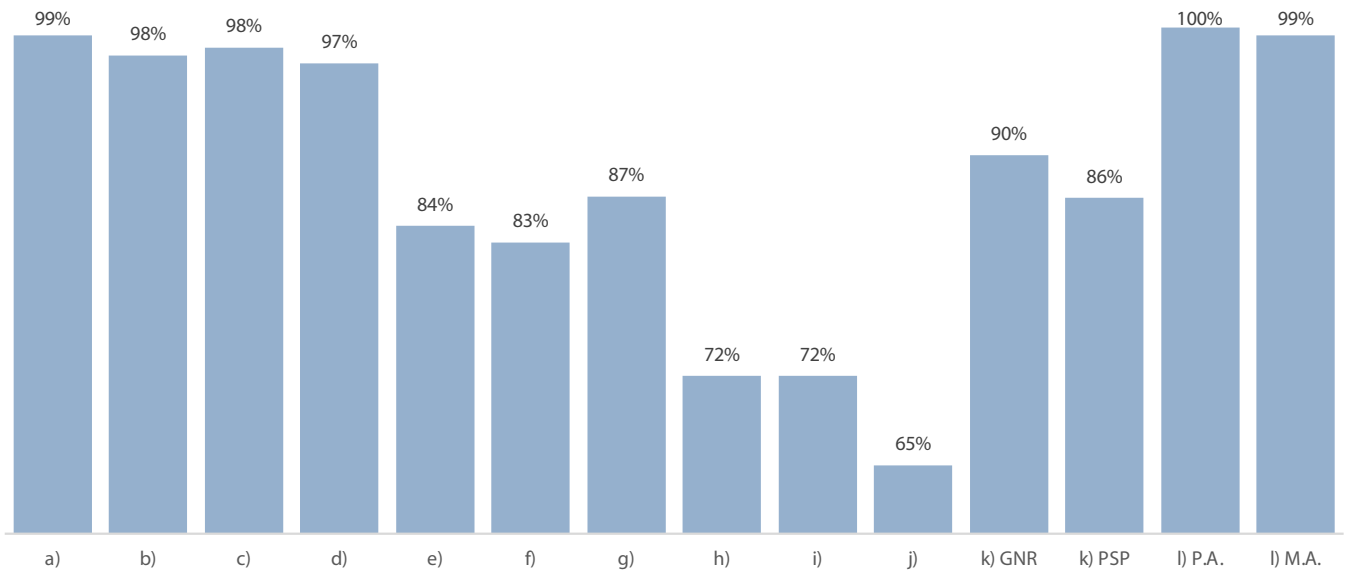
Table 1 | Composition of the extended format of the CPCJ

a)	A representative of the Municipality or of the Parish(es), to be appointed by the City or by the Parish Councils, respectively, in the situations foreseen in Article 15(2)(b), or a representative of the Parishes, to be appointed by the latter in the situations foreseen in Article 15(2)(a), who shall be selected from among people with a special interest or aptitude in the area of children and young people in danger;
b)	A representative of the Social Security, preferably appointed from among technicians with a background in social work, psychology or law;
c)	A representative of the services of the Ministry of Education, preferably a teacher with special interest and knowledge in the area of children and young people in danger;
d)	A representative of the Ministry of Health, preferably a doctor or nurse, who is also, whenever possible, a member of the Support Centre for Children and Young People at Risk;
e)	A representative of the private institutions of social solidarity or other non-governmental organizations that provide children, young people and families social responses of non-residential nature in the region that lies under the competence of the local Commission;
f)	A representative of the public body responsible for matters related to employment and vocational training;
g)	A representative of the private institutions of social solidarity or other non-governmental organizations that provide children and young people social responses of residential nature in the region that lies under the competence of the local Commission;
h)	A representative of existing parents' associations in the region that lies under the competence of the local Commission;
i)	A representative of associations or other private organizations that carry out sports, cultural or recreational activities for children and young people in the region that is under the competence of the local Commission;
j)	A representative of existing youth associations operating in the region that lies under the competence of the local Commission, or a representative of the youth services;
k)	A representative of each security force that, under the tutelage of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, operates in the region that lies under the competence of the local Commission;
l)	Four voting citizens, preferably with special knowledge or skills to intervene in the area of children and young people in danger, appointed by the municipal assembly, or by the municipal assemblies or parish assembly, in the situations foreseen in Articles 15(2)(b) and 15(2)(a), respectively;
m)	Technicians who may be co-opted by the local Commission, with a background in social work, psychology, health or law, or citizens with a special interest in problems related to childhood and youth.

Overall, the composition of the CPCJ includes six or seven State Representatives, the first four of which are mandatory (members of the restricted format of the CPCJ), and seven or eight Representatives of the Civil Society [depending on the (in)existence of residential care].

The information presented below aims to assess the compliance of each type of representation/institution with the requirements regarding the composition of the CPCJ. As of December 31, 2024, only 85 CPCJ (27%) had their composition complete, whereas all others lacked representatives of one or more entities.

Chart 1 | Percentage of compliance with representativeness in the CPCJ per entity



As of the compliance regarding the State representation, namely the four entities whose representation is mandatory for the CPCJ to fulfil its protective role integrating the restricted format of the CPCJ.

