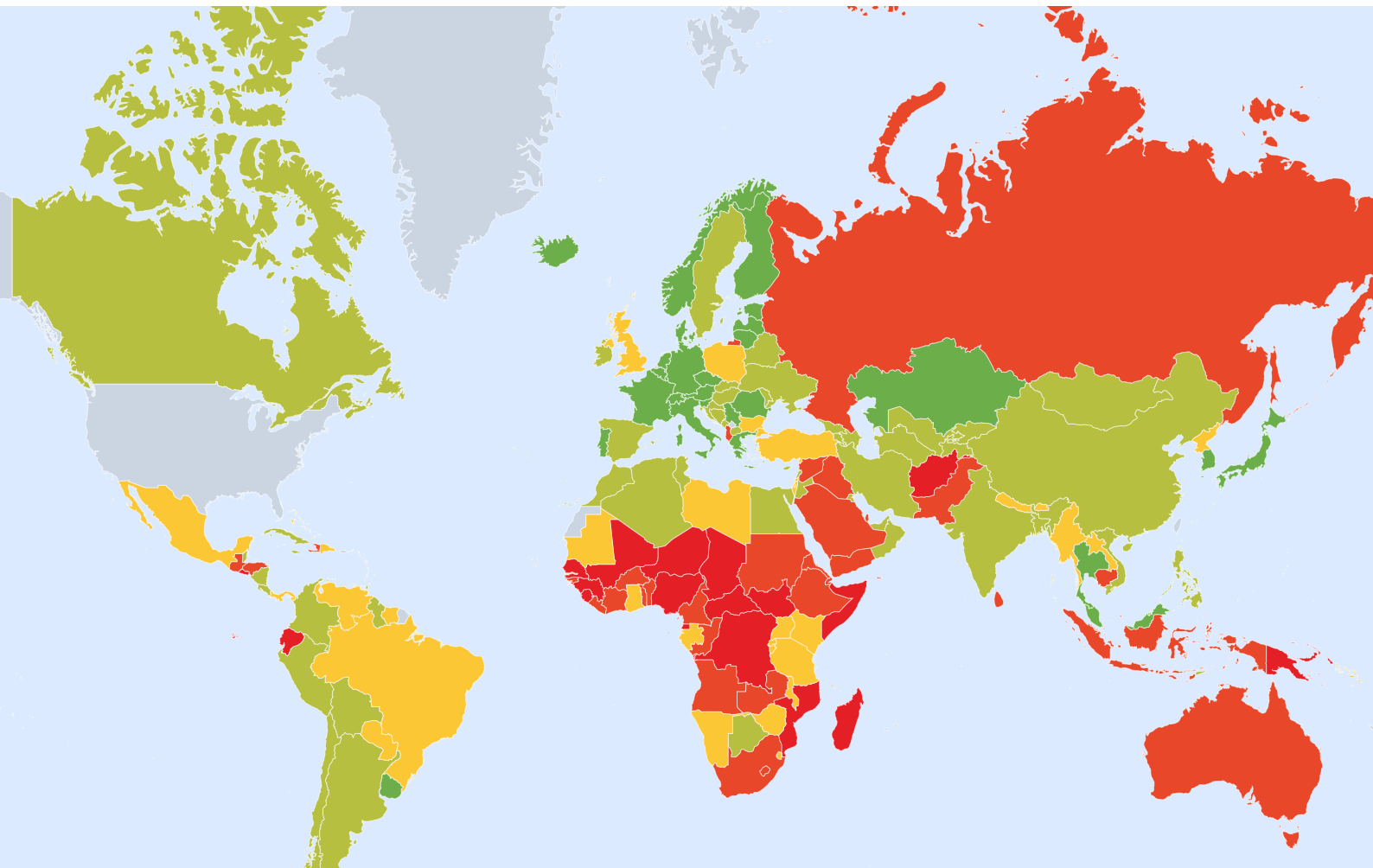




KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 2026



KidsRights Foundation in cooperation with

Erasmus
School of
Economics



International
Institute of
Social Studies



The KidsRights Index and information about its domains, indicators and methodology are accessible at www.kidsrights.org/kidsrights-index

ABOUT



KidsRights is an international non-governmental organization that promotes the wellbeing of vulnerable children across the world and advocates for the realisation of their rights. KidsRights strives for a world where all children have access to their rights and are empowered to realize the great potential they carry within them. KidsRights sees children as 'changemakers' who have the power to move the world and facilitates them in voicing their opinions and in taking action to bring about change.

KidsRights supports children by commanding global attention for the realisation of children's rights and by acting as a catalyst to ignite change, together with children and youths. This advocacy is supported with research and action. The KidsRights Foundation also finances local projects aimed at directly improving the rights of vulnerable children and stimulating child participation and changemaking by youth. <https://www.kidsrights.org/>

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PREFACE

The KidsRights Index 2026 is the 14th annual report on the child rights performance of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The KidsRights Index 2026 found the overall child rights performance of countries to be underwhelming. Luxembourg, Iceland and Monaco are the top performers in this year's Index, while Afghanistan, Chad and Guinea rank lowest.

It is extremely concerning and unacceptable that children are growing up amidst persistent and escalating crises in the world. Armed conflicts have reached unprecedented levels. Today, more than 20 per cent of children worldwide live within 50 kilometres of an armed conflict, exposing them to the dangers of displacement, attacks on educational institutions, food insecurity, physical violence and psychological distress. We are living in a world where children are being directly attacked as part of war tactics. Sexual violence against children is being increasingly used as a war tactic. Since 2024, sexual violence against children in armed conflicts increased by 35%. The impact of armed conflicts is not just limited to the country or region, as it affects children's rights globally. For instance, the conflict in the middle east will push millions of children into a hunger crisis this year due to supply chain disruptions and a global spike in energy and food costs, including in Somalia, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.



At the same time, obesity has become a global epidemic, putting children's health and development at serious risk. 1 in 10 school-age children worldwide is living with obesity, reflecting a concerning rise in childhood obesity rates. Obesity is particularly prevalent among children in Latin America and the Caribbean, and in the Middle East and North Africa, followed by Western Europe and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. All countries have a responsibility to prevent worsening of the childhood obesity epidemic by implementing effective and child-centric legal and regulatory safeguards to safeguard children's right to health. Considering the global prevalence of childhood obesity and overweight, the KidsRights Index 2026 has incorporated these conditions as new indicators within the Domain Health – providing comprehensive insights into children's access to nutrition.

The international human and children's rights frameworks and institutions are falling short of protecting and advancing children's rights. Systematic efforts are needed from all stakeholders to put an immediate end to the child rights violations and to get back on track to improve the monitoring, accountability and realization of children's rights globally. Protecting children's rights is an absolute and non-negotiable priority now!

Marc Dullaert,



Founder and Chair, KidsRights Foundation

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4. PERSISTENT CHILD RIGHTS ISSUES IN 2026

1.1 Continuing global child rights crisis as a result of rampant armed conflicts

Before delving into the specific results of the KidsRights Index 2026, given the circumstances in the world, it is imperative to highlight once more the child rights crisis caused by armed conflicts globally. Children's rights continue to be sidelined and violated amidst the ongoing global turmoil compounded by an unprecedented rise in armed conflicts.

Globally, more than 20 per cent of children are living within 50 kilometers of an armed conflict. This means that one out of every five children is facing the direct impact of an armed conflict.¹ Indiscriminate attacks on civilians are proving to be increasingly fatal for children. 69 per cent of all child casualties in armed conflicts were due to the use of explosive weapons.²

Armed conflicts and conflict-induced displacement directly impact children's access to education. Conflicts have a devastating impact on educational institutions and children's educational attainment. For instance, in Yemen, one out of five schools are unusable due to the destruction and displacement caused by armed conflict.³ The enrolment rate of children in primary schools is negatively impacted by armed conflicts where recruitment of child soldiers and sexual violence against children are used as conflict tactics, as parents and guardians are then forced to keep children away from schools.⁴

Armed conflicts are also the leading cause of food insecurity, contributing to 70 per cent of global food insecurity.⁵ The conflict in the Middle East is expected to increase the number of people facing acute hunger by 45 million, a 14 per cent increase to the 318 million people who were already facing acute hunger before.⁶ In addition, in 2026, in Sudan alone, 825.000 children under five years are estimated to face severe acute malnutrition which might turn fatal if not treated immediately.⁷

The increase in armed conflicts and the resulting increase in military spending is translating into lower public spending on services directly related to children. Global military spending continues to be on the rise. It increased by a staggering 41 per cent between 2016 and 2025.⁸ In low- and middle-income countries, and in developing countries, a 1 per cent increase in military spending translates into reduced public health spending by nearly 1 per cent, while also eating into the spending on education.⁹

Countries that reported the highest incidence of grave violations of children's rights during armed conflicts¹⁰ – Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Nigeria and Haiti – are also among the lowest performing countries in the KidsRights Index 2026 even though the Index does not directly measure this aspect. This shows that the countries responsible for the highest number of grave violations during armed conflicts are usually also the countries where the realization of all children's rights is severely lacking. For instance, in the overall

¹ Gudrun Østby and Siri Aas Rustad, 'Children Affected by Armed Conflict, 1990–2024', Conflict Trends, Peace Research Institute Oslo, 2025, <https://www.prio.org/publications/14586>.

² UNICEF, 'Explosive Weapons and Child Casualties in Conflict: Five Key Facts', 18 November 2025, https://www.unicef.org/media/176371/file/EWIPA_FactSheet_Digital_3.pdf.pdf.

³ UNESCO, 'Global Education Monitoring Report 2026', <https://doi.org/10.54676/JLKL3223>, p. 180.

⁴ Roos Haer, Ragnhild Nordås, Gudrun Østby, Siri Aas Rustad and Andreas Forø Tollefsen, 'Warfare and Schooling: The Impact of Conflict Tactics Targeting Children on Educational Enrollment', *The Journal of Development Studies*, April 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2026.2654513>, pp. 15–16.

⁵ World Food Programme '2026 Global Outlook', World Food Programme, November 2025, <https://www.wfp.org/publications/wfp-global-outlook>, p. 3.

⁶ World Food Programme, 'Projected Increase in Acute Food Insecurity Due to the Middle East Conflict', 23 March 2026, <https://www.wfp.org/publications/projected-increase-acute-food-insecurity-due-middle-east-conflict>.

⁷ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, 'Sudan: Major Food and Nutrition Crisis Persists as Conflict Enters Fourth Year and Risk of Famine Looms (IPC Special Snapshot & Recommendations)', 14 May 2026, https://reliefweb.int/attachments/3a07066f-3eb3-4ff2-ab2b-0728e677158d/IPC_Sudan_Acute_Food_Insecurity_Feb2026_Jan2027_Special_Snapshot.pdf.

⁸ Xiao Liang, Nan Tian, Diego Lopes da Silva, Lorenzo Scarazzato, Zubaida A. Karim and Jade Guiberteau Ricard, 'Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2025', Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), April 2026, <https://doi.org/10.55163/ZLHQ1057>.

⁹ Report of the Secretary General, 'The Security We Need: Rebalancing Military Spending for a Sustainable and Peaceful Future', United Nations, 2025, https://front.un-arm.org/Milex-SDG-Study/SG_Report_TheSecurityWeNeed.pdf, p. 39.

¹⁰ UN General Assembly, 'Children and Armed Conflict', *UN Doc. A/HRC/61/37*, 23 December 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/61/37>, p. 3.

KidsRights Index 2026, the Democratic Republic of the Congo ranks 180th, Somalia 183rd, Nigeria 191st, Haiti 147th, Israel 110th and the State of Palestine 108th.

Further, the Central African Republic – where for instance high numbers of sexual violence cases during armed conflicts were verified¹¹ – ranks 189th in the KidsRights Index 2026. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Nigeria and Somalia are also among the countries where high numbers of sexual violence cases were reported during armed conflicts.¹² The available data on incidences of conflict-related sexual violence against children – a 35 per cent increase in 2024 – must still be considered to represent only a part of the total number of cases, considering patterns of under-reporting due to stigma, fear of retaliation by the perpetrators and lack of reporting mechanisms, among other reasons.¹³

Children in conflict-affected areas are therefore growing up in unstable and unsafe environments, often facing physical violence and psychological distress,¹⁴ while being unable to access basic services such as education, healthcare and nutritional support. Despite the fact that international human rights, child rights and humanitarian law frameworks are enumerating special safeguards for children and their safety in situations of armed conflicts, the realities on the ground paint an extremely grim picture for children's rights.

1.2 Children living with obesity: A child rights issue now included in the KidsRights Index

Malnutrition: A matter of underweight and overweight

Nutrition and weight are key aspects of children's health. Nutritious food provides children with an important part of the basis they need to grow and develop optimally. Malnutrition seriously affects the physical development of a child and can have impactful mental repercussions too.¹⁵ While initially malnutrition was mainly understood as 'only' necessitating attention for underweight, over time it has become clear that overweight too is an extremely serious health risk for children. In fact, in 2025 for the first time ever the global prevalence of obesity¹⁶ among 5-to-19-year-old children and adolescents was higher than that of underweight. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has qualified this as a "historic turning point".¹⁷

According to the latest available figures published in 2025, 5 per cent of all children younger than 5 years and 20 per cent of all children between the ages of 5 and 19 are living with overweight. The latter represents a doubling since the year 2000, from 194 to 391 million school-age children.¹⁸ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), as far back as 1990, in total around 2 per cent of all children and adolescents between 5 and 19 years old (or 31 million young people) were living with obesity. By 2022, this figure had gone up to 8 per cent, or more than 160 million school-age children living with obesity.¹⁹ Only three years later, by 2025, this number had further risen to a staggering one in ten

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Dyan Mazurana and Courtney Rosani, 'Conflict-related sexual violence against children: Legal frameworks, patterns of harm, and pathways to prevention and recovery', *The Missing Peace Series: Understanding Conflict-Related Sexual Violence through Research, Policy and Practice*: 6, Peace Research Institute Oslo, 2026, <https://www.prio.org/publications/14770>, p. 4.

¹⁴ A Generation at Risk: Protecting Children in Conflict Zones, IMPACT Initiatives, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/generation-risk-protecting-children-conflict-zones-march-2026>, p. 4.

¹⁵ See e.g. Tish Davidson and Rebecca J. Frey, 'Childhood Nutrition', in Jacqueline L. Longe (ed.), *The Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine*, Farmington Hills, Gale, 6th ed., 2020, pp. 1120-1126, and Benedetta Faedi Duramy, 'Childhood Obesity and Positive Obligations: A Child Rights-Based Approach', *Seattle University Law Review*, Vol. 42, pp. 87-128 at 90 and 107. On children's lived experiences of poverty including food insecurity and hunger, see e.g. Elizabeth Ngutuku, *Children's Lived Experience of Poverty and Vulnerability in Kenya: Going Beyond Multi-dimensionality*, New York, Routledge, 2025. On mental health aspects of obesity, see e.g. María Morales-Suárez-Varela et. al., 'Obesity and Mental Health in Childhood and Adolescence: A Scoping Review of Recent Scientific Evidence', *Children*, Vol. 12: 1512, November 2025, 21 pp.

¹⁶ The extreme form of overweight which will be further defined below.

¹⁷ UNICEF, *Feeding Profit: How Food Environments are Failing Children - Child Nutrition Report 2025, Report Brief*, New York, September 2025, p. 4.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ See e.g. World Health Organization, *Factsheet Obesity and Overweight*, 8 December 2025, <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight> and <https://data.who.int/indicators/ii/C6262EC/EF93DDB>.

school-age children worldwide living with obesity.²⁰ Based on these numbers, the phenomenon of obesity is broadly referred to as a ‘global epidemic’.

Consequences, regional and inequitable prevalence

In simplified terms, children are overweight when “significantly heavier than what is healthy for their age, sex and health”.²¹ The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed more specific and technical measures for both childhood overweight and obesity.²² In terms of its consequences, according to UNICEF: “[o]besity is a severe form of overweight and leads to higher risk of developing insulin resistance and high blood pressure, as well as life-threatening diseases later in life, including type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and certain cancers”.²³ So children are affected doubly, in the short and long term. In that sense, obesity can be qualified as a potentially life-changing condition. Besides physical health risks such as the ones listed above, both in childhood and adulthood, obesity often has significant psychological consequences too. These result for instance from being bullied, shunned, stigmatized or discriminated against.²⁴

While overweight was initially perhaps mainly an issue in high income countries, this has changed dramatically. Reportedly, by 2018 estimates, then already nearly half of all overweight children under the age of five lived in Asia, and another quarter in Africa.²⁵ The “global overweight burden” has gone up from manifesting at the level of 66 per cent in low- and middle income countries in the year 2000 to 81 per cent at present.²⁶ Thus, next to high childhood obesity rates in countries like Chile, the UK, the United Arab Emirates, or the USA, the situation in countries such as China, Mexico, or Nigeria is concerning too. Currently, several Pacific Island countries including the Cook Islands even record childhood obesity figures of one third of their children or higher.²⁷ Further country-specific information is presented below in the Domain Health section of this KidsRights Index report in Section 3.3.2.

The information about the phenomena of childhood overweight and obesity, their causes and their consequences in the form of preventable noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), have been known for a long time. They are amply documented in relevant academic and professional literature.²⁸ In 2011 already, Reisch and Gwozdz wrote that: during “*the past 30 years*, the frequency of overweight children has tripled” and “[i]ncreasingly, curtailing and preventing obesity already in childhood has become recognized as a goal of a sustainable society”.²⁹ In 2012 the World Health Assembly approved what Patterson and others have qualified as “a comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition” including “a global target of no increase in childhood overweight by 2025”.³⁰ In 2014, the WHO’s Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity (ECHO) was established. In 2018, a feature in a newsletter of the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition referred to childhood

²⁰ UNICEF, ‘Obesity Exceeds Underweight for the First Time Among School-age Children and Adolescents Globally’, press release, 9 September 2025.

²¹ Ibid.

²² See e.g. World Health Organization, *Factsheet Obesity and Overweight*, 8 December 2025, <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ See e.g. Lawrence D. Hammer, ‘Obesity’, in Neil J. Salkind (ed.), *Child Development*, New York, Macmillan Reference USA, 2002, pp. 287–289.

²⁵ Duramy (supra note 15) at p. 89, referring to information presented by the WHO.

²⁶ UNICEF (supra note 17), p. 4. For detailed information about in the WHO’s European region, see e.g. World Health Organization, ‘WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI): A Brief Review of Results from round 6 of COSI (2022–2024)’, Fact Sheet Highlights 2022–2024, WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, 2024.

²⁷ UNICEF (supra note 20).

²⁸ See e.g. Patricia M. Anderson and Kristin F. Butcher, ‘Childhood Obesity: Trends and Potential Causes’, *The Future of Children*, Vol. 16(1), 2006, pp. 19–45; Megan Purcell, ‘Raising Healthy Children: Moral and Political Responsibility for Childhood Obesity’, *Journal of Public Health Policy*, Vol. 31(4), 2010, pp. 433–446; Amandine Garde, Nikhil Gokani and Marine Friant-Perrot, ‘Entitlement and Rights: Children’s Rights, Childhood Obesity and Health Inequalities’, in *Advancing Equity, Equality and Non-discrimination in Food Systems: Pathways to Reform*, United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition Newsletter no. 43, Rome, 2018, pp. 65–74, <https://www.developmentaid.org/api/frontend/cms/file/2021/05/UNSCN-News43.pdf>; Amandine Garde, Joshua Curtis and Olivier De Schutter (eds.), *Ending Childhood Obesity*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing.

²⁹ Lucia A. Reisch and Wencke Gwozdz, ‘Chubby Cheeks and Climate Change: Child Obesity as a Sustainable Development Issue’, *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, vol. 35, 2011, pp. 3–9 at 3, emphasis added.

³⁰ David Patterson, Kent Buse, Roger Magnusson and Brigit Toebe, ‘Identifying a Human Rights-based Approach to Obesity for States and Civil Society’, *Obesity Reviews*, vol. 20(S2), pp. 45–56 at 46.

obesity and related NCDs as “having grown rapidly *over the past 20 years* and their prevention (...) [having] become one of the most pressing public-health concerns globally”.³¹

The information on record is also clear about the fact that socio-economic and other differences bring inequities in terms of the vulnerability of children and adolescents to overweight and obesity. For instance, there is ample evidence that children from minority and/or low-income households are over-represented among children with obesity, and that generally boys are more vulnerable to obesity than girls.³²

Individualistic approaches versus systemic and child rights-based approaches

With the facts being so clearly documented, and international and national attention for the problems of childhood overweight and obesity increasing, why is there still so little success in curbing these problems? After all, according to the literature reviewed while preparing this report there seem to be no examples of countries in which the prevalence of overweight and/or obesity among children has gone down significantly.

A key explanatory factor is the over-individualistic approach taken by many actors who could make a difference, such as governments, professionals, schools, or businesses. For example, childhood obesity is typically understood as occurring “whenever calorie intake exceeds calory consumption over a longer period” which in turn is the consequence of “lifestyle, food intake and level of physical activity”.³³ While certain medical conditions can lead to overweight, it has been reported that only a very small number of obesity cases result from such conditions.³⁴ Because obesity (and overweight too) is typically seen as the result of individual behaviour, it is also still too often labelled mostly an individual responsibility.³⁵ In the case of pre- and school-age children and adolescents this is often extended to a shared (but essentially private) responsibility of parents or other caretakers and children.

This approach largely neglects that, while of course individual choices play a role, quite often those choices are heavily constrained and influenced by socio-economic disparities and obesogenic environments. The latter refers for instance to the massive availability of ultra-processed food options and the heavy commercial marketing of unhealthy (e.g. excessively salty, sugary or fat) food. It also refers to the shortcomings in the built environment and daily mobility options which jeopardize children’s physical exercise and play and promote sedentary behaviour patterns among others under influence of time spent on social media use. Thus, Kelly and others, in turn joined by various others, have issued a call for “system level action” seeking to address “the social, structural and commercial determinants of obesity”. This also implies that universal policies such as the introduction of a sugar tax should be combined with “targeted interventions for vulnerable groups” for instance to reduce food insecurity in particular deprived areas.³⁶

This system approach aligns very well with what is also required under a child rights-based approach, which is mandatory for all states that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.³⁷ After all, a child rights-based approach insists on the realization of all children’s rights for all children as soon as reasonably possible. It also strives for preventing child rights violations in the first place, rather than remedying them after the fact. Both courses of action entail addressing the structural causes.

³¹ Garde, Gokani and Marine Friant-Perrot (supra note 28), p. 65.

³² See e.g. Anderson and Butcher (supra note 28), pp. 23 and 28; and C.N. Kelly et al., ‘Inequalities in Childhood Overweight and Obesity: A Call to Strengthen Upstream Policy Measures’, *Public Health in Practice*, Vol. 10(100637), 2025, 7 pp. at pp. 2-3.

³³ Reisch and Gwozdz (supra note 29), p. 3.

³⁴ See e.g. Anderson and Butcher (supra note 28), pp. 23-24.

³⁵ This is implicitly the case in Hammer (supra note 24). See also Reisch and Gwozdz (supra note 29), p. 3; and Patterson et al. (supra note 30), p. 46.

³⁶ Kelly et al. (supra note 32) at p. 3.

³⁷ This is the case for all states, except the USA and Taiwan who for different reasons have not yet ratified the Convention. For the USA this is a matter of choice. Taiwan is unable to do so, given the ongoing controversies around its international status.

