



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

**EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY AND
RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE 2022 ANNUAL
REPORT**



Title: Executive summary and recommendations of the 2022 Evaluation Report of the Activity of the Local Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People

Revised by: CNPDPCJ

Page layout: CNPDPCJ

Cover design: CNPDPCJ

ISSN: 2184-559X

May 2023

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The Annual Report on the Evaluation of the Activity of the local Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCJ) is a national reference document for the general public and for the CPCJ, elaborated and published by the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People (inserir link <https://www.cnpdpcj.gov.pt/about-us>), in which the results of the prevention and protection actions implemented by the CPCJ in each year are presented, analyzed and reflected upon.

The CPCJ are official entities of non-judicial, multidisciplinary nature with functional autonomy, aiming to promote the rights of children and young people and to prevent or intervene in situations of children in danger, while fostering synergies at the local level by involving the representatives of the various key sectoral areas, local authorities, police forces, the Public Prosecutor's Office and non-governmental organizations. As a collegial body, it meets monthly

in its extended format, focusing mainly on actions of preventive nature, and weekly in restricted format to address, discuss and deliberate over concrete situations of children in danger.

In 2022, there were 311 CPCJ nationwide, i.e., mainland Portugal, the Autonomous Region of the Azores and the Autonomous Region of Madeira.

The present document is the English version of the executive summary and recommendations of the 2022 Annual Report, and also includes: the framework of the Portuguese system for the protection of children and young people and for the promotion of their rights; the composition of the CPCJ, their competences and operation.

The tables, charts and figures herewith are numbered as in the full report.

The full 2022 Report in Portuguese is available [here](#).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Portuguese System for the Promotion and the Protection of Children is based on two main areas: Preventive and Protective.

Bearing in mind that over 90% of the activity of the CPCJ regards the protective dimension, the following data concerning 2022 can be highlighted:

In 2022, the CPCJ monitored **74.191 children and young people**, of which **28.396 were subject to a promotion and protection** measure whose implementation was decided by the CPCJ within the scope of a process, as to remove the danger situation in which each child was in.

Also in 2022, **49.564 situations of possible danger** involving children were reported to the CPCJ, representing an increase of 6.489 reports over 2021.

As in previous years, the entities that reported situations of children in possible danger to the CPCJ the most were the security forces and educational establishments.

Also as before, most of the reported situations of danger involve the categories of "Domestic Violence" and "Neglect". An increase in the category of "Behaviours of Danger in Childhood and Youth" shall be highlighted.

In 2022, **27.370 diagnoses** were carried out, representing an additional 619 cases over the figures ascertained in 2021. In 13.444 of these, a decision was made towards the implementation of a promotion and protection measure, in order to remove the situation of danger in which the child/young person was. As in 2021, the categories "Neglect" (30,5%), with a higher prevalence among male children and young people aged 0 to 10 years old, and "Domestic Violence" (27,4%) were the situations diagnosed that justified the implementation of most promotion and protection measures. The categories "Behaviours of Danger in Childhood and Youth" and "Compromised Right to Education" became the third and fourth most diagnosed categories, with 19,9% and 15,6% of the total number of reported situations, respectively.

With regards to the categories "Psychological Abuse" and "Sexual Abuse", a higher incidence was registered among girls (76%).

As aforementioned, in 2022, **28.396 children were subject to a promotion and protection** measure decided by the CPCJ, corresponding to 28.581 promotion and protection processes and to 29.407 promotion and protection measures.

As in past years, the measures "Support with the Parents" and "Support with Other Family Member" prevailed, corresponding to 92,1 % of the total number of promotion and protection measures implemented.

The data also makes it possible to conclude that, in 2022, the CPCJ **ceased their intervention in 42.671 processes**, mainly due to the fact that the danger was removed.

A total of 31.603 processes were carried over from 2022 to 2023, of which 17.086 encompassed a promotion and protection measure under implementation and monitoring.

Finally, in addition to the work already carried out by the five Regional Technical Teams of the National Commission - which provide direct support to the CPCJ in their respective region of competence -, it is noteworthy to mention the work produced within the scope of the Adélia Project, which contributed to the development of Local Plans for the Promotion and Protection of Children and Young People and to the technical training of entities with competence in matters of childhood and youth in the three territories where the Adélia Project was implemented.

TOTAL PROCEDURAL VOLUME HANDLED BY THE CPCJ IN 2022

Processes carried over
from previous years into
2022

30.616

78.173

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION PROCESSES

Corresponding to 74.191 children and young people

Reopened
in 2022

8.866

Reopened more than
once in 2022

2.149

Initiated in 2022

38.691

Transferred from one
CPCJ to another due to
changes of residence of
the child or young person