Although these entities/areas ensure their representation in most CPCJ, thus complying with the legal provisions, they are lacking in the composition of some CPCJ, as mentioned below:

- a) **Municipality** – two representatives lacking in total, one per each of the following CPCJ: Funchal and Vila Viçosa;
- b) **Social Security** – seven representatives lacking in total, one per each of the following CPCJ: Mealhada, Vagos, Vila Nova de Famalicão, Paredes, Santiago do Cacém, Montalegre and Valpaços;
- c) **Education** – five representatives lacking in total, one per each of the following CPCJ: Góis, Vila do Bispo, Angra do Heroísmo, Nazaré and Paredes de Coura;
- d) **Health** – nine representatives lacking in total, one per each of the following CPCJ: Figueira da Foz, Alcoutim, Corvo, Central Lisbon, Odivelas, Western Porto, Almada, Arcos de Valdevez and Penedono.

The compliance with representativeness further decreases regarding the remaining types of entities/areas:

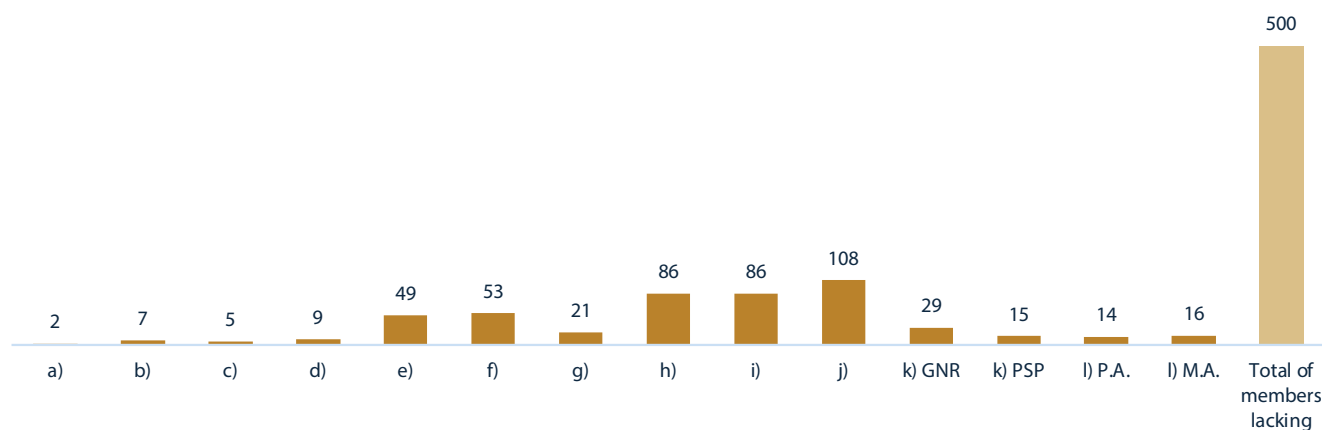
- e) **Private institutions of social solidarity (IPSS)/non-governmental organizations (non-residential nature)** – 49 representatives lacking; compliance with representation requirements in 84% of the CPCJ;
- f) **Institute for Employment and Vocational Training** – 53 representatives lacking; compliance with representation requirements in 83% of the CPCJ, the lowest rate of compliance amongst State institutions/areas represented in the CPCJ;
- g) **Private institutions of social solidarity (IPSS)/non-governmental organizations (non-residential na-**

ture) – 21 representatives lacking, compliance with representation requirements in 87% of the CPCJ (it should be noted that this category is not considered for the assessment of the composition of the CPCJ in case there is no residential care response in the municipality where the CPCJ operates);

- h) **Parents' Associations** – 86 representatives lacking; compliance rate of 72%;
- i) **Sports, cultural and recreational associations** – 86 representatives lacking; compliance rate of 72%.
These two types of entities of the civil society are represented by individuals who have no employment relationship with the entity they represent [h) and i)]. This particular circumstance often makes it difficult to find people who are actually available to accept becoming representatives. The low percentage of compliance with the representativeness of these entities is also associated with the difficulty in assessing whether or not this entity actually exists in each territory, making the presumption that it always exists in each territory a possible bias.
- j) **Portuguese Institute for Sports and Youth or youth associations** – 108 representatives lacking; compliance rate of 65%, making this type of entity/area the least compliant with the representation requirements in the composition of the CPCJ;
- k) **Security Forces – National republican Guard (GNR)/Public Security Police (PSP)** – The law provides for the representation of each of the security forces existing within the area of competence of the CPCJ. This legal requirement means that some CPCJ have a representative of the GNR and others a representative of the PSP in their composition. There are also larger and/or mixed territories (rural and urban areas), whose CPCJ should integrate two representatives of security forces, one per each, GNR and PSP. The analysis of the representativeness of the security forces in the composition of the CPCJ reveals that the GNR is lacking 29 representatives and the PSP 15 representatives, thus showing a compliance rate of 90% and 86%, respectively. There are four CPCJ - Vila Franca de Xira, Portalegre, Ourém and Almada - with no representatives of the security forces, despite the fact that there should be two of them, one per each security force mentioned above;
- l) **Voting Citizens – Parish/Municipality** – This type of representation is ensured by four members in each CPCJ. This means that, although there may be a citizen designated in all CPCJ, not all CPCJ have a full representation of four voting citizens, hence 11 voting citizens of the Parish Assembly and 16 of the Municipal Assembly were lacking.

As of the correspondence between representation and numbers of professionals, 4.111 out of 4.611 due members of the CPCJ were actually appointed, leaving a shortfall of 500 members in the composition of the Commissions. This insufficiency is distributed as shown on Chart 2.

