



**COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE REPUBLIC  
OF TAJIKISTAN**

**REPORT  
THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS  
IN THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN  
FOR 2025**

**DUSHANBE 2026**

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## **FOREWORD**

As a social welfare state, the Republic of Tajikistan ensures conditions for a decent life and the free development of every individual, including children, who make up more than 40 percent of its population.

To this end, in 2025, effective measures were adopted to protect the rights and freedoms and ensure the legitimate interests of children within the framework of the humane policies of the Founder of Peace and National Unity – Leader of the Nation, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon – in all key areas of statehood.

First and foremost, efforts continue to ensure the rights of the child to life, health, education, rest, freedom of expression, protection from violence and the threat of use of violence, prohibition of corporal punishment against children, elimination of the worst forms of child labour, and inclusion of children in education and upbringing within the family environment. A significant step has been taken toward achieving the strategic objectives of the state.

In this regard, the Commissioner for Children's Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan has undertaken efforts to further improve the observance of children's rights and freedoms and ensure their legitimate interests. Based on the results of these activities and an analysis of the state of observance of children's rights, the Commissioner has prepared the latest report.

The report of the Commissioner for Children's Rights has been compiled taking into account the results of visits, assessments, and monitoring of children's institutions, the review of complaints filed by children and on behalf of and in the interests of children, an analysis of legislation, an assessment of strategic and programmatic sectoral documents, a review of draft regulatory acts, international obligations regarding children's rights, information provided by government agencies, and media materials.

The work of the Commissioner for Children's Rights, which is primarily aimed at realizing the rights and freedoms of children and safeguarding their legitimate interests within the framework of strategic development goals, state policy, and the fulfillment of international obligations, also contributes to enhancing Tajikistan's standing on the world stage.

In this regard, an annual report is prepared given an assessment and analysis of the current situation, and specific recommendations are made regarding the improvement of legislation, the adoption and implementation of strategic planning documents, and the further enhancement of the process of protecting children's rights and freedoms and safeguarding their interests.

It is encouraging that these reports are being reviewed under the guidance of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, and that steps are being taken to incorporate the findings and recommendations presented.

In this regard, in accordance with Part 1 of Article 32<sup>7</sup> of the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan 'On the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan,' the report of the Commissioner for Children's Rights shall be submitted to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Majlisi Milli of the Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Supreme Economic Court of the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The 2025 Report of the Commissioner for Children's Rights is devoted to the analysis and assessment of issues related to raising public legal awareness and strengthening cooperation in the field of child rights protection, restoring children's violated rights, promoting the improvement of legislation and the development of strategic plans in the field of child rights protection, ensuring justice and privacy, protecting the rights of children with disabilities, and eradicating the worst forms of child labor.

We are confident that the latest report of the Commissioner for Children's Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan will be thoroughly studied and reviewed. The recommendations put forward will contribute to further improving the state of the observance of rights and freedoms while ensuring the best interests of the children of our beloved Tajikistan.

## **1. ENHANCING PUBLIC LEGAL AWARENESS AND STRENGTHENING COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION**

Enhancing public legal awareness and strengthening cooperation in the field of protecting children's rights and freedoms is an ongoing process that is constantly being reinforced by organizations working with children. This is due to the fact that these issues are enshrined in national legislation, international obligations regarding the protection of children's rights, and strategic planning documents, and are consistently emphasized in the messages and speeches of the Founder of Peace and National Unity, Leader of the Nation, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon.

In this process, while attention is paid on parents, guardians, other legal representatives of the child, and society, it is also necessary to improve the education of the children themselves so that they can defend themselves independently in the event of a violation of their rights or seek assistance from the relevant authorities to ensure their protection.

In this regard, when implementing measures, special attention is paid to raising legal awareness and strengthening cooperation, and factors contributing to this, as well as existing obstacles, are examined.

Due to insufficient legal awareness, children and their legal representatives face certain challenges in family, labor, property, social, and other relations, which, in turn, can lead to family conflicts and the aggravation of social tensions.

Analysis of appeals and informational materials indicates that most problems in the protection of children's rights and freedoms, as well as in safeguarding their lawful interests, are caused by a low level of legal awareness, non-compliance with legislative requirements, and insufficient cooperation among entities working with children.

In this regard, as part of the implementation of the Human Rights Commissioner's Action Programme for 2025, activities were carried out to raise public awareness. The Commissioner for Children's Rights and the responsible staff of the Office of Commissioner for Human Rights on child rights protection appeared 39 times in the media to address various aspects of children's lives, including legislative changes, the activities of national child protection institutions, implementation of national and international child rights instruments, and ensuring children's rights to life, health, education, rest, sports, etc.

To further enhance public awareness of child rights protection, the Commissioner for Children's Rights and staff of the Office of Commissioner for Human Rights held meetings and informational events with representatives of local executive authorities, heads of educational institutions, civil society actors, and parents, providing

participants with information on specific aspects of children's rights and freedoms.

To this end, in 2025, the Commissioner for Children's Rights visited the Panj, Jayhun, Dusti, A. Jomi, and Temurmaliq districts of Khatlon Region, the cities of Khujand, Konibodom, and Isfara in Sughd Region, and the Rasht District to assess the situation regarding the protection of children's rights in child care institutions. During these visits, informational events were also held with officials responsible for child welfare and community activists, and mobile reception sessions for citizens' appeals were organized.

As part of these visits, roundtables were conducted with the participation of local executive authorities, secretaries of guardianship and custodianship bodies, members of local child protection commissions, and community activists, with over 350 participants in total.

Additionally, in 2025, during assessment and monitoring of several child care institutions in the cities of Dushanbe, Hisor, Roghun, Khujand, Isfara, Kulob, and the districts of A. Jomi, J. Balkhi, B. Ghafurov, and Temurmaliq, informational events were held involving teachers, caregivers, and children to raise awareness on issues of child protection and development.

These activities provided information on state policy in the field of protecting and promoting the rights and freedoms of the child during the period of independence, on international and national

mechanisms for the protection of children's rights, including the Commissioner for Children's Rights, and on the possibility for children to submit individual complaints in accordance with the Procedure for Reviewing Children's Appeals to the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as prevention of all forms of violence against children, the eradication of the worst forms of child labor, and other related topics.

At the same time, as part of the 2025 Work Plan of the Commission on the Rights of the Child under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, and in collaboration with institutions of higher professional and postgraduate education, a series of training events on the protection and development of children was held. In particular, on 9 July 2025, a training session on 'International Instruments on the Rights of the Child' was held at the Training Centre for Supreme Court Judges, at the Academy of Public Administration on 15-17 September and 21 November 2025 for participants in the advanced training course for leading specialists and specialists from local branches of the State Agency for Social Protection of the Population in regions, cities and districts on the topic 'Development of Public Services in the field of Child Social Protection', on 7 October for participants in the advanced training course for heads of education structures in regions, cities and districts on the topic 'Protection of Children's Rights in the field of Education in Tajikistan', and on 21 and 22 October for participants in the advanced training course for

staff of the Execution Service on the topic ‘Protection of Children’s Rights in the Work of Execution Service Service Staff’.

Issues relating to the protection of children’s rights are regularly discussed at public events. To this end, on 2 June, dedicated to the World Children's Day, a national conference was held on ‘The 10th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On the Protection of the Rights of the Child”’, and on 28 November the Third Forum of Commissions on the Rights of the Child took place, in which the Commissioner for Children's Rights participated and delivered speech.

On the initiative of the Dushanbe city state executive authorities, from 25 November to 10 December, at the Abulqosim Firdavsi Cultural and Entertainment Park, the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Tajik National University, the Institute of Finance and Economics, the National Academy of Sciences and the Republican Medical College events were held dedicated to the ‘16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence’, in which the Commissioner for Children's Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan took part.

At the same time, on 26 November 2025, in accordance with the 2025 Action Plan of the Public Movement for National Unity and the Revival of Tajikistan, approved by the Movement’s Chairman, the Leader of the Nation, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon, a meeting was held with teachers and

parents of students at Lyceum No. 3 for gifted children in Dushanbe, where the Commissioner for Children's Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan spoke on the topic 'The Role of Education in Raising a Generation creating unity'.

As part of the celebrations for Human Rights Day and the events of 'Human Rights Week', a round table was held on 11 December 2025, dedicated to activities for the protection of children's rights, including the results of visits, assessments and monitoring of children's institutions by the authorities, with the participation of representatives of state bodies, civil society and development partners working in the field of child protection.