1.833

Newly opened
in 2022

36.858

TOTAL

78.173

COMMUNICATIONS AND SITUATIONS OF DANGER REPORTED TO THE CPCJ IN 2022

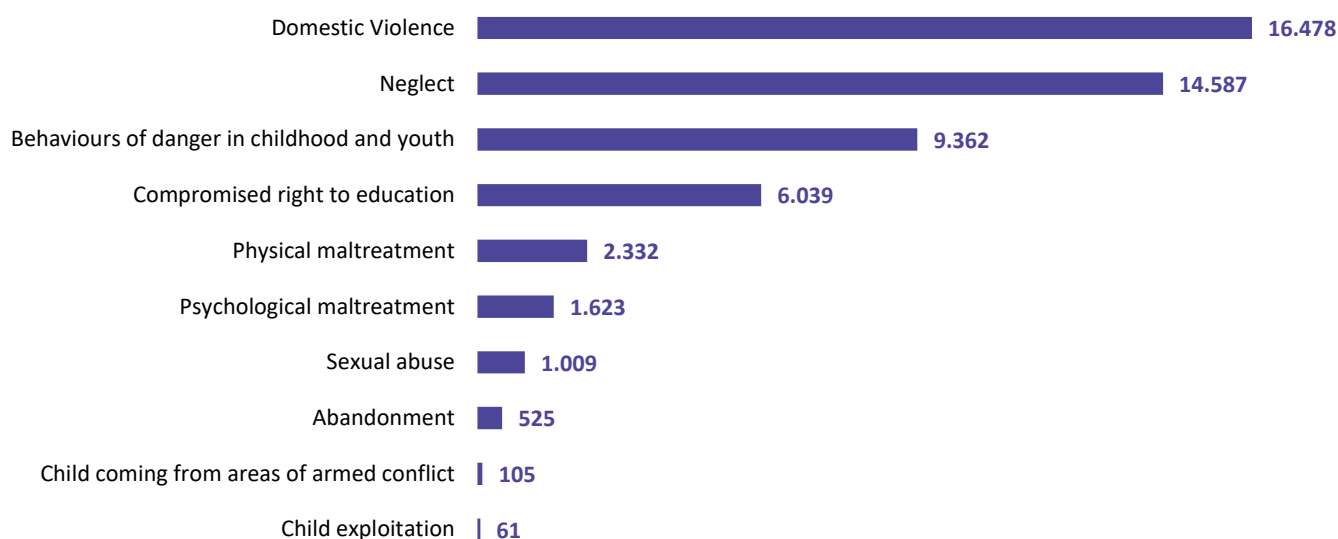
NUMBER OF COMMUNICATIONS

49.564

NUMBER OF REPORTED SITUATIONS OF DANGER

52.121

CATEGORIES OF THE REPORTED SITUATIONS OF DANGER



PROMOTION AND PROTECTION PROCESSES WITH DIAGNOSIS OF DANGER IN 2022

CONCLUDED IN PREVIOUS YEARS

16.528

CONCLUDED IN 2022

27.370

Diagnosis whose conclusion ascertained no need to implement a promotion and protection measure

13.926

Diagnosis ascertaining the need to implement a promotion and protection measure

13.444

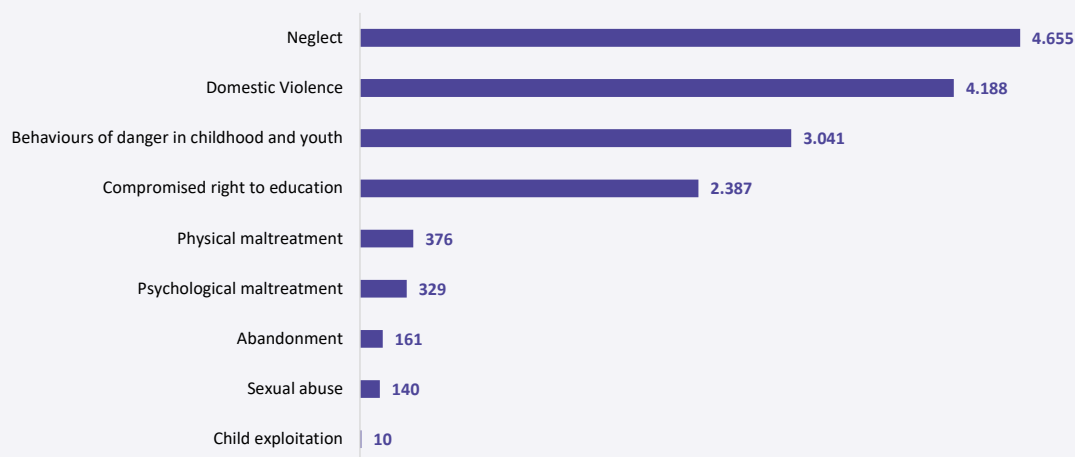
TOTAL

43.898

SITUATIONS OF DANGER DIAGNOSED IN 2022

TOTAL=15.287

CATEGORIES OF THE DIAGNOSED SITUATIONS OF DANGER



PROMOTION AND PROTECTION PROCESSES WITH MEASURES UNDER IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORIZATION IN 2022

PROCESSES WITH PROMOTION AND PROTECTION MEASURE

28.581

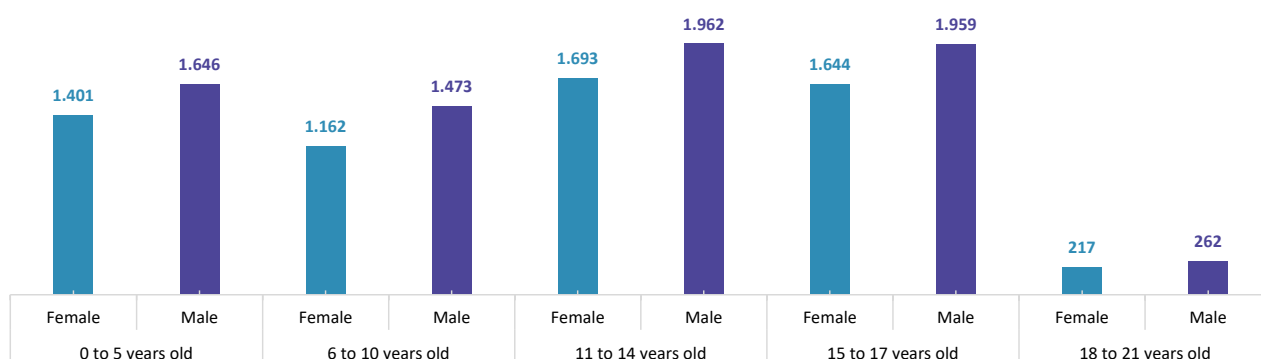
referring to **28.396** Children and Young People

13.505

MEASURES IMPLEMENTED IN 2022

referring to **13.419** Children and Young People

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE 13.419 CHILDREN UNDER PROMOTION AND PROTECTION MEASURES IN 2022 BY AGE RANGE AND SEX