Chart 2 | Number of members lacking per entity

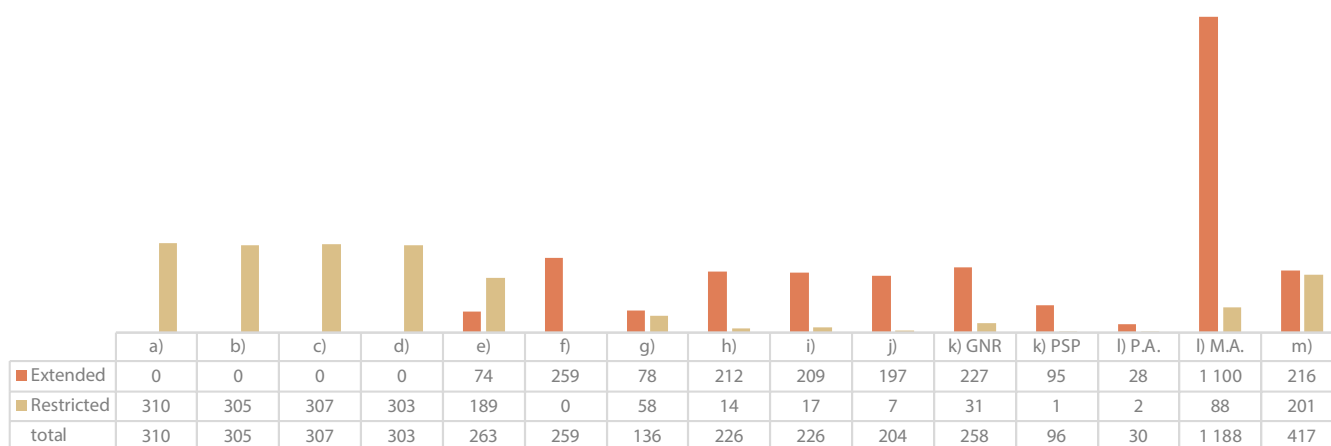


Article 17(m) sets out that the CPCJ may co-opt, on an individual basis, persons who can join the CPCJ by their special relevance and knowledge in the field of childhood or youth or by the fact that their special expertise may meet a specific need of the CPCJ. There were 182 CPCJ that resorted to co-optation, and 417 elements were co-opted as a result.

Thus, in 2024, the CPCJ had a total of 4.528 members, of which 2.695 (59,5%) carried out functions of a specific preventive only, as members of the extended format of the CPCJ, while 1.833 (40,5% of the members) accumulated these with protective functions, as members of the restricted format of the CPCJ.

Chart 3 shows the distribution of members of the CPCJ by format [of the CPCJ], entities represented, designated citizens and co-opted elements.

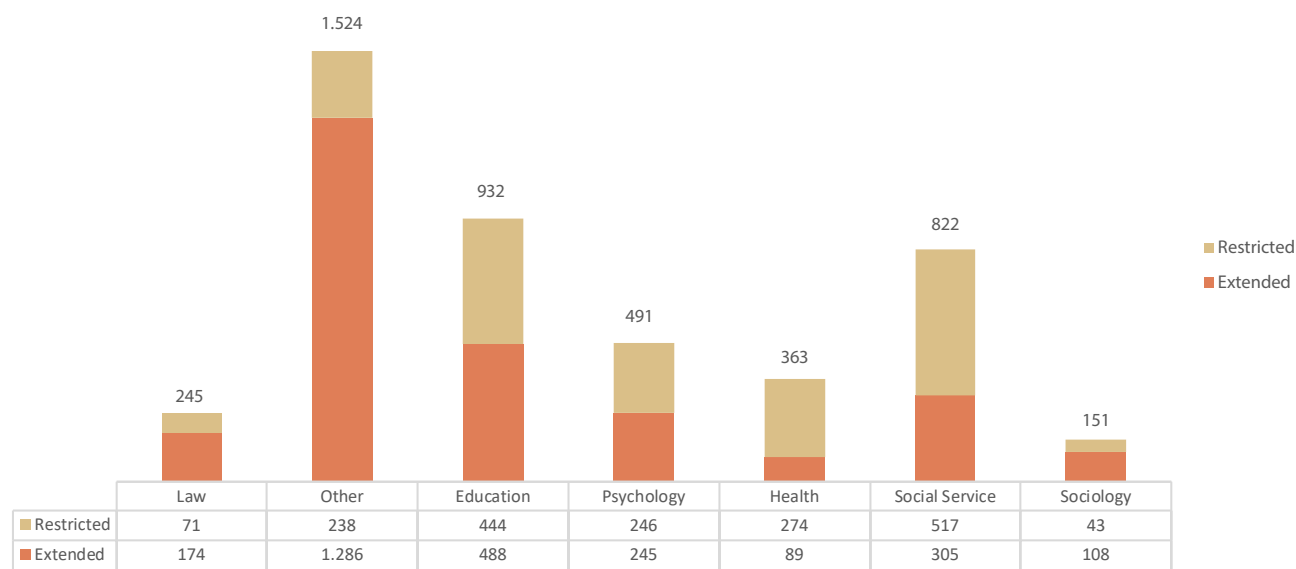
Chart 3 | Total number of members of the extended and restricted formats of the CPCJ by represented entities, designated citizens and co-opted elements



Based on what has been mentioned so far, it emanates from the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger that the CPCJ must have a multidisciplinary composition, and should include professionals with training in the areas of social service, psychology, law, education and health.

However, it is not always possible to achieve the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary dimensions or to ensure the fulfillment of the needs of each CPCJ, as shown on Chart 4. This situation has an even greater impact in the protective role, *i.e.*, in the restricted format of the CPCJ.

Chart 4 | Distribution of the members of the CPCJ by format [of the CPCJ] and technical training area



Source: IT management system of the management of the CPCJ.