In a child rights-based approach, in accordance with articles 2, 3 and 4 of the UNCRC, the state is the primary duty-bearer for the realization of children's rights. Thus, there clearly is a role for the state as legislator, public policymaker, information-provider and awareness-raiser about malnutrition, including childhood overweight and obesity. Articles 5 and 27 of the UNCRC clarify state obligations to support parents and others responsible for children, for instance in realizing an adequate standard of living. The latter implies that, "in case of need", the state is required to provide "material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition (...)".³⁸

In other words, curbing the non-communicable disease of obesity is not a matter of choice but involves a set of legal obligations of states. According to Patterson and others, these emerge from the state obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the right to health. These entail that governments should not do "things that make the obesity epidemic worse", prevent third parties from doing so and protect children living with obesity against discrimination. Lastly, states should take legislative, administrative or other appropriate measures to address the causes of obesity and ensure "that quality treatment is available, accessible and acceptable for all who need it".³⁹

The above is confirmed in Article 24 of the UNCRC which specifies that states parties to the Convention must seek to realize "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and (...) facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health".⁴⁰ This is concretized further as implying, among other implementation efforts, the obligation to take appropriate measures: "[t]o combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water (...)".⁴¹ In addition, states must "ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition"⁴² including the advantages of breastfeeding and hygiene. In practice, the above amounts to obligations on states for instance to: ensure, where needed, the availability, accessibility, affordability and appropriateness of treatment and prevention programmes; regulate or otherwise influence the practices of the food and beverage industry and retailers,⁴³ and those of their marketeers and the mass media;⁴⁴ and/or introduce other measures that could make a positive difference, such as targeted taxation. The exact choices to be made will depend on a context-specific child rights situation analysis and the available evidence-base on the prevalence and causes of overweight and obesity in a given setting.⁴⁵

Monitoring by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: Room for improvement

Through the years, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has gradually stepped up its monitoring role in relation to the child right to health.⁴⁶ It has provided guidance on how to interpret the UNCRC's health-related provisions and confirmed that, even though they do not specifically mention overweight or obesity, action on these conditions is a legal obligation under the Convention. This has occurred for example in 2013, through the issuance of General Comment 15⁴⁷ in which the Committee clarified that states must "address obesity in children, as it is associated with hypertension, early markers of

³⁸ UNCRC art. 27(3).

³⁹ Patterson et al. (supra note 30), p. 50.

⁴⁰ UNCRC art. 24(1). See also Katharina Ó Cathaoir, 'Childhood Obesity and the Right to Health', *Health and Human Rights Journal*, Vol. 18(1), 2016, pp. 249-261; and Duramy (supra note 15).

⁴¹ Ibid., art. 24(2c).

⁴² Ibid., art. 24(2e).

⁴³ See e.g. Katharina Eva Ó Cathaoir, 'Children's Rights to Freedom from Obesity: Responsibilities of the Food Industry', *Nordic Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 36(2), 2018-pp. 109-131, who explains how states have been too soft in addressing the human rights responsibilities of companies; Duramy (supra note 15), and UNICEF (supra note 17).

⁴⁴ The latter aspect relates to art. 17 UNCRC which lays out the state obligation to "recognize the important function performed by the mass media" and to "ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health".

⁴⁵ For a further concretization of required and desirable state action, see e.g. UNICEF, *Prevention of Overweight and Obesity in Children and Adolescents: UNICEF Advocacy Strategy and Guidance*, New York, UNICEF, 2020.

⁴⁶ See e.g. Jaap E. Doek, 'Children and Their Right to enjoy Health: A Brief Report on the Monitoring Activities of the Committee on the Rights of the Child', *Health and Human Rights*, Vol. 5(2), 2001, pp. 155-162.

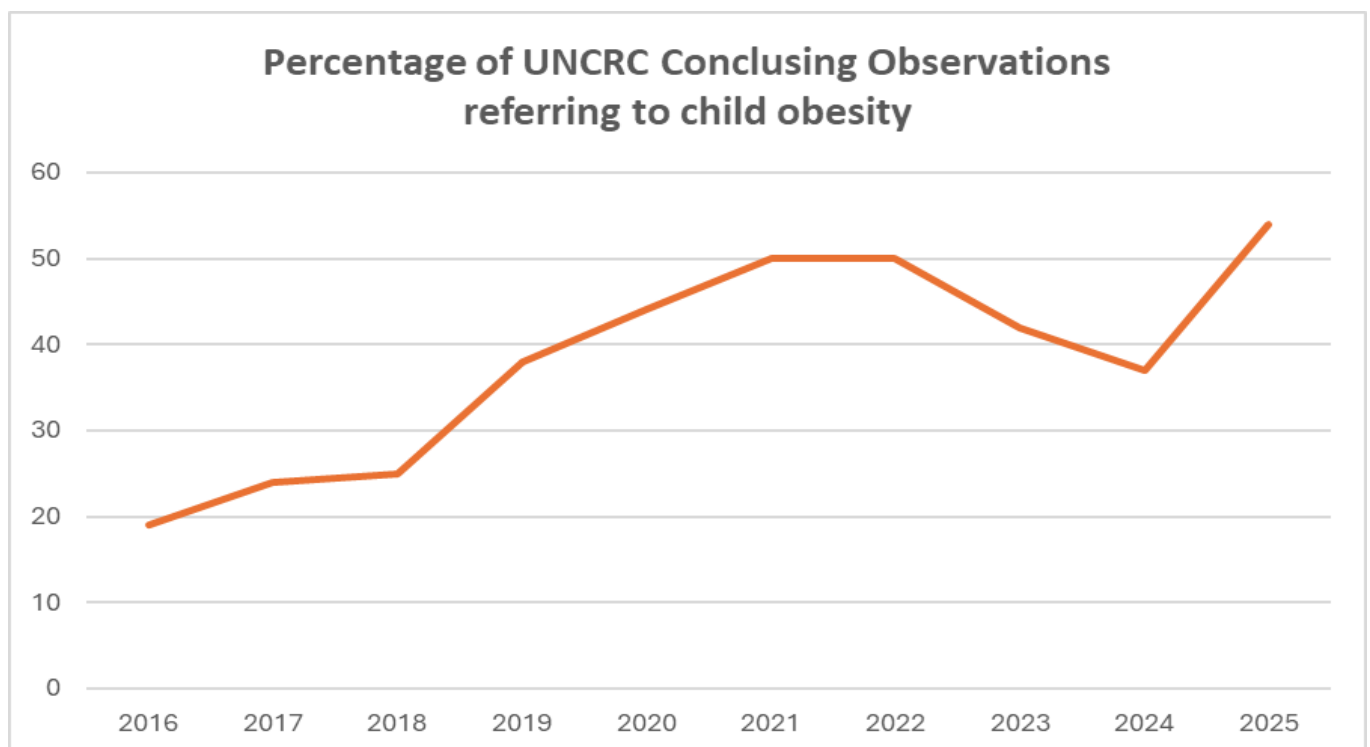
⁴⁷ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'General Comment No. 15 (2013) on the Right of the Child to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (art. 24)', UN Doc. CRC/C/GC/15, 17 April 2013, p. 6.

cardiovascular disease, insulin resistance, psychological effects, a higher likelihood of adult obesity, and premature death”. In the same paragraph this was further detailed as implying that:

[c]hildren’s exposure to “fast foods” that are high in fat, sugar or salt, energy-dense and micronutrient-poor, and drinks containing high levels of caffeine or other potentially harmful substances should be limited. The marketing of these substances – especially when such marketing is focused on children – should be regulated and their availability in schools and other places controlled.⁴⁸

An analysis of the Concluding Observations adopted by the Committee in the past decade to round off the mandatory periodic state reporting procedures for individual countries under the UN Convention on the Child revealed that this applies to the specific aspect of childhood obesity too. While in 2016 this matter was addressed in about one-fifth of all adopted Concluding Observations, in 2025 or the last available full annual set of Concluding Observations to date, this was the case for more than half (54%).

While this increase in concrete references to childhood obesity is to be applauded, a further strengthening of the Committee’s monitoring performance is certainly possible. First of all, given the magnitude of the epidemic, the percentage of Concluding Observations that address problems of childhood overweight and obesity should go up. The above chart even shows a drop in percentage-coverage between 2022 and 2024. This is not in line with the actual rise of the problems involved in practice, as sketched earlier in this report. In addition, it is clear that segregated data providing much needed insight into the specific weight situations of children with different characteristics (such as disabilities) and children living in different circumstances (e.g. socio-economic or cultural) are all too often still lacking. Later on in this KidsRights Index Report, the data gap on the new indicator overweight among children is discussed. For 33 countries in total, of which 18 are from Europe, no information at all is available on overweight. For many more, the available data will only be patchy, as is the case for so many other children’s rights covered by the UNCRC.



Against this background, it would be helpful if the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in its Concluding Observations could call yet more systematically on states to collect relevant, comprehensive and segregated data on all aspects of childhood malnutrition. Another striking gap in the Concluding

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Observations is that until now the Committee has hardly invited states to involve children living with overweight and obesity in efforts to curb these conditions. Child participation is a core pillar of the UNCRC and has an important role in this area too.

1.3. Implications for the KidsRights Index: Adding two new indicators to the Domain Health

The KidsRights Index team has considered all the above information. Until this year, we measured and assessed childhood malnutrition by a single indicator only: that of the percentage of under-five year olds suffering from underweight. Given the compelling evidence-base on the child rights implications of overweight and obesity, and in line with the child rights-based approach underlying the Index as a whole, we have decided to change this as of this year. Thus, as of the 2026 KRI, malnutrition will be measured and assessed by three indicators: the original one on underweight plus two new ones on overweight among children under the age of 5 and obesity among children in the age group 5 to 19. Some methodological aspects and the implications of expanding the Domain Health by two indicators will be discussed below in the Sections 3.1 and 3.3 of this report.

1.4. Outline KidsRights Index report 2026

Against the above background, the KidsRights Index 2026 monitors and reports on the child rights performance levels of states parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child during the year 2025. After a general introduction, the report presents specific overall and domain-wise results, insights into data gaps, followed by findings from the experimental integration of climate change domain in the KidsRights Index.

2. GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX

2.1. What is the KidsRights Index?

The KidsRights Index⁴⁹ is the first and the only global ranking that annually measures how children's rights are respected worldwide and to what extent countries are committed to improving the rights of children. It is based on the almost universally ratified United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).⁵⁰ The Index synthesizes and ranks the children's rights performance records of States Parties⁵¹ to the CRC in relation to the most crucial aspects of children's lives for which global and comparable data is available.

A particularly distinctive feature of the Index is its Domain 5. This Domain charts how States are faring in creating the conditions that need to be in place for realizing children's rights and/or for making children's rights policies and putting them into effect. In other words, Domain 5 assesses how States Parties are doing in providing an 'enabling environment' for children's rights as required by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Overall, the KidsRights Index presents an accessible, general, and comparative overview of state performance on selected children's rights. It also creates a basis for making concrete and evidence-based recommendations on how governments might improve on various children's rights matters.

The KidsRights Index is widely used by stakeholders, including policymakers, researchers, media, child and human rights defenders, civil society organisations, businesses and financial institutions in advancing children's rights.

2.2. Methodology of the KidsRights Index

The KidsRights Index has developed a fully comparable measure of State performance on children's rights, applicable to all the States Parties to the CRC for which adequate and updated data is available.

Specific child rights issues, such as child marriage or the situation of children in armed conflict, are much more prevalent in some countries than in others. This makes it difficult to arrive at a fair comparison between countries when scoring such issues in an index. In addition, insufficient or non-available data on certain specific issues that do manifest in nearly all countries, such as violence against children or the treatment of refugee children, makes it difficult to measure those issues and/or to arrive at adequately comparable results. While therefore, coverage in the KidsRights Index is not possible, the annual KidsRights Index Reports at times include special features on such issues.

The KidsRights Index focuses on generic issues which in principle are equally relevant for all States Parties to the CRC and for which, on the whole, reliable data are made available consistently. The KidsRights Index rankings are the outcome of an integrated analysis of existing, high-quality data published by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.⁵²

⁴⁹ Hereafter also referred to as the 'Index'.

⁵⁰ UN General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, p. 3, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>.

⁵¹ The term 'states partes' refers to states that have formally bound themselves to the CRC (through ratification or accession). Since 2015, this is the case for 196 states. The USA remains the only state that did not follow up on its signature with a ratification.

⁵² These data are drawn from <https://data.unicef.org/>, <https://population.un.org/wpp/>, <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center>, <https://data.who.int/indicators/i/C6262EC/EF93DDB> and the 'Concluding Observations' published by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child at the end of the periodic state reporting procedure for all states that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The latter are available at https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=5&DocTypeID=5.

The Index covers the following five Domains:

1. Domain 1: Life
2. Domain 2: Health
3. Domain 3: Education
4. Domain 4: Protection
5. Domain 5: Enabling Environment for Children's Rights

Until the KidsRights Index 2025, twenty indicators formed the basis of the Index. In the KidsRights Index 2026, with the addition of 'obesity' and 'overweight' as two new indicators in the Domain Health, twenty-two indicators together cover and measure these five Domains. Out of the twenty-two indicators, fifteen indicators are quantitative (Domains 1 to 4) and seven are qualitative (Domain 5). *Annex 3* contains detailed information about all the indicators included in the KidsRights Index. The data collected is systematically rated for all the States Parties included in the Index, by applying a standard calculation method. States Parties are ranked on each of the five Domains, which in turn generates a comprehensive overall ranking.

2.2.1. Calculation of scores for Domains 1 to 4

The scores for Domains 1 to 4 are calculated as the mean of the scores of the underlying indicators. All indicators are standardized between a minimum of 0.01 and a maximum of 1 using a linear scaling technique. If scores are missing for particular indicators, the Domain score is calculated based on the remaining indicators. However, the score for a particular Domain is not calculated if more than half of the indicators of that Domain are missing.

Further, a country is not included in the Index if the score on Domain 5 'Enabling Environment for Children's Rights' is missing, or if more than half of all the Domain scores are missing (i.e. if the Domain scores are missing for three or more of the five Domains).

2.2.2. Calculation of scores for Domain 5

Domain 5, or the 'Enabling Environment for Children's Rights', is an important and unique Domain of the KidsRights Index. Closely based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it reveals to what extent countries have operationalized the Convention's general principles and the state of their basic 'infrastructure' for developing and implementing children's rights-based laws and policies. The scores on Domain 5 are derived from the latest Concluding Observations (Cos) of the respective States Parties adopted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. These Cos are the final product of the state reporting procedure that monitors the performance of States in implementing the Convention. The Cos communicate the views of the CRC Committee on the level of realization of children's rights achieved in a particular country over a period.

The scores on Domain 5 are generated as follows. First, the Committee's Concluding Observations are analyzed for remarks about a country's performance on the seven selected indicators that make up Domain 5:

1. Non-discrimination
2. Best interests of the child
3. Respect for the views of the child/child participation
4. Enabling national legislation
5. Mobilization of the 'best available' budget
6. Collection and analysis of disaggregated data
7. State-civil society cooperation for children's rights.

These seven indicators together represent what can be seen as the general enabling environment, or 'infrastructure' for children's rights that every State Party to the CRC is expected to have in place.

The first three (non-discrimination, best interests, and child participation) are general principles of the CRC.⁵³ The last four (legislation, budget, data, and state civil society cooperation) represent basic elements or tools that States must mobilize to be able to develop and implement child rights policies and to trigger child rights practice. This set of requirements can be applied to all countries in the world, is equally relevant to all countries in the world, and is crucial for creating capacity to implement the CRC. Thus, they form a pertinent and fully comparable measure for children's rights performance.

For each of the above seven indicators, countries are scored on a scale between 1 and 3. The actual score assigned for each indicator is exclusively based on the language used by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its Concluding Observations. A score of 1 (or 'lowest') implies that the Committee made exclusively negative remarks. A score of 2 (or 'middle') implies that the Committee made both negative and positive remarks. A score of 3 (or 'highest') implies that the Committee presented exclusively positive remarks. In case the Committee did not address a particular indicator in the Concluding Observations of a particular country, the score of NA ('not addressed') applies.

The scoring for Domain 5 is carried out separately and independently by two researchers. If upon comparison of their scores it turns out that there are differences between them (which happens relatively rarely because the scoring system is simple and in most cases its application is straightforward), the final score is determined jointly, in consultation between the two researchers. The resulting final scores are standardized by using linear scaling technique. The specific text in the Concluding Observations on which the scores are based is made publicly available in an overview table at <https://www.kidsrights.org/kidsrights-index/reports-and-publications/>.

2.2.3. Calculation of overall scores, ranks and clusters

Each domain of the Index carries equal weight. The scores for each domain are calculated as the average of the underlying indicators. As explained earlier, all indicators have been standardized using a linear scaling technique. This scaling technique ensures that the score for each indicator ranges between 0.01 and 1. Since all indicators were coded positively, a higher score for each indicator can be associated with a positive contribution to the rights of children.

A country's total score on the KidsRights Index is calculated as the geometric mean of the scores of the five domains. In general, the geometric mean is used instead of the arithmetic mean because this makes it more difficult to compensate for low scores on specific Domains. This is justified by the argument that such compensation is not desirable, because all the children's rights aspects covered in the Index are considered equally important. This reasoning is based on the principle that all children's rights are indivisible, interdependent, and interconnected. Therefore, an extremely low score in one area of children's rights, for example on providing an 'enabling environment for children's rights', cannot be compensated by a high score, for instance, on 'education'.

The Index is a ranked list of countries, with colour-coding indicating relevant clusters of rankings. There are five different clusters. Countries in each cluster display a similar performance level. This means that each cluster represents countries for which the scores are in the same range, for example 0.991 to 0.981. Within a cluster, the scores of countries are more similar than across clusters. The clusters are expressed in coloured world maps in the KidsRights Index Report and the KidsRights Index Dashboard.

⁵³ These general principles were identified by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and are supposed to be leading considerations in all CRC implementation efforts. Survival and development of children has been identified as another general principle of the Convention. However, this is of a different (including more substantive) nature than the three other general principles mentioned, and in fact only fully pursued through realizing the Convention as a whole. In that spirit, the general principle of survival and development is integrated into the KidsRights Index via Domains 1 to 4 and not addressed separately again in Domain 5.



Figure: Colour-coding indicating relevant clusters

The 194 countries included in the KidsRights Index are categorized into 5 clusters. Cluster 1 contains the best performing countries and Cluster 5 holds the worst performing countries. Countries that are grouped together in the clusters can be broadly understood as performing at the same level, despite the differences in their respective rankings. Cluster movement of countries is a strong signifier of major improvements or downgrades in the situation of children’s rights in those countries. In this report, cluster insights are provided for the overall KidsRights Index 2026, as well as for each of the domains in their respective sub-sections, along with a granular overview of the cluster groupings at the regional level. These global and regional level cluster insights further help in assessing and contextualizing the progress made in realizing the children’s rights standards set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2.3. Climate Change in the KidsRights Index

Recognizing the disproportionate impact of climate change on children’s rights, the KidsRights Index team has been experimenting with climate change as a sixth Domain of the Index for the past three editions. This Domain aims to account for the relevant climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts of the countries.

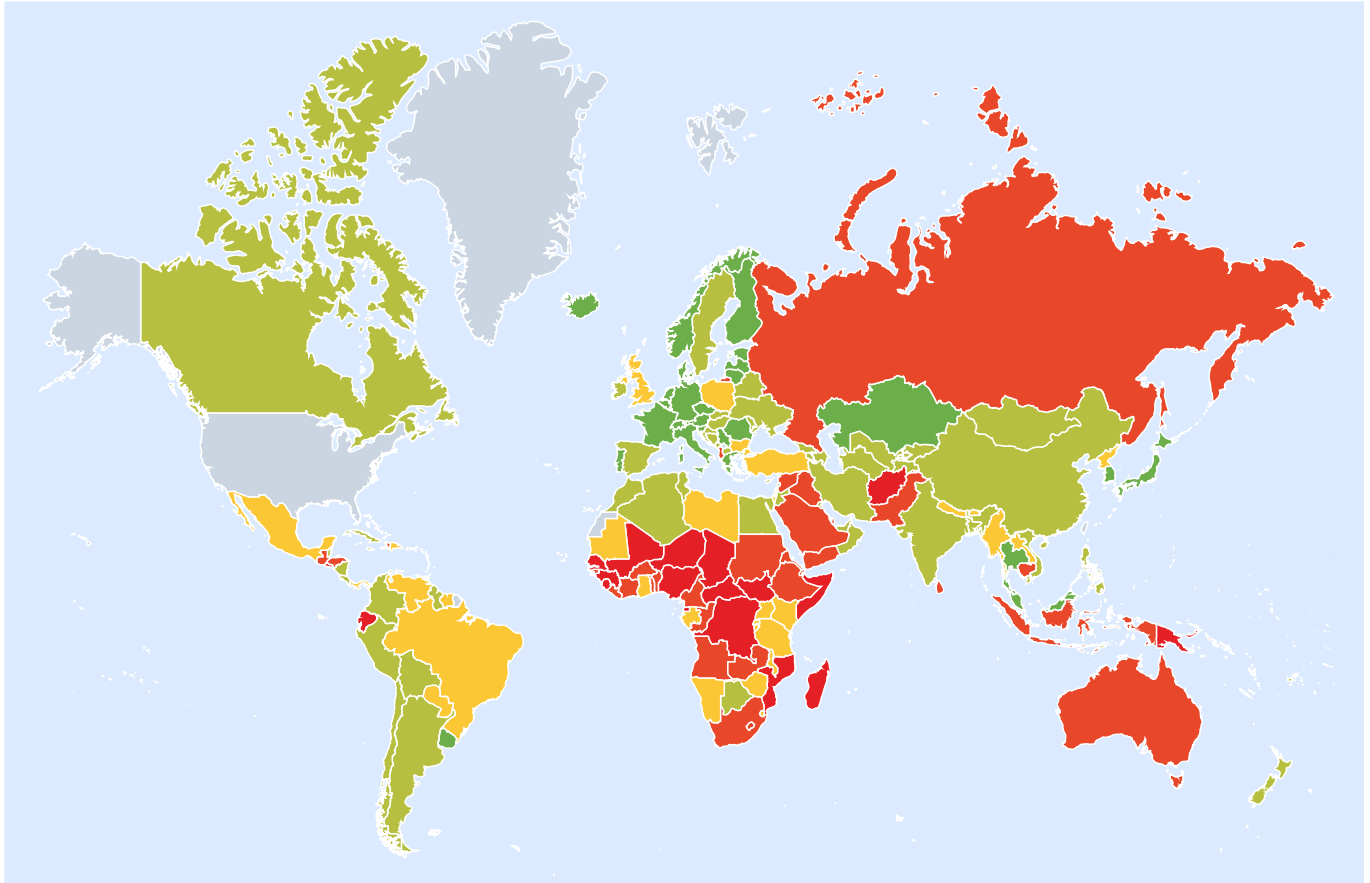
Similar to the previous KidsRights Index, for the KidsRights Index 2026 we have again integrated the Climate Change Mitigation scores from the 2024 Environmental Performance Index of Yale University.⁵⁴ The indicators that together compose the scores on Climate Change Mitigation “track trends in countries’ emissions of climate pollutants: four greenhouse gases and black carbon”.