The event was attended by senior officials from the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, the departments of the Prosecutor General's Office responsible for the protection of children's rights, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Health and Social Protection, Justice, Labour, Migration and Employment, the Committee on Women and Family Affairs, the Committee on Primary and Secondary Vocational Education, as well as representatives of public associations – a total of 45 people.

During the event, particular emphasis was placed on the wise policies of the Founder of Peace and National Unity, Leader of the Nation, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon, as well as the support and effective initiatives of the State and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, and the

provisions of current legislation in the field of protecting the rights and freedoms of children and ensuring their best interests.

Additionally, during the event, issues were raised concerning the social integration of women and children returning from conflict zones, the protection of the rights and freedoms of children in conflict with the law, the safeguarding of children's rights in the context of ensuring access to education, healthcare, and social protection, reforms of the juvenile justice system, and the promotion of the best interests of the children in Tajikistan. The discussions also covered the sector's achievements, challenges, and future prospects.

In the course of conducting information activities, particular importance is attached to the development, publication, and dissemination of analytical and informational materials to the public. To this end, in 2025, the following report of the Commissioner for Children's Rights was prepared, translated, and published in 250 copies, and distributed to state bodies, academic institutions, international organizations, and civil society. At the same time, 1,000 brochures were published to raise public awareness, including among children, about the activities of the Commissioner for Children's Rights and the impact of violence on the development of children and youth.

At the same time, in accordance with the Work Plan of the Commission on the Rights of the Child under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, a training module entitled 'Monitoring

Children's Rights on the Basis of National and International Instruments' was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. This module covers the main provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, international treaty bodies and mechanisms for monitoring children's rights, methods for involving children in monitoring and reporting, the key principles of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnection between children's rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), SDG indicators relating to children, and sources of statistical data on children. It is planned that in 2026, training events for civil servants and others working in the field of child rights protection and implementation will be conducted on the basis of this module.

The protection of children's rights and freedoms, as well as the safeguarding of their interests, largely depend on regional and international cooperation among child rights institutions. In this regard, the Commissioner for Children's Rights strengthened cooperation with foreign counterparts, including within the framework of the CIS Commission of Commissioners for Children's Rights, and participated virtually and delivered speech in its fifth session on June 18 and sixth session on November 13, held in Bishkek and Minsk.

These meetings addressed issues such as the analysis of childhood illnesses, comprehensive care for children suffering from physical and

mental health conditions, child trafficking, children and the SDG, raising children in a family environment, organising child labor during the holidays, establishing a Children's Council, child begging and vagrancy, children in conflict with the law, orphans and abandoned children, children's education and upbringing, children's leisure activities, the improvement of children's legislation and other topical issues, and relevant decisions were adopted.

One of the significant achievements in strengthening cooperation is the establishment of the Children's Council under the CIS Commission of Commissioners for Children's Rights. The Council was established on 13 November 2025 by a decision of the Commission, and its first meeting took place in Minsk on 14 November. The Council is an advisory body established with the aim of involving children in the discussions and adoption of decisions concerning the protection of children's rights in CIS member states, the development of friendly cooperation, and the promotion of legal awareness by representing children's interests before the CIS Commissioners for Children's Rights. The Council, which comprises representatives from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan, includes two children aged between 16 and 18.

In this regard, the Commissioner for Human Rights, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science, nominated Oisha Badalova, an 11th-year student at the Umar Khayyam Lyceum

in Dushanbe, and Ashurov Anushervon, an 11th-year student at Secondary School No. 87 in Dushanbe, for inclusion on the Council, a move which was supported by the CIS Executive Committee.

It is worth noting that similar councils have been established within the CIS national human rights institutions, and to strengthen the Council's activities, a decision was taken to establish a Children's Council under the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan.

In connection with the strengthening of cooperation with this Commission, in 2025, responsible officials of the Commissioner for Human Rights participated in and delivered speeches at six working groups and five scientific and practical conferences held in a virtual format.

Measures were also taken to establish cooperation with commissioners for children's rights in Central Asia countries. To this end, on September 11-12, 2025, the Commissioner for Children's Rights participated in and delivered a speech at the First Forum of commissioners for children's rights in Central Asia countries, held in Tashkent. Following the forum, a Declaration on the Development of Regional Cooperation in the field of Child Rights Protection was adopted, along with a decision to hold the second forum in the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2026.

At the national level, cooperation was established with the General Prosecutor's Office, as well as the ministries of education and

science, internal affairs, justice, health and social protection of the population, and labor, migration and employment, in addition to the committees on women and family affairs, youth and sports, and primary and secondary vocational education. This cooperation contributed to the timely resolution of issues affecting children. In this process, effective collaboration with the General Prosecutor's Office in restoring violated children's rights proved particularly important, as did strengthening the work of local child rights commissions; cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science in developing training modules for child protection officials, drafting strategic planning documents, and conducting assessments and monitoring of educational institutions; and collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs in preventing violations of children's rights and working with women and children returning from conflict zones.

Cooperation also continued with development partners, including the UNICEF Office in Tajikistan, in areas such as monitoring the situation regarding children's rights, promoting and protecting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 'Legal Initiative' Public Foundation, the NGO 'Parents of Children with Disabilities', the NGO 'Caravan of HOPE' and others, in areas such as ensuring the rights of children with disabilities to rehabilitation, providing legal representation for children whose rights have been violated, placing children who have been victims of exploitation and

violence in protection and rehabilitation centres, and organising awareness-raising events.

**In this regard, with the aim of further improving efforts to raise legal awareness of the population and strengthen cooperation in the field of protecting children's rights, the following recommendations are proposed:**

*– enhancing public awareness of children's rights through intensified information and outreach activities;*

*– developing, publishing, and disseminating comprehensive materials on the protection of children's rights among the population, including children;*

*– expanding cooperation with state authorities, international counterparts, development partners, civil society, and the public in the field of child rights protection.*

## **2. RESTORATION OF CHILDREN’S RIGHTS THAT HAVE BEEN VIOLATED**

The legislation and law enforcement practices of the Republic of Tajikistan have created favourable conditions and opportunities for the protection of violated rights and freedoms and for safeguarding the best interests of children. In this regard, children and their legal representatives may freely apply to State bodies, local government bodies, public associations, organisations, institutions and enterprises, irrespective of their legal form, with a request to restore violated rights and to exercise their rights and freedoms.

This process was significantly facilitated, first and foremost, by the assistance of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan in the development and approval of internal administrative procedures for the receipt and consideration of appeals from children in the ministries and departments responsible for child protection, as well as the introduction of amendments and additions to the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan “On Appeals by Individuals and Legal Entities”.

Prior to these amendments being introduced in 2024, only legal representatives and other authorised bodies were permitted to act on behalf of minors in accordance with the law. In other words, minors did not have the right to appeal on their own behalf.

Given this new opportunity, in 2025, the Commissioner for Children's Rights received 167 (186 appeals in 2024) appeals from individuals and legal entities regarding the protection of rights and freedoms, the safeguarding of interests and the restoration of children's violated rights, of which 56 (52 appeals in 2024) were written appeals, 109 (131 appeals in 2024) were verbal appeals and 2 (3 appeals in 2024) were electronic appeals.

Of these, 112 appeals were registered at the Central Office of the Commissioner, while 55 appeals were recorded during mobile receptions by the Commissioner for Children's Rights in cities and districts.

The distribution of written appeals submitted on behalf of and in the interests of children by region is as follows: Dushanbe: 21 cases (28 in 2024), Khatlon Region: 4 case (1 in 2024), Sughd Region: 9 cases (8 in 2024), Districts of Republican Subordination: 8 cases (5 in 2024), foreign countries (Russian Federation): 13 cases (10 in 2024).

Written appeals, according to the classification, pertained to the following human rights and freedoms:

- right to an adequate standard of living, parental care, family upbringing, alimony, and social security: 21 cases (24 in 2024);
- right to personal inviolability and freedom from all forms of violence: 10 cases (8 in 2024);
- right to education – 9 cases (3 in 2024);
- right to appeal – 7 cases (8 in 2024);

- right to communication – 6 cases (1 in 2024)
- right to property – 2 cases (2 in 2024);
- right to health – 1 case.

An analysis of compliance with the principle of equal responsibility in the upbringing and education of children shows that, as in previous years, mothers most frequently submit appeals on behalf of and in the interests of children. However, civil society structures also play an important role. In this regard, the statistics for 2025 regarding entities that submitted written appeals on behalf of and in the interests of children are as follows:

- women: 26 cases (2024 – 26);
- men: 21 cases (2024 – 15);
- legal entities: 9 cases (2024 – 11).