In terms of technical training, 20,6% of the members of the CPCJ have degrees in the area of Education, while 18,2% have degrees in Social Service and 10,8% in Psychology. There are 8% of members with degrees in the area of Health and 5,4% in Law. The area that is least prevalent (3,3%) is Sociology. The remaining (33,7%) members have degrees in other fields that are not typified or predefined due to the wide range of areas at stake.

Considering the areas of training foreseen per CPCJ by the Law, there are 151 CPCJ with no members with a degree in Law, 77 CPCJ with no members with a degree in Psychology, 41 CPCJ with no members with a degree in the area of Health, and 20 CPCJ with no members with a degree in Social Service.

The composition of the restricted format of the CPCJ is a result of the members who make up its extended format. Nevertheless, there is not always a direct relationship between the existence of members with training in a specific area in the extended format and its existence in the restricted format. Thus, the Chart 5 represents the training areas that are lacking in the restricted format of the CPCJ, per CPCJ.

Chart 5 | Technical training areas lacking in the restricted format of the CPCJ

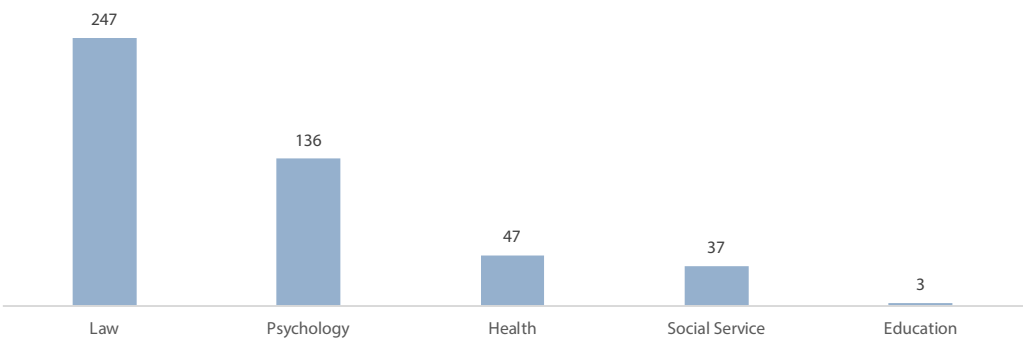


Chart 5 shows that the restricted format of some CPCJ lack members with technical skills in certain areas; while the absence of training in law was already mentioned regarding the extended format of the CPCJ, which acts mostly at the preventive level, there are 247 CPCJ whose restricted format, which operates at the protective level, lacks members with technical skills in this area.

It is also worth noting that 136 CPCJ do not have members with training in the area of psychology, 47 CPCJ do not have members with training in the area of health, 37 CPCJ do not have members with training in the area of social service, and 3 CPCJ have no members with training in the area of education.

MULTIPLE REPRESENTATIONS

The analysis of the available data reveals that some people are members of more than one CPCJ. This situation can be advantageous, in the sense that it allows a better application of technical and territorial knowledge and fosters intermunicipal synergies. However, in some cases, it can pose an additional challenge, especially when this circumstance constraints the exercise of their duties, which compromises the functioning of multiple CPCJ simultaneously.

Table 2 presents the total number of members who represent or were appointed by entities to more than one CPCJ.

Table 2 | Total number of technicians who are members of more than one CPCJ, per sector of the entity of origin

Entity	Number of technicians	Member of 2 CPCJ	Member of 3 CPCJ	Member of 4 CPCJ	Member of 5 CPCJ	Member of 6 CPCJ
b) Social Security	41	36	4	1		
c) Education	3	3				
d) Health	5	5				
e) IPSS - non-residential nature	1	1				
f) Employment and Vocational Training	34	24	7	2	1	
j) Youth Associations or IPDJ	18	11	3	3		1
k) Security Forces - GNR	13	9	4			
k) Security Forces - PSP	2	2				
	117	91	18	6	1	1

The table shows the existence of 117 members who were appointed by their entity of origin to more than one CPCJ; Social Security stands out amongst all entities, by having appointed 41 representatives as members of more than one CPCJ.

Taking the representation of Social Security alone, and considering that its representation in the restricted format is mandatory, 36 of their 41 professionals/in these conditions are members of two CPCJ. However, it is important to highlight that four technicians are simultaneously on three CPCJ and one is ensuring the representation of this entity on four Commissions.

The Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP) ranks second, by having appointed 34 professionals as members of more than one CPCJ. It shall be noted that it is the entity that resources most often to the same professional to ensure its representation in more than one CPCJ, with one professional ensuring the representation of the IEFP in five CPCJ, two professionals in four CPCJ, and seven professionals in three CPCJ.

Youth associations/the Portuguese Institute for Sports and Youth also resource to multi-representation, although most of their representatives do so in only two CPCJ.

In addition, five members representing the Ministry of Health, three representing the Ministry of Education, and two representing the Security Forces (Public Security Police - PSP) also accumulate the representation of their entity in two CPCJ.

COMPETENCES

Adding to the definition of the composition of the CPCJ, Article 18 and Article 21 of the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger lists the competences of the CPCJ according to its operating format — extended or restricted.