CESSATION OF THE INTERVENTION OF THE CPCJ IN 2022

42.671 PROMOTION AND PROTECTION PROCESSES

PHASE OF THE PROCESS *	Number of promotion and protection processes	%
Preliminary Analysis (e.g. Filing or referral; Non-existence of legitimacy for intervention as of article 3; Referral to Court - joinder of judicial proceedings under the terms of article 81; Communication to entity with competence in matters of childhood and youth (article 8); Improper opening of proceedings due to incorrect information provided in the reported communication of danger; Return to entity with competence in matters of childhood and youth (article 7); The Child/ Young person moved abroad). (Further details in Annex 10 of the full annual report, only available in Portuguese here)	5.125	12
Diagnostic Assessment (e.g. Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - Failure to give consent; The young person reached the age of majority and did not request the continuation of the intervention; The child or young person moved abroad; Referral to Court - joinder of judicial proceedings under the terms of article 81; Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - Withdrawal of the consent for intervention) (Further details in Annex 11 of the full annual report, only available in Portuguese here)	10.280	24
Deliberation and contracting process (e.g. The situation of danger no longer exists; The reported situation of potential danger is confirmed as not being such; Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - Inexistence of Promotion and Protection Agreement; Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - Withdrawal of the consent for intervention; The young person reached the age of majority and did not request the continuation of the intervention). (Further details in Annex 12 of the full annual report, only available in Portuguese here)	15.414	36
Implementation and monitoring (e.g. Cessation of the measure - the situation of danger no longer exists; Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - Repeated non-compliance with the Promotion and Protection Agreement; Cessation of the measure - the duration of the measure or of its extension has elapsed and the situation of danger no longer persists; Cessation of the measure - the young person reached the age of majority or, as legally foreseen in specific situations, reached the age of 21 or 25 years old, up to which the young person can benefit of the extension of the intervention; Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - withdrawal of consent for intervention; Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - Inexistence of Promotion and Protection Agreement; Referral to Court - joinder of judicial proceedings under the terms of article 81; Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - the duration of the measure or of its extension elapsed and the situation of danger still persists; Referral to the Public Prosecutor's Office - unavailability of resources to implement the promotion and protection measure; The child/ young person moved abroad) (Further details in Annex 13 of the full annual report, only available in Portuguese here)	11.852	28
TOTAL = 42.671 Promotion and Protection Processes		

* As foreseen in the [Law for the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#), approved by Law No. 147/99, of September 1, amended by Law No. 31/2003, of August 22, Law No. 142/2015, of September 8, Law No. 23/2017, of May 23 and Law No. 26/2018, of July 5.



FRAMEWORK

The Portuguese system for the promotion of the rights and the protection of children from risk and danger is essentially set out in the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#)¹

First of all, the system recognises the family as the institution that is responsible for the realization of the rights of their children. This acknowledgement starts forthwith in the Portuguese Constitution, in which the family is deemed as a fundamental element of society that is awarded the necessary State protection, in order to be provided the conditions that allow the realization of the family as a whole and of each of its elements as individuals, assigning the parents the responsibility for their children's safety, health, education or physical, intellectual and moral development.

Nevertheless, parents are not always able, willing or know how to ensure their children's rights.

A society that doesn't look after its children jeopardizes its future. The economic and social development depends heavily on the human quality, and the latter on the quality of childhood, which makes the protection of children a matter of public interest. This burden confers the State and the civil society legitimacy to intervene in an area that is, in principle, reserved to the family.

The entities that integrate the promotion and protection system can be listed into three categories: entities with competence in matters of childhood and youth, the local Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCJ) and the courts.

These entities intervene according to the legal principle of subsidiarity, enshrined in article 4 of the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#), which sets out the primacy of the most informal intervention, as it involves lower risks of stigmatization and arouses community and proximity synergies more easily. According to this principle, the intervention is structured in a "pyramid" of increasing order of formality, as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1 | Graphic representation of the Portuguese Promotion and Protection System



Thus, the community stands at the base of the pyramid - the first line of intervention -, and is composed by the: extended family; neighbours; cultural, recreational and sports' associations; community support centres of religious nature; fire brigades; public services; entities with competence in matters of childhood and youth, such as schools, health centres, social security, security forces, municipalities, private institutions of social solidarity, non-governmental organisations (NGO), among similar others.

This first line of intervention is then followed by the local CPCJ, whose legitimacy to intervene depends on the consent of the parents or of the legal representative of the child, and presupposes that the implementation of the promotion and protection measure is contracted upon agreement with the family and that the child aged 12 years old or above is not opposed to it.

The courts stand at the last level of intervention, when the previous levels of intervention failed to remove the situation of danger in which the child or young person is. The courts intervene whenever foreseen by the law, and have the power to implement promotion and protection measures coercively, even though consensual solutions are favoured whenever possible.

The current 311 local CPCJ are a democratic expression of the representation of the local community in fulfilling its responsibility for children living in their territorial area of competence. Along with other entities that integrate the promotion and protection system,

¹ Law No. 147/99, of September 1, amended by Law No. 31/2003, of August 22, Law No. 142/2015, of September 8, Law No. 23/2017, of May 23 and Law No. 26/2018, of July 5.

all embrace one of the noblest missions each of us can have: the protection and defence of the best interests of all children, regardless of their origin or condition.

The evaluation of the activity of the CPCJ

The elaboration of the annual report on the evaluation of the activity of the CPCJ is enshrined in article 32 of the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#), and provides an opportunity for learning more about the socio-demographics of children and young people in danger in the country and their caregivers, as well as about the situations of danger that affect them, and the responses provided by the promotion and protection system in preventing and protecting from danger.

This report also focuses on the positive aspects, constraints and proposals for

improving the activity of the CPCJ, in order to facilitate a joint reflection on this reality and its refinement. A focus is also put on the enhancement of the preventive

and protective capacity of the CPCJ and of the system in which these operate.

As in previous years, this report results from the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data derived from the Promotion and Protection Processes uploaded by each of the 311 CPCJ in the IT application used by the CPCJ for its management and of the Promotion and Protection Process. The report also draws upon the information provided by the CPCJ in the replies to the annual Questionnaire sent out by the National Commission on the composition, functioning and activity of the CPCJ regarding 2022.

The qualitative information was subjected to content analysis, while the quantitative data went through descriptive statistical analysis carried out by resourcing to Excel software.

The aim is thus to present the evaluation of the activity carried out by the CPCJ in 2022, regarding the dimension of the preventive intervention and of the promotion of rights, as well as that of the protective intervention.