The climate change Domain does not yet directly contribute to the results of the overall KidsRights Index over Domains 1 to 5. Because Domain 6 (climate change) is still a work in progress, for the time being it is still kept separate from the overall Index although we do analyze how the results for the new climate change Domain would influence the overall rankings, if fully integrated. Once the work on the climate change Domain will have fully matured it will become a regular and fully integrated component of the KidsRights Index.

⁵⁴ Sebastián Block, John W. Emerson, Daniel C. Esty, Alex de Sherbinin, Zachary A. Wendling et al., *Environmental Performance Index 2024*, New Haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy, 2024, <https://epi.yale.edu/downloads/2024-epi-report-20250106.pdf>, p. 32, Table 3.1.

3. SPECIFIC RESULTS OF THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 2026

3.1. Results of the overall KidsRights Index 2026



Map 1: Overall KidsRights Index map 2026

Top ten countries KRI 2026	Overall Rank KRI 2026	Overall Score KRI 2026
Luxembourg	1	0,871
Iceland	2	0,867
Monaco	3	0,866
Germany	4	0,866
Norway	5	0,854
Denmark	6	0,853
Greece	7	0,850
Belgium	8	0,848
Slovenia	9	0,845
Austria	10	0,842

Table 1: Top ten countries in the KidsRights Index 2026

Luxembourg has climbed two ranks to become the top performing country in the KidsRights Index 2026 (KRI 14). **Greece**, the top performing country in the KRI 13, fell by six ranks in KRI 14. **Thailand** and **Finland** have dropped out of the top ten performing countries in the KRI and are replaced by **Slovenia** and **Austria**.

The top twenty-five countries in the KRI 14 comprise of twenty countries from Western Europe, which is two more than last year.⁵⁵ Three countries from East Asia and the Pacific (**Thailand**, **Republic of Korea** and **Japan**), and one country each from Eastern Europe and Central Asia (**Kazakhstan**) and the

⁵⁵ This report uses the regional classifications by UNICEF, June 2023. For an overview, see Annex 1 of this report.

Latin America and Caribbean region (**Uruguay**) complete the top twenty-five. **Andorra** and **San Marino** from the Western European region are the two new countries featuring among the top twenty-five countries in the KRI. They have replaced **Qatar** (Middle East and North Africa) and **Barbados** (Latin America and Caribbean) among the top twenty-five countries.

The overall average score of the 194 countries included in this year's KidsRights Index reduced from 0.642 in 2025 to 0.636 in 2026. Similarly, the average KRI score of the top ten countries reduced from 0.866 in 2025 to 0.856 in 2026. In contrast, the average KRI score of the bottom ten countries improved from 0.282 in 2025 to 0.304 in 2026. Whereas in 2025, six countries received an overall average score of less than 0.3, in 2026 only one country – **Afghanistan** – did so. Thus, in most cases, while the average performance of the countries in the KRI is declining, the performance of the tailenders in the Index has slightly improved.

Bottom ten countries KRI 2026	Overall Rank KRI 2026	Overall Score KRI 2026
Afghanistan	194	0,214
Chad	193	0,304
Guinea	192	0,304
Nigeria	191	0,304
South Sudan	190	0,307
Central African Republic	189	0,311
El Salvador	188	0,319
Madagascar	187	0,321
Sierra Leone	186	0,325
Ecuador	185	0,328

Table 2: Bottom ten countries in the KidsRights Index 2026

Insights into the impact on the KidsRights Index scores of the new indicators in the Domain Health and updated data in the Domain Protection

The KidsRights Index 2026 has been based on a revised methodology, incorporating new indicators in the Domain Health (obesity and overweight) and updated data in the Domain Protection (adolescent birth rates). The following insights provide a comparison between the KRI 2026 scores as computed before applying the revised methodology, and the updated KidsRights Index 2026. The analysis reveals the impact of the revised methodology on the KRI scores.

With the addition of the two new indicators, obesity and overweight, and with the updated adolescent birth rate data, the average overall KRI score changes from 0.646 (KRI 2026 with same indicator composition as KRI 2025) to 0.636 (updated KRI 2026).

The new composition of the Domain Health contributed the most to this reduction as the average Domain Health score changed from 0.809 (without new indicators) to 0.787 (with new indicators). This change in the average Domain Health score is caused by the inclusion of the two new indicators – obesity and overweight – in the Domain Health which otherwise consists of the four original indicators: underweight, immunization, access to sanitation facilitation, and access to drinking water. This relative change in the Domain Health score shows that, for once, the overall performance of the countries in this Domain is negatively affected by the inclusion of the data on obesity and overweight. This is not because of their performance over two years, but as a result of their performance being measured more rigorously on nutritional health.

The updated adolescent birth rate data also contributed to the reduction in the average overall KRI score as the average Domain Protection score declined from 0.805 to 0.794 (with the updated adolescent birth rate data). For this indicator, the KidsRights Index – until the KidsRights Index 2025 – relied on the dataset 'age specific fertility rate' for ages 15 to 19 from the World Fertility Data produced

by the Population Division of UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs ('UNDESA').⁵⁶ Considering that the World Fertility Data received its latest update in 2019, we identified an alternate dataset produced by the same source (Population Division of UNDESA) that is more recently and consistently updated. Therefore, in the KidsRights Index 2026, the dataset 'age specific fertility rate' for 15 to 19 is used from UNDESA's World Population Prospects 2024 - published in 2025 – as it provides the most up-to-date data on adolescent birth rates and hence more contemporary insights.⁵⁷

3.1.1. Biggest movers in the overall KidsRights Index 2026

Ascenders 2026

Romania improved its overall KRI score by twenty-two per cent. This improvement led to Romania climbing eighty-one ranks, from 108th in 2025 to 27th in 2026. Romania improved by 43 ranks in the Domain Health and by 137 ranks in the Domain Enabling Environment. The latter is the result of the outcomes of the state reporting procedure with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2025. These positive jumps have contributed to its stupendous rise in the KidsRights Index.

Romania is followed by **Nauru**, which improved by thirty-seven ranks. Nauru improved its performance in the Domains Life and Education by twenty-three and sixty-seven ranks respectively. Due to data becoming available for the Domain Protection, which was previously lacking, in the 2026 Index Nauru also received a score on child protection.

San Marino and **Slovakia** also improved significantly as, overall, they climbed twenty-five and twenty-four ranks respectively. San Marino improved by sixty-six ranks in the Domain Education. With new data being available, San Marino received a score for the Domain Protection where it now ranks second. Both these developments contributed to the improvement of San Marino's overall KRI ranking. Slovakia's overall KRI improvement can be attributed mainly to its twenty-one-rank improvement in the Domain Enabling Environment, which is the result of new Concluding Observations being issued by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and an eighteen-rank improvement in the Domain Health. **South Sudan** improved its overall KRI score by thirty-five per cent, the highest rise of all countries but this only translated into a three-rank improvement in the Kids Rights Index 2026.

Descenders 2026

Qatar declined the most in the KidsRights Index 2026, dropping by 139 ranks from 18th in 2025 to 157th this year. A decline by sixty-three ranks in the Domain Health, and by 183 ranks in the Domain Enabling Environment led to this significant downfall overall. After having been assessed anew by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and thus having received its new set of Concluding Observations in 2025, Qatar's score on the Domain Enabling Environment fell to the second lowest possible score for the Domain.

Ecuador too was assessed critically by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2025. The country dropped 106 ranks due to a fifty-four per cent reduction in its overall KRI score. This amounts to the highest deterioration among all the countries in the Index. This downfall can be attributed to a 111-rank decline in the Domain Enabling Environment.

Honduras and **Indonesia** both also received new Concluding Observations by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Their performance in the KidsRights Index declined by seventy and fifty-seven

⁵⁶ UN Population Division, World Fertility Data 2019, https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa_pd_2019_world_fertility_dataset.xlsx, available at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/world-fertility-data>.

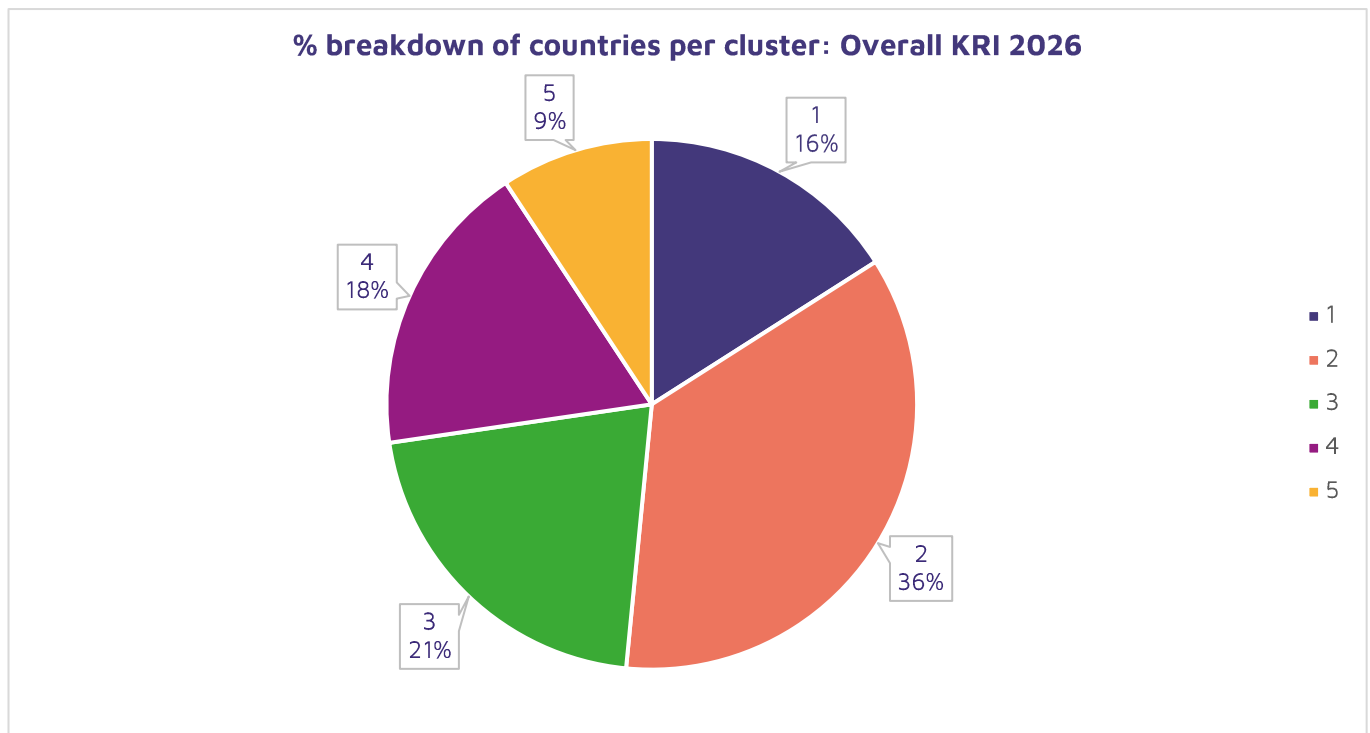
⁵⁷ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, World Population Prospects 2024, Fertility, Standard Projections (Estimates and Projection scenarios), [https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/Excel%20Files/1_Indicator%20\(Standard\)/EXCEL_FILES/3_Fertility/WPP2024_FERT_F02_FERTILITY_RATES_BY_5-YEAR_AGE_GROUPS_OF_MOTHER.xlsx](https://population.un.org/wpp/assets/Excel%20Files/1_Indicator%20(Standard)/EXCEL_FILES/3_Fertility/WPP2024_FERT_F02_FERTILITY_RATES_BY_5-YEAR_AGE_GROUPS_OF_MOTHER.xlsx), available at <https://population.un.org/wpp/downloads?folder=Standard%20Projections&group=Fertility>.

ranks respectively as a result of a decline of their overall KRI scores of around twenty-five percent. The significant decline by Honduras in the Domain Enabling Environment (-145 ranks) and a twenty-two-rank fall in the Domain Protection have directly contributed to the country’s overall decline in the KidsRights Index even though it improved by thirty-five ranks in the Domain Health. Indonesia recorded a decline in the Domains Enabling Environment and Education which has led to a drop in its overall KRI ranking.

3.1.2. Global cluster insights for the overall KidsRights Index 2026

The global cluster insights assist in identifying the countries that have undergone significant positive or negative changes in their efforts to honor children’s rights. Cluster categorization of countries also helps in understanding the global trends in realizing children’s rights based on the concentration of countries in different clusters, and cluster movements of countries compared to previous years.

The highest concentration of countries remains in Cluster 2, increasing from 32 per cent in 2025 to 36 per cent in 2026. Only 16 per cent of the 194 countries are categorized in Cluster 1, down from 23 per cent in 2025. Thirteen countries declined from Cluster 1 to Cluster 2, which is the highest cluster movement recorded in the KidsRights Index 2026, followed by eight countries that declined from Cluster 3 to Cluster 4. The number of countries in Cluster 1 therefore reduced by 30 per cent compared to 2025 which reflects a deterioration among the top performing countries. The number of countries in Cluster 4 has increased by 35 per cent which reveals an increase in the number of countries that are performing poorly in securing children’s rights.



Only five countries improved their cluster ranks from previous year. In stark contrast, thirty-one countries declined on their cluster ranks. In comparison, last year nineteen countries improved their cluster rank and ‘only’ fifteen countries declined.

In 2026, Romania is the only country that recorded an improvement by two clusters, moving from Cluster 3 to Cluster 1. Ecuador and Qatar declined by three clusters each, which represents the highest decline in the KRI 2026. Honduras and Indonesia also fell by two clusters each, from Cluster 2 to Cluster 4.

These overall cluster insights indicate a concerning trend as the countries are rapidly declining in their performance on children’s rights while the improvements recorded are few and far between.

Overall Cluster	No. of countries in 2026	No. of countries in 2025
1	31	44
2	69	61
3	41	47
4	35	26
5	18	16

Table 3: Overall KRI Clusters 2026 vs 2025

3.1.3. Regional level cluster insights for the overall KidsRights Index 2026

Western Europe remains the only region where the highest proportion of countries are categorized in Cluster 1. In Latin America and the Caribbean, only one country features in Cluster 1. In comparison, last year as many as seven countries from this region were in Cluster 1. The region Middle East and North Africa - which had three countries in Cluster 1 in 2025, does not have any country in the top cluster in 2026. Countries from South Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa also do not feature in Cluster 1 at all.

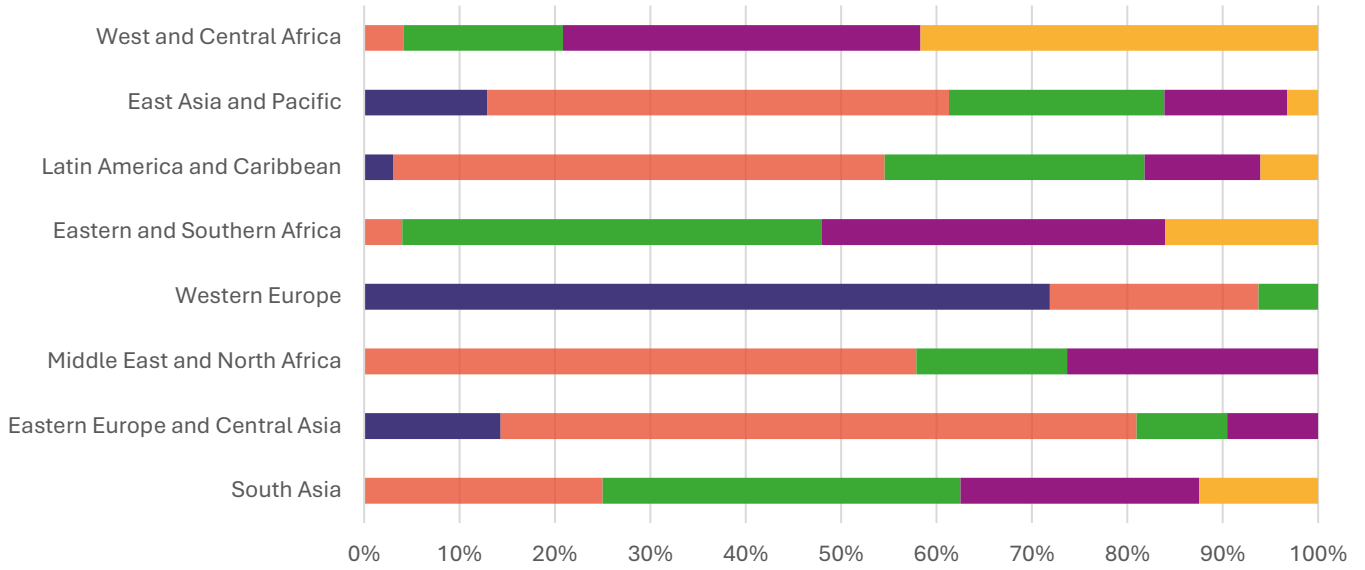
The table below provides a detailed overview of the cluster representation at regional level.

Regions	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
South Asia	0	2	3	2	1
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	3	14	2	2	0
Middle East and North Africa	0	11	3	5	0
Western Europe	23	7	2	0	0
Eastern and Southern Africa	0	1	11	9	4
Latin America and Caribbean	1	17	9	4	2
North America	0	1	0	0	0
East Asia and Pacific	4	15	7	4	1
West and Central Africa	0	1	4	9	10

Table 4: Region-level cluster representation based on the overall KRI 2026 scores

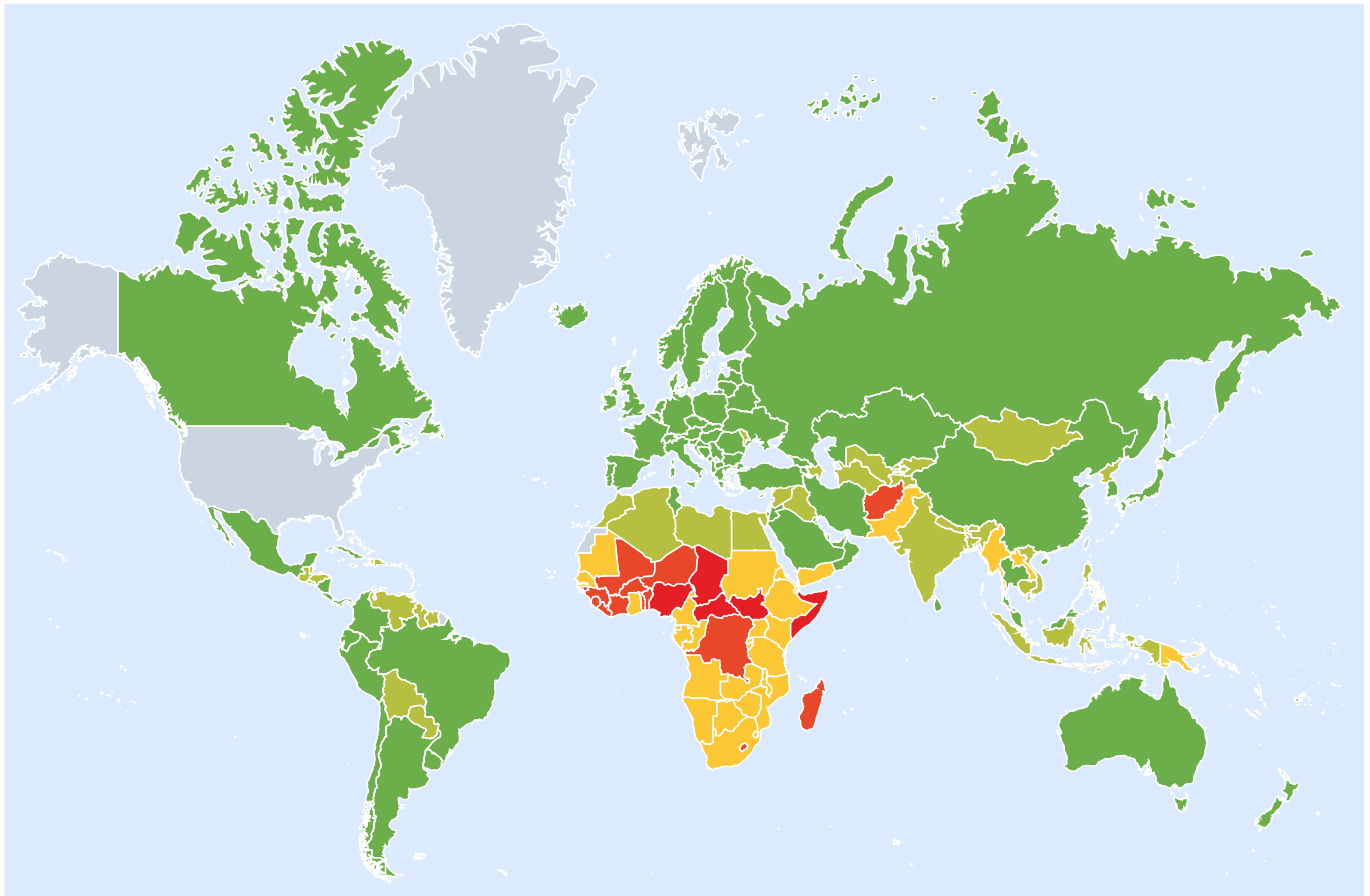
The Eastern Europe and Central Asia region has the highest proportion of countries in Cluster 2 (67 per cent), followed by the Middle East and North Africa (58 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (52 per cent) and East Asia and the Pacific (48 per cent). Eastern and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa are represented by only one country each in Cluster 2. Countries from both these regions are heavily concentrated in Clusters 3 to 5, with 44 per cent of the countries from Eastern and Southern Africa featuring in Cluster 3 and 42 per cent of the countries from West and Central Africa featuring in Cluster 5. The West and Central Africa region alone contributes over 55 per cent of the countries in Cluster 5. This indicates a greater need for the countries in the region to exponentially scale up their efforts to realize the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

% representation of countries per region in the clusters: Overall KRI



	South Asia	Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Middle East and North Africa	Western Europe	Eastern and Southern Africa	Latin America and Caribbean	East Asia and Pacific	West and Central Africa
■ Cluster 1	0%	14%	0%	72%	0%	3%	13%	0%
■ Cluster 2	25%	67%	58%	22%	4%	52%	48%	4%
■ Cluster 3	38%	10%	16%	6%	44%	27%	23%	17%
■ Cluster 4	25%	10%	26%	0%	36%	12%	13%	38%
■ Cluster 5	13%	0%	0%	0%	16%	6%	3%	42%

3.2. Overview of the Domain Life



Map 2: Domain Life

Top ten countries Domain Life	Life Rank KRI 2026	Life Score KRI 2026
Monaco	1	0,994
San Marino	2	0,990
Japan	3	0,979
Republic of Korea	4	0,973
Andorra	5	0,969
Singapore	6	0,969
Australia	7	0,967
Italy	8	0,966
Spain	9	0,966
Switzerland	10	0,966

Table 5: Top ten countries in the Domain Life in KRI 2026

Monaco remains the top performer in the Domain Life with a score of 0.994. **Nigeria** remains at the bottom of the rankings with its score dropping further from 0.077 in 2025 to 0.029 this year. This decline of 62 per cent is the largest recorded by any country this year in this Domain. No other country has a score below 0.1 in this Domain, with **Chad** and **South Sudan** improving their scores from 0.092 and 0.086 respectively in 2025 to 0.129 and 0.181 respectively in 2026.