Table 3 | Competences of the CPCJ

EXTENDED FORMAT	RESTRICTED FORMAT
Competent to develop actions to promote children's rights and prevent situations of danger to the child and young person.	Competent to intervene in situations in which a child or young person is in danger.
Competences of the extended format of the CPCJ:	Competences of the restricted format of the CPCJ:
a) Inform the community about the rights of children and young people and raise its awareness as to support them whenever they experience special difficulties;	a) Assist and inform the people who seek or address the Commission;
b) Promote actions and cooperate with the competent entities, in order to detect facts and situations within its territorial jurisdiction, which may: affect the rights and interests of the child and of the young person, jeopardize their safety, health, training or education or that show to be detrimental to their development and social integration;	b) Deciding on the opening and initiation of a promotion and protection process;
c) Inform and cooperate with the competent authorities in determining the needs, and in identifying and mobilizing the resources to promote the rights, the well-being and the integral development of the child and young person;	c) Assess, on a preliminary basis, the situations reported to the CPCJ, and decide whether or not to close them immediately whenever there is an evident lack of the need to intervene;
d) Collaborate with the relevant entities in the study and elaboration of innovative projects within the scope of the primary prevention of risk factors, as well in the support provided to children and young people in danger;	d) Carry out the initiation of the processes;
e) Collaborate with the relevant organizations in the establishment, operation and formulation of social development projects and initiatives at the local level, in the area of childhood and youth;	e) Request the participation of the members of the extended format of the CPCJ in the processes mentioned in d), whenever deemed necessary;
f) Promote and provide advice on programmes aimed at children and young people in danger;	f) Request the opinion of and cooperate with technical experts, or other people and public or private organizations;

EXTENDED FORMAT	RESTRICTED FORMAT
Competent to develop actions to promote children's rights and prevent situations of danger to the child and young person.	Competent to intervene in situations in which a child or young person is in danger.
Competences of the extended format of the CPCJ:	Competences of the restricted format of the CPCJ:
g) Analyze half-yearly information provided by the restricted format of the CPCJ on the promotion and protection processes that were initiated and the progress of ongoing ones, without prejudice of the provisions set out in Article 88 of the Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger;	g) Decide on the implementation, monitoring and review of promotion and protection measures, except for the measure of trust to a person selected for adoption, foster family or institution with a view to adoption;
h) Provide support and cooperation as requested by the restricted format of the CPCJ, namely concerning the availability of resources needed by the latter to carry out its functions;	h) Carry out the acts of initiation and monitoring of the promotion and protection measures that might be requested within the scope of the collaboration with other CPCJ;
i) Elaborate and approve the annual plan of activities;	i) Inform the extended format of the CPCJ, on a six-monthly basis, on the opened promotion and protection processes and on the progress of ongoing ones, without identifying the subjects involved.
j) Approve the annual report on the activities and evaluation of the CPCJ and send it to the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People, to the municipal assembly, and to the Public Prosecutor's Office;	
k) Collaborate with the Social Network in the elaboration of the local social development plan in what regards the area of childhood and youth.	
3 - While exercising the competences foreseen in b), c), d) and e), mentioned above, the CPCJ shall articulate with the local Social Network.	

While analyzing these competences, it is possible to define that the **Extended Format of the CPCJ** is responsible for the prevention and promotion of children's rights, and that the **Restricted Format of the CPCJ** is in charge of the protective and restorative roles.

FINAL

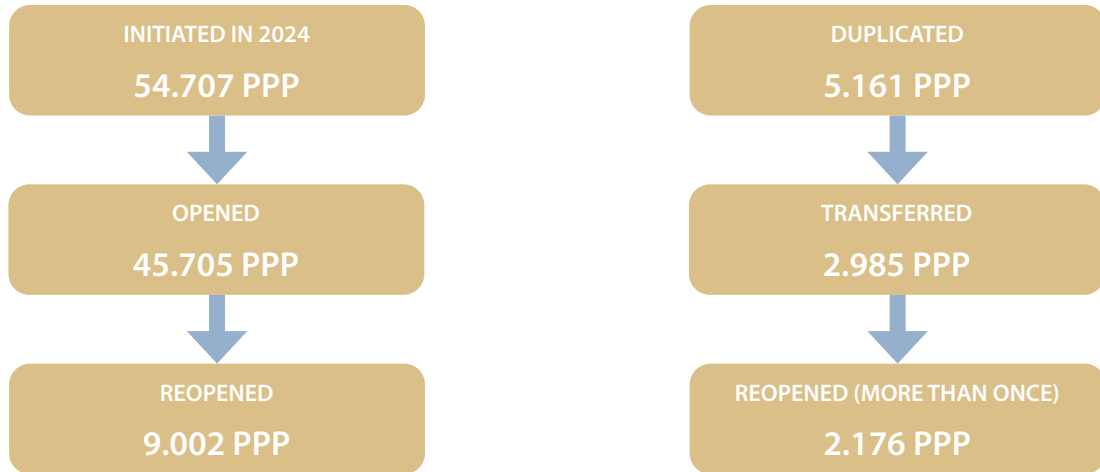


SUMMARY

PROCEDURAL VOLUME

In 2024, the CPCJ handled 89.008 Promotion and Protection Processes (PPP), an increase of 4.812 PPP (5,5%) over the 84.196 PPP handled in 2023, but anyway smaller than the one seen in 2023 in comparison with 2022 (7,7%).

Of the 89.008 PPP, 34.301 were carried over from 2023 and 54.707 were newly opened in 2024.