COMPOSITION AND OPERATING MODE OF THE COMMISSIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



IN 2022, THERE WERE, IN TOTAL, 4.279 MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMISSIONS, OF WHICH 1.955 WERE MEMBERS OF THE RESTRICTED FORMAT OF THE CPCJ, 270 OF WHOM WERE CO-OPTED MEMBERS (I.E., 14%).



4.1.

COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CPCJ

4.1.1.

BRIEF OVERVIEW

4.1.2.

DATA CONCERNING 2022

4.2.

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATING MODE OF THE CPCJ

4.2.1.

BRIEF OVERVIEW

4.2.2.

DATA CONCERNING 2022

4.1.

COMPOSITION

AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CPCJ

4.1.1.

BRIEF OVERVIEW

Under the terms of Article 12 of the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#), the CPCJ are official entities of non-judicial nature, with functional autonomy, aiming to promote the rights of children and young people and to prevent or put an end to situations of children that may affect their safety, health, training, education or integral development. The CPCJ carry out their duties in compliance with the law and deliberate on an impartial and independent basis¹.

According to Article 8 of the aforementioned law, the CPCJ intervene when the action of the first line entities with competence in matters of childhood and youth is no longer appropriate nor sufficient to remove the danger in which children and young people are, particularly in the situations identified in Article 3, regarding the legitimacy of intervention.

Pursuant to Article 15, the CPCJ operate in the area of the municipality in which they are based or in the parishes of their area of competence (the latter situation takes place in locations where there are more than one CPCJ, as foreseen in paragraph 2(a)).

In Portugal, there are four municipalities with more than one CPCJ, namely:

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

Even though the law also foresees the establishment of intermunicipal commissions under the terms of Article 15 (b), there are no such commissions set up currently in Portugal.

Thus, in 2022, there were 311 CPCJ across Portugal, namely:

- 281 in mainland Portugal;
- 19 CPCJ in the Autonomous Region of the Azores; and
- 11 CPCJ in the Autonomous Region of Madeira.

This information can be found on the [CNPDPJ website](#), which contains varied information, including the contact details and address of each CPCJ.

The composition of the CPCJ must observe the need for keeping interinstitutional and multidisciplinary representativeness in their composition, shared by public and private organizations that hold responsibility for matters of childhood and youth, thus mirroring the nature of the community in which they operate.

¹ Law No. 147/99, of September 1, amended by Law No. 31/2003, of August 22, Law No. 142/2015, of September 8, Law No. 23/2017, of May 23 and Law No. 26/2018, of July 5.

The CPCJ operate in restricted and in extended formats. As of Article 17 of the aforementioned law, the composition of the extended format encompasses representatives of organizations and citizens/personalities of recognized merit and prestige, namely:

Table 18| Composition of the extended format

a)	A representative of the Municipality, to be appointed by the City Council, or of the Municipalities, to be appointed by the City Councils in the situations foreseen in Article 15(2)(b), or 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 operating, under the tutelage of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in the region that lies under the competence of the local Commission;
l)	Four elected 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 Article 15(2) (b) and (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.

As set up in Article 20, the restricted format of the Commission is always composed by an odd number of members - five as the bare minimum, all of whom shall integrate its extended format.

In this way, the restricted format of the CPCJ is composed by its president and representatives of the Municipality, Social Security, services of the Ministry of Education and of Health Services, should none be chairing the Commission.

The extended format of the Commission may appoint other members to integrate the restricted format, while also observing the criteria of representativeness, interinstitutionalism and multidisciplinary (namely concerning the areas of social work, psychology, law, education and health).

The powers of the extended and restricted formats of the CPCJ are listed on table XX (cf articles 18 and 21).

Table 19| Powers and responsibilities of the extended and restricted formats of the CPCJ

EXTENDED FORMAT	RESTRICTED FORMAT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The extended format of the CPCJ has powers to develop actions to promote rights and prevent situations that endanger the child and young person. 2. These powers and responsibilities include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Informing the community about the rights of children and young people and sensitize it to support them whenever they experience special difficulties; b) Promote actions and cooperate with the competent entities aiming to detect facts and situations, in the area of its territorial jurisdiction, that may affect the rights and interests of the child and of the young person, jeopardize their safety, health, training or education or are detrimental to their development and social integration; c) Informing and cooperating with the competent authorities in determining the needs, and identifying and mobilizing the resources to promote the rights, well-being and development of the child and young person; d) Cooperating with the relevant entities in the study and elaboration of innovative projects within the scope of the primary prevention of risk factors and support to children and young people in danger; e) Collaborating 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; f) Promoting and giving advice on programmes aimed at children and young people in danger; g) Analyzing half-yearly information provided by the restricted format of the Commission regarding the open promotion and protection processes and the progress of pending ones, without prejudice of the provisions of Article 88; h) Providing the support and cooperation requested by the restricted format of the Commission, namely concerning the availability of the resources needed for the latter to exercise its functions; i) Elaborating and approving the annual plan of activities; j) Approving the annual activity and evaluation report 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) Collaborating with the Social Network in the elaboration of the local social development plan in what regards the area of childhood and youth. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The restricted format of the Commission is competent to intervene in situations in which a child or young person is in danger. 2. In particular, the powers of and responsibilities of the restricted format of the Commission are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Assisting and informing the people who seek the Commission; b) Deciding on the opening and initiation of a promotion and protection process; c) Assessing, on a preliminary basis, the situations reported to the Commission, and deciding whether or not to close them immediately whenever it is clear that there is no need to intervene; d) Carry out the initiation of the processes; e) Requesting the participation of the members of the extended format of the Commission in the processes mentioned in d), whenever necessary; f) Requesting the opinion of and cooperating with technical experts, or other people and public or private organizations; g) Deciding 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) Carrying 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) Informing the extended format of the Commission, every six months, on the opened promotion and protection processes on the progress of pending processes, without identifying the subjects involved.