Of the 193 countries that received a score for the Domain Life, sixty-nine countries improved in ranking. Eighty-eight countries declined and thirty-six countries maintained the same rank. Nine countries improved by ten or more ranks, whereas five countries declined by ten or more ranks in this Domain. Domain Life data continues to remain unavailable for **Liechtenstein** due to lack of data generation for the indicators under-5 mortality rate and maternal mortality rate.

South Sudan's improvement in the Domain Life

South Sudan has recorded the highest year-on-year increase in its score on the Domain Life of more than 110 per cent. It is followed by Chad which improved its score on the Domain Life by nearly 40 per cent. Improvements in their respective Maternal Mortality Rate (MMRs) have directly contributed to their improved scores in Domain Life.

South Sudan improved its MMR by 43 per cent from 1223 maternal deaths per 100.000 live births in 2025 to 692 maternal deaths per 100.000 live births in this year's KidsRights Index. Despite this substantial improvement, South Sudan's MMR is still among the highest in the world. The country's inadequately equipped healthcare system, lack of sufficient trained healthcare professionals and the grave hindrances caused due to the ongoing conflict and internal displacement,⁵⁸ have cumulatively resulted in its high MMR.⁵⁹ Collaborative efforts have been underway between international and national organisations, and South Sudan's Ministry of Health, to strengthen South Sudan's healthcare system.⁶⁰ Training midwives over the past decade is reported to have made a major contribution to the massive reduction in MMR recorded in the past few years.⁶¹

Andorra improved by eight ranks from 13th in 2025 to 5th in 2026 and now features among the top ten countries in the Domain Life. **Norway** dropped out of the top ten by declining two ranks from 9th in 2025 to 11th this year.

Among the top twenty-five countries in the Domain Life, nineteen are from the Western European region, four from East Asia and the Pacific (Japan, Republic of Korea, Singapore and Australia) and two from the Middle East and North Africa (UAE and Israel). Slovenia is a new entrant among the top twenty-five, replacing Canada which fell from 24th in 2025 to 27th in 2026.

The average domain score of the top ten ranked countries has remained consistently at 0.974 since the KidsRights Index number 11, published in 2023. The average domain score of the bottom ten countries has consistently increased, from 0.172 in 2023 to 0.234 this year. Similarly, the average domain score of all ranked countries has recorded a slight improvement from 0.732 in 2025 to 0.752 in 2026.

Year	Average score of top 10 countries	Average score of bottom 10 countries	Average score of all countries
KRI 2023	0.974	0.172	0.732
KRI 2024	0.974	0.212	0.739
KRI 2025	0.974	0.231	0.750
KRI 2026	0.974	0.234	0.752

Table 6: Domain Life average scores trend KRI 2023 to KRI 2026

3.2.1. Biggest movers in the Domain Life

Ascenders

Nauru improved the most in the Domain Life by climbing up twenty-three ranks, from 170th in 2025 to 147th in 2026. This was the result of an improvement of over 23 per cent in its Domain Life score

⁵⁸ UN Women, 'Women and Health in South Sudan', 2022, page 2, https://africa.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/sectoral_brief_on_women_and_health_in_south_sudan_0.pdf.

⁵⁹ South Sudan Healthcare Organization, 'Challenges and Solutions of Maternal Health in the Republic of South Sudan', 28 March 2023, <https://sshco.org/south-sudan-maternal-health-challenges-solutions/>.

⁶⁰ WHO South Sudan, 'Saving Lives and Safeguarding Mothers During Childbirth in South Sudan: A Midwife's Poignant Recollection', 7 April 2025, <https://www.afro.who.int/countries/south-sudan/news/saving-lives-and-safeguarding-mothers-during-childbirth-south-sudan-midwives-poignant-recollection>.

⁶¹ Helen Cusick, 'Midwife Training Reduces Maternal Mortality in South Sudan', The Borgen Project, 11 July 2025, <https://borgenproject.org/maternal-mortality-in-south-sudan-2/>.

compared to last year. Nauru is followed by the **Marshall Islands** and **Dominica**, which have improved by twenty-one and nineteen ranks respectively, because of an improvement of over 15 per cent in their Domain Life scores. This improvement is a direct result of maternal mortality rate indicator data being available this year, which was missing for both these countries previously.

Descenders

Libya declined the most in the Domain Life by falling 17 ranks, from 112th in 2025 to 129th this year. **Trinidad and Tobago** declined by 15 ranks in the Domain Life.

3.2.2. Underlying indicator data for the Domain Life

Most score and rank changes in the Domain Life can be attributed to the updated data on under-5 mortality rates and maternal mortality rates. For the indicator life expectancy, no updated data are available after 2024. Therefore, the data on life expectancy that was used for KRI 2025 is also used for KRI 2026 to ensure the results remain comparable to previous years.

Under-5 mortality rate

While the global average under-5 mortality rate improved from 25.46 in 2025 to 24.93 in 2026, it is concerning that 61 countries recorded a spike in their under-5 mortality rates.

The under-5 mortality rate nearly tripled in **Libya**, increasing from 11 to 31 since the data available in 2025. With this development, the under-5 mortality rate in Libya has reached 1997 levels,⁶² reversing the consistent progress the country had made for over one and half decades. Amidst political uncertainty,⁶³ and lack of access to essential healthcare services, personnel, and infrastructure,⁶⁴ mortality rates in Libya have spiked in recent years.⁶⁵ Lower immunization rates⁶⁶ and prevalence of acute malnutrition among children⁶⁷ are especially concerning in light of the serious shortcomings of Libya's healthcare system.

The **State of Palestine** recorded a 83 per cent increase in its under-5 mortality rate. The situation in Palestine had a significant direct and indirect impact on children's lives. Over 5.000 thousand children under the age of 5 were reportedly killed during the Israeli war against the Gaza.⁶⁸ The violence adversely impacted the healthcare system, access to medical supplies, food and water,⁶⁹ which heightened the risk of death especially among children under 5 years.⁷⁰ Children were reported to be trapped in famine, as a result of Israeli restrictions on humanitarian access.⁷¹ This put all 320.000 children under 5 at risk of acute malnutrition.⁷² The impact of famine on Palestinian children will

⁶² World Bank Group, 'Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000 live births) - Libya', <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.DYN.MORT?locations=LY>.

⁶³ Vivek Panwar, 'Libya's Broken Healthcare System Drives Locals to Migrate', P4H Social Health Protection Network, 19 July 2025, <https://p4h.world/en/news/libyas-broken-healthcare-system-drives-locals-to-migrate/>.

⁶⁴ UNICEF, 'UNICEF Libya Annual Report 2024', New York, February 2025, p. 5, <https://open.unicef.org/download-pdf?country-name=Libya&year=2024>.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ WHO, 'Public Health Situation Analysis (PHSA) - Libya', 20 March 2025, p. 10, <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/public-health-situation-analysis---libya>.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

⁶⁸ State of Palestine, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 'The Report on The Status of the Rights of Palestinian Children', Ramallah, 2025, p. 23, <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/media/xnnd21u1/book2729.pdf>.

⁶⁹ Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Human Rights Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Obligation to Ensure Accountability and Justice', *UN Doc. A/HRC/61/26*, advance unedited version, 16 February 2026, p. 16, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session61/advance-version/a-hrc-61-26-auv-en.pdf>.

⁷⁰ WHO, 'Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the Occupied Syrian Golan', *UN Doc. A77/18*, May 2024, https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA77/A77_18-en.pdf, pp. 1-2.

⁷¹ FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 'Famine Confirmed for First Time in Gaza', joint press release, 22 August 2025, <https://www.who.int/news/item/22-08-2025-famine-confirmed-for-first-time-in-gaza>.

⁷² UNICEF, 'Humanitarian Situation Report No. 41: State of Palestine', 20 August 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/media/173726/file/State-of-Palestine-Humanitarian-SitRep-31-July-2025.pdf>, p. 1.

continue to surface in the coming years. UN organizations estimated that, by June 2026, 43.400 children will be at “severe risk of death from malnutrition”.⁷³

Costa Rica, Turkey and Bahrain recorded an increase of over 30 per cent in their respective under-5 mortality rates.

Nauru recorded a significant decline in its under-5 mortality rates in the past few years, improving by 66 per cent. Nauru’s latest under-5 mortality rate stands at 8.9, while it was as high as 26 in 2023.⁷⁴ Reportedly, this progress has been made possible due to Nauru’s commitment to improving its healthcare system, supported by its long-term partnership with Australia. In its National Sustainable Development Strategy 2019-2030, the Government of Nauru included “improved health and well-being” as one of its seven national development goals,⁷⁵ highlighting concerns about the poor health standards despite improvements in infant mortality rates.⁷⁶ Reducing the under-5 mortality rate was one of the priority targets under the Nauru-Australia Partnership for Development which supported Nauru’s National Sustainable Development Strategy 2005-2025.⁷⁷ Australia has once again committed to strengthening Nauru’s healthcare system with its *Rana Tsimorum* program (2025-2034) – valued at 50 million Australian dollar –⁷⁸ supporting Nauru in implementing its National Health Strategy.⁷⁹

North Macedonia and Zambia also recorded substantial improvements in their under-5 mortality ratios, by 30 and 19 per cent respectively.

Region	Lowest under-5 mortality rate	Highest under-5 mortality rate
South Asia	5.71, Maldives	58.46, Pakistan
East Asia and Pacific	2.07, Singapore	55.14, Kiribati
Eastern and Southern Africa	14.25, Seychelles	104.02, Somalia
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	2.44, Belarus	39.95, Turkmenistan
Latin America and Caribbean	6.66, Uruguay	55.12, Haiti
Middle East and North Africa	3.39, Israel	49.25, Yemen
West and Central Africa	11.59, Cabo Verde	114.79, Niger
Western Europe	1.43, San Marino	6.08, Slovakia

Table 7: Under-5 mortality rate, highest and lowest per region

Region	Highest % improvement, under-5 mortality rate	Highest % increase, under-5 mortality rate
South Asia	6%, Sri Lanka	6%, Bangladesh
East Asia and Pacific	66%, Nauru	97%, Cook Islands
Eastern and Southern Africa	19%, Zambia	7%, Namibia
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	30%, North Macedonia	33%, Turkey
Latin America and Caribbean	12%, El Salvador	35%, Costa Rica
Middle East and North Africa	7%, Jordan	198%, Libya
West and Central Africa	14%, Gabon	4%, Senegal
Western Europe	12%, Luxembourg	22%, Ireland

Table 8: Under-5 mortality rate, highest % improvement and % increase per region

⁷³ FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, ‘Famine Confirmed for First Time in Gaza’, joint press release, 22 August 2025, <https://www.who.int/news/item/22-08-2025-famine-confirmed-for-frst-time-in-gaza>.

⁷⁴ UNICEF, ‘The Situation of Children in Nauru: Country Fact Sheet’, April 2024, p. 3, https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/media/5196/file/The_situation_of_children_in_Nauru.pdf.

⁷⁵ Nauru’s National Sustainable Development Strategy 2019-2030, 2019, p. 32, <https://naurufinance.info/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Final-NSDS-2019-2030.pdf>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Schedule to ‘The Nauru-Australia Partnership for Development’, p. 9, <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/nauru-health-strategy.pdf>.

⁷⁸ Australia Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, ‘Australia’s Development Program to Nauru’, <https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/nauru/development-assistance/development-assistance-in-nauru>.

⁷⁹ ‘Republic of Nauru 2024-2025 Budget’, p. 22, <https://naurufinance.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Development-Budget-2024-25.pdf>.

A comparative, regional analysis revealed the following picture.

South Asia: **Bangladesh** and the **Maldives** recorded an increase in their under-5 mortality rates, while the other six countries in this region saw a decline. For two consecutive years, Bangladesh recorded a nearly 6 per cent increase of its under-5 mortality rate. However, the overall regional average for this indicator has improved from 29.9 in 2025 to 29.2 in 2026.

East Asia and Pacific: Ten of the thirty-one countries in the region recorded an increase in the mortality rate. Of these countries, **Cook Islands** (97 per cent), **Thailand** (13 per cent) and **Solomon Islands** (12 per cent) recorded the highest increase. Among the countries that have improved on this indicator, **Nauru** (66 per cent), **Tonga** (9 per cent) and **Vanuatu** (8 per cent) recorded the highest improvement. Overall, the regional average has improved from 19.96 in 2025 to 19.41 in 2026.

Eastern and Southern Africa: Six of the twenty-five countries in the region (**Botswana, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda** and **South Africa**) witnessed an increase in under-5 mortality rate. **Zambia** (19 per cent), **Lesotho** (18 per cent), and **Comoros** (17 per cent) improved the most in the region. The regional average improved from 50.2 in 2025 to 47.91 in 2026.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Under-5 mortality rates increased in five of the twenty-one countries in the region. **Turkey** recorded a 33 per cent increase on this indicator, from 10 to 12.8, going past the regional average of 11. The regional average remains nearly unchanged at 11.13 in 2025 and 11 in 2026.

Latin America and the Caribbean: Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the three regions (the other two being Western Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa) that have witnessed a worse regional average on this indicator as compared to last year. This region also has the highest percentage of countries (48.5 per cent) recording an increase in under-5 mortality rates. Sixteen of the thirty-three countries in the region recorded a spike in under-5 mortality rates. Last year, only nine countries reported an increase in this indicator. **Costa Rica** (35 per cent), **Trinidad and Tobago** (24 per cent) and **Belize** (16 per cent) reported the highest increase in this region. At 6.6, **Uruguay** became the best performing country on this indicator in the region as **Chile** recorded a 14 per cent rise in under-5 mortality rate, from 6.2 to 7.1.

The Middle East and North Africa: Eight of the nineteen countries in the region have recorded an increase in under-5 mortality rates. **Libya** (198 per cent) and the **State of Palestine** (83 per cent) deteriorated the most and are among the worst performers across all regions. The Middle East and North Africa's regional average of under-5 mortality rate increased by 12 per cent, which is the worst among all regions.

West and Central Africa: Out of the twenty-four countries in the region, only **Senegal** recorded an increase in under-5 mortality rates. **Gabon** (14 per cent) and **Ghana** (12 per cent) improved the most, and the regional average improved from 68.3 in 2025 to 66 in 2026.

Western Europe: Similar to last year, the under-5 mortality rate deteriorated in twelve countries in the region. **Ireland** (22 per cent) and **Estonia** (12 per cent) recorded the highest increase in under-5 mortality rate in the region. **Cyprus, Germany, Italy, Portugal,** and **Slovakia** recorded a spike for two consecutive years.

Maternal mortality rate

Maternal mortality rates have recorded consistent improvements globally. Overall, the global maternal mortality rate improved from 328 in 2000 to 197 in 2023.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ WHO, 'Trends in Maternal Mortality Estimates 2000 to 2023: Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and UNDESA/Population Division, Geneva, p. 50, <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240108462>.

This year, for the 194 countries included in the KidsRights Index, the global average maternal mortality rate improved by 19 per cent, from 145.03 in 2025 to 117.69 in 2026.

Some countries recorded significant improvements in their MMR, including **Cyprus** (79 per cent), **Azerbaijan** (56 per cent), the **United Arab Emirates** (67 per cent), **Vietnam** (61 per cent), **Saudi Arabia** (56 per cent), and **Eswatini** (51 per cent).

As per the latest available data, the maternal mortality rate reportedly increased in **Malta** (167 per cent), **Grenada** (129 per cent), **Luxembourg** (83 per cent) and **Micronesia** (74 per cent). Noting the increase in the maternal mortality rate of **Micronesia**, Japan has recently committed to provide grant assistance of 533 million Yen aimed at strengthening Micronesia's maternal healthcare services.⁸¹ Despite the increase in MMR, the reported numbers of maternal death in the above-mentioned countries is among the lowest (3 or under 3 deaths) of all countries.⁸² In stark contrast, despite a year-on-year improvement of MMR by 5 per cent in **Nigeria**, the number of maternal deaths in **Nigeria** alone accounted for over a quarter of all maternal deaths globally.⁸³

Region	Lowest, MMR	Highest, MMR
South Asia	18, Sri Lanka	521, Afghanistan
East Asia and Pacific	0, Cook Islands	273, Nauru
Eastern and Southern Africa	42, Seychelles	692, South Sudan
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	1, Belarus	42, Kyrgyzstan
Latin America and Caribbean	10, Chile	328, Haiti
Middle East and North Africa	2, Jordan	118, Yemen
West and Central Africa	40, Cabo Verde	993, Nigeria
Western Europe	1, Norway	19, Latvia

Table 9: Maternal mortality rate, highest and lowest per region

Region	Highest % improvement, maternal mortality rate	Highest % increase, maternal mortality rate
South Asia	44%, Maldives	1%, Pakistan
East Asia and Pacific	61%, Viet Nam	74%, Micronesia (Federated States of)
Eastern and Southern Africa	5%1 per cent, Eswatini	1300%, Seychelles
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	56%, Azerbaijan	58%, Republic of Moldova
Latin America and Caribbean	48%, Belize	129%, Grenada
Middle East and North Africa	67%, United Arab Emirates	14%, Kuwait
West and Central Africa	49%, Sao Tome and Principe	3%, Gabon
Western Europe	79%, Cyprus	167%, Malta

Table 10: Maternal mortality rate, highest % improvement and % increase per region

South Asia: All countries in the region except **Pakistan** improved their maternal mortality rates. The regional average recorded a significant improvement of 16 per cent, from 165 in 2025 to 138.75 in this year's KidsRights Index.

East Asia and Pacific: Maternal mortality rates increased in ten of the thirty-one countries in the region, which made the regional average rise from 83.65 in 2025 to 85.35 in 2026. Micronesia and Samoa recorded a spike of over 70 per cent in their maternal mortality rate. Conversely, **Vietnam** and **Tonga** improved significantly by reducing MMR by 61 and 47 per cent respectively. The significant decline in

⁸¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 'Grant Assistance to the Federated States of Micronesia: Signing and Exchange of Notes on "the Project for Strengthening Maternal Health Care Services at Primary Service Delivery Points"', Tokyo, 18 February 2026, https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_02089.html.

⁸² UNICEF, 'Maternal Mortality', https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/MMR-maternal-deaths-and-LTR_MMEIG-trends_2000-2023_Revised-2025-1.xlsx?client_id=256439783.1772033886&session_id=349987620, 9 April 2025.

⁸³ WHO, 'Trends in Maternal Mortality Estimates 2000 to 2023: Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and UNDESA/Population Division', Geneva, p. xvi, <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240108462>.

maternal deaths in Vietnam is primarily attributed to improved maternity care in the country.⁸⁴ The **Cook Islands** reported a MMR of zero, the only country among all countries included in the Index to have a record of zero under-five deaths.

Eastern and Southern Africa: The **Seychelles, United Republic of Tanzania, Madagascar** and **Zimbabwe** are the only four of the twenty-five countries in the region that have recorded a rise in maternal mortality rates. The Seychelles reported a 13-times increase of its maternal mortality rate, from 3 in 2025 to 42 this year. The latter is the highest percentage increase across all countries globally. Conversely, several countries in the region recorded significant improvement. This has brought down the regional average from 319.76 in 2025 to 251.12 in 2026 – an improvement of 21.5 per cent. **Eswatini** (51 per cent), **South Sudan** (43 per cent), **Malawi** (41 per cent), **Uganda** (40 per cent), **Zambia** (37 per cent), **Mozambique** (35 per cent) and **Namibia** (35 per cent) are among the countries that have recorded substantial improvement in maternal mortality rates in the region.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Three of the twenty-one countries – **Moldova** (58 per cent), **Romania** (20 per cent) and **Serbia** (10 per cent) – recorded an increase in MMR. **Azerbaijan** (56 per cent) and **Croatia** (40 per cent) reported the highest improvement in MMR in the region. The overall regional average improved by 18 per cent from 15.57 in last year's KidsRights Index to 12.71 this year.

Latin America and Caribbean: Six of the thirty-three countries reported an increase in MMR, with **Grenada** (129 per cent) and **Trinidad and Tobago** (100 per cent) recording the highest increase in the region. On the other hand, **Belize** (48 per cent), **Saint Lucia** (40 per cent), **Honduras** (35 per cent), **Guyana** (33 per cent) and **Chile** (33 per cent) reported significant improvement of their maternal mortality rates. The overall regional average also improved by 12 per cent, from 81.45 in 2025 to 71.67 in 2026.

Middle East and North Africa: Only 2 countries in the region – **Kuwait** (14 per cent) and **Bahrain** (6 per cent) reported an increase in MMR. Conversely, the **United Arab Emirates** (67 per cent), **Saudi Arabia** (56 per cent) and **Qatar** (50 per cent) showed the highest improvement in MMR in the region. The regional average recorded an improvement of over 22 per cent, from 39.21 in last year's KidsRights Index to 30.53 this year.

West and Central Africa: **Gabon** (3 per cent) is the only country in the region that recorded an increase in MMR. **Sao Tome and Principe** (49 per cent, from 146 to 75) and **Cameroon** (41 per cent, from 438 to 258) stand out by showing a significant reduction in their respective MMRs. The regional average MMR improved from 466.88 in 2025 to 385.54 in 2026, an improvement of over 17 per cent.

Western Europe: Six of the thirty-one countries reported a spike in MMR, including **Malta** (167 per cent), **Luxembourg** (83 per cent), **Portugal** (25 per cent), **Austria** (20 per cent) and **Latvia** (6 per cent). On the other hand, **Cyprus** (79 per cent, from 68 to 14) recorded the highest improvement in MMR in the region. **Norway** (50 per cent), **Slovenia** (40 per cent) and **Greece** (38 per cent) also improved their respective MMRs. The regional average improved from 8.5 in last year's KidsRights Index to 6.58 this year, an improvement of over 22.5 per cent.

3.2.3. Global cluster insights for the Domain Life

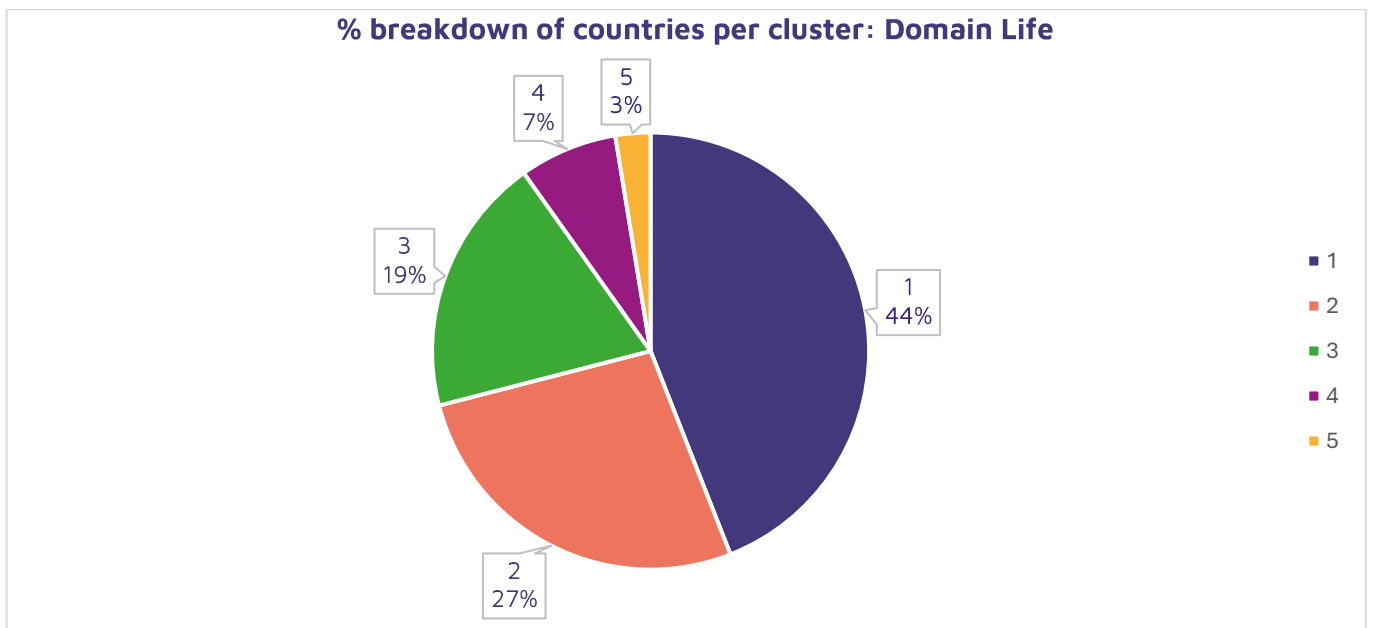
In the Domain Life, four countries have improved from Cluster 2 to 1 and three countries have improved from Cluster 3 to 2 in comparison to the 2025 results. While one country improved from Cluster 4 to 3 (**Cameroon**), one country each declined from Cluster 1 to 2 (**Grenada**), Cluster 3 to 4 (**Togo**) and Cluster 4 to 5 (**Somalia**). Of the 193 countries in the Domain Life, 182 countries remained in the same cluster as in 2025.