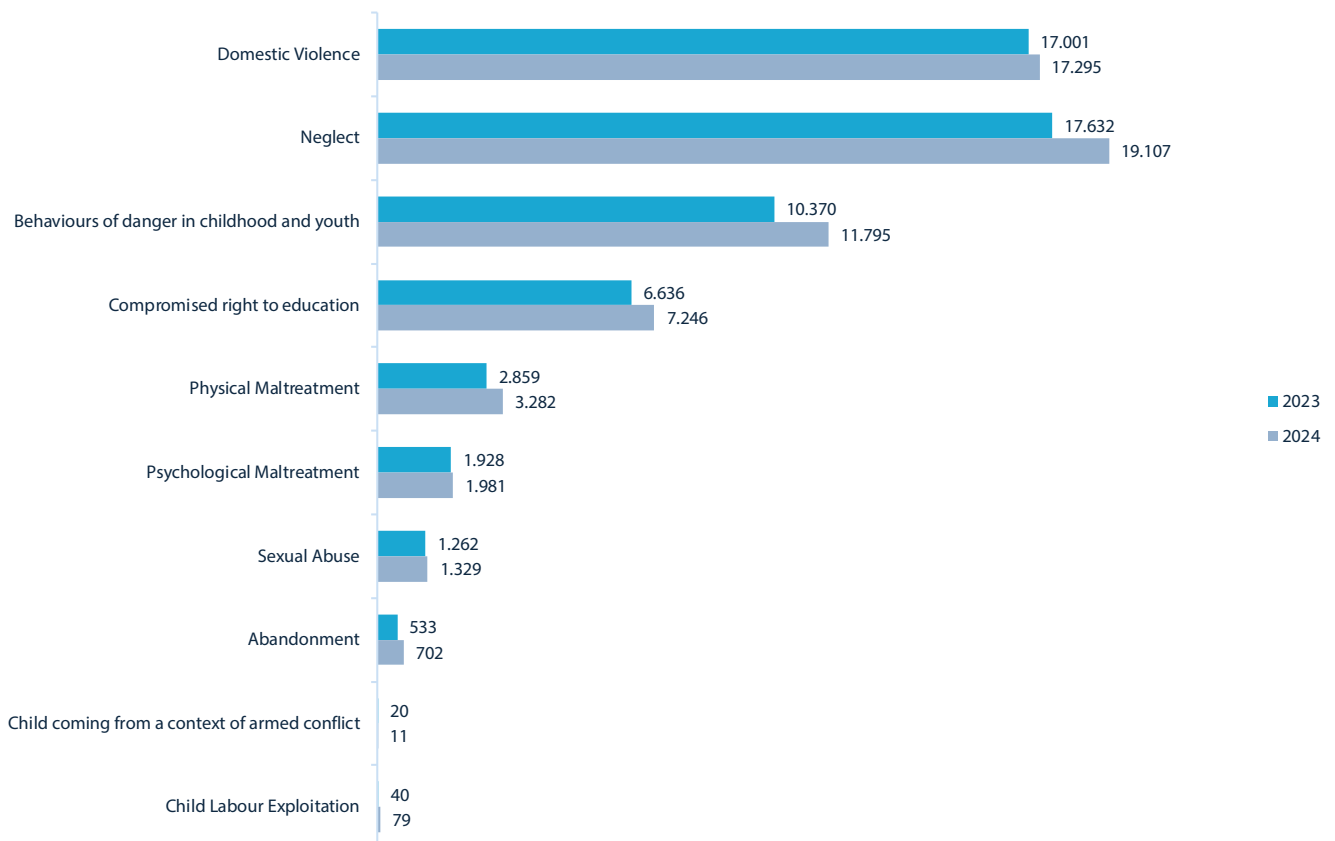
COMMUNICATIONS OF DANGER

In 2024, the CPCJ received **58.436** reports of situations of danger. The security forces (National Republican Guard - GNR, Public Security Police - PSP, Portuguese Criminal Investigation Police - PJ) were the entities that reported the majority (42%) of the situations of children in danger. Educational establishments are the second largest source of (18,5%) communications.

Neglect was the category of danger reported in 19.107 cases (30,4%), making it the most commonly reported, followed by 17.295 cases (27,5%) of **Domestic violence**, a decrease of 1,6% when compared to 2023.