During the reception of appeals, details regarding the number, age and gender of the children on whose behalf and in whose interests the appeal is made are recorded in the case files; as of 2025, these figures are as follows:

Total number	70 people
Gender:	
Boy	33 people
Girl	37 people
Age:	
under 1 year	1 person
1 year	4 persons

2 years	4 persons
3 years	3 persons
4 years	4 persons
5 years	5 persons
6 years	7 people
7 years	6 people
8 years	7 people
9 years	3 persons
10 years	5 persons
11 years	3 persons
12 years	2 persons
13 years	3 persons
14 years	4 persons
15 years	2 persons
16 years	3 persons
17 years	4 persons

The protection of children's social rights is considered one of the fundamental areas of child protection and development. Regardless of the measures taken, certain challenges remain in ensuring support for children from low-income families, securing a healthy family environment, the amount of alimony, ensuring its timely payment and its proper use for the child's needs, as well as guaranteeing access to social security for children. Analyses indicate that in 2025, the

majority of appeals also relate to issues of ensuring an adequate standard of living, parental care, upbringing within the family, alimony, and social security.

At the same time, concern remains over the increasing number of appeals related to the right to personal inviolability and freedom from all forms of violence.

The presented statistics show that the number of appeals concerning the right to appeal and communication has been increasing year by year, with the primary aim of removing obstacles to a child's communication with their father, mother, and close relatives.

In most cases, fathers and mothers complain about the need to facilitate communication with their children, whose upbringing, following divorce, has been assigned by court decision to one of the parties. Despite the existence of a court order regulating communication, Execution Service employees, district police officers, and secretaries of guardianship and trusteeship bodies are unable to implement it for various reasons. This situation compels the parties to repeatedly appeal to the relevant authorities to protect their rights.

An analysis of appeals shows that, as in previous years, the issue of communication between fathers, mothers, and close relatives with children is often associated with hostility, resentment, and acts of revenge by former spouses and their relatives, and in most cases, children's rights are violated. Because this process occurs in the

presence of children, significantly affecting their lives and their physical and mental well-being.

The study of appeals revealed that citizens submitted complaints in 6 cases related to the potential use of violence against a child by parents or their legal representative, in 2 cases by by strangers, in 1 case, by a teacher, and in 1 case, by officers of internal affairs agencies related to the potential use of violence and threats of violence. It is particularly alarming that, in most instances, children are subjected to violence by individuals they know and trust.

Given the potential for violence, these appeals were referred, in accordance with their respective jurisdictions, to the General Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Committee for National Security, the Shohmansur District Court of Dushanbe, and the executive body of state authority of the city of Vahdat.

The provision of information on the outcomes of appeals review is also subject to delays, and some state authorities prolong this process, which complicates oversight of the resolution of these issues.

Appeals concerning possible violations of children's rights were also forwarded to the Commissioner for Human Rights, reviewed, and assistance was provided in restoring children's rights. In particular, an appeal from a minor, Y.R., regarding poor treatment by his mother toward him and his siblings was examined. In cooperation with the secretary of the guardianship and trusteeship bodies of the city of

Vahdat, explanatory work was carried out to address such treatment, and the family was placed under supervision.

An appeal by citizen Kh.S. regarding a possible threat of violence by a resident of the city of Vahdat, M.S., against minors N. and F. was reviewed. In cooperation with officials of the city of Vahdat, the parties reached an agreement, and explanatory work was conducted with citizen M.S. to prevent the recurrence of such actions in the future.

At the same time, an appeal by citizen N.Z.Sh. concerning unlawful actions by S.U., a teacher at an educational institution in Dushanbe, was reviewed, and the teacher was fined by the Sino District Court. An appeal by citizen H.R.O. regarding communication with his children was also considered in cooperation with the secretary of the guardianship and trusteeship bodies of the Sino District, and communication with the children was ensured.

Furthermore, an appeal by citizen H.Sh.A. seeking assistance in obtaining alimony for minors S.Sh. and S.Sh. was reviewed, resulting in the resumption of alimony payments. An appeal by citizen A.S.D. concerning the return of her minor child, Sh.H.H., from the Russian Federation was also examined, and, in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the child was returned to the mother.

In 2025, 109 oral appeal were also received and reviewed. Of these, 47 were considered at the Central Office of the Commissioner

for Human Rights, while 62 were reviewed by the Commissioner for Children's Rights during mobile receptions held in cities and districts.

In particular, the Commissioner for Children's Rights received and reviewed appeals from 36 individuals (16 women and 20 men) during official visits to cities and districts of the Khatlon region, 20 appeals (14 women and 6 men) in the Sughd region, and 6 appeals from women in the Rasht district.

During these visits, citizen receptions were conducted with the participation of senior officials and representatives of central government bodies. Assistance was provided in resolving a range of issues, including school enrollment, name changes, provision of social assistance, facilitating communication with a child, payment of alimony, access to drinking water, allocation of land for constructing a vertical well, obtaining a child's birth certificate from the mother-in-law, allocation of land plot for housing construction, building sports grounds, obtaining construction permits, construction of educational institutions, granting pardons and reducing prison sentences for a son, deferral of court decisions, taking custody of a child from a former spouse, transferring a child to another school, and other matters.

Oral appeals were classified as relating to the following human rights and freedoms:

- right to an adequate standard of living, parental care, family upbringing, alimony, and social security – 33 cases (2024 – 46);
- right to housing – 18 cases (2024 – 4);

- right to communication – 15 cases (2024 – 16);
- right to education – 11 cases (2024 – 16);
- right to personal inviolability and freedom from all forms of violence – 5 cases (2024 – 6);
- right to individuality – 5 cases (2024 – 9);
- right to appeal – 4 cases;
- right to health – 2 cases;
- other matters – 16 cases.

To the extent possible, assistance was provided to citizens who submitted verbal appeals to resolve their issues, while legal consultations were provided in remaining cases. Analysis indicates that, as with written appeals, citizens most frequently sought assistance with matters related to ensuring an adequate standard of living, alimony enforcement, social security for children, ensuring children's rights to education, communication, and individuality.

For instance, S.M., a minor and resident of the Shohmansur district of Dushanbe, made an oral appeal stating that she had a young child and wished to place the child in a children's institution so that she could take up employment. During the consideration of the appeal, it emerged that the citizen had been married off as a minor in a religious ceremony and had also been subjected to violence. Given the nature of the offence in this case, with the assistance of the Office of Commissioner for Human Rights in cooperation with the Public Foundation ‘Legal Initiative’ and Public Organization ‘Caravan of

Hope’, the minor was temporarily placed in a support centre for women and minors. Civil society organisations provided the minor with psychological and legal assistance.

In addition, a citizen, S.D., a resident of Dushanbe, requested assistance in applying for a pension for her children following the loss of the family’s breadwinner. Due to her difficult financial situation and inability to pay for legal representation, in cooperation with the PO ‘Rights and Prosperity’, the citizen was provided with a lawyer, an application for the establishment of paternity was prepared and submitted to the court, and a pension was arranged.

Analysis shows that in 2025, 27 women and 14 men submitted appeals to the Central Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights on behalf of and in the interests of 65 minors.

The statistics regarding the age and gender of children on whose behalf and in whose interests verbal appeals were made are as follows:

Total number	65 people
Gender:	
Boy	35 persons
Girl	30 persons
Age:	
under 1 year	2 persons
1 year	3 persons
2 years	3 persons
3 years	4 persons

4 years	2 persons
5 years	1 person
6 years	4 persons
7 years	3 persons
8 years	7 persons
9 years	6 persons
10 years	3 persons
11 years	3 persons
12 years	6 persons
13 years	5 persons
14 years	4 persons
15 years	3 persons
16 years	2 persons
17 years	4 persons

Thus, an analysis of appeals by minors and those lodged on their behalf and in their interests shows that effective assistance, the restoration of infringed rights and freedoms, and the safeguarding of children's best interests depend to a large extent on the timely attention of state bodies, including local executive authorities, organisations and institutions, public associations, and the general public.