⁸⁴ Ahmed, S., Ali, M., Shah, I., & Tsui, A. 'Effect of Maternity Care Improvement, Fertility Decline, and Contraceptive Use on Global Maternal Mortality Reduction Between 2000 and 2023: Results from a Decomposition Analysis', *The Lancet Global Health*, 14(1), 2025, p.e40, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2214-109x\(25\)00409-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2214-109x(25)00409-7).

Domain Life Cluster	No. of countries in 2026	No. of countries in 2025
1	85	82
2	52	52
3	37	40
4	14	15
5	5	4

Table 11: Domain Life Clusters 2026 vs 2025

This year, 71 per cent of the countries in the Domain Life are categorized in Clusters 1 and 2. This is a slight improvement from the 69 per cent in the KRI 2025. The global cluster insights in the Domain Life indicate overall stability and even a small positive development.



3.2.4. Regional level cluster insights for the Domain Life

In the Domain Life, the Cluster categorization of countries in the regions South Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Western Europe and West and Central Africa remained the same as it was in the KRI 2025. Thus, there is neither an improvement nor further deterioration.

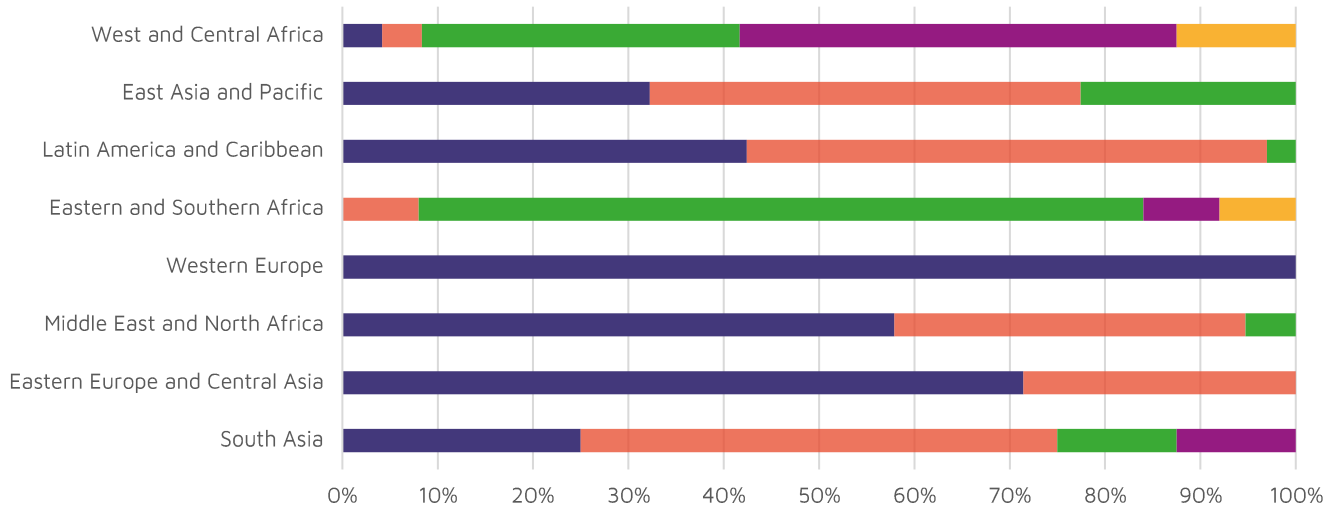
All Western European countries in this domain feature in Cluster 1. The Eastern Europe and Central Asia region stands out as the second-best performing region as all the countries in this region feature in Clusters 1 (71 per cent) and 2 (29 per cent). 97 per cent of the countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region and 95 per cent of the countries in the Middle East and North Africa are also categorized in Clusters 1 and 2 of Domain Life.

Regions	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
South Asia	2	4	1	1	0
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	15	6	0	0	0
Middle East and North Africa	11	7	1	0	0
Western Europe	31	0	0	0	0
Eastern and Southern Africa	0	2	19	2	2
Latin America and Caribbean	14	18	1	0	0
North America	1	0	0	0	0
East Asia and Pacific	10	14	7	0	0
West and Central Africa	1	1	8	11	3

Table 12: Region-wise cluster representation based on Domain Life scores

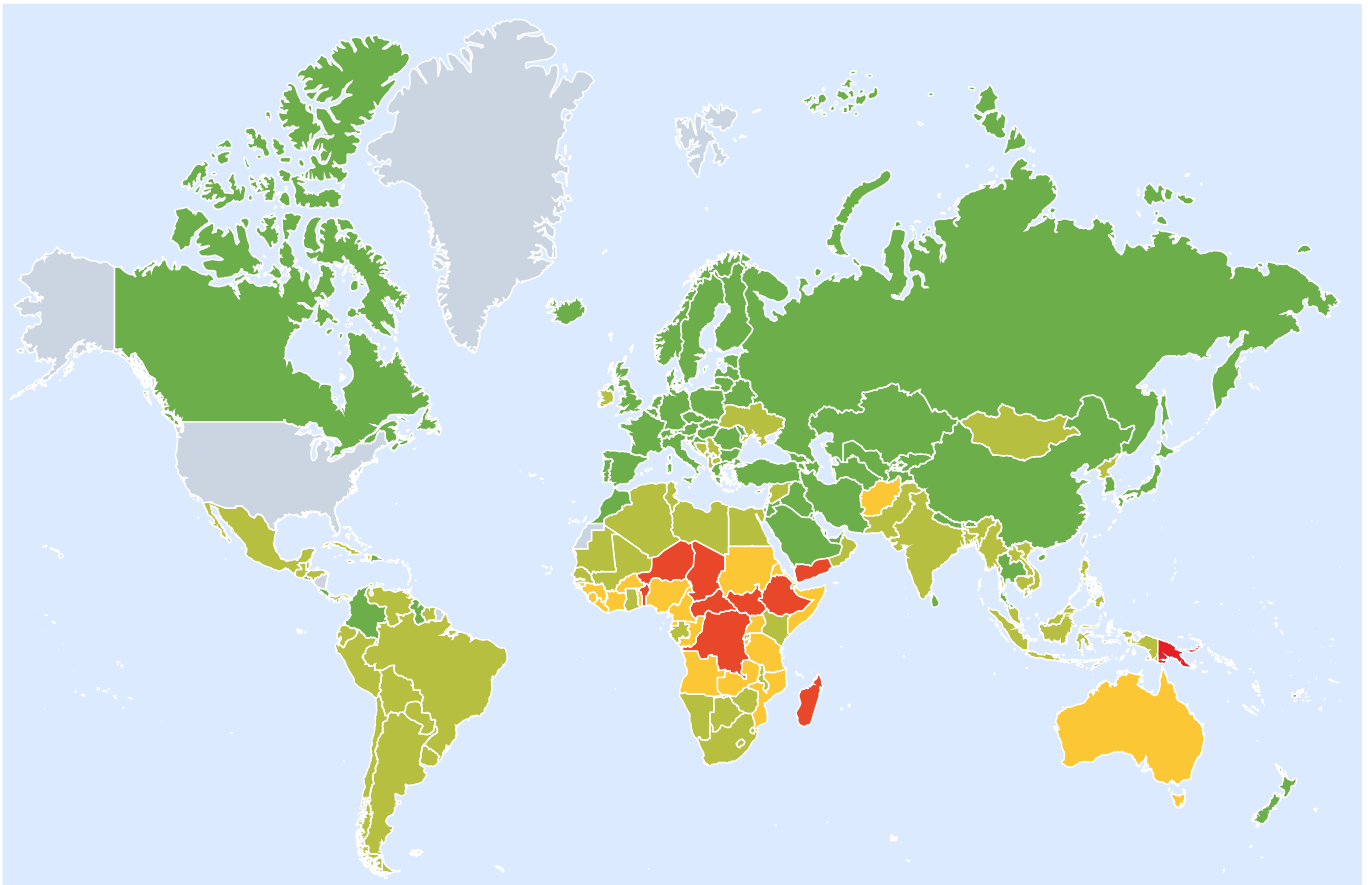
Eastern and Southern Africa continues to be the only region without representation in Cluster 1 of the Domain Life. Instead, 76 per cent of the countries from this region are concentrated in Cluster 3. This indicates a considerable need and potential for improvement to the level of the top performing countries. A disproportionate number of countries, 14 of the 19 countries or 73 per cent, that are categorized in Clusters 4 and 5 are from West and Central Africa. Concerted efforts are required from within the region and through inter-regional and global-level cooperation, to improve the status of the children’s right to life in West and Central Africa.

% representation of countries per region in the clusters: Domain Life



	South Asia	Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Middle East and North Africa	Western Europe	Eastern and Southern Africa	Latin America and Caribbean	East Asia and Pacific	West and Central Africa
■ Cluster 1	25%	71%	58%	100%	0%	42%	32%	4%
■ Cluster 2	50%	29%	37%	0%	8%	55%	45%	4%
■ Cluster 3	13%	0%	5%	0%	76%	3%	23%	33%
■ Cluster 4	13%	0%	0%	0%	8%	0%	0%	46%
■ Cluster 5	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	0%	0%	13%

3.3. Overview of the Domain Health



Map 3: Domain Health

Top ten countries Domain Health	Health Rank KRI 2026	Health Score KRI 2026
France	1	0,961
Japan	2	0,957
Denmark	3	0,955
Turkmenistan	4	0,950
Luxembourg	5	0,950
Norway	6	0,949
Switzerland	7	0,946
Germany	8	0,943
Israel	9	0,941
Belgium	10	0,941

Table 13: Top ten countries in the Domain Health in KRI 2026

In this year's KidsRights Index, for the first time the Domain Health comprises six indicators instead of four previously: underweight (under 5 years old),⁸⁵ overweight (under 5 years old),⁸⁶ obesity (5 to 19 years),⁸⁷ immunization, access to sanitation, and access to drinking water facilities. As has been justified earlier in Section 1 of this report, the indicators overweight (under 5 years old) and obesity (5 to 19 years) have been newly added to provide more complete insights into the status of malnutrition among children. Several significant changes can be observed in this Domain due to its new constitution.

⁸⁵ Percentage of children aged 0–59 months who are below minus two standard deviations from median weight-for-age of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards.

⁸⁶ Percentage of children aged 0–59 months who are above two standard deviations from median weight-for-height of the WHO Child Growth Standards.

⁸⁷ Percentage of children and adolescents (5–19 years) with a body mass index greater than 2 standard deviation above the median, <https://data.who.int/indicators/i/C6262EC/EF93DDB>

This year, no country received a full score of 1 on the Domain Health, while four countries (**Andorra, Bahrain, Liechtenstein** and **Qatar**) had received that full score in 2025. The top score on the Domain Health this year is 0.961 and has been obtained by **France**.

France, Japan and **Denmark** have each climbed around twenty ranks to become the top three performing countries on the Domain Health. As a result of including the two new indicators, among the top ten performing countries in this Domain, all countries except **Israel** are new entrants. The average score of the top ten countries in the Domain Health reduced from 0.996 in the KidsRights Index 2025 to 0.949 in 2026. In stark contrast, the average score of the bottom ten countries in the Domain improved by over eighty per cent, from 0.270 in 2025 to 0.488 in 2026. Further, seventy countries improved by ten ranks or more in this Domain, while forty-five countries deteriorated by ten ranks or more.

Among the top twenty-five countries in the Domain Health, eighteen countries are from Western Europe, five are from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and one country each is from the East Asia and Pacific region (Japan) and the Middle East and North Africa region (Israel). Last year, the top twenty-five included five countries from the Middle East and North Africa and four countries from East Asia and the Pacific. This change in regional composition in the top twenty-five also shows the significant changes brought about by the inclusion of the new indicators obesity and overweight in the Domain Health.

France, Japan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Iceland, Azerbaijan, Slovenia, Sweden, Tajikistan, Latvia and the **Netherlands** entered the top twenty-five of this Domain in this year's KidsRights Index. **Liechtenstein, Monaco, Nicaragua** and **San Marino** do not have sufficient data to receive a Domain Health score this year. Nicaragua is missing data for three of the original four indicators so it would not have received a score anyway. The remaining three countries are missing the data for all the three weight indicators.

Comparing the Domain Health scores in 2026 and 2025

Comparing the Domain Health scores in the KidsRights Index 2026 (with six indicators) with the Domain Health scores in KRI 2025 (with four indicators) also shows a reduction in the average score from 0.796 to 0.787. It means that the inclusion of the two new indicators exerted a downward pressure on the Domain Health score, outweighing the changes in the original four indicators.

As the shifts in Domain Health scores and ranks are primarily a result of the revised methodology (the inclusion of obesity and overweight indicators), the KRI 2026 scores for this Domain do not represent a year-over-year decline in the realization of the children's right to health. Instead, the KRI 2026 establishes a recalibrated baseline for the Domain Health, and now offers a more comprehensive – and consequently more challenging – assessment of countries' performance on the Domain Health for future comparisons.

3.3.1. Biggest movers in the Domain Health

Ascenders

Tajikistan improved the most in this Domain as it climbed eighty-six ranks, from 108th in 2025 to 22nd in 2026. It is closely followed by **Nepal** and **Sri Lanka**, which have improved by seventy-four and seventy-three ranks respectively. Morocco (+66 ranks), the Republic of Moldova (+64 ranks), Bangladesh (+59 ranks), Lithuania (+55 ranks), Croatia (+55 ranks), Georgia (+53 ranks), Cabo Verde (+53 ranks) and the Philippines (+51 ranks) are the other countries that have each improved by over fifty ranks in the Domain Health.

The **Central African Republic** improved its Domain Health score by 164 per cent, which accounts for the highest rise in this Domain this year. It is followed by the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** which

improved its score by 121 per cent. **Niger, Madagascar, Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan** and **Sudan** also improved their respective Domain Health scores by over seventy per cent.

Descenders

Australia deteriorated the most in the Domain Health of this year's KidsRights Index, falling from 39th in 2025 to 155th in 2026 or a twenty-seven per cent reduction in its overall Domain score. **Chile** (-90 ranks), **Brunei Darussalam** (-83 ranks), **Tonga** (-80 ranks) and **Palau** (-79 ranks) also declined significantly, all by a nearly twenty per cent reduction in their respective Domain Health scores. They are followed by **Qatar, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Greece** and **Egypt**, which fell by around sixty ranks in the Domain Health.

3.3.2. Underlying indicator data for the Domain Health

The rank and score changes in the Domain Health are primarily due to the inclusion of the two new indicators overweight⁸⁸ and obesity⁸⁹. Additionally, updated data for the indicators access to sanitation facilities, access to drinking water and underweight have contributed to the changes in this Domain. Data for the indicator immunization remains unchanged compared to 2025, therefore it did not have any impact on the changes observed in the Domain Health in the KidsRights Index 2026.

Access to sanitation facilities

Access to sanitation facilities has improved compared to the previous year. 106 countries recorded over 90 per cent access to sanitation facilities. Forty-four of these countries recorded 100 per cent access, which is two more than in 2025. Antigua and Barbuda and Uruguay improved to achieving 100 per cent access to sanitation facilities in their respective countries.

The following table shows the countries that recorded the highest improvements and downgrades in access to sanitation facilities in their respective regions.

Region	Highest improvement, access to sanitation	Highest downgrade, access to sanitation
South Asia	14%, Bangladesh	-3%, Bangladesh
East Asia and Pacific	25%, Timor Leste	-3%, Marshall Islands
Eastern and Southern Africa	78%, Sudan	-10%, Botswana
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	5%, Georgia	-1%, Tajikistan
Latin America and Caribbean	6%, Jamaica	-22%, Haiti
Middle East and North Africa	15%, Yemen	-4%, Libya
West and Central Africa	31%, Togo	-5%, Mali
Western Europe	1%, Lithuania	-0.1%, Sweden

Table 14: Access to sanitation facilities, highest % improvement and % downgrade per region

Sudan recorded the highest improvement (78 per cent) on this indicator. Humanitarian efforts in Sudan are the driving force behind improved access to sanitation as they aim to curb open defecation to improve public health.⁹⁰ **Comoros** recorded a 59 per cent improvement on this indicator driven by its government's strategic efforts to raise awareness about good hygiene practices and use of improved toilets, supported by budget allocations.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Percentage of children aged 0–59 months who are above two standard deviations from median weight-for-height of the WHO Child Growth Standards.

⁸⁹ Percentage of children and adolescents (5–19 years) with a body mass index greater than 2 standard deviation above the median, <https://data.who.int/indicators/i/C6262EC/EF93DDB>.

⁹⁰ Humanitarian Action, 'Analyzing Needs and Response', 31 December 2024, <https://humanitarianaction.info/document/sudan-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2025/article/38-water-sanitation-and-hygiene-wash>.

⁹¹ UNICEF, 'Use of Improved Toilets, Water Conservation and Good Hygiene Practices', Comoros, <https://open.unicef.org/country-info/6620A006001004?year=2026>.

Access to drinking water

In 133 countries, access to drinking water was recorded to be over 90 per cent. 64 of these countries recorded 100 per cent access, which is four more than in KRI 2025. **Barbados, Argentina, Trinidad and Tobago, Montenegro, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lithuania, and Croatia** improved to the level of 100 per cent access. **Canada, Libya, Czechia, and Tuvalu** recorded a deterioration from their 100 per cent access recorded in 2025.

The following table shows the countries that recorded the highest improvements and downgrades in access to drinking water in their respective regions.

Region	Highest improvement, access to drinking water	Highest downgrade, access to drinking water
South Asia	3%, Nepal	-2%, Afghanistan
East Asia and Pacific	12%, Lao People's Democratic Republic	-5%, Indonesia
Eastern and Southern Africa	29%, Somalia	-6%, Rwanda
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	9%, Tajikistan	-1%, Turkey
Latin America and Caribbean	9%, Haiti	-7%, El Salvador
Middle East and North Africa	21%, Yemen	-4%, Libya
West and Central Africa	9%, Niger	-9%, Togo
Western Europe	2%, Lithuania	-1%, Czechia

Table 15: Access to drinking water facilities, highest % improvement and % downgrade per region

Underweight,⁹² overweight⁹³ and obesity⁹⁴

Data for the indicator underweight is available for 11 more countries than was the case last year. However, it is still unavailable for 74 of the 194 countries in the KidsRights Index 2026. For the indicator overweight, data is unavailable for 33 countries and for the indicator obesity, data is unavailable for 4 countries.

The following table lists countries with the highest prevalence of underweight (under 5 years), overweight (under 5 years) and obesity (5 to 19 years) per region.

Region	Underweight (%)	Overweight (%)	Obesity (%)
South Asia	31.5, India	4.4, Afghanistan	13, Maldives
East Asia and Pacific	31.9, Timor-Leste	26.4, Australia	37.5, Cook Islands
Eastern and Southern Africa	28.3, Burundi	12.8, South Africa	18.1, Seychelles
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	5.2, Tajikistan	16.7, Albania	12.1, Bulgaria
Latin America and Caribbean	14.4, Guatemala	15.4, Paraguay	27.5, Chile
Middle East and North Africa	40.7, Yemen	17.5, Tunisia	23.9, Qatar
West and Central Africa	34.6, Niger	13.6, Cameroon	9.1, Liberia
Western Europe	1.1, Lithuania	13.5, Greece	14.8, Hungary

Table 16: Underweight, overweight and obesity among children, highest % per region

Both the countries with the highest overweight percentage among children under 5 years (26.4 per cent, **Australia**) and the highest obesity percentage among children aged 5 to 19 years (37.5 per cent, **Cook Islands**) belong to the East Asia and Pacific region. **Yemen** has the highest percentage of underweight children under 5 years (40.7 per cent), followed by **Niger** (34.6 per cent), **Timor-Leste** (31.9 per cent), and **India** (31.5 per cent).

⁹² 'Underweight' refers to the percentage of children aged 0–59 months who are below minus two standard deviations from median weight-for-age of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards.

⁹³ 'Overweight' refers to the percentage of children aged 0–59 months who are above two standard deviations from median weight-for-height of the WHO Child Growth Standards.

⁹⁴ 'Obesity' refers to the percentage of children and adolescents (5–19 years) with a body mass index greater than 2 standard deviations above the median.

Australia has the highest percentage of overweight children under 5 years, at 25.4 per cent. It is followed by **Papua New Guinea** (18.5 per cent) and **Tunisia** (17.5 per cent).

Prevalence of overweight and obesity among children in Australia

Poor nutritional intake is one of the factors contributing to the high prevalence of overweight and obesity among children and adolescents in Australia. It was found that less than 5 per cent of Australian children (2 to 17 years) met the recommended vegetable intake and only two-thirds of children met the recommended fruit intake.⁹⁵ Energy intake for children is heavily sourced (35 per cent) from unhealthy food and drinks.⁹⁶ In a study in Melbourne, it was found that the dietary intake of children as young as nine months was not in line with the dietary guidelines on consumption of discretionary food.⁹⁷ Based on the current trends, it is estimated that by the year 2050 obesity and overweight will be prevalent among 50 per cent of children and adolescents in Australia.⁹⁸ Studies suggest that strategic interventions such as additional tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and government financial aid for children to engage in physical activities may lead to a decrease in the prevalence of obesity and overweight.⁹⁹ These findings corroborate the World Health Organization's recommendation to implement additional tax on sugar sweetened beverages to prevent obesity and overweight.¹⁰⁰

By 2030, the government of Australia is aspiring to reduce overweight and obesity among children (2 to 17 years) by at least 5 per cent by creating an environment which promotes healthy food and drinks, reducing consumption of discretionary food, and increasing physical activity.¹⁰¹

The following table provides the list of ten countries with the highest prevalence of overweight among children under 5 years.