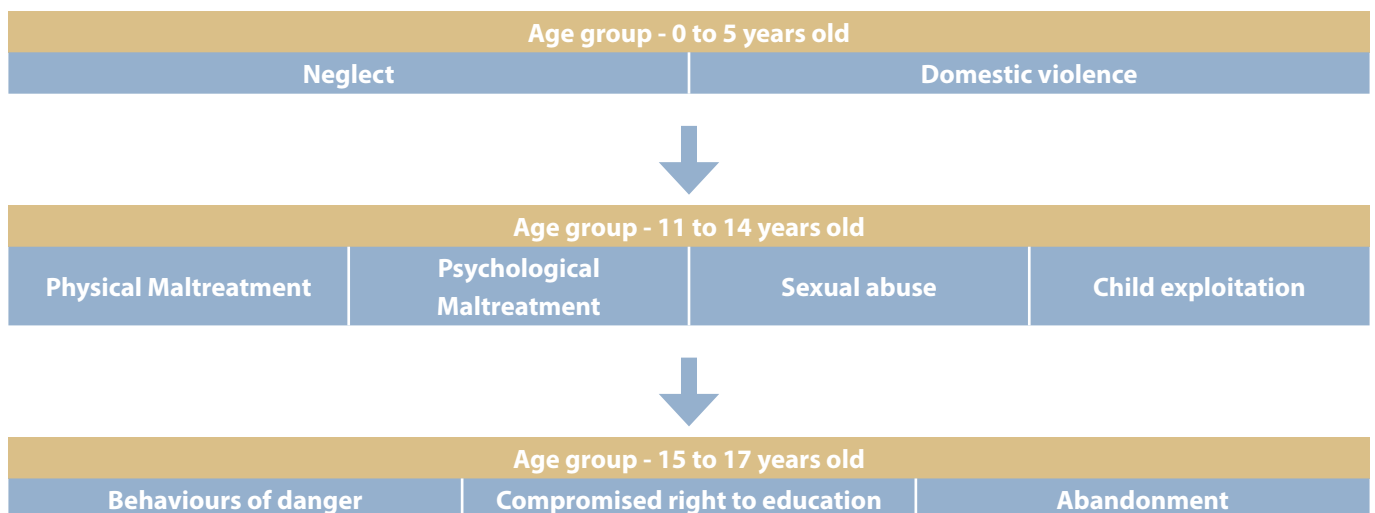
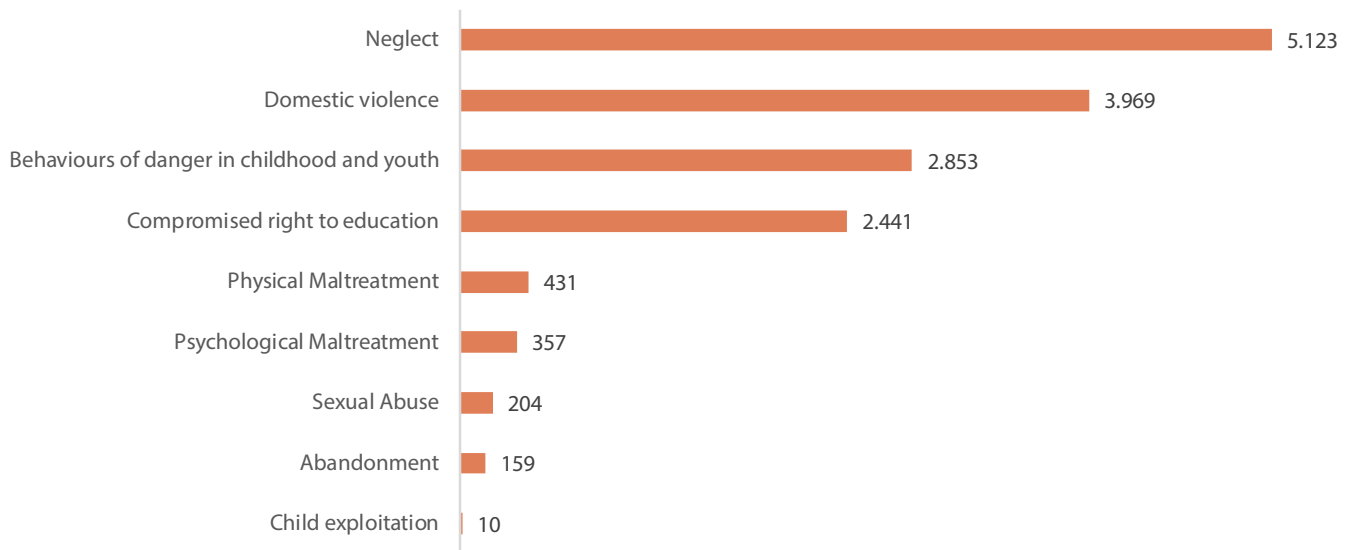
In 2024, there were 11.795 cases (18,8%) of **Behaviours of danger in childhood and youth**, an increase of 1.425 cases in comparison with 2023.

When broken down by age group, the largest number of communications of situations of danger - 16.045 - regarded children aged 15 to 18. Communications of danger regarding male children show a larger proportion in all age groups.



ASSESSMENT AND DIAGNOSIS

In 2024, upon analysis of the communications, the CPCJ decided not to proceed with intervention in 8.799 cases. The CPCJ decided to open or reopen **47.712 PPP** upon concluding that there were grounds for their intervention. Of the total of 13.373 children and young people diagnosed as needing promotion and protection measures, the highest incidence was on 3.599 children (26,9%) aged 15-17, of which 2.037 (56,6%) were male and 1.562 (43,4%) were female.



PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

In 2024, 1.032 children and young people benefited of 1.037 precautionary measures applied in their favour, most to male children, especially in the age group 0 to 5 years old.

As of the type of precautionary measures applied, 935 (90,2%) were measures in the natural living environment and 102 were placements in alternative care (9,8%).

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION MEASURES



Regarding age distribution, most children and young people (27,3%) are 15 to 17 years old, followed by the age group 11 to 14 (24,1%).

Considering the distribution by sex in all age groups, there is a tendency for there to be more male children than female children.

Support with Parents remains the prevalent measure, accounting for 83,8% of the total, with a slight increase of 0,4% over 2023.

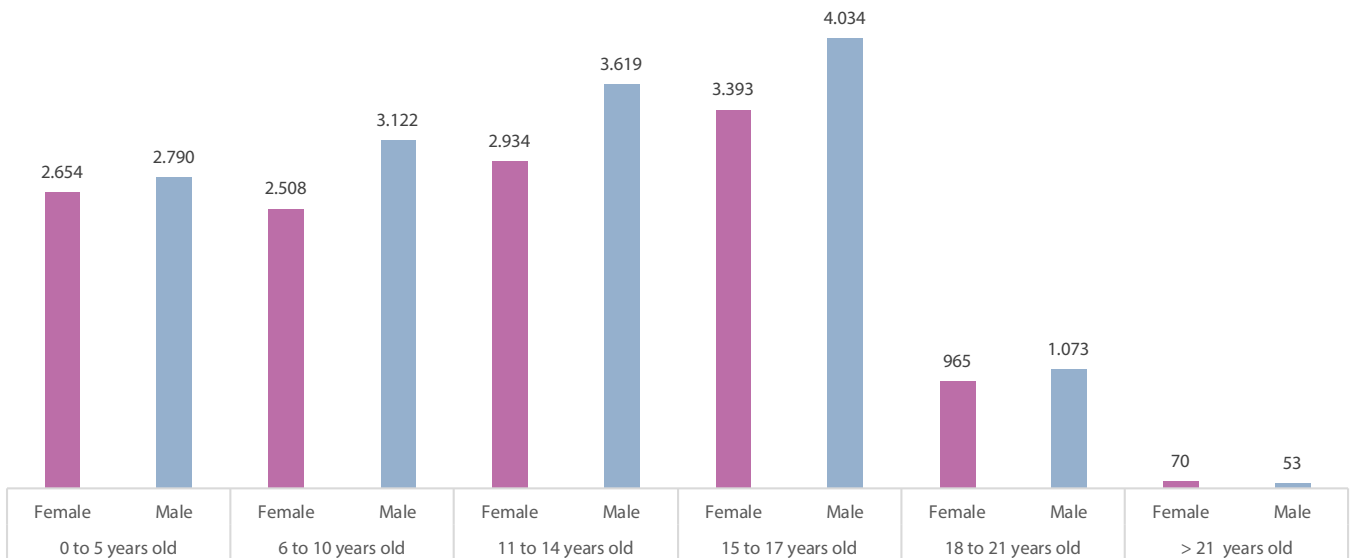
On the other hand, **Support with Other Family Members** decreased from 7,8% in 2023 to 7,7% in 2024.