When the service of the commissioners on a full-time basis does not guarantee compliance with the benchmarks set out by the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People, technical support is provided under the terms of Article 20(6) by the entities mentioned in Article 17(1)

(a), (b), (c) and (k), namely: Municipality/Parishes; Social Security; services of the Ministry of Education; and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Exceptionally, due to a clear lack of human resources and depending on the qualification of the protective response, the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People may also sign a protocol with the entities represented in the extended format of a local Commission aimed at allocating technicians to support the activities of the restricted format of that Commission, under the terms of Article 20-A of the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#)².

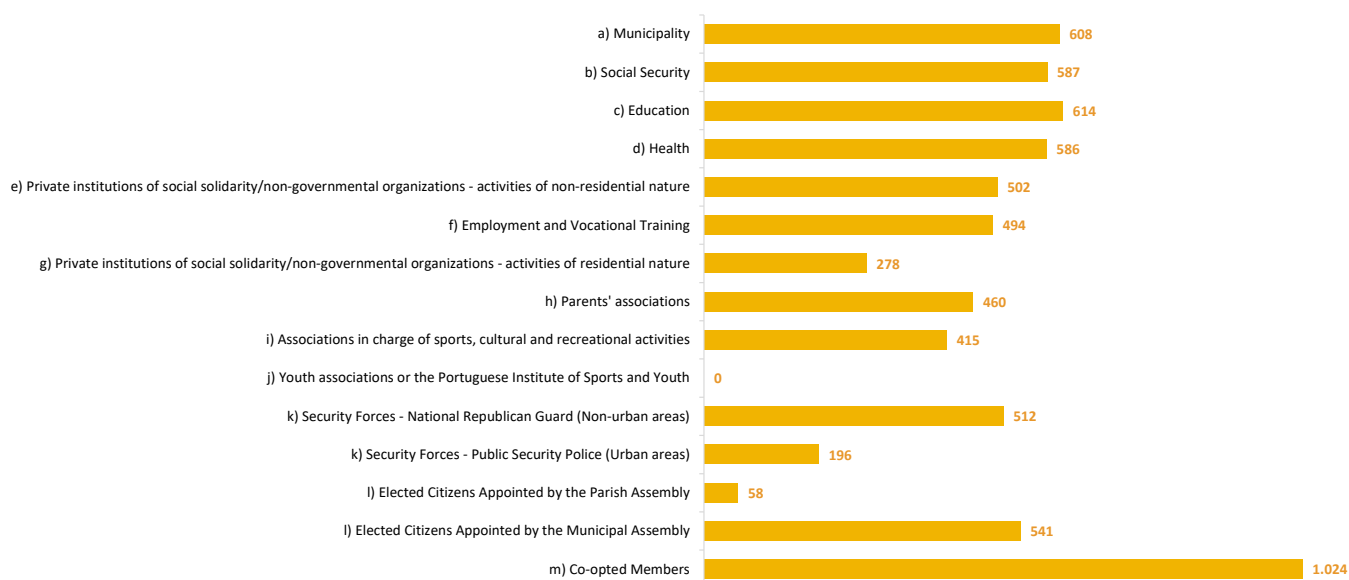
4.1.2.

DATA CONCERNING 2022

In 2022, there were, in total, 4.279 members of the local Commissions, of which 1.955 were members of the restricted format of the CPCJ, 270 (i.e., 14%) of whom were co-opted members. As of these figures, the restricted format of the CPCJ counted with ca. half the number of members of the extended format (i.e., 45,69%).

In addition, 45% of the CPCJ mentioned the Technical Support provided within the scope of Article 20(6) of the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#). The entities that provide the support at stake are as follows, by decreasing order.

Chart 41| Total number of members of the local Commissions by area each represents



Source: IT application used by the CPCJ for its management and of the Promotion and Protection Process(es)

² Law No. 147/99, of September 1, amended by Law No. 31/2003, of August 22, Law No. 142/2015, of September 8, Law No. 23/2017, of May 23 and Law No. 26/2018, of July 5.

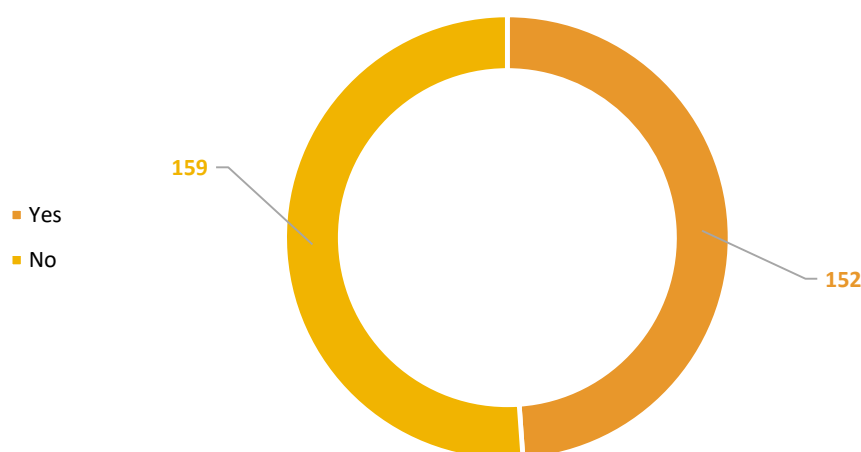
Notwithstanding the added value that the participation of co-opted members brings to the work developed by the CPCJ, it is noteworthy to underline the high percentage of this type of members, which seems to be excessive in comparison with the number and percentage of members representing public and private entities in the CPCJ.

It is also important to highlight the compliance of the organisms, whose participation is compulsory in the restricted format of the CPCJ, with the legal disposition that establishes such. In this regard, one underlines that the Municipality, the area of Social Security, the services of the Ministry of Education and of the Ministry of Health totaled 9% of the overall number of members. The presence of 8% of voting citizens appointed by the Municipal Assembly shall be underlined as well.

The representation of private institutions of social solidarity/non-governmental organizations offering activities of non-residential nature, the organism in charge of employment and vocational training, parents' associations and the security forces (GNR) total, each of them, circa 7% of the members. The remaining types of entities mentioned in the graph account, altogether, for 14% of the total number of members of restricted format of the local Commissions.

Note that 152 out of the 311 CPCJ (i.e., circa half of the total) reported a lack of representation of the entities at stake in Article 17 of the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#) equivalent to around half of all CPCJs.