Country	Region	Overweight (%)
Australia	East Asia and Pacific	26.4
Papua New Guinea	East Asia and Pacific	18.5
Tunisia	Middle East and North Africa	17.5
Albania	Eastern Europe and Central Asia	16.7
Ukraine	Eastern Europe and Central Asia	16
Paraguay	Latin America and Caribbean	15.4
Trinidad and Tobago	Latin America and Caribbean	15
Argentina	Latin America and Caribbean	14.3
Cameroon	West and Central Africa	13.6
Greece	Western Europe	13.5

Table 17: Ten countries with the highest prevalence of overweight among children (under 5 years)

Among the top ten countries with the highest percentage of overweight children under 5 years, three countries are from Latin America and the Caribbean, two countries each are from East Asia and the Pacific and the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region, and one country each is from Middle East and North Africa, West and Central Africa, and Western Europe.

⁹⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Diet, 17 June 2024, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/food-nutrition/diet>.

⁹⁶ Commonwealth of Australia, 'National Obesity Strategy 2022-2032', 2022, https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2022/03/national-obesity-strategy-2022-2032_0.pdf, p. 11.

⁹⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 'Overweight and Obesity among Australian Children and Adolescents', Canberra, 2020, p. 26, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/ac61b7d7-7991-4e15-8fa6-a7973479fa8b/aihw-phe-274.pdf?v=20230605184344&inline=true>,

⁹⁸ Jessica Kerr, Peter Azzopardi, and Susan M. Sawyer, 'Without Change, Half of Australian Kids and Adolescents will be Overweight or Obese by 2050', Victoria, Murdoch Children's Research Institute, 12 March 2025, <https://www.mcric.edu.au/news/insights-and-opinions/half-australian-kids-adolescents-overweight-obese-2050>.

⁹⁹ Simon Keith Chiu et al., 'Insights from a Codesigned Dynamic Modelling Study of Child and Adolescent Obesity in Australia', *BMJ Public Health*, vol. 3(1), e001164, 2025, <https://doi:10.1136/bmjph-2024-001164>, pp. 7 and 10.

¹⁰⁰ World Health Organization, 'Taxes on Sugary Drinks: Why Do It?', Geneva, 2017, <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/260253/WHO-NMH-PND-16.5Rev.1-eng.pdf>, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Commonwealth of Australia, 'National Obesity Strategy 2022-2032', Health Ministers Meeting, 2022, https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2022/03/national-obesity-strategy-2022-2032_0.pdf, pp. 25-26.

Overweight among children under 5 is reported to be over ten per cent in eight countries from Latin America and the Caribbean, six countries each from the Middle East and North Africa and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, five countries from East Asia and Pacific, four countries from Eastern and Southern Africa, three countries from Western Europe, and one country from West and Central Africa. It is important to highlight that overweight data is not available for thirty-three countries, of which eighteen countries are from Western Europe alone.

Cook Islands (37.5 per cent), **Nauru** (32.9 per cent) and **Tonga** (32.5 per cent) are the countries with the highest obesity percentage among children (5 to 19 years). Pacific island states such as **Cook Islands** and **Nauru** report high levels of obesity among children. This is primarily due to the shift from traditional food to highly processed food which is relatively cheaper but more calorie-intensive.¹⁰²

Six of the ten countries with the highest obesity percentages are from East Asia and the Pacific, including all five countries with the highest child obesity rates. Of the remaining four, three countries are from Latin America and the Caribbean and one country is from the Middle East and North Africa region. The following table provides the list of ten countries with the highest prevalence of obesity among children aged 5 to 19 years.

Country	Region	Obesity (%)
Cook Islands	East Asia and Pacific	37.5
Nauru	East Asia and Pacific	32.9
Tonga	East Asia and Pacific	32.5
Tuvalu	East Asia and Pacific	29.7
Palau	East Asia and Pacific	28.0
Chile	Latin America and Caribbean	27.5
Bahamas	Latin America and Caribbean	26.6
Antigua and Barbuda	Latin America and Caribbean	24.4
Qatar	Middle East and North Africa	23.9
Samoa	East Asia and Pacific	23.5

Table 18: Ten countries with the highest prevalence of obesity among children (5 to 19 years)

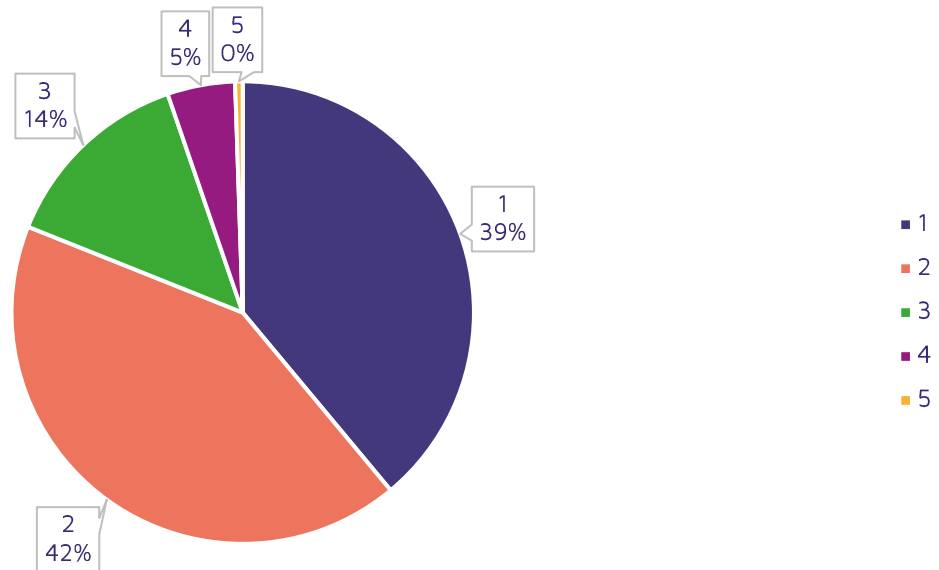
Obesity among children (5 to 19 years) was reported to be over ten per cent in thirty of the thirty-one countries from Latin America and Caribbean and sixteen of the eighteen countries in the Middle East and North Africa region, twelve of the twenty-nine countries in Western Europe, six of the twenty-one countries in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region, and two (**Seychelles** and **Mauritius**) of the twenty-five countries from Eastern and Southern Africa. **The Maldives** (13 per cent) is the only country in South Asia with over 10 per cent obesity. None of the countries from West and Central Africa reported obesity rates over 10 per cent.

Therefore, obesity is especially prevalent among children in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa region, followed by children in Western Europe, and the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region.

3.3.3. Global cluster insights for the Domain Health

Significant cluster changes can be observed in the Domain Health driven by the inclusion of the indicators overweight and obesity. The percentage of countries in Cluster 1 of Domain Health fell from 60 per cent in KRI 2025 to 39 per cent in KRI 2026. This development showcases the relatively weaker performance of countries that previously featured in Cluster 1 of the Domain, especially on the indicators overweight and obesity. On the other end, nearly all countries that were previously categorized in Cluster 5 have improved their cluster position reflecting a relatively positive performance of these countries on the new indicators, which in turn has fuelled their improvement in the Domain Health.

¹⁰² UNICEF, 'Obesity Exceeds Underweight for the First Time among School-age Children and Adolescents Globally', 9 September 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/obesity-exceeds-underweight-first-time-among-school-age-children-and-adolescents>.

% breakdown of countries per cluster: Domain Health


The proportion of countries in Cluster 2 increased from 10 per cent in the KidsRights Index 2025 to 42 per cent in 2026. Cumulatively, 81 per cent of the countries in the Domain Health feature in Clusters 1 and 2, compared to 70 per cent in 2025. Therefore, based on the cluster performance, while the overall impact of the addition of the two new indicators appears to have elevated the global performance in the Domain Health, this initial impression is unlikely to be correct especially considering that the average Domain Health score has declined to 0.787 from 0.796 in KRI 2025. **Somalia** moved up by two clusters, from Cluster 5 to 3, whereas the **Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Niger** and **South Sudan** moved from Cluster 5 to 4. In reality, most likely these upward moves do not represent improvements in practice but are caused by relatively low overweight and obesity rates due to food shortages and food insecurity. Nevertheless, it is important to have a more comprehensive coverage of child health aspects by inclusion of the two new indicators. **Papua New Guinea** is the only country that remains in Cluster 5 of Domain Health in KRI 2026.

Domain Health Cluster	No. of countries in 2026	No. of countries in 2025
1	74	116
2	80	19
3	26	28
4	9	22
5	1	9

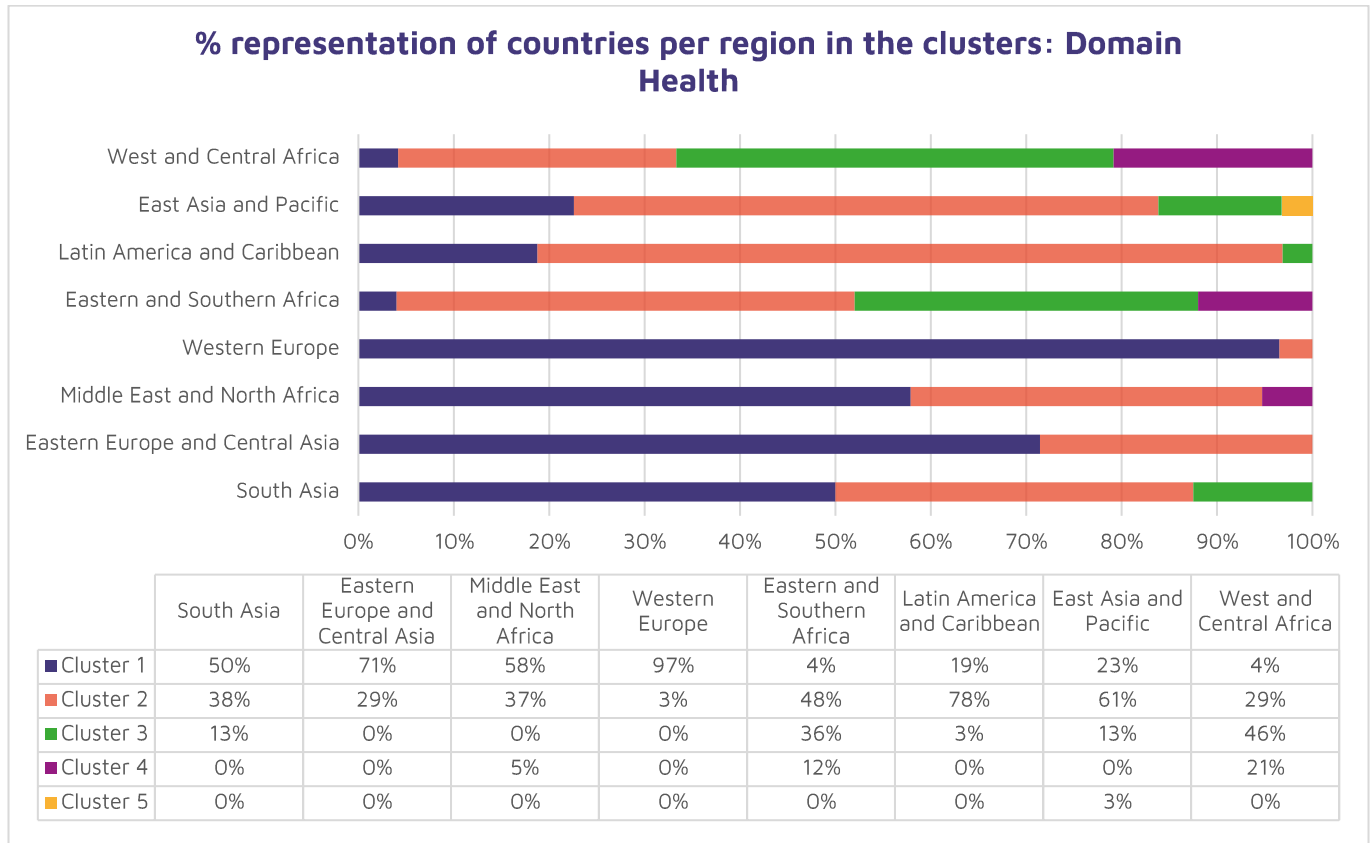
Table 19: Domain Health Clusters 2026 vs 2025

3.3.4. Regional level cluster insights for the Domain Health

Regions	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
South Asia	4	3	1	0	0
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	15	6	0	0	0
Middle East and North Africa	11	7	0	1	0
Western Europe	28	1	0	0	0
Eastern and Southern Africa	1	12	9	3	0
Latin America and Caribbean	6	25	1	0	0
North America	1	0	0	0	0
East Asia and Pacific	7	19	4	0	1
West and Central Africa	1	7	11	5	0

Table 20: Region-wise cluster representation based on Domain Health scores

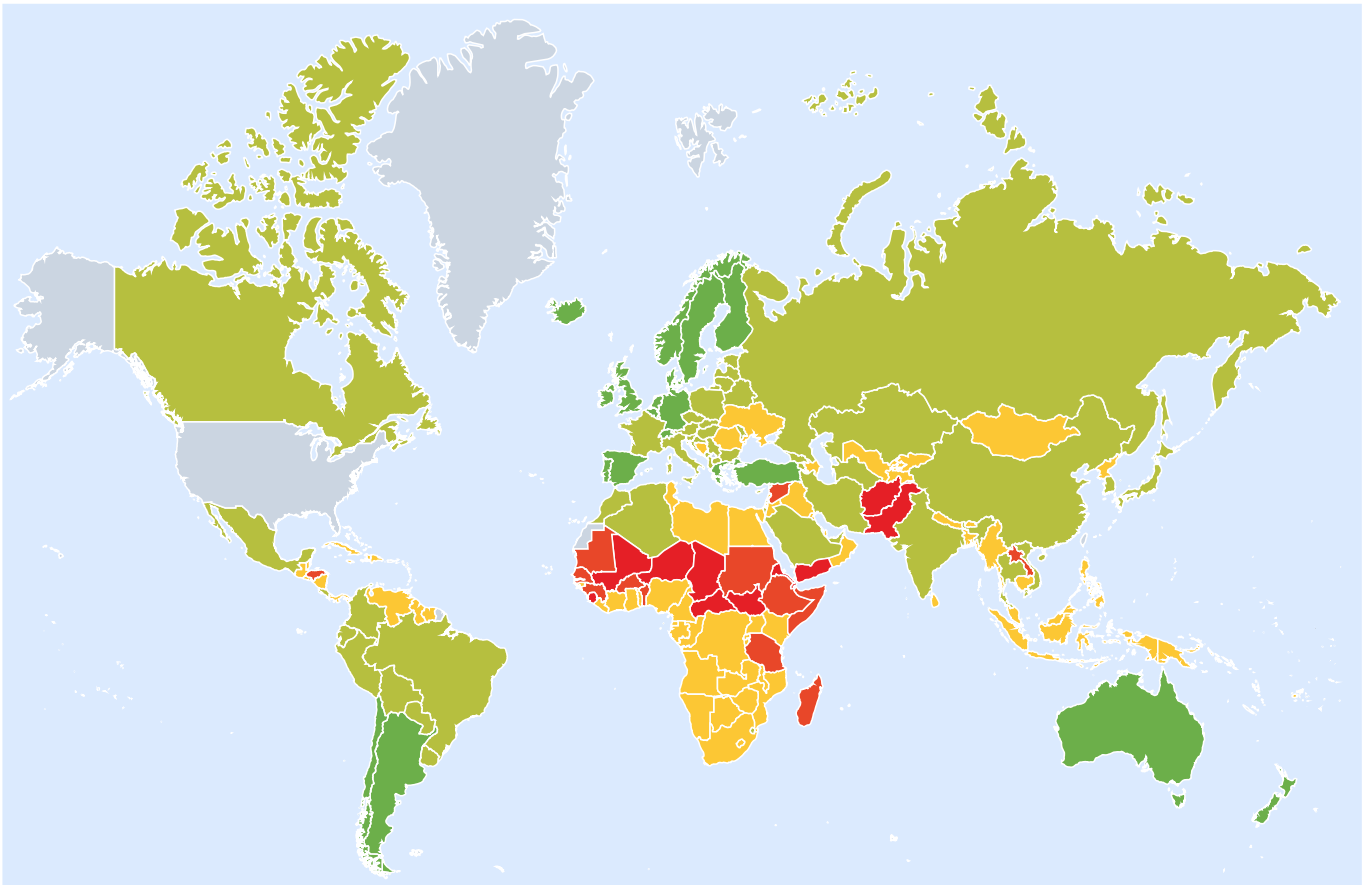
Four regions have the highest proportion of countries featuring in Cluster 1, including Western Europe (97 per cent), Eastern Europe and Central Asia (71 per cent), Middle East and North Africa (58 per cent), and South Asia (50 per cent). Due to the (new) consideration of performance on child overweight and obesity, Latin America and the Caribbean, and East Asia and the Pacific had 76 per cent and 55 per cent of countries respectively in Cluster 1 in the KRI 2025, while this year they only have 19 per cent and 23 per cent of countries in the top cluster in KRI 2026. A higher proportion of countries from both these regions now feature in Cluster 2.



The regions Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa recorded noticeable improvements in their cluster performance in the Domain Health. 52 per cent of the countries from Eastern and Southern Africa are now categorized in Clusters 1 and 2 of the Domain Health, which is up from 20 per cent recorded in 2025. Further, no country from the region features in Cluster 5 of the Domain Health. Similarly, 79 per cent of the countries from West and Central Africa feature in Clusters 1 to 3 of the Domain, compared to only 42 per cent last year.

In the KidsRights Index 2025, the Domain Health had the highest number of countries (116) categorised in Cluster 1. This has fallen to 74 countries in 2026. The analysis also indicates a serious and understudied problem of overweight and obesity among children from countries that have predominantly been the better performers in the Domain Health of the KidsRights Index.

3.4. Overview of the Domain Education



Map 4: Domain Education

Top ten countries Domain Education	Education Rank KRI 2026	Education Score KRI 2026
Australia	1	1,000
Denmark	2	1,000
Finland	3	1,000
Greece	4	1,000
Ireland	5	1,000
Monaco	6	1,000
Netherlands	7	1,000
New Zealand	8	1,000
Turkey	9	1,000
Belgium	10	0,996

Table 21: Top ten countries in the Domain Education in KRI 2026

Nine countries – **Australia, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Turkey** maintained their full score of 1 in Domain Education and thus remain as the top performing countries in this Domain.

Out of the 193 countries that received a score for the Domain Education, twenty-eight countries dropped by ten ranks or more. At the same time, twenty-one countries improved by ten ranks or more. New data is available for the **Democratic People’s Republic of Korea**, which was missing Domain Education data in 2025. The country ranks 119th in this Domain in 2026. Data for the **Cook Islands** continues to remain unavailable for this Domain in 2026.

South Sudan, the Central African Republic and Afghanistan are the worst performing countries in this Domain. **Sierra Leone and Djibouti** dropped by fourteen and twelve ranks and are among the bottom ten performing countries in the Domain Education. Djibouti recorded the highest downgrade in

the Domain Education score, as it reduced by 28.1 per cent. Sierra Leone's Domain score also reduced by over 26 per cent.

The average domain scores of the top and the bottom ten performing countries and the overall average Domain scores showed no noticeable changes when compared to the results of last year. This indicates a lack of overall improvement or deterioration in this Domain.

The top twenty-five countries in the Domain Education comprise of countries from four regions, including fifteen countries from the Western European region (seven in the top ten); four countries from the East Asia and Pacific region – **Australia, New Zealand, Singapore** and **Republic of Korea**; four countries from Latin America and the Caribbean – **Saint Kitts and Nevis, Argentina, Chile** and **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**; and two countries from Eastern Europe and Central Asia – **Turkey** and **Georgia**. Compared to 2025, the **Republic of Korea** improved by two ranks, from 26th to 24th and now features among the top twenty-five countries in this Domain. The country replaces **Palau** which recorded a significant fall in its Domain Education rank, from 23rd in 2025 to 117th in 2026.

3.4.1. Biggest movers in the Domain Education

Ascenders

The **Seychelles** shows the most improvement in the Domain Education, climbing 109 ranks from 148th in 2025 to 39th in 2026 resulting from a 41 per cent improvement in its overall Domain score. The Seychelles provides free and compulsory education for children for at least ten years,¹⁰³ i.e. from six until sixteen years of age.¹⁰⁴ Though Early Childhood Education is not compulsory, the Seychelles prioritizes it through its National Action Plans for Early Childhood Care and Education.¹⁰⁵ Non-formal education is provided by the government of the Seychelles from birth until 3.5 years, after which early childhood education is provided until the age of 5.5 years.¹⁰⁶ Its focus on continuous improvement of its education system, including teacher training, adapting to technological developments and integrating inclusivity,¹⁰⁷ may also have contributed to its striking improvement in educational access for both boys and girls.

Nauru and the **Solomon Islands** also improved by 67 ranks each, followed by **San Marino** (+66 ranks) and **Vietnam** (+65 ranks) which also improved substantially in this Domain. **Nauru** witnessed an improvement in educational outcomes as the government undertook proactive measures aimed at enhancing student enrolment and attendance,¹⁰⁸ including through cash rewards for attendance and initiatives to improve parental and community engagement.¹⁰⁹ Australia is facilitating the transformation of Nauru's education sector through the *Nauru Education Program* – a ten-year support program launched in late 2022.¹¹⁰

Vietnam has achieved near-universalization of its early childhood and primary education by focusing on improving enrolments and reducing costs to access education.¹¹¹ Vietnam also expanded access to

¹⁰³ Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles, art. 33(a), <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/9115>.

¹⁰⁴ 'Education for a Learning Society', Policy Statement of the Ministry of Education Seychelles, 2000, p. 9, <https://www.uil.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2023/05/seychelles-education-for-a-learning-society-policy-statement.pdf>.

¹⁰⁵ Institute of Early Childhood Development, 'Seychelles Unveils 7th National Action Plan to Transform Early Childhood Care and Education', 5 July 2025, <https://www.iecd.gov.sc/seychelles-unveils-7th-national-action-plan-to-transform-early-childhood-care-and-education/>.

¹⁰⁶ Commonwealth of Learning, 'Towards a New Model of Schooling in Seychelles', p. 13, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/239f/189de5c0bd462c42c011d617e7f2e3020b01.pdf>.

¹⁰⁷ Commonwealth of Learning, 'Scaling Quality Teacher Development through Open and Distance Learning in the Seychelles', 7 January 2026, <https://www.col.org/news/scaling-quality-teacher-development-through-open-and-distance-learning-in-the-seychelles/>.

¹⁰⁸ International Monetary Fund, 'Republic of Nauru: 2023 Article IV Consultation-Press Release; Staff Report; and Statement by the Executive Director for Republic of Nauru', *IMF Staff Country Reports* 2023, 376 (2023), p. 50, <https://doi.org/10.5089/9798400259678.002>.

¹⁰⁹ Republic of Nauru 2024-2025 budget, Paper No. 2, <https://naurufinance.info/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/BP-2-2024-25-1.pdf> p. 34.

¹¹⁰ Tetra Tech, 'Fostering Literacy, Numeracy and Educational Improvements in Nauru', <https://intdev.tetrattech.com.au/projects/fostering-literacy-numeracy-and-educational-improvements-in-nauru/>.

¹¹¹ OECD, *OECD Economic Surveys: Viet Nam 2025*, Vol. 2025(16), OECD Publishing, Paris, 2025, p. 60, https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/06/oecd-economic-surveys-viet-nam-2025_f2511b78/fb37254b-en.pdf.

its education system through tuition fee exemptions and financial support for children enrolled in private schools.¹¹² It also implemented specific projects aimed at supporting vulnerable children, including girls¹¹³ and children belonging to ethnic minorities.¹¹⁴ Through its 2019 Education Law, Vietnam has committed to allocating at least 20 per cent of its annual budget towards education and training.¹¹⁵ This legal mandate to invest in the education sector is likely to have played a vital role in financing the initiatives to improve access to education for children.