The measure **Trust to a Suitable Person** remained stable at 1% in 2023 and 2024, as well as the **Support to Life Autonomy**, which was kept at 0,5% of the total number of measures.

The measure of placement in **Residential Care** rose from 0,4% in 2023 to 0,5% in 2024.

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE CHILDREN UNDER PROMOTION AND PROTECTION MEASURES

Age group and sex of the children subject of a measure under implementation



In terms of education level and considering the compulsory schooling age of 6 to 18, most children and young people monitored by the CPCJ are within the expected range of schooling for their age group.

Concerning children and young people aged below 6 years old that are not covered by the terms of compulsory education, most attend nurseries or pre-school establishments. The family is the support context that ranks second as most common.

Of the total of 27.215 children and young people who were subject to a promotion and protection measure, most were **Portuguese nationals** and 3.442 (12.6%) were **foreign nationals**.

Of the 27.215 children and young people monitored, 1.053 (3,9%) had **some type of disability or impairment**.

It shall be noted that 346 children and young people were subjects in the process CPCJ and in another process in court, simultaneously. Of the 346 children with processes running simultaneously in the CPCJ and in the court, 305 (88,4%) were involved in **civil guardianship processes**, while 41 children (11,6%) were subjects in **educational guardianship processes**.

PROCEDURAL HANDLING

AP*	PROCESSES CARRIED OVER 1.961	PROCESSES INITIATED 54.707	TOTAL 56.668	CESSATION OF INTERVENTION 8.799	AWAIT DELIBERATION 2.448	PROCESSES INSTRUCTED 45.421
AD**	PROCESSES CARRIED OVER 17.174	PROCESSES INSTRUCTED 45.421	TOTAL 62.595	CESSATION OF INTERVENTION 11.550	AWAIT DELIBERATION 18.854	PROCESSES 32.191
DC***	PROCESSES CARRIED OVER 1.593	PROCESSES 32.191	TOTAL 33.784	CESSATION OF INTERVENTION 17.360	AWAIT DELIBERATION 2.294	PROCESSES 14.130
EA****	PROCESSES CARRIED OVER 13.573	PROCESSES 14.130	TOTAL 27.703	CESSATION OF INTERVENTION 12.700	UNDER IMPLEMENTATION 11.804	
	PROCESSES CARRIED OVER 34.301	PROCESSES INITIATED 54.707	TOTAL OF PROCESSES 89.008	FILED/ CLOSED 50.409	TRANSFERS 3.199	PROCESSES TO CARRY OVER 35.400

* Preliminary Analysis (AP)

** Assessment and Diagnosis (AD)

*** Deliberation and contractualization of the agreement (DC)

**** Implementation and Monitoring (EA)

CESSATION OF THE INTERVENTION OF THE CPCJ - GLOBAL OVERVIEW AND PER PROCEDURAL PHASE

AP	<div>CESSATION OF THE INTERVENTION 8.799</div>	In 2024, 8.799 processes (17,5%) were closed in the first phase - Preliminary Analysis -, which represents an increase of 3% regarding 6.297 processes (14,8%) closed in this phase in 2023.
AD	<div>CESSATION OF THE INTERVENTION 11.550</div>	In the second phase - Assessment and Diagnosis -, 11.550 processes (22,9%) were closed, corresponding to a decrease of 1% compared with 2023.
DC	<div>CESSATION OF THE INTERVENTION 17.360</div>	In the third phase - Deliberation and Contractualization -, 17.360 processes (34,4%) were closed, which corresponds to a decrease of 1% compared with the 16.498 processes (35,43%) closed in this phase in 2023.
EA	<div>CESSATION OF THE INTERVENTION 12.700</div>	In the fourth and final phase - Implementation and Monitoring -, 12.700 processes (25,2%) were closed, which corresponds to a decrease of 0,5% in comparison with 2023.
	<div>FILED/ CLOSED 50.409</div>	In 2024, the total number of processes closed was 50.409, representing a decrease of approximately 8,3% when compared with the total number of 46.564 cases closed in 2023.

#PROTEGER CRIANÇAS COMPETE A TOD@S

National Commission for the Promotion of the
Rights and the Protection of Children and Young
People (CNPDPJ)

[information in English available at <https://www.cnpdpj.gov.pt/about-us>]

Praça de Londres, n.º 2 – 2.º, 1049-056 Lisboa
Tel. (+351) 300 509 717 | 300 509 738
E-mail: apoio.presidencia@cnpdpj.pt