Chart 42| Number of CPCJ with representation of all entities in 2022

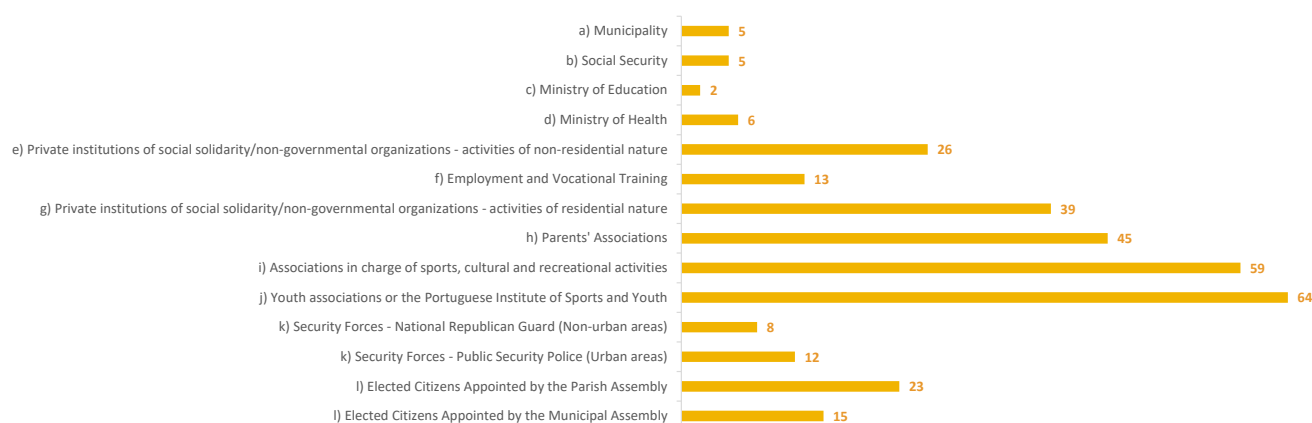


Source: Replies to the annual questionnaire on the composition, functioning and activity of the CPCJ in 2022.

The three entities or types of entity most often identified as missing representation in the CPCJ were as follows, in decreasing order of reference: youth associations or the Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth (missing representation in 64 CPCJ); associations in charge of sports, cultural and recreational activities (missing in 59 CPCJ); and parents' associations (missing in 45 CPCJ).

On the other hand, the least referenced entities were: the Ministry of Education, which counts with a centralized allocation procedure on mainland Portugal; the Municipalities alongside the services of Social Security; and the Ministry of Health.

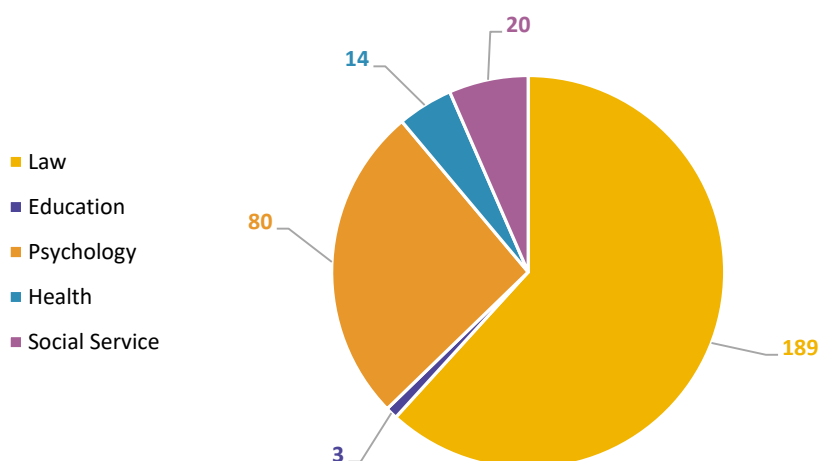
Chart 43 | Entities lacking to ensure representation in the CPCJ in 2022



Source: Replies to the annual questionnaire on the composition, functioning and activity of the CPCJ in 2022.

Following on from the aforementioned and pursuant to the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#), the composition of the CPCJ is of multidisciplinary nature. In this regard, adding to the mandatory members, it must include professionals trained in areas such social work, psychology, health and law, or citizens with special interest - and ideally competence and/or experience - in matters related to childhood and youth, as of Article 17(1)(m). However, observing multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary dimensions it is not always possible.

Chart 44 | Number of CPCJ with compromised interdisciplinarity due to the lack of representation of technical areas



Source: Replies to the annual questionnaire on the composition, functioning and activity of the CPCJ in 2022.

In 2022, 306 of the 311 CPCJ reported to lack some technical skills, a situation which somehow compromises their interdisciplinary nature.

The three areas that were reported the most by the CPCJ in these circumstances are: Law, reported to be lacking in 189 CPCJ; Psychology, lacking in 80 CPCJ; and Social Work, mentioned by 20 CPCJ.

4.2. ORGANISATION AND OPERATING MODE OF THE CPCJ

4.2.1. BRIEF OVERVIEW

As aforementioned, the CPCJ operates in two formats, whose powers and responsibilities differ.

The extended format meets in plenary sessions or in working groups that focus on specific issues. The meetings take place on a monthly basis or as often as necessary for the CPCJ in its extended format to fulfill its duties. Commissioners are required to work effectively for a minimum of eight hours a month, which make up for one working day of their regular working time, established by the institution they represent.

The restricted format operates on a permanent basis, and its members or technical support work full-time (35 hours per week) or part-time (variable time allocation), in accordance with the reference criteria established by the CNPDPCJ. The plenary sessions are convened by the president at least every two weeks, for the steps to be taken in proceedings to promote the rights and protection of children and young people in danger to be distributed to the members of the restricted format.

As set out in the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#), the CPCJ is chaired by one of its members, who is elected by the plenary of the extended format. The president of the CPCJ is responsible for: representing that local Commission; chairing and coordinating the work carried out during the meetings of both the extended and the restricted formats; promoting the implementation of the deliberations; coordinating the work of the CPCJ with a view to elaborating the annual activity plan and the annual report; submitting the annual activity plan and the annual report to the extended format of the CPCJ for approval; authorizing the consultation of proceedings; and making the communications foreseen in the law.