Descenders

Education of children in Cameroon impacted by prolonged conflicts

Prolonged armed conflict in Cameroon has severely impacted children's access to schools. Due to the attacks on the education system and institutions, many children in South-West and North-West Cameroon have been deprived of schooling for over half a decade.¹¹⁶ Schools have become unsafe spaces for children in conflict-affected regions as physical violence, exploitation and bullying is widespread.¹¹⁷ Conflict-induced displacement further led to children losing access to education.¹¹⁸ Increases of child labour, poverty levels and early marriages have also contributed to the lower enrolment and higher dropout rates in schools.¹¹⁹

Palau dropped by 94 ranks in the Domain Education. This is the highest fall in rankings among all countries in this Domain, due to a 26 per cent reduction of its overall Domain Education score. While Palau has achieved universal access to primary education, barriers to access secondary education lower children's expected years of schooling. Secondary schools are not accessible to children from outlying islands as these schools are predominantly concentrated in the central region and do not offer boarding facilities, which increases the risk of children dropping out of schools.¹²⁰

Cameroon (-54 ranks), **the Russian Federation** (-46), and **Malawi** (-45 ranks) are the other countries that have considerably dropped in the rankings in this Domain. One of the factors reportedly contributing to the reduction in the expected years of schooling in the Russian Federation is the discriminatory language proficiency testing which keeps migrant children out of the education system.¹²¹

¹¹² Vietnam Net Global, '2025: The year Vietnam's education system turned a new page', 4 January 2026, <https://vietnamnet.vn/en/2025-the-year-vietnam-s-education-system-turned-a-new-page-2478438.html>

¹¹³ UN Sustainable Development Group, 'Viet Nam Closes Learning Gaps towards Education for All', January 2025, <https://unsdg.un.org/latest/stories/viet-nam-closes-learning-gaps-towards-education-all#:~:text=Over%20the%20last%20two%20decades,hub%20and%20a%20global%20example.>

¹¹⁴ UNICEF Vietnam, *50 Years of Progress for Children in Viet Nam: Opportunities And Investments For Future Generations*, November 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/vietnam/vi/media/19276/file/EN%20%20Final%20Full%20Report%20Viet%20Nam%2050-Year%20Progress%20on%20Children%20and%20Future%20Prospects.pdf> pp. 41-42.

¹¹⁵ Article 96 (1), Education Law, Law No. 43/2019/QH14, Vietnam, 14 June 2019, [https://investdanang.gov.vn/documents/37916/163631/Education+Law+2019.pdf/5edeb639-fb69-781c-95a7-7ca720bf6b17?version=1.0&t=1658302003869&download=true.](https://investdanang.gov.vn/documents/37916/163631/Education+Law+2019.pdf/5edeb639-fb69-781c-95a7-7ca720bf6b17?version=1.0&t=1658302003869&download=true)

¹¹⁶ UNICEF Cameroon, 'Situation of Children in Cameroon', June 2025, https://www.unicef.org/cameroon/media/3136/file/2025-Situation%20des%20enfants%20au%20Cameroun_ENGL_%20FINAL2.pdf, p. 6.

¹¹⁷ UNICEF Cameroon, in a web feature 'Education' has stated that "All children, no matter where they live or what their circumstances, have the right to quality education". The web feature explains how UNICEF in Cameroon supports children "so they can attend school and learn", <https://www.unicef.org/cameroon/what-we-do/education>.

¹¹⁸ Isaac Oben Awu and Xu Hui, 'Education under Attack: Teachers' Perspectives on the Effects of Anglophone Crises on Secondary Schools: Implications for Cameroon's educational development', *Journal of Education Health and Sport*, Vol. 80, 2025, p. 59283 ff., <https://doi.org/10.12775/jehs.2025.80.59283>, p. 10.

¹¹⁹ UNICEF, 'Situation of Children in Cameroon', June 2025, https://www.unicef.org/cameroon/media/3136/file/2025-Situation%20des%20enfants%20au%20Cameroun_ENGL_%20FINAL2.pdf, p. 6.

¹²⁰ Republic of Palau, *Palau National Youth Policy 2023 - 2027*, Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development, September 2022, <https://ministryofhrctd.pw/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Palau-National-Youth-Policy-and-Action-Plan-FINAL-1.pdf>, pp. 19-20.

¹²¹ Syinat Sultanalieva, 'Discriminatory Testing Blocks Migrant Children's Right to Education in Russia', Human Rights Watch, New York, 19 May 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/05/19/discriminatory-testing-blocks-migrant-childrens-right-education-russia>.

3.4.2. Underlying indicator data for the Domain Education

The Domain Education scores of countries are determined by the expected years of schooling for boys and girls, and the absolute difference between both – as a measure of gender inequality.

Expected years of schooling for girls: A regional picture

Region	Highest, expected years of schooling girls	Lowest, lowest expected years of schooling girls
South Asia	14.09, Maldives	7.31, Pakistan
East Asia and Pacific	21.48, Australia	8.84, Lao People’s Democratic Republic
Eastern and Southern Africa	20.79, Seychelles	4.51, South Sudan
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	19.74, Turkey	10.48, Tajikistan
Latin America and Caribbean	20.75, Argentina	10.64, Honduras
Middle East and North Africa	18.2, Kuwait	6.48, Yemen
West and Central Africa	13.37, Congo	6.23, Central African Republic
Western Europe	22.34, Monaco	14.36, Liechtenstein

Table 22: Expected years of schooling for girls, highest and lowest per region

Region	Highest % improvement	Highest % downgrade
South Asia	+6%, Maldives	-4%, Nepal
East Asia and Pacific	+16%, Vietnam	-18%, Palau
Eastern and Southern Africa	+35%, Seychelles	-29%, Djibouti
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	+14%, North Macedonia	-17%, Russian Federation
Latin America and Caribbean	+4%, Dominica	-9%, Venezuela (Bolivian Republic of)
Middle East and North Africa	+15%, Saudi Arabia	-19%, United Arab Emirates
West and Central Africa	+16%, Côte d’Ivoire	-19%, Cameroon
Western Europe	+24%, San Marino	-2%, Iceland

Table 23: Expected years of schooling for girls, highest % improvement and highest % downgrade per region

The global average of expected years of schooling for girls showed a minor improvement from 13.7 years in the KidsRights Index 2024 to 13.84 years in 2025 and 13.87 years this year. However, it is concerning that sixty-nine countries recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for girls compared to the results of 2025. In comparison, eighty countries have recorded a decline between 2024 and 2025. The regional insights on the expected years of schooling for girls presented below showcase the disparities in educational access for girls within and across regions.

South Asia: Four of the eight countries in the South Asian region recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for girls. The **Maldives** (14.09 years) is the only country in this region that has a result above the global average of 13.87 years. The Maldives has replaced Sri Lanka as the best performing country on this indicator in the region, as **Sri Lanka** recorded a 3 per cent decline (from 14.12 to 13.63 years), whereas the Maldives improved by 6 per cent (from 13.33 years to 14.09 years). Both **Pakistan** (7.31 years) and **Afghanistan** (8.09 years) continue to remain as the only countries in the region where the expected years of schooling for girls is below 10 years.

East Asia and Pacific: The average result of the East Asia and Pacific region decreased from 14.43 years in 2025 to 14.16 years this year, as fifteen of the thirty-one countries recorded a decline in their expected years of schooling for girls. The region’s average continues to remain higher than the global average though. **Lao People’s Democratic Republic** is the only country in the region with less than ten expected years of schooling for girls, as it recorded a reduction of 12 per cent from 10 years to 8.84 years.

Eastern and Southern Africa: Nine of the twenty-five countries in Eastern and Southern Africa recorded a decline in their expected years of schooling for girls. At 10.89 years, the regional average is well below

the global average and the second lowest among all regions. **South Sudan** has the lowest expected years of schooling for girls across all countries with only 4.51 years. Several other countries from this region feature among the worst performers on this indicator globally, including **Djibouti** (5.84 years), **Eritrea** (6.93 years), **Somalia** (7.49 years), **Sudan** (8.41 years), the **United Republic of Tanzania** (8.72 years), **Ethiopia** (8.63 years) and **Madagascar** (9.2 years). Conversely, with an improvement of 35 per cent from 15.45 years to 20.79 years, the **Seychelles** became one of the best performing countries on this indicator globally.¹²²

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Though seven of the twenty-one countries in this region recorded a decline in their expected years of schooling for girls, the overall regional average improved from 14.52 years in 2025 to 14.61 years in 2026. **North Macedonia** (15.29 years) and **Bulgaria** (15.7 years) recorded substantial improvement on this indicator, by 14 per cent and 11 per cent respectively. The **Russian Federation** declined on this indicator by 17 per cent (from 15.85 years to 13.23 years), and features among the countries with the lowest expected years of schooling for girls in the region.

Latin America and the Caribbean: Eleven of the thirty-three countries in this region recorded a decline in their expected years of schooling for girls. **Argentina** (20.75 years), **Saint Kitts and Nevis** (19.73 years), **Uruguay** (18.88 years) and **Barbados** (18.45 years) feature among the countries with the highest expected years of schooling for girls globally. The regional average of Latin America and the Caribbean is the second highest among all regions, at 14.74 years.

The Middle East and North Africa: Ten of the nineteen countries in the Middle East and North African region recorded a decline in their expected years of schooling for girls. The regional average for this indicator decreased from 14.1 years in 2025 to 13.97 years in 2026. The **United Arab Emirates** and **Libya** declined the most on this indicator, by 19 and 12 per cent respectively. **Yemen** (6.48 years) and the **Syrian Arab Republic** (7.17 years) are the only two countries in the region where the expected years of schooling for girls is below the regional average. **Yemen** worsened further on this indicator from 6.88 years in 2025 to 6.48 years this year.

West and Central Africa: Six countries recorded a decline in their expected years of schooling for girls. Eleven of the twenty-four countries in the region have a result below ten expected years of schooling. This is the highest number of underperforming countries among all the regions. With its regional average at 10.01 years, the West and Central African region has the lowest of all expected years of schooling for girls.

Western Europe: Six of the thirty-two countries in the Western European region recorded a decline in their expected years of schooling for girls. However, improvements among other countries made the regional average improve further from 17.41 years in 2025 to 17.82 years in 2026. Western Europe's regional average is substantially higher than that of all the other regions. **Monaco** (22.34 years), **Greece** (21.03 years), **Finland** (20.66 years), **Sweden** (20.71 years), **Iceland** (20.19 years) and **Belgium** (20.07 years) are among the countries with the highest expected years of schooling for girls globally.

¹²² See Section 3.4.1 of this Report for a detailed explanation on Seychelles' improvement in this domain.

Expected years of schooling for boys: A regional picture

Region	Highest, expected years of schooling boys	Lowest, expected years of schooling boys
South Asia	13.97, Nepal	8.57, Pakistan
East Asia and Pacific	19.84, Australia	9.73, Lao People's Democratic Republic
Eastern and Southern Africa	16.25, Seychelles	6.57, Djibouti
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	19.92, Turkey	11.21, Tajikistan
Latin America and Caribbean	17.05, Saint Kitts and Nevis	9.7, Honduras
Middle East and North Africa	16.38, Saudi Arabia	9.08, Yemen
West and Central Africa	14.54, Togo	7.75, Mali
Western Europe	21.06, Monaco	14.22, Luxembourg

Table 24: Expected years of schooling for boys, highest and lowest per region

Region	Highest % improvement	Highest % downgrade
South Asia	12%, Nepal	-4%, Sri Lanka
East Asia and Pacific	20%, Viet Nam	-22%, Palau
Eastern and Southern Africa	29%, Seychelles	-18%, Djibouti
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	13%, North Macedonia	-15%, Russian Federation
Latin America and Caribbean	4%, Dominica	-12%, Nicaragua
Middle East and North Africa	11%, Saudi Arabia	-9%, Yemen
West and Central Africa	18%, Democratic Republic of the Congo	-19%, Cameroon
Western Europe	17%, Monaco	-2%, Cyprus

Table 25: Expected years of schooling for boys, highest % improvement and highest % downgrade per region

In total seventy-five countries recorded a decline on this indicator compared to their 2025 results. This reveals a lack of consistent progress on access to education globally. Nevertheless, the overall record this year is still an improvement compared to last year when a total of one hundred and five countries recorded a year-on-year decline in the expected years of schooling for boys. The regional average continues to remain around 13.3 years since 2024.

South Asia: Only one country in the South Asian region - **Sri Lanka** - recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for boys. The regional average of South Asia for this indicator improved from 11.89 years in 2025 to 12.2 years this year. **Pakistan**, at 8.57 years, is the only country in the region where the expected years of schooling for boys is below 10 years. With an improvement of 12 per cent, from 12.5 to 13.97 years, **Nepal** now leads the region on this indicator.

East Asia and Pacific: Fourteen of the thirty-one countries recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for boys. At 9.73 years, **Lao People's Democratic Republic** is the only country in the region where the expected years of schooling for boys is below 10 years. The **Solomon Islands**, which previously was the lowest performer in the region, improved by 20 per cent from 9.7 to 11.62 years.

Eastern and Southern Africa: Eleven of the twenty-five countries in the region recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for boys. This year, the regional average for this indicator is a low 10.89 years. However, this is an improvement from last year's 10.85 years. The expected years of schooling for boys in **Djibouti** decreased from 8 to 6.57 years (which is an 18 per cent decline). **Djibouti** replaced **South Sudan** (6.74 years) as the worst performing country in the region. The **Seychelles** (16.25 years) reported a 29 per cent improvement on this indicator¹²³ and replaced **Eswatini** (16.25 years) as the country with the highest expected years of schooling for boys in the region.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Ten of the twenty-one countries recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for boys. The **Russian Federation** recorded the highest decline from 15.5 to 13.15

¹²³ See Section 3.4.1 of this Report for a detailed explanation on Seychelles' improvement in this domain.

years (15 per cent), while **North Macedonia** recorded the highest improvement from 12.6 to 14.3 years. **Turkey** (19.92 years) remains the top performing country in the region on this indicator. **Tajikistan** has the lowest expected years of schooling for boys in the region and declined further from the result of 11.3 years in 2025 to 11.21 years in 2026.

Latin America and the Caribbean: Fourteen of the thirty-three countries in the region recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for boys. Its regional average declined from 13.58 years in 2025 to 13.5 years in 2026. **Jamaica** (9.7 years) remains the only country in the region where the expected years of schooling are less than ten years.

The Middle East and North Africa: Eight of the nineteen countries of the region recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for boys. **Yemen** and the **United Arab Emirates** declined the most in the region with their expected years of schooling for boys reducing by 9 and 7 per cent respectively. In this region, **Saudi Arabia** exhibited the highest improvement in the expected years of schooling for boys (11 per cent) as well as for girls (15 per cent). With this improvement, Saudi Arabia (16.38 years) has become the best performing country on this indicator in the region, replacing the **United Arab Emirates**, which declined from 16.4 years in 2025 to 15.27 years in 2026.

West and Central Africa: The regional average of West and Central Africa improved from 10.46 years in 2025 to 10.67 years this year. Only five countries in the region recorded a decline in the expected years of schooling for boys. However, eight of the twenty-four countries still have a result of under-ten years of expected years of schooling for boys. With a decline of 19 per cent on this indicator, **Cameroon** is the country with the second-highest year-on-year decline in expected years of schooling for boys globally.

Western Europe: The regional average of Western Europe improved further from 16.42 years in 2025 to 16.7 years in 2026. This is the highest result across all regions. Nevertheless, it is concerning that eleven of the thirty-two countries recorded a decline in their expected years of schooling for boys. **Monaco** improved on this indicator by 17 per cent from 18.1 to 21.06 years and has become the country with the highest expected years of schooling for boys, both in the region and globally.

Gender inequality in expected years of schooling

Out of the 193 countries in this year's KidsRights Index for which Domain Education scores are available, the expected years of schooling for boys is lower in 146 countries when compared to the expected years of schooling for girls.

However, **Afghanistan** continues to show the opposite and remains as the country with the highest gender inequality in expected years of schooling globally. The expected years of schooling for Afghan girls is only 8.09 years, compared to 13.36 years for boys. Similarly, in **Chad** (2.62 years) and **Sierra Leone** (2.55 years) the expected years of schooling for girls is lower in comparison to the expected years of schooling for boys.

In various other countries with a high difference in the expected years of schooling between boys and girls, including the **Seychelles**, **Kuwait**, **Argentina**, **Barbados** and **Sweden**, boys have shorter schooling prospects than girls, as elaborated in the table below.

Country	Region	Expected years of schooling for girls	Expected years of schooling for boys	Absolute difference
Afghanistan	South Asia	8.09 years	13.36 years	5.28 years
Seychelles	Eastern and Southern Africa	20.79 years	16.25 years	4.53 years
Kuwait	Middle East and North Africa	18.20 years	13.93 years	4.27 years
Argentina	Latin America and the Caribbean	20.75 years	16.99 years	3.76 years
Barbados	Latin America and the Caribbean	18.45 years	14.81 years	3.64 years
Sweden	Western Europe	20.71 years	17.39 years	3.32 years

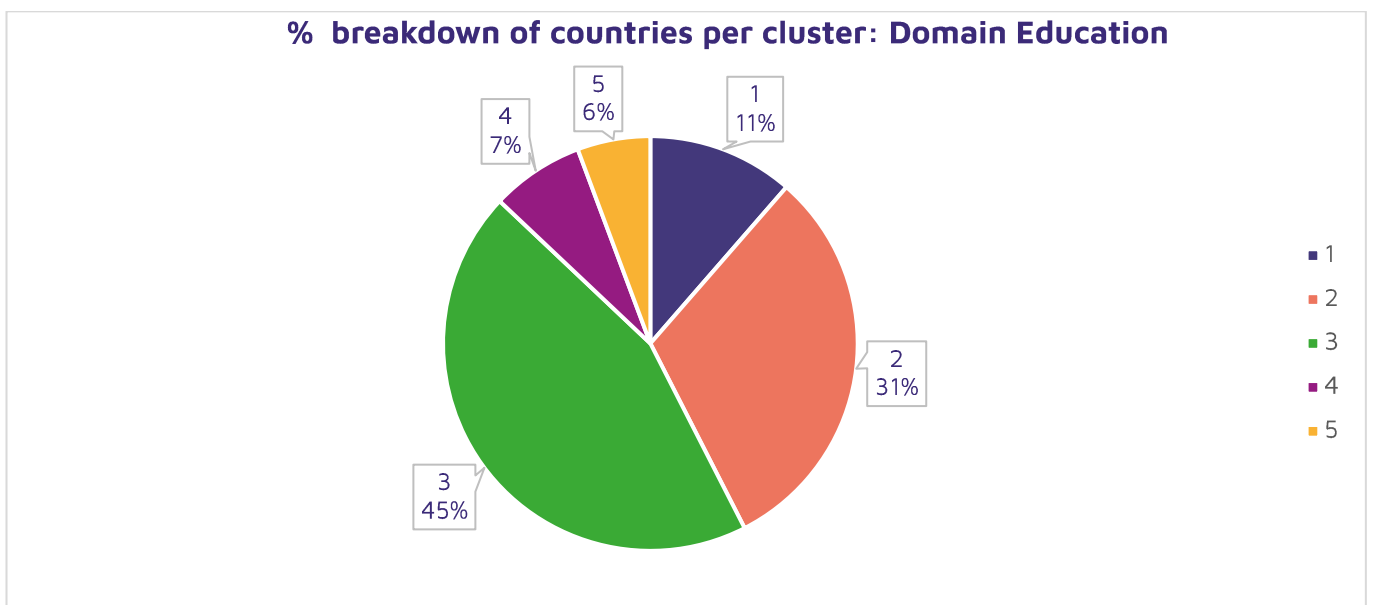
Table 26: Countries with the highest difference in the expected years of schooling for boys and girls

3.4.3. Global cluster insights for the Domain Education

The proportion of countries in Cluster 1 of the Domain Education, which in the KidsRights Index 2025 was already at the lowest level of all five Domains (13 per cent), further declined to 11 per cent in 2026. Around 75 per cent of countries continue to be concentrated in Clusters 2 and 3.

Palau is the only country to have declined by two clusters, from Cluster 1 to 3, in the Domain Education of the KRI 2026. Three countries – **Djibouti, Pakistan** and **Sierra Leone**, declined from Cluster 4 to 5. Three other countries – **Indonesia, Mauritius** and **Romania**, declined from Cluster 2 to 3. One country each declined from Cluster 1 to 2 (**Georgia**) and Cluster 3 to 4 (**Lao People’s Democratic Republic**) in this Domain.

Due to an improved performance in the Domain Education, four countries moved up from Cluster 4 to 3: **Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Nauru** and **Solomon Islands. Andorra, India, North Macedonia, Paraguay, San Marino, Serbia, Seychelles** and **Vietnam** improved from Cluster 3 to 2 in KRI 2026.



Domain Education Cluster	No. of countries in 2026	No. of countries in 2025
1	22	24
2	60	54
3	86	86
4	14	20
5	11	8

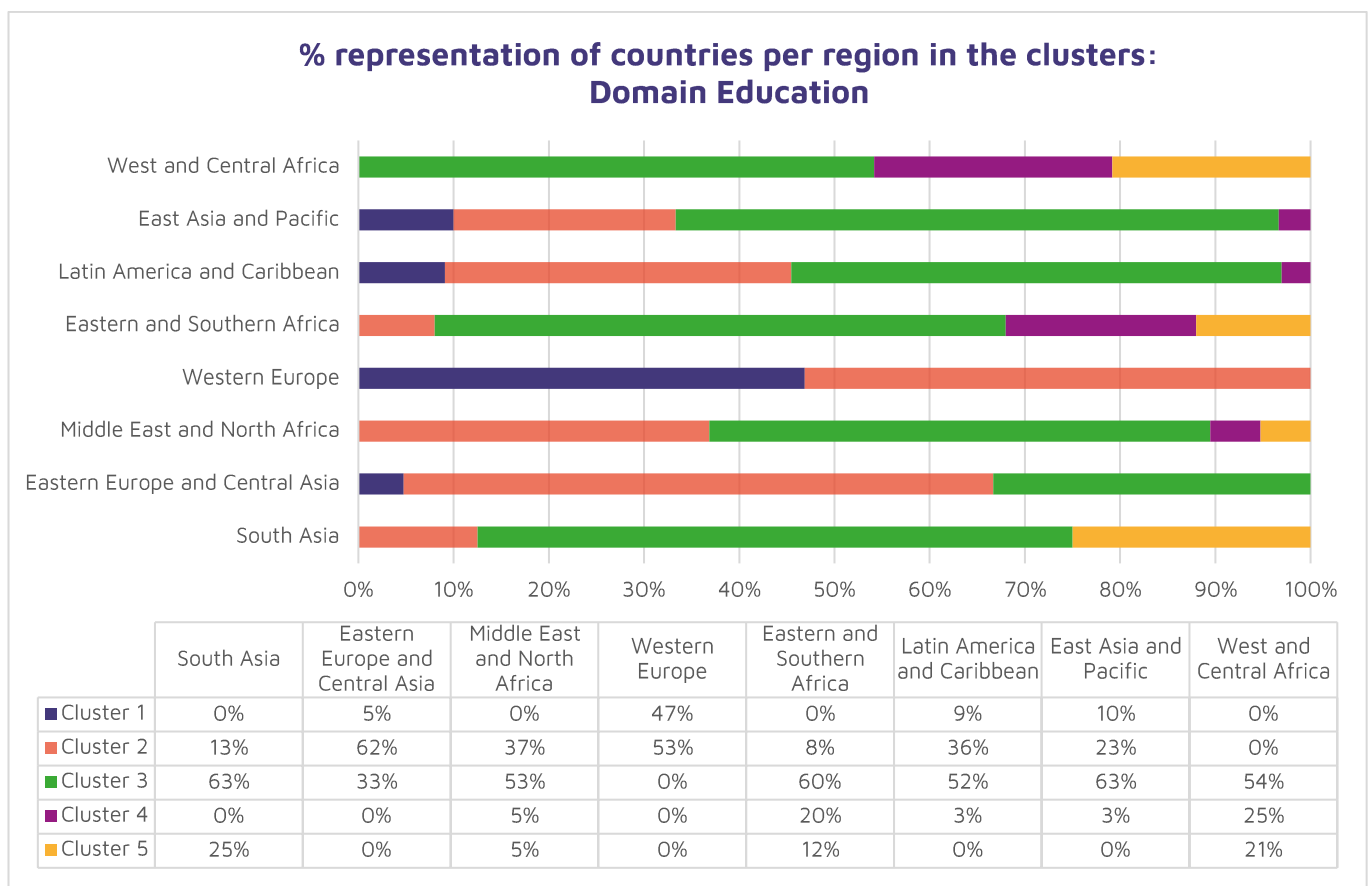
Table 27: Domain Education Clusters 2026 vs 2025

3.4.4. Regional level cluster insights for the Domain Education

One country each from South Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa, declined to Cluster 5 in this Domain. Two countries from Western Europe – **San Marino** and **Andorra**, improved from Cluster 3 to 2 which also means that 100 per cent of the Western European countries now feature in Clusters 1 and 2 of the Domain Education in the KRI 2026. The regions Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean each have one country less featuring in feature one less country in Cluster 1 compared to last year.