**In this regard, with the aim of further improving the process of receiving and reviewing appeals and restoring the violated rights of children, the following recommendations are proposed:**

- improving existing legislation and strengthening the mechanism for children's appeals;*
- developing and implementing procedures for receiving and reviewing children's appeals in government agencies, institutions, and organizations;*
- ensuring a timely response to restore violated rights and freedoms and protect the best interests of children;*
- taking children's best interests into account when receiving and reviewing appeals.*

### **3. SUPPORTING THE IMPROVEMENT OF LEGISLATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENTS IN THE FIELD OF PROTECTION OF CHILDREN`S RIGHTS**

In view of the development of public relations, the fulfillment of international obligations in the field of children's rights, the implementation of strategic objectives, and the prevention of potential threats to the life, health, and development of children, the process of

improving legislation, as well as drafting and adopting regulatory acts and strategic planning documents, is being continuously strengthened.

In this regard, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights cooperates with legislative and law-making bodies and provides feedback on draft regulatory acts that are directly or indirectly related to the respect, recognition, protection, and promotion of children's rights.

In recent years, this process has expanded, and a number of regulatory acts aimed at the protection and development of children have been drafted and adopted, taking into account the position of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights. However, there are still individual cases where draft regulatory acts concerning the protection of children's rights are adopted without the consent or opinion of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights.

Since the coordination of the drafting of regulatory acts and the obtaining of opinions from a national human rights institution are considered best international practices, they have a positive impact on the standard and quality of adopted documents and, ultimately, on the protection of children's rights.

Given the accumulated experience, in 2025, conclusions were provided on a number of regulatory acts and strategic planning documents.

In this process, one of the regulatory acts that continues to be improved is the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On the Protection

of the Rights of the Child,” which was amended and supplemented three times in 2025, and received positive opinions.

In particular, as of January 2, 2025, amendments were introduced to this Law concerning the promotion of a healthy lifestyle; respect for the law, cultural values, and national traditions and their protection by children; the provision of housing for orphans and abandoned children; the creation of conditions for the full physical, intellectual, spiritual, and moral development of children; the protection of children from the harmful effects of tobacco products, alcohol, drugs, psychotropic substances, highly addictive and other intoxicating substances; ensuring a decent standard of living for children with disabilities in accordance with their physical and mental capacities; and guaranteeing the right of children with disabilities to receive special assistance, education, and training that ensure their full independence and social integration.

Another amendment to this Law, introduced on 1 October 2025, addresses the issue of protecting children from information harmful to their health or development. Although in practice some countries have adopted specific laws on this subject, these amendments provide for the drafting and adoption of a bylaw – rules for the protection of children from information harmful to their health or development, as well as a new article on the protection of children from information harmful to their health or development, harmful information contained

in information products, and on the restriction or prohibition of their dissemination among children of a certain age.

Furthermore, on 17 December 2025, a corresponding amendment was introduced to this Law concerning the procedure for the return of children from other countries and the provision of medical and social services to them, and, in general, the mechanism for the protection of children's rights was further strengthened.

At the same time, in 2025, draft laws of the Republic of Tajikistan were submitted for approval, amending the Family, Civil and Civil Procedure Codes, designed to protect the rights and safeguard the legitimate interests of children.

In this regard, proposals were also submitted regarding draft resolutions of the Plenum of the Supreme Court entitled 'On the Implementation by Courts of Legislation Concerning the Protection of the Honour, Dignity and Professional Reputation of Individual and Legal Entities' and 'On the Specific Application of Legislation Concerning Juvenile Offences and Measures of Alternative Influence on Them'.

The adoption and implementation of strategic planning documents also contribute to the protection and promotion of children's rights. In this regard, in 2025, conclusions were submitted on draft resolutions of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan 'On the National Program for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency for 2026-2030', 'On the Action Plan for 2026 on Implementation of

the Program for the Reform of the Judicial System in Relation to Children for 2023-2027’, ‘On the Action Plan for 2026–2027 on Implementation of the Program for the Rehabilitation, Reintegration into Normal Life and Provision of Employment and Education for Women and Children Returning from Areas of Armed Conflict for 2023-2027’, “On the Action Plan for 2026-2027 on Implementation of the Concept of Legal Policy of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2018-2028”, “On the Development and Revision of Strategic Planning Documents in the Republic of Tajikistan” and “On the Guides on the Procedure for Questioning Child Victims of Human Trafficking”.

One of the key achievements in the field of child rights protection in 2025 was the adoption of the National Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2025-2027, approved by Decree No. 403 of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated 24 July 2025.

In the development of this Plan, the proposals of the Commissioner for Human Rights were taken into account, particularly regarding assessments in maternity hospitals, compliance with legal provisions related to adoption, and the eradication of document forgery in this area, as well as the organization and implementation of awareness-raising activities aimed at eliminating the exploitation of children, their involvement in sexual exploitation, begging, or their use in the production of pornographic materials or content.

Work also continued on fulfilling international obligations in the field of children's rights and strengthening regional and international cooperation in the recognition of regulatory acts. In this context, the draft Protocol on amendments to the Convention on Legal Assistance and Legal Relations in Civil, Family, and Criminal Matters of January 22, 1993, was reviewed, and the proposed amendments were approved.

Additionally, with regard to the conduct of state procedures, the Agreement on the Training of Personnel for Penitentiary Services of the CIS Member States, adopted on December 12, 2024, was considered appropriate and received a positive recommendation.

Work is currently under way to develop strategic plans relating to children, including the drafting of regulations on the registration of children with disabilities, orphans, abandoned children and other vulnerable children, as well as a National Child Protection Program; and representatives of the authorities are participating in inter-ministerial working groups in this area.

**In this regard, to further improve the existing legislation and adopt strategic planning documents in the field of children's rights protection, the following recommendations are proposed:**

*– improving legislation and adopting regulatory legal acts related to child protection and development;*

- submitting draft regulatory legal acts related to child protection to the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights for review and opinion;*
- expediting the process of developing and adopting a comprehensive sectoral program on child protection;*
- strengthening informational efforts to promote legislative updates and other regulatory legal acts related to child protection.*

#### **4. ENSURING JUSTICE AND PRIVACY**

Ensuring justice, privacy, freedom from exploitation, torture and all forms of violence are key aspects of child rights protection and are the responsibility of the State, the child's legal representatives and society.

In this context, national legislation is being continuously improved, strategic planning documents are being adopted and implemented, and child protection mechanisms are being strengthened.

In this regard, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights is also taking steps in this process by organising visits by the Commissioner for Children's Rights, assessments and monitoring of children's institutions, as well as by informing the public with a view to addressing existing problems and protecting the rights and freedoms of children.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and an inter-ministerial working group, the Action Plan for 2023-2025 on Implementation of the Program for the Reform of the Juvenile Justice System for 2023-2027 was successfully completed in 2025. It is worth noting that there are three juvenile justice institutions operating in the republic: the Republican Special School under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Dushanbe Special Vocational and Technical Lyceum under the Committee for

Primary and Secondary Vocational Education, and the YS 3/12 Educational Institution of the Main Directorate for the Execution of Criminal Sentences under the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan, the reform of which is continuing within the framework of this Program.

During visits, assessments, and monitoring of these institutions, staff of the Office of Commissioner for Human Rights continuously assess whether the care provided to children complies with national legislation and international standards, and regularly develop relevant recommendations.

In particular, studies and analyses indicate that the statutes and internal regulations of these institutions do not meet the requirements of international standards in the field of child rights protection. Therefore, in order to harmonize these documents, Model Regulations for institutions involving the deprivation or restriction of children's liberty have been developed and are currently under consideration by a working group.

Another issue in this area, noted in previous reports of the Commissioner for Children's Rights, is the absence of a psychologist in the Special School and the Special Vocational-Technical Lyceum, which were established with the support of development partners and civil society organizations. It is advisable in the future to consider funding these positions from the state budget.

The condition of the buildings, living conditions, and the standard of education and upbringing in these institutions are in need of improvement. In particular, the old, dilapidated and partially unsafe building of the Republican Special School is a cause for concern. It is also necessary to address the lack of established standards for children's nutrition, the shortage of suitable sports facilities, and the inability to involve children from these institutions in cultural events, competitions and Olympiads.

Another institution that is constantly under the close scrutiny of the Office of Commissioner is the educational institution YS 3/12 of the Main Directorate for the Execution of Criminal Sentences under the Ministry of Justice.

During the monitoring, it became clear that this institution is constantly taking measures to address existing shortcomings and is taking the Commissioner's recommendations into account. Currently, the institution has created good conditions for the upbringing and rehabilitation of children, and its staffing capacity is being strengthened year on year. Conditions in the dormitory, kitchen, catering facilities, medical services, communal areas, prisoners' uniforms and CCTV cameras met the requirements. At the time of the monitoring visit, 105 juveniles were serving sentences at the facility.