When carrying out these duties, the president appoints a member of the CPCJ as secretary, who replaces the president in case of the absence or impediment of the latter.

4.2.2. DATA CONCERNING 2022

In 2022, most CPCJ held plenary meetings once or twice a month, which is compliance with the [Law on the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger](#).

It is also noted that the frequency of the meetings in 63 CPCJ (i.e., 20%) is lower than the legally required.

In 2022, most CPCJ hold plenary meetings once or twice a month.

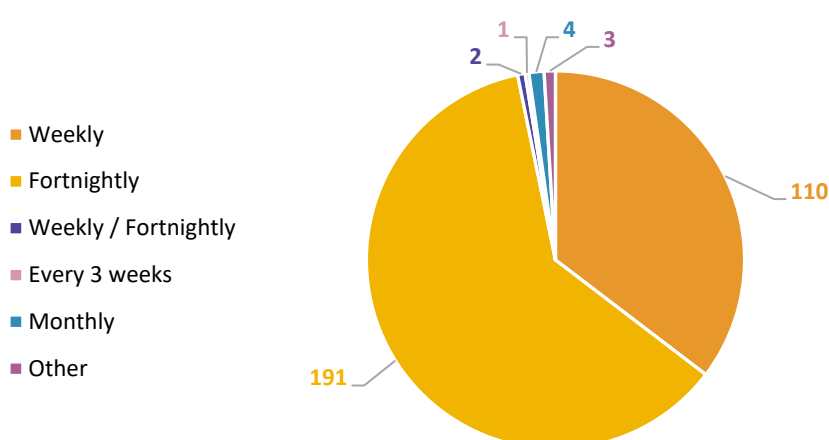
Table 20 | Frequency of the plenary meetings of the extended format of the CPCJ

FREQUENCY	NUMBER OF CPCJ
Twice a month	2
Once a month	246
Every 2 months	20
Every 3 months	9
Every 6 months	2
Monthly and every 2 months	1
Once over every 2 months	29
Once over every 3 months	1
Whenever relevant	1

Source: Replies to the annual questionnaire on the composition, functioning and activity of the CPCJ in 2022.

The restricted format of most CPCJ convene fortnightly and weekly. Only a residual number of CPCJ meet in other frequencies.

Chart 45 | Frequency of the plenary meetings of the restricted format of the CPCJ



Source: Replies to the annual questionnaire on the composition, functioning and activity of the CPCJ in 2022.

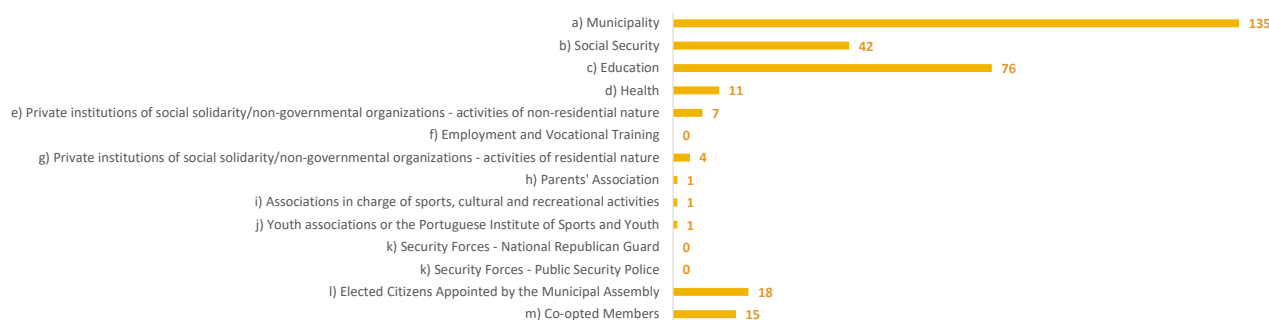
As previously mentioned, the restricted format of the CPCJ operates on a permanent basis. In order to accomplish such, the CPCJ resource to several strategies, including:

- Service available via mobile phone, with the possibility of establishing direct contact with technicians (some of which are available on a rotating basis) or to leave a voice message;
- Forwarding the contacts received to other CPCJ communication channels (e-mail, WhatsApp, Facebook);
- Forwarding calls to the Security Forces (National Republican Guard/Public Security Police);
- Forwarding or suggestion of forwarding (via voice message with contact details) the contact received to entities with competence regarding matters of childhood and youth (hospitals, health centers and other local public services); and
- Forwarding or suggestion of forwarding the contact received to a first line emergency intervention provider,

specifically the National Social Emergency Line.

The charts below provide information on presidents and secretaries of the CPCJ according to the entity responsible for their appointment to the local Commission.

Chart 46| Area of operation of the institution that appointed the member of the CPCJ, which was then elected president



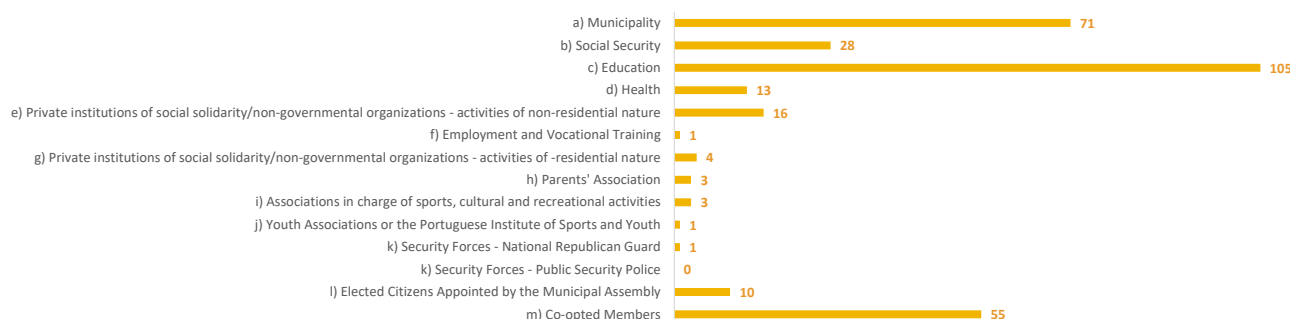
Source: Replies to the annual questionnaire on the composition, functioning and activity of the CPCJ in 2022.