At the end of the year, the Main Directorate reported that, as of 25 December 2025, a total of 186 minors were being held in penal institutions, of whom 116 were serving sentences at the YS 3/12

educational facility in Dushanbe, whilst 66 minors were held in detention centres. In addition, four female minors were serving sentences at the YS 3/8 women's correctional facility in Nurek.

In 2025, a total of 154 convicted juveniles were admitted to correctional institutions to serve their sentences, of whom 151 are serving their sentences at the YS 3/12 educational institution and 3 at the Women's Correctional Institution, which is 25 more than in 2024.

It is worth noting that, in accordance with Decree No. 1009 of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan dated 20 March 2025 'On the Pardon of Persons Sentenced to Imprisonment', 30 convicted juveniles were pardoned and released from serving the remainder of their sentences, alongside adults.

The pardon of convicts by the Leader of the Nation is regarded as a significant sign of mercy and care for prisoners, including children. This is because, regardless of the crime committed and its severity, there are many people among those sentenced to imprisonment who repent of their actions and ask for a pardon.

In particular, children always hope for the early release or amnesty of their relatives and loved ones. This hope grows in the eve of major national holidays and commemorative dates, which are made possible by the humane policies of the Leader of the Nation, and amnesty becomes a topic of public discussion. In this regard, amnesty has a positive impact on strengthening social justice and trust in the state and the government.

Despite improvements in correctional measures, living conditions, education and the conditions of detention for convicted juveniles, a number of problems remain, including an increase in the number of convicts, recidivism among juveniles due to a lack of supervision and social support, as well as the need to construct appropriate sports facilities and recreational and leisure areas for juvenile offenders, which requires special attention.

Statistics provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs also show an increase in crimes committed by minors: in 2025, 715 cases of crimes committed by minors were recorded, which is 41 cases, or 6 percent, more than in the previous year. According to the available statistics, 353 cases of theft and 162 cases of hooliganism were recorded as having been committed by children, which exceeds the number of other offences.

842 minors were involved in committing 715 offences, 33 of whom were girls. Analysis shows that whilst 273 of them are students at educational institutions, the remaining 565 are minors who are not enrolled in education. This situation is cause for concern, as the lack of a proper education among children increases the likelihood of them committing offences and crimes.

Unfortunately, in 2025, the number of crimes committed against minors also increased. According to statistics from the competent state authorities, 1,440 crimes against minors were recorded in 2025, which is 419 cases, or 41 percent, higher than in the previous year.

According to the classification, the following types of crimes against minors are of particular concern: causing bodily harm, intentional homicide, rape, sexual violence, sexual intercourse with a person under the age of 16, immoral conduct, violations of traffic rules, hooliganism, obstruction of compulsory general education, and the marriage of a girl below the legal age.

In 2025, staff from the Office of Commissioner for Human Rights also carried out monitoring visits to the reception centers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Dushanbe and Khujand in July and November. During this period, 504 and 103 minors respectively were brought to the reception centres, 89 of whom were girls. An examination of the materials revealed that the majority of them were vagrants due to a lack of supervision. During their stay at these centres, children are provided with hot meals, vocational training, recreation and entertainment.

An analysis of the appeals received, official reports from state bodies, international human rights organisations, public associations and media reports, including social media, indicates that cases of crimes against children require effective practical measures. In particular, a number of cases of deliberate and particularly brutal murders of minors in the Qubodiyon and Farkhor districts, the city of Tursunzoda and, most recently, in the Moscow region of the Russian Federation have caused public outrage.

In response to these situations, the Commissioner for Human Rights, both at the national level and in cooperation with foreign counterparts, took action and, in order to ensure the protection of children's rights and freedoms as well as their best interests, called on state authorities, institutions and organizations, parents, other legal representatives, and citizens to take measures to create a protective environment for children and to intensify awareness-raising efforts aimed at further improving public legal awareness in the areas of child protection, upbringing, education, supervision, and development.

Moreover, in recent years, there has been an increase in cases of death and physical harm to children due to the negligence of parents, other legal representatives, and citizens. Despite ongoing response measures, awareness campaigns, and media appearances by the staff of the Commissioner for Human Rights and other state bodies, violations of children's rights in this area remain widespread.

According to data from the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, in 2025, two children died as a result of natural disasters, whilst 76 children died from drowning for various reasons, 71 of whom were under the age of 16.

Analysis shows that child drownings most frequently occur during the summer holidays, and the main factors contributing to child drownings are the irresponsibility of parents or their guardians, as children swim in areas not designated for swimming.

Cases of missing children and child suicides are also a cause for serious concern. Over the past two years, more than 800 cases of missing children have been registered, and 22 of them are still missing. Suicide statistics have also risen compared to 2024, with 67 children committing suicide, and in 61 cases the reasons for the suicide remain unknown. Although identifying the causes and factors leading to suicide plays an important role in preventing such cases, and the investigating authorities need to take measures in this regard.

One of the issues of concern is the absence of full or partial acquittals in cases involving children. According to the Supreme Court, in 2025 the courts heard 666 criminal cases against 910 minors, and in 635 cases 879 minors were convicted, which is a very high number. The number of juvenile victims in criminal cases stands at 914.

Within the justice system, the application of alternatives to deprivation of liberty for minors is considered a best practice. This is because it eliminates the risk of acquiring a criminal record and allows for the use of more lenient measures aimed at the correction of juveniles.

In this regard, as part of the reform of the juvenile justice system, consideration is being given to the practice of separating minors from the investigative and judicial system in cases of minor and medium-gravity offenses, and to applying approaches focused on social engagement and non-detention of minors.

This process contributes to the upbringing of the child and prevents the negative impact of the criminal justice system on their development. Unfortunately, such practices are rarely applied in the republic. Analysis shows that all 124 requests submitted to courts in 2025 seeking the application of preventive measures in the form of involving minors in the criminal justice system were fully granted.

In recent years, the issue of lowering the legal marriage age has become a subject of debate in the republic among officials and experts in this field, and recommendations have also been put forward by UN treaty bodies to abolish this legislative provision. According to statistics from the Supreme Court, in 2025, courts reviewed 3,410 cases concerning the reduction of the marriage age, and 3,322 applications were approved. Although courts approved 482 fewer applications than in 2024, this situation remains a cause for concern, as, under international legal instruments, this practice is considered a violation of children's rights.

Although the use or threat of violence against children is prohibited by national legislation, individual cases of this undesirable phenomenon still occur. It should be noted that the prevention of violence against children is not possible without the existence of effective protection mechanisms and accessible complaint procedures for children.

In this regard, within the framework of visits, assessments, and monitoring, meetings are held with children in institutions involving

restriction or deprivation of liberty, with the participation of institutional officials, teachers, students, and members of the public. These include constructive discussions and consultations aimed at raising children's legal awareness regarding the prohibition of violence and threats thereof.

To increase public legal awareness, including among children, on issues related to the administration of justice and the right to personal inviolability, the responsibility of adults in raising the younger generation, and the prevention of antisocial behavior, information and awareness-raising activities are conducted on an ongoing basis.

**In this context, to further improve the situation regarding the observance of children's rights within the juvenile justice system, the following recommendations are proposed:**

- improving legislation and strengthening the mechanisms for the administration of juvenile justice;*
- ensuring the protection of minors' rights within the justice system;*
- intensifying awareness-raising efforts aimed at preventing crimes committed by and against minors;*
- preventing violence in the family, schools, and society through information campaigns;*
- providing social support for minors raised in institutions involving deprivation or restriction of liberty;*

- strengthening the material and technical conditions of specialized children’s institutions;*
- applying best practices of separating minors from the investigative and judicial system for minor and medium-gravity offenses and promote approaches based on social reintegration;*
- ensuring timely responses to cases of murder, exploitation, torture, discrimination, and violence against children both within and outside the country.*

## **5. PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

Respecting, protecting, and promoting the rights and interests of children with disabilities is one of the key priorities of Tajikistan's social policy. The state has identified the protection of the rights of children with disabilities to a decent standard of living, healthcare, education, rehabilitation and social integration as a key social priority.

The rights of children with disabilities in the Republic of Tajikistan are guaranteed on the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, national legislation, and international legal instruments recognized by the country.

In accordance with the requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children with disabilities have equal rights to a dignified life, special care, inclusive education, and social support.

An increase in the number of children with disabilities has been recorded in the republic, which is mainly due to overall population growth, the birth of children with congenital conditions, an increase in hereditary and genetic diseases, health issues affecting mothers and children, as well as other contributing factors.

According to data from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population, as of 29 December 2025, the number of children with disabilities in the republic stood at 35,381, which is 1,017 more than in 2024. The statistics show the following figures:

933 in GBAO, 8,665 in Sughd region, 14,007 in Khatlon region, 3,691 in the city of Dushanbe and 8,086 in cities and districts under republican jurisdiction.

Despite the implementation of preventive health measures, the upward trend continues.

Children with disabilities are covered by pensions and other forms of social support under current legislation, and analyses show that, over the past few years, the amount of pensions and benefits for children with disabilities has increased. To this end, by Decree of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan No. 962 of 8 February 2025, with effect from 1 September 2025, insurance, occupational and social pensions, as well as supplemental payments thereto and the basic pension amount, were increased by 10 percent, that is, indexed. In this context, on 16 December 2025, in his regular address, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan instructed that, from 1 September 2025, insurance, labour and social pensions, as well as supplemental payments thereto and the basic pension amount, be increased by the 2025 inflation rate, but by no less than 15 percent above the established amount.

The current minimum pension for children with disabilities is 487.5 somoni. The implementation of the above measures will help to improve the socio-economic situation of families with children with disabilities.

The republic has a network of rehabilitation and social institutions, such as the State Institution “Chorbogh” National Rehabilitation Centre for Children with Disabilities in the Varzob district, the State Institution “International Rehabilitation Centre” in the Baljuvon district, 27 day rehabilitation centres attached to State social services, 58 social services and day rehabilitation centres, as well as children’s departments in boarding schools in the Sughd and Khatlon regions, which are subject to regular assessment and monitoring by the Commissioner for Human Rights.

According to data provided by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population, medicines, blood and blood components are provided free of charge to children with disabilities and children with chronic conditions, including HIV, tuberculosis, type 1 diabetes, as well as those suffering from haemophilia, leukaemia and cancer.

In 2025, the number of childhood diseases in the country is as follows:

#	Disease	2025	2024
1	Autism	2162 people	1997 people
2	Diabetes	1 388 people	1 326 people
3	Congenital developmental defects	14 315 people	14 210 people
4	Congenital heart defects	3997 people	3524 people
5	Tuberculosis	338 people	380 people

6	Down's syndrome	1331 people	1056 people
7	Infantile cerebral palsy	6671 people	-
8	Mental disorders	5229 people	-

Data for 2025 show that the incidence of a number of childhood illnesses, including anaemia, birth defects, heart disease, cerebral palsy and mental disorders, remains high.

In accordance with the Strategy of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2021-2025, the protection of the rights of children with disabilities is considered a priority area, and measures are constantly being taken in this regard.

On the basis of the Action Plan of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2025, assessments and monitoring were carried out in the following state institutions: the Republican Centre for Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in Dushanbe, the Special Boarding School in Kulob, the Republican Boarding School for Blind Children in Hissar, and the Special Boarding School for Children with Impaired and Poor Vision in Isfara.

During assessments and monitoring, particular attention was paid to the state of compliance with children's rights, conditions of detention, the right to health protection, provision of nutrition, non-violent treatment, communication with relatives, classroom conditions, quality of education, teachers' working conditions, the

organization and implementation of the educational process, the provision of students with textbooks and visual aids, compliance with state standards of primary and general education, student attendance, and other related aspects.

Vocational training is of great importance for students, as after completing their education they will be able to use the acquired knowledge to support their future lives and their families. Therefore, special attention was given during monitoring to students' professional training. In boarding schools, various clubs are organized, including sewing, handicrafts, painting, carpentry, shoemaking, hairdressing, and cooking.

The Kulob Special Boarding School provides a nine-year education, and only boys are admitted to the school on the recommendation of a medical and educational commission. The total number of students is 157, of whom 11 are half-orphans. Class sizes are limited to 12 students, and educational groups to 14 students.

Children are provided with clothing and hot meals. However, certain gaps are sometimes observed within the educational institution. Although the boarding school is a specialized auxiliary institution requiring staff with specific qualifications, the educational and upbringing processes are organized in the same way as in other boarding schools. In accordance with the institution's charter requirements, teachers and caregivers must undergo specialized professional development courses to work with children who have

intellectual, speech, and motor impairments, and students of the boarding school should be provided with specialized textbooks designed for auxiliary institutions.

During an assessment of the auxiliary boarding school, it was found that classrooms are in poor condition, only partially equipped with teaching materials, and in need of new educational resources.

The Republican Center for Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in Dushanbe was also inspected. This center is the main national institution on child mental health and has been operating since 1993.

The facility treats children aged between 3 and 18 with various mental and psychological conditions and helps them recover. It has 60 beds, including 30 for overnight stays and 30 for day care.

During the assessment, it was reported that in the first quarter of 2025, 101 sick children and adolescents sought treatment at the facility, of whom 29 were registered at the clinic treatment and 72 for consultation. Currently, 10,782 children under the age of 18 are registered and monitored at clinics and consultation centres in the cities and districts of the republic, of whom 6,299 receive disability pensions.

The facility was providing care for 349 children with autism (autism spectrum disorder). Specialists in this field from other cities and districts conducted home visits to assess 345 children with mental health conditions and autism spectrum disorders, and provided

recommendations for further treatment. The facility's kitchen is equipped with refrigerators for food storage, meets sanitary requirements both inside and outside the building, and serves 30 people per shift. The quality of the food is checked daily by a nurse, and samples are taken. According to the list of food items, children should be fed four times a day; however, during a conversation with the facility's management, it emerged that the daily budget for food is 10 somoni, and for medicines 4 somoni and 70 dirams, which is insufficient.

During the assessment, the institution's management also visited the work areas, treatment rooms, patient wards, kitchen, bathroom, restroom, and playground. They additionally conducted interviews and surveys with doctors, patients, and the parents of children who brought their children to the institution. The citizens expressed satisfaction with the services provided. They noted that children with disabilities undergo rehabilitation in the facility and requested the installation of specialized equipment to help them move between the first and second floors.

Monitoring was also carried out at the Republican Boarding School for Children with visual impairments in Hissar. According to the institution's charter, the secondary boarding school for blind children is a specialized vocational, therapeutic-technical, and polytechnic institution, where clubs in knitting, cooking, shoemaking, music, and nerve-point massage are currently in operation. During

discussions with the head of the institution, it became clear that graduates are not issued certificates confirming their vocational training, even though mastering these professions and obtaining certification would help them secure employment in the future.

The monitoring revealed that the school has a capacity of 180 children, but currently has 213 students, 76 of whom are girls. There are between 5 and 10 students in each class, and between 8 and 12 children sleep in each room.

The dormitory is a two-story building that lacks ramps for blind children at the entrance and access to the second floor, as well as handrails in the corridors and along the interior walls.

During the visit to the educational institution, discussions were held with children and staff, who made the following suggestions for improving the protection of children's rights within the institution.

Since books printed in Braille are read by touch, they quickly become worn out and unreadable. To facilitate their work, the institution has been provided with equipment for printing books. However, there is no funding available for printing, which creates difficulties in printing textbooks.

An assessment was also carried out at a Specialised Boarding School for Children with Visual Impairments and Hearing Impairment in the city of Isfara. Children are admitted to this institution following a regional medical and educational assessment and a referral from an ophthalmologist at the city's Department of Education. The

assessment of the boarding school revealed that the building is single-storey and has 12 classrooms, all of which are equipped with desks and chairs. Students are provided with the recommended clothing, shoes, books, teaching materials and a place to sleep.

The boarding school building is in good condition and meets sanitary and hygiene standards; however, the internal and surrounding infrastructure does not meet the needs of children with disabilities.

Classes at the boarding school are held from Monday to Friday in accordance with the curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education and Science.

During the assessment, interviews and surveys were conducted with teachers, the school nurse, and the children. In these interviews and surveys, the students expressed satisfaction with the teachers' attitudes toward them, their relationships with each other, the organization of cultural and recreational activities, as well as the conditions of education and upbringing at the boarding school. This reflects a positive attitude of the school management and teachers, as well as effective organization of the educational/morale building activities among the students.

Ensuring a decent life for children with disabilities, necessary for their full independence and social integration, is directly linked to access to education. Education plays a key role in personal development, improving literacy levels, and ensuring equal opportunities for participation in society.