As of the chart above, most presidents were first appointed as members by institutions such as municipalities, services of the Ministry of Education and of the area of Social Security, but there were citizens appointed by the Municipal/Parish Assembly, as well. In 2022, there were no presidents who had been appointed members by a public body responsible for employment and vocational training, nor by the security forces.

According to the data collected, most presidents have a degree in the area of pedagogy (96) or social work (62). Other background areas include criminology, social education, theology, psychomotricity, management and communication, among others.

In terms of assignment, the majority of presidents work full-time (35 hours per week), while 52 of them work part-time (17, 5 hours per week) and 67 circa 7 or 8 hours a week.

Chart 47| Area of operation of the institution that appointed the member of the CPCJ, which was then appointed secretary by the president



Source: Replies to the annual questionnaire on the composition, functioning and activity of the CPCJ in 2022.

As of the position of secretary and according to the chart above, the majority was first appointed member of the CPCJ as representatives of services of the Ministry of Education and of the municipalities. Co-opted members

rank third as the origin of the secretaries appointed by the presidents of the CPCJ.

Most secretaries have a degree in education (111), social work (73) or psychology (44).

In terms of assignment and similarly to the presidents, the majority of secretaries (115) work full-time, while 46 of them work part-time and 70 circa 7 or 8 hours a week.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Considering the holistic and integrated analysis of the data in this report, and aiming to contribute to strengthen the preventive and protective intervention of the entire system, the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People (CNPDPJ) issues a set of recommendations addressed to the entities with competence in matters of childhood and youth (ECMIJ), the local Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCJ), and to the CNPDPCJ itself.

ENTITIES WITH COMPETENCE IN MATTERS OF CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

The promotion of the rights, the protection of children and young people and the prevention of situations of danger are, first of all, of the competence of public and private entities with competence in matters of childhood and youth (ECMIJ). Therefore, the first recommendation is addressed to these entities.

In fulfilling this legal obligation, the ECMIJ must also follow an ethical imperative to intervene correspondingly in situations of risk and of danger, with a very serious and committed effort, in an integrated and articulated manner.

Networking shall encourage participation, the knowledge of skills, the definition of limits and concerted intervention, in order to resolve the situation of the child, as well as to avoid the duplication of actions and the need to move further into another level of intervention.

It is up to those entities to respond effectively, while mobilizing, preparing and assuming their responsibility for promoting children's rights or in preventing the violation of these rights, implementing local, integrative plans, based on a systemic and holistic vision, capable of preventing, protecting and repairing situations of children whose rights have been compromised.

LOCAL COMMISSIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- The local Commissions for the Protection of Chil-

dren and Young People (CPCJ), through its extended format, need to continue to promote and deepen the awareness towards the high importance of the public interest in internalizing and promoting the Rights of the Child and towards the prevention of the risk and of the danger that disrespecting or offending those rights represent. The extended format of the CPCJ is responsible for mobilizing the community and for the creation of increasingly consolidated synergies that contribute to an effective planning and implementation of concerted actions, aiming to prevent danger, in order to reduce the need for protective intervention. Should the implementation of the Local Plans developed under the Adélia Project match their ambition as the National Commission anticipates and trusts they will, the plans at stake will be a valuable contribution to creating childhoods of higher quality.

- The participation of children and young people is not optional, neither for the State, nor for institutions or for professionals who work with children and young people. Participation is only optional for children and young people, who may or may not want to exercise this right of theirs. The CPCJ, while developing their several preventive and protective activities, must guarantee the right to participation to all children by hearing them, involving them and taking into account their opinions and perspectives in the planning and decision-making processes.
- Commissioners and technical support staff of the CPCJ shall keep in mind a set of ethical principles, aiming to develop practices of excellence, ensuring that the benchmark for professional practice is the ethical maximum and not the acceptable minimum.

These principles include:

- respect for the dignity and rights of all people;
- permanent professional, technical and scientific updating, for greater competence;
- responsibility and awareness of the consequences that their work may have on children, young people, families and the society at large; and
- integrity, while preventing and avoiding any possible conflicts of interest that may arise in the exercise of their professional duties.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE RIGHTS AND THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The noble, yet challenging, mission of the National Commission is to contribute to the planning of the State intervention and to coordinate, monitor and assess the action of public entities and of the community in promoting the rights and in protecting children and young people. Its responsibility is immense. Its objectives include contributing to a system of higher quality through:

- Its action with the entities represented in the CPCJ, in order for former to appoint their representative while taking in consideration the member profile approved by the National Council of the CNPDPCJ, as well as to ensure their effective compliance regarding the allocation time defined for their representative's work at the CPCJ;
- The qualification of the members and of the tech-

nical support staff of the CPCJ, by offering a diversified training programme that contributes to a more specialized knowledge, which is closer to the needs of the children, young people and families upon whom the system intervenes;

- The reinforcement of the local support provided to the CPCJ through the work of the Regional Technical Teams of the CNPDPCJ and the promotion of regional and district meetings, in which good practices and matters deemed as priorities can be shared;
- The standardization of procedures and tools that are useful in the assessment and intervention within the scope of Promotion and Protection Processes, along with the elaboration of recommendations and technical guidelines; and
- The definition of methodologies for the assessment of the CPCJ, and also the promotion of possible supervision mechanisms targeted at the professionals of the CPCJ.

**THE BEST INTEREST OF ALL CHILDREN IS THE
NORTH OF THE SYSTEM AS A WHOLE, FOR THE SAKE
OF HAPPIER, FAIRER AND MORE PROGRESSIVE
PRESENTS AND FUTURES, BOTH AT THE INDIVIDUAL
AND COLLECTIVE LEVELS.**



#PROTEGER CRIANÇAS COMPETE A TOD@S

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