Access to education for children with disabilities is comprehensively regulated by international legal instruments, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other regulatory frameworks. The Republic of Tajikistan, as a party to these international legal instruments, takes concrete measures to ensure the right of children with disabilities to education. National legislation is also continuously harmonized with international standards.

In line with Sustainable Development Goal 4, the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030 outlines measures to develop the education system, including ensuring equality and access to education for all segments of the population. This strategy calls for the development of inclusive education through the construction of barrier-free infrastructure, the development of appropriate teaching materials, and the training of qualified personnel.

According to data from the Ministry of Education and Science, in the 2025-2026 academic year, the number of children with disabilities is 7,320, of whom 2,885 are girls. In addition, 694 children with disabilities are enrolled in preschool educational institutions alongside their peers.

Regular training is conducted for specialists in social work, social educators (tutors), and speech and developmental therapists (defectologists) with the aim of facilitating the enrollment of children with disabilities in secondary educational institutions and

implementing inclusive educational programs, as well as carrying out campaigns to raise public awareness of the social integration of these children. To provide methodological support and enhance professional competence, teachers and caregivers working with children with disabilities are engaged in courses, seminars, and specialized training sessions at the Republican Institute for Advanced Training and Retraining of Education Workers and its branches.

The Strategy of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2021-2025 also identifies access to inclusive education for children with disabilities as a priority area.

As part of the 2025 Action Plan of the Commissioner for Human Rights, assessments and monitoring were conducted at a number of educational institutions, including specialized boarding schools and medical centers. During the monitoring, particular attention was paid to issues of respect for children's rights, learning and care conditions, the provision of food and medical care, the quality of education and vocational training, the prevention of violence and humane treatment, as well as the adaptation of infrastructure to the needs of children with disabilities.

As part of the Action Plan through 2025, assessments and monitoring were conducted at eight secondary schools, preschool institutions, and supplementary education institutions in this district, including Secondary School No. 90 in the Sino district of Dushanbe, Secondary School No. 6 in the Ismoili Somoni district of Dushanbe,

Secondary School No. 40 in the Firdavsi district of Dushanbe, the Isfara Supplementary Education Institution, the Jaloliddin-Balkhi District Supplementary Education Center, the Kulob City Supplementary Education Institution, preschool educational institution No. 98 in the Sino district of Dushanbe, and preschool educational institution No. 3 in Kulob.

Analysis of conducted assessment and monitoring indicates that the education and upbringing of children in the aforementioned institutions largely comply with the requirements for ensuring the comprehensive right of the child to education. At the same time, there are certain challenges in guaranteeing the right of children with disabilities to quality education in an inclusive environment.

In particular, not all assessed institutions have internal and surrounding infrastructure that meets the needs of children with disabilities. For example, at Secondary School No. 40 in Dushanbe, the internal and surrounding infrastructure of the institution does not fully meet the needs of children with disabilities. Currently, 17 children with disabilities are enrolled in this school, 16 of whom receive home-based self-directed education.

At Secondary School No. 90 in the Sino district of Dushanbe, 9 children with disabilities are enrolled, 5 of whom study independently at home.

This school provides education to children with disabilities who are capable of independent mobility.

In addition, in collaboration with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science and the PO “Association of Parents of Children with Disabilities,” assessments and monitoring were conducted at Secondary School No. 2 and preschools No. 1 and 2 in the Abdurahmoni Jomi district, Secondary School No. 1 and Preschool No. 1 in the Temurmaliq district, the state boarding school for children with disabilities and Preschool No. 28 in the city of Khujand, the T. Gaforov, and Secondary Boarding School No. 15 in the Bobojon Ghafurov district.

During assessments and monitoring of the observance of children’s rights, primary attention was paid to issues such as the right to health care, protection from violence, living conditions, communication with family members, classroom conditions, quality of student learning, teachers’ working conditions, nutrition, organization and implementation of the educational process, provision of textbooks and visual aids, compliance with national standards of primary and general education, student attendance, etc.

The monitoring revealed that the management of these institutions, in cooperation with state authorities and with the support of charitable organizations, continuously takes measures to improve the conditions for children’s education and upbringing, including enhancing sanitary and hygienic conditions, providing clothing for students, and operating canteens and libraries, and paying particular attention to the educational process. The medical departments of these institutions are

staffed with doctors, nurses, paramedics, and supplied with necessary medications.

However, these institutions also lack essential materials, including textbooks printed in Braille, large-print books for visually impaired children, sign language resources for deaf children, classrooms equipped with electronic boards, computers with specialized software, hearing aids, language courses, and so on. It was also found that teachers and tutors in these institutions have not undergone specialized professional development courses in inclusive education.

In the State Boarding School for Children with Disabilities in the city of Khujand and in the Special Boarding School for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children in the Bobojon Ghafurov district, monitoring revealed that students in certain classes are trained in professions such as shoemaking, carpentry, weaving, drawing, pottery, painting, sewing, and culinary arts.

In the corridors of some institutions, informational boards featuring national and international documents on children's rights and freedoms are absent.

Family connections are well maintained in these boarding schools. Parents and relatives are able to visit their children at any convenient time, and those who have the opportunity may take their children home on Saturdays and Sundays.

Overall, the research findings indicate that children's rights in the inspected institutions are generally respected, and no serious

violations of children's rights were recorded. However, a number of gaps were identified in terms of infrastructure, supplies, and staffing.

**Therefore, to further improve the state of observance of the rights of children with disabilities, the following recommendations are proposed:**

*– Accelerating the ratification process of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;*

*– Strengthening measures to prevent disability among mothers and children and develop early intervention services;*

*– Expanding access to rehabilitation services for children with disabilities;*

*– Adapting the infrastructure of educational institutions to the standards of inclusive education;*

*– Providing teachers and instructors in educational institutions with specialized professional development courses;*

*– Ensuring proper provision of boarding schools with nutrition, an adequate supply of medications, and rehabilitation equipment;*

*– Ensuring proper provision of boarding schools with curricula, textbooks, visual aids, and vocational training classrooms.*

## **6. ELIMINATION OF THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR**

The Republic of Tajikistan has taken effective measures at the administrative, legislative and law enforcement levels to safeguard children's right to work, eradicate the worst forms of child labour, and protect the lawful rights and interests of children.

In this regard, effective cooperation has been established with the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Labour Organisation and the International Organisation for Migration. The Republic of Tajikistan, as an active party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, has undertaken, in particular, the obligation to recognise the right of the child to protection and freedom from economic exploitation, to refrain from performing any work that may be hazardous to their health, hinder their education or be harmful to their health, their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development; to adopt legal, administrative and social measures; to establish one or more minimum ages for admission to employment; to determine the necessary working hours and conditions of work; and to adopt appropriate sanctions or other measures to ensure the effective fulfilment of these obligations.

Tajikistan has also ratified other international instruments in this field, such as International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182, ILO Recommendation No. 190

concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, and ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the minimum age for admission to employment, which regulate issues relating to child labour.

To this end, national legislation has been adopted and improved, and strategic planning documents have been approved and implemented to ensure children's right to work and to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.

In accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, a specific minimum age for employment has been established in Tajikistan. Under the provisions of the Labour Code of the Republic of Tajikistan, a citizen who has reached the age of fifteen may be a party to an employment contract as an employee.

Additionally, in exceptional cases, employment contracts may be concluded with students who have reached the age of fourteen, as well as with students under the age of fourteen who participate in theaters, film organizations, concerts, circuses, and other creative activities, provided that such work does not harm their health or moral development and is carried out with the consent of their parents or legal representatives.

One of the key conditions in this regard is that the educational process must not be interrupted, and priority is given to the child's right to education.

The legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan contains relevant provisions governing the employment of workers under the age of eighteen.

In particular, in accordance with labour law requirements, employees under the age of eighteen have equal rights with other employees and benefit from additional guarantees established by law in the areas of occupational safety, working hours, rest periods, and other working conditions.

The employment of persons under the age of eighteen is prohibited in heavy, underground work, as well as in hazardous or harmful working conditions, and in work that may damage their health or moral development. However, experience shows that this provision is not always observed in the employment of children.

In cases where the continuation of work is harmful to the health of employees under the age of eighteen or is associated with other adverse effects, parents, guardians, trustees, or authorized bodies have the right to demand the termination of the employment contract. Nevertheless, in practice, parents and other legal representatives of the child, taking into account social factors, including wages and other employment benefits, often do not give sufficient importance to the harm caused to the child's health and development.

Although children have the same rights as other workers, reduced working hours are established for employees under the age of eighteen. For example, while an adult and able-bodied employee may

work up to 40 hours per week, employees aged fourteen to sixteen are permitted to work no more than 24 hours per week, and those aged sixteen to eighteen no more than 35 hours per week. In addition, students who work while studying are allowed to work up to 2.5 hours per day if they are between fourteen and sixteen years old, and up to 3.5 hours per day if they are between sixteen and eighteen years old.

In view of the above restrictions, Decree No. 110 of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan of 3 March 2017, ‘List of Jobs in which the Use of Child Labour is Prohibited, and Maximum Permissible Loads for Manual Lifting and Carrying’, was adopted; its implementation and observance are of great importance.

This Decree lists more than 1,500 types of work in which the use of child labour is prohibited, covering all sectors of the economy. Furthermore, this Decree establishes the minimum load that a minor may lift or carry by hand, namely:

<b>Job characteristics, job severity indicators</b>	<b>Maximum permissible load weight, kg</b>							
	<b>Boy</b>				<b>Girl</b>			
	<b>14 years old</b>	<b>15 years old</b>	<b>16 years old</b>	<b>17 years old</b>	<b>14 years old</b>	<b>15 years old</b>	<b>16 years old<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>17 years old</b>
Lifting and carrying heavy loads manually on	3	3	4	4	2	2	3	3

a regular basis during the work shift								
Lifting and carrying heavy loads manually regularly during 1/3 of the working time (more than 2 times per hour)	6	7	11	13	3	4	5	6
When alternating with other work (up to 2 times per hour)	12	15	20	24	4	5	7	8
Total weight of the load transported during one work shift: lifting from work equipment	400	500	1000	1500	180	200	400	500
lifting from the floor	200	250	500	700	90	100	200	250

Experience in this area shows that, despite the existence of such legal provisions, some parents, other legal representatives of the child, employers, and even the children themselves are not aware of their content. In this regard, notwithstanding the tightening of legislation and the adoption of practical measures, many cases of children being involved in heavy and hazardous labor still persist.

Analysis indicates that disregard for these norms may lead to disability, stunting, and certain illnesses among children.

In this regard, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, by Decree No. 485 of 30 August 2024, adopted the ‘National Program for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2024-2028’, the implementation of which is also facilitated by the Commissioner for Human Rights.

This program was developed with the aim of regulating and preventing activities which, by their nature or conditions, may harm the health and safety of children, and it represents the second state program in this area.

One of the areas envisaged in the Action Plan of this Program for 2024-2026, implemented jointly with the Commissioner for Human Rights, is the establishment of a database on child labour. This database is intended to include information on types of work, gender, age, place of employment, evidence of child labour, and the measures taken.

The Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan has proposed the creation of a database on child labour, to be hosted on the website [www.no-childlabour.tj](http://www.no-childlabour.tj).

To ensure the effective implementation of this Program and the centralisation of resources for the protection of children's rights and the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, it is advisable to draw up a map and create a single source of information on all organisations and projects of international organisations working in these areas. In this context, the Ministries of Justice, Finance, Economic Development and Trade, and the Tax Committee under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, as the authorised state bodies responsible for the registration of public associations and projects of international organisations, as well as for the receipt and expenditure of grant funds, may collect and provide the necessary information.

Another measure involves conducting joint assessments at businesses operated by employers deemed to pose a heightened risk of child labour. In this regard, assessments, monitoring and visits were carried out in 2025 at all relevant institutions, including during reviews of the activities of child welfare authorities and child rights protection commissions within the local executive bodies of the cities of Roghun, Hissor and the districts of Jaloliddin Balkhi, Abdurahmoni Jomi, Kushoniyon, Panj, Jaihun and Danghara, issues relating to the elimination of the worst forms of child labour were raised.

The study of eradicating the worst forms of child labour shows that child labour in Tajikistan is assessed on the basis of surveys conducted in 2012 and 2023, in which staff from the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights also participated and provided assistance.

For example, in 2023 a survey on child labour, family and domestic work was conducted, during which 6,000 households were interviewed, covering 11,850 children aged between 5 and 17 at the regional level across the country. As regards the education of the children who took part in the study, it is worth noting that 51.6% of them had primary education, 18.5% had basic education, 21.1% had secondary education, and 8.8% attended pre-school institutions.

The results of this study show that child labour is mainly used in the following types of work:

- caring for domestic livestock (16.7 percent);
- harvesting fruits and vegetables for household needs (6.2 percent);
- working on livestock farms (0.5 percent);
- various agricultural activities (15.7 percent);
- preparing juices, canned foods, and beverages for household needs (16.8 percent);
- collecting water from rivers, reservoirs, and other sources for household use (13.5 percent);

– collecting firewood and other resources necessary for household needs (19.2 percent).

According to the survey results, 2.4 percent of all children aged between 5 and 17 were working for private individuals, which is 1.7 percentage points lower than the findings of the 2012 child labour survey, when this figure stood at 4.1 percent.

Analysis shows that, in most cases, children are involved in working alongside other family members, primarily in agriculture and subsistence farming, trade, and work on livestock farms.

To ensure the effective implementation of State programs and plans in this area, the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan has established an Inter-Agency Coordination Council for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, of which a representative of the Commissioner for Human Rights is a member. There are also plans to establish similar councils within local state executive authorities.

Experience shows that one of the issues capable of affecting a country's image on the global stage is the use of child labour in work that poses a risk to the life, health, and development of children.

Another important issue in this context is the promotion and dissemination of the norms and requirements of national legislation, the international legal instruments recognized by Tajikistan, as well as the goals and priorities of strategic plans related to gainful employment and the worst forms of child labour, with the aim of

raising public awareness and eliminating the practice of using the worst forms of child labour.

*In this regard, to further improve measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, the following recommendations are proposed:*

*– harmonizing the national child labour legislation with international standards and ensuring its enforcement;*

*– adopting measures to provide social protection for families whose children are involved in the worst forms of labour and are at risk;*

*– regular organization and conduct of research on child labour issues and, on this basis, the creation of a database on the worst forms of child labour;*

*– creating the favorable conditions for the prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labour;*

*– regular assessments and monitoring of enterprises where there is a risk of the use of the worst forms of child labour;*

*– involving the children in information, awareness-raising, and advocacy activities aimed at preventing and combating the worst forms of child labour.*

## CONCLUSION

Measures aimed at promoting the protection of children's rights and freedoms, as well as ensuring their lawful interests, along with the analysis and review of social relations and developments in 2025, show that strengthening effective cooperation is necessary to further improve the situation regarding the observance of children's rights.

In this context, enhancing the legal awareness of the population also plays a decisive role. On the one hand, attention is given to parents, guardians, other legal representatives of the child, and society at large; on the other hand, it is essential to increase the awareness of children themselves so that they can independently protect their rights in case of violations or address to the relevant authorities to ensure their protection.

Analyses show that, despite improvements in legislation, increased accountability, and the adoption and implementation of strategic plans, individual cases of serious violations of children's rights are still recorded in practice.

In this regard, the 2025 report of the Commissioner for Children's Rights contains a total of 32 recommendations: 3 recommendations for further improving the process of raising public legal awareness and strengthening cooperation in the field of child rights protection; 4 recommendations for restoring violated children's rights; 4 recommendations for promoting the improvement of legislation and

the development of strategic plans in the field of child rights protection; 8 recommendations for ensuring justice and the personal inviolability of children; 7 recommendations for protecting the rights of children with disabilities; and 6 recommendations for eliminating the worst forms of child labour.

Taking these recommendations into account will undoubtedly help to protect children's rights and freedoms, safeguard their legitimate interests, and prevent violations of children's rights.

However, an analysis of the reports shows that the recommendations of the Commissioner for Children's Rights are not always taken into account and are ignored when it comes to resolving problems or further improving the situation regarding respect for children's rights and ensuring their development, which increases the likelihood that such recommendations will be repeatedly put forward by the United Nations treaty bodies.

Taking into account the existence of certain challenges in the protection of children's rights and their development, as well as the adoption of effective measures to address them, it is necessary for actors working with children and society to make greater efforts than before.

We are confident that cooperation among government bodies, development partners, international organizations, civil society associations, scientific and academic circles, as well as the mass media and the Commissioner for Children's Rights will continue to be

strengthened to promote the rights and freedoms of children, and that concrete measures will be taken to implement the recommendations made.