Regions	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
South Asia	0	1	5	0	2
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	1	13	7	0	0
Middle East and North Africa	0	7	10	1	1
Western Europe	15	17	0	0	0
Eastern and Southern Africa	0	2	15	5	3
Latin America and Caribbean	3	12	17	1	0
North America	0	1	0	0	0
East Asia and Pacific	3	7	19	1	0
West and Central Africa	0	0	13	6	5

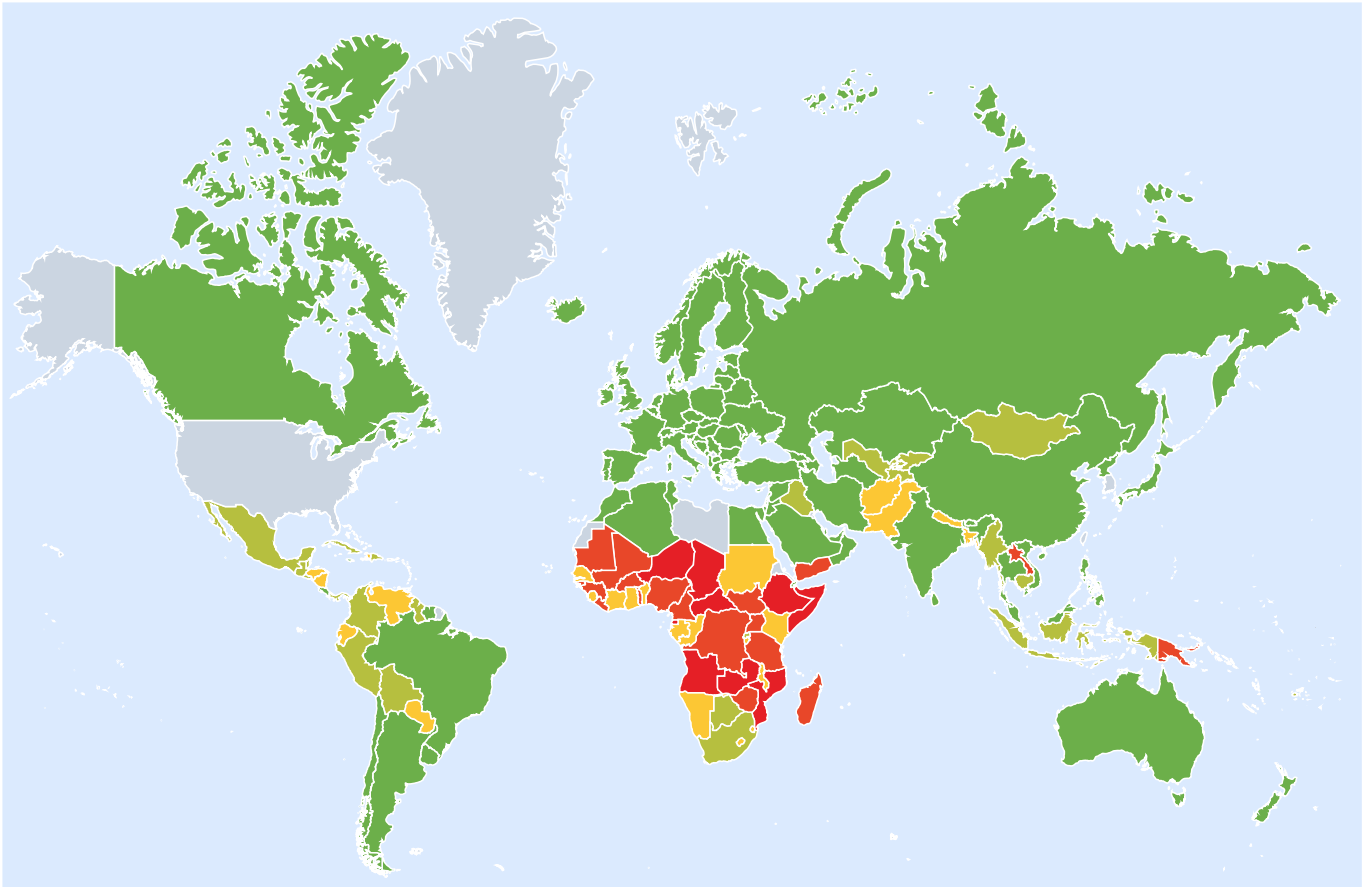
Table 28: Region-wise cluster representation based on Domain Education scores



None of the regions have the highest proportion of countries in Cluster 1 in the Domain Education. Western Europe and the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region have 53 per cent and 62 per cent of their respective countries in Cluster 2. All the other regions are highly concentrated in Cluster 3, including East Asia and the Pacific (63 per cent), South Asia (63 per cent), Eastern and Southern Africa (60 per cent), West and Central Africa (54 per cent), Middle East and North Africa (53 per cent) and Latin America and Caribbean (52 per cent).

The West and Central Africa region is not represented in Clusters 1 and 2, and is also the region contributing the highest proportion of countries to Clusters 4 and 5. Eleven of the twenty-five countries (44 per cent) in Clusters 4 and 5 belong to this region.

3.5. Overview of the Domain Protection



Map 5: Domain Protection

Top ten countries Domain Protection	Protection Rank KRI 2026	Protection Score KRI 2026
Denmark	1	0,998
San Marino	2	0,998
Norway	3	0,997
Switzerland	4	0,997
Liechtenstein	5	0,996
Japan	6	0,996
Sweden	7	0,996
Netherlands	8	0,996
Singapore	9	0,994
Italy	10	0,993

Table 29: Top ten countries in the Domain Protection in KRI 2026

Due to a minor improvement in its Domain score, **Denmark** has replaced **Switzerland** as the top performing country in the Domain Protection in this year's KidsRights Index. **San Marino** and **Liechtenstein** are the new entrants in the top ten of this Domain as sufficient data is available this year to attribute a score and rank to both countries.

Due to improved data availability, 180 countries could be ranked in the Domain Protection in 2026, compared to 172 countries in 2025. Along with **San Marino** and **Liechtenstein**, the other countries which could now be ranked in the Domain Protection are: **Andorra**, **Brunei Darussalam**, **Monaco**, the **Cook Islands**, **Nauru** and the **Marshall Islands**.

Among the top twenty-five countries in the Domain Protection, twenty countries are from Western Europe, two countries each are from the East Asia and Pacific region (**Japan** and **Singapore**) and the Middle East and North Africa region (the **United Arab Emirates** and **Qatar**). One country (Canada) is

from North America. **San Marino, Liechtenstein, Andorra, the United Arab Emirates, Canada and Qatar** are the new entrants in the top twenty-five of this Domain in 2026, replacing **Cyprus, Portugal, Greece, Croatia, Israel and Tunisia**.

In the Domain Protection, six countries improved by ten ranks or more, whereas forty-seven countries declined by ten ranks or more. The average score of all countries ranked in this Domain decreased from 0.804 in 2025 to 0.794 in 2026. While the global average did not reduce by much, the average Domain Protection score of the bottom ten countries recorded a twenty-eight per cent decline from 0.331 in 2025 to 0.259 in 2026. These findings indicate a further deterioration of the realization of the child right to protection in the countries that were already underperforming.

3.5.1. Biggest movers in the Domain Protection

Ascenders

The **United Arab Emirates** climbed fifty-two ranks, from 64th in 2025 to 12th in 2026. **Iraq** improved by thirty-nine ranks, from 139th in 2025 to 100th in 2026 aided by a 34 per cent increase in its Domain score. These are also this year's highest year-on-year percentage increases in the Domain Protection score. **Chile** also showed a noticeable improvement in this Domain by climbing twenty-three ranks.

Descenders

Botswana declined the most in the Domain Protection as it dropped by twenty-seven ranks, from 78th in 2025 to 105th in 2026. It is followed by several other countries that dropped by over twenty ranks, including **Honduras** and **Bangladesh** which both dropped by twenty-two ranks, and **Bulgaria, Lebanon, Nicaragua** and **Saudi Arabia** which all dropped by twenty-one ranks. The Domain Protection scores of **Mozambique** and **Somalia** deteriorated the most of all, with sixty and fifty-five per cent declines respectively. As a result, Somalia and Mozambique have become the worst performing countries in this Domain.

3.5.2. Underlying indicator data for the Domain Protection

Data on the indicators child labor, adolescent birth rate, and birth registrations together constitute the Domain Protection. There have been no updates of the child labor data since 2025 and new data for birth registrations is only available for a few countries. Therefore, the Domain Protection score and rank changes in the KidsRights Index 2026 can be attributed primarily to the improvements and deteriorations of countries on the indicator adolescent birth rate.

Birth registrations

Birth registrations in **Nigeria** decreased by 31 per cent. The percentage of children under 5 years with birth registrations declined from 57.3 per cent to 39.7 per cent. The country is followed by **Bangladesh**, where birth registrations decreased by 25 per cent, from 56 per cent to 41.8 per cent. Concerns about the accessibility of registration services,¹²⁴ uneven implementation, lack of accountability and quality checks at the local registration centres,¹²⁵ are adversely impacting the birth registration numbers in **Nigeria** despite birth registrations being mandatory.¹²⁶ **Bangladesh** requires families to report births,

¹²⁴ Godwin Aidenagbon, 'Demand and Supply Perspectives on Birth Registration in Nigeria: Evidence from the Federal Capital Territory', *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, Vol. 10(3), 2026, pp. 7881-7892, <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100300572>; Shuaib, Mustapha Adeiza, and Prasitsiriphon Orawan, 'Exploring the Factors Influencing Birth Registration in Nigeria', *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, Vol. 7(2), 2025, <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2025.v07i02.39213>.

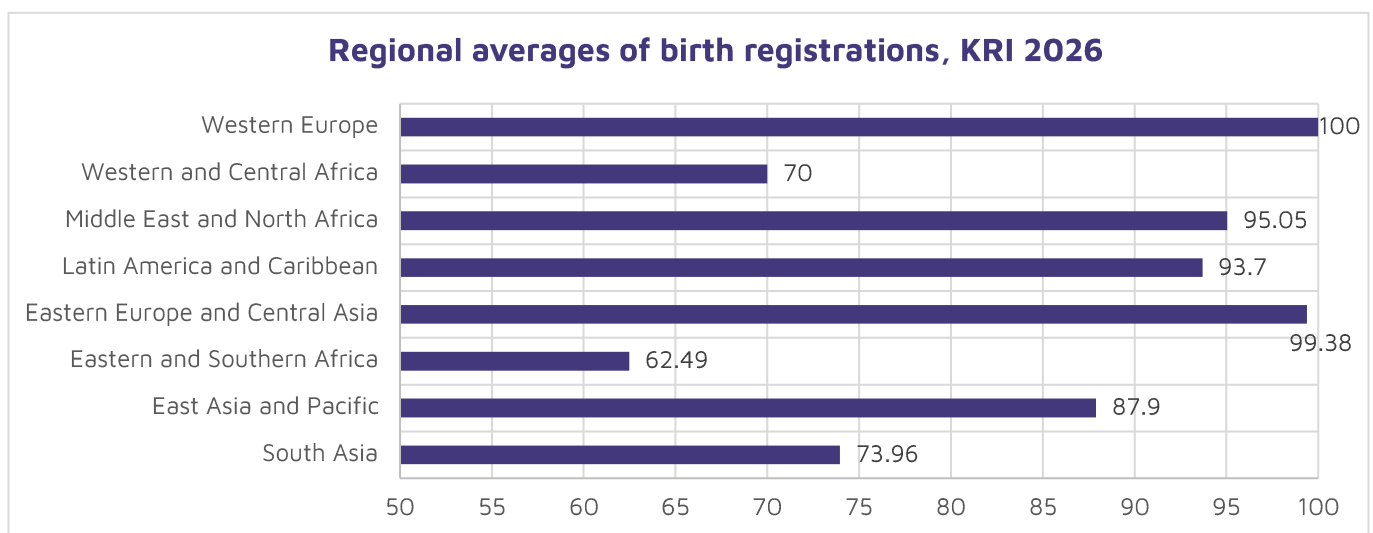
¹²⁵ Moredecai Oweibia et al., 'Birth Registration in Nigeria's Delta Region: Analyzing LGA-Level Compliance Disparities and Systemic Barriers', *medRxiv*, 2025, p. 19, <https://doi.org/10.1101/2025.07.23.25332096>.

¹²⁶ National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and UNICEF, 'Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2021, Survey Findings Report Nigeria', August 2022, p. 320, https://mics.unicef.org/sites/mics/files/Nigeria%202021_MICS_SFR_English.pdf.

instead of the healthcare facilities. This appears to be hindering the immediate registration of childbirths.¹²⁷

At the other end, birth registrations of children under 5 in **Lesotho** improved by 80 per cent, from 44.5 per cent to 80.1 per cent. The country is followed by **Vanuatu** which improved by 77 per cent from 43.4 per cent to 76.7 per cent. It was previously the second lowest in the East Asia and Pacific region. **Belarus** reportedly achieved 100 per cent birth registration by improving 7 per cent.

The increase in birth registrations in **Lesotho** can be attributed to the improvement in its civil registration system, including the government's launch of the *Ntlafatsa Bana Digital Birth Registration System* marking a shift from manual registration.¹²⁸ The digital birth registration system is creating a legal identity for children and is helping children in accessing nutrition and clean water.¹²⁹ In **Vanuatu**, improved coordination between the Department of Civil Registry and the Ministry of Education facilitated an increase in birth registrations through the schools by making it integral to the enrolment process,¹³⁰ and by using the birth registration numbers as unique identifiers to track the academic progress of students.¹³¹



All thirty-two countries in the Western European region continue to maintain the level of 100 per cent birth registrations. Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and the Latin America and Caribbean region reported a regional average of over 90 per cent. The Eastern and Southern Africa region has the lowest regional average for birth registrations at only 62.49 per cent.

Adolescent birth rate

The Adolescent birth rate of a country refers to the number of births to females aged 15 to 19 years, per 1000 females in the age group. The global average adolescent birth rate of the countries that received a score for the Domain Protection in the KidsRights Index 2026 improved from 52.99 in 2025 to 42.17 in 2026. This significant change in the adolescent birth rate can be partly attributed to the change of source data used for this indicator as of this year. Until (and including in) 2025, the KidsRights

¹²⁷ ABM Zubair, 'Counting every life: Why Bangladesh must reform birth and death registration law', *The Business Standard*, 30 September 2025, <https://www.tbsnews.net/thoughts/counting-every-life-why-bangladesh-must-reform-birth-and-death-registration-law-1250321>.

¹²⁸ Ministry of Social Development Lesotho, European Union and UNICEF, 'Ntlafatsa Bana Improvement for Children Newsletter', July 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/lesotho/media/1191/file/Ntlafatsa-Bana-Newsletter-July-2025.pdf>.

¹²⁹ Thato Machone, 'Every Child Counts: Linking Nutrition, Water, and Identity to a Better Future', UNICEF Lesotho, 19 June 2025, <https://lesotho.un.org/en/296588-every-child-counts-linking-nutrition-water-and-identity-better-future>.

¹³⁰ United Nations General Assembly, Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Forty-sixth session, 29 April–10 May 2024, 'National Report submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21, Vanuatu', <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4039448?ln=en&v=pdf>, p.14.

¹³¹ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 'Making Registration More Accessible through Schools and Hospitals VANUATU', <https://crvs.unescap.org/sites/default/files/resources/Vanuatu.pdf>.

Index relied on the World Fertility Data (Age-specific Fertility Rates, 14 to 19 years) published by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) which was the original and the best available source for adolescent birth rates at the time of publishing the previous editions of the KidsRights Index.¹³² However, considering that this dataset has not received any update since 2019, as of this year we use the data (Age-specific Fertility Rates, 14 to 19 years) from UNDESA's 'World Population Prospects' which is updated biannually.¹³³ This change in source data for adolescent birth rates aims to include the most updated and best comparable data.

As detailed below, inclusion of the very most up-to-date data on adolescent birth rates reveals that all regions recorded an improvement in their respective regional averages on this indicator.

Region	Lowest adolescent birth rate	Highest adolescent birth rate
South Asia	5.43, Maldives	73,18, Bangladesh
East Asia and Pacific	0.51, Democratic People's Republic of Korea	81,64, Lao People's Democratic Republic
Eastern and Southern Africa	18.97, Djibouti	153.45, Mozambique
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	6.57, Croatia	40.43, Tajikistan
Latin America and Caribbean	6.54, Chile	93.45, Nicaragua
Middle East and North Africa	1.57, Kuwait	75.32, Yemen
West and Central Africa	38.75, Cabo Verde	163, Central African Republic
Western Europe	1.14, Denmark	24.59, Slovakia

Table 30: Adolescent birth rate,¹³⁴ highest and lowest per region

Region	Highest % improvement, adolescent birth rate	Highest % increase, adolescent birth rate
South Asia	-67%, Bhutan	31%, India
East Asia and Pacific	-54%, Japan	32%, Micronesia (Federated States of)
Eastern and Southern Africa	-41%, Kenya	71%, Lesotho
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	-45%, Ukraine	43%, Uzbekistan
Latin America and Caribbean	-87%, Chile	84%, Honduras
Middle East and North Africa	-91%, United Arab Emirates	44%, Tunisia
West and Central Africa	-34 per cent, Cabo Verde	6%, Mauritania
Western Europe	-59%, Sweden	7%, Cyprus

Table 31: Adolescent birth rate, highest % improvement and highest % increase per region

Adolescent birth rates decreased in several countries over the past few years owing to strategic interventions from the respective governments. In **Kuwait**, higher awareness and knowledge on sexual and reproductive health have led to a decrease in adolescent fertility.¹³⁵ In **Chile**, improved awareness and access to contraceptives through a legal mandate,¹³⁶ accompanied with the National Health Strategy's objective to reduce adolescent pregnancies, may have led to a decrease in the adolescent birth rates.¹³⁷ Extending the compulsory school hours in Chile was also found to have had an inverse impact on adolescent pregnancies.¹³⁸

Despite relative decline globally, adolescent birth rates remain high in several countries. Though the adolescent fertility rate has relatively decreased in **Iraq**, the continued prevalence of adolescent

¹³² UNDESA Population Division, 'World Fertility Data', 2019, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/world-fertility-data>.

¹³³ UNDESA Population Division, 'World Population Prospects 2024', Age-specific Fertility Rates (ASFR) by Five-year Age Groups, <https://population.un.org/wpp/downloads?folder=Standard%20Projections&group=Fertility>.

¹³⁴ Adolescent birth rate refers to the number of births to females aged 15 to 19 years per 1000 females in the age group.

¹³⁵ Smartson. P. NYONI, Thabani NYONI, 'Adolescent Fertility Projection for Kuwait Using Holt's Linear Method', *International Research Journal of Innovations in Engineering and Technology*, Vol. 7(2), February 2023, pp. 153-158, https://irjiet.com/common_src/article_file/1679712237_5b74981fea_7_irjiet.pdf.

¹³⁶ Law 20,418 (2010), Ministry of Health, Chile.

¹³⁷ Ministry of Health Chile, 'Plan Nacional de Salud 2011-2020', <https://extranet.who.int/countryplanningcycles/planning-cycle-files/plan-nacional-de-salud-2011-2020>.

¹³⁸ Clara Rodríguez Ribas, 'Adolescent Pregnancy, Public Policies, and Targeted Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Systematic Review', *Pan American Journal of Public Health*, 45:e144, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.26633/RPSP.2021.144>, p. 5.

pregnancies is due to lack of access to information on sexual and reproductive health and contraceptive methods,¹³⁹ and high rates of early and child marriage.¹⁴⁰ Educational programs on sexual and reproductive health in **Lesotho**, such as the Comprehensive Sexuality Education curriculum,¹⁴¹ are yet to significantly lower the adolescent birth rates despite been implemented for over a decade already.¹⁴²

Structural inequalities and barriers rooted in poverty, the rural-urban divide, lower educational attainment,¹⁴³ and gender-based violence result in unintended pregnancies among adolescents in Lesotho. Addressing these barriers necessitates a targeted approach.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, the prevalence of child marriages in **Honduras** despite a legal ban¹⁴⁵ and barriers to accessing sexual and reproductive health education result in high adolescent birth rates.¹⁴⁶ It has been reported that one in four Honduran adolescent girls bear children before turning 19.¹⁴⁷ **Mozambique**, a country with one of the highest adolescent birth rates globally, is also grappling with a high incidence of child marriages¹⁴⁸ and low awareness and adoption of contraceptive methods¹⁴⁹ due to cultural and social barriers.¹⁵⁰ These examples show that countries must locate the root causes that are hindering the reduction of adolescent birth rates and implement localized strategies to effectively address them.

South Asia: The regional average performance of South Asia on the indicator adolescent birth rate has improved from 46.02 in 2025 to 36.18 in 2026. All countries in the region except India improved on the indicator. Bhutan (67 per cent) and the Maldives (44 per cent) recorded the highest improvement in the region.

East Asia and Pacific: Six of the thirty-one countries in this region - **Micronesia (Federated States of), Myanmar, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu** and **Vietnam**, reported an increase on this indicator. **Malaysia, Japan** and the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** improved the most in this region, with their respective adolescent birth rates reducing by around 50 per cent. The overall regional average improved only marginally from 32.37 in 2025 to 30.46 in 2026. This represents the lowest improvement observed across all regions. This is primarily due to the better availability of data this year. Data on this indicator is now available for six more countries in this region than was the case in 2025.

Eastern and Southern Africa: Adolescent birth rates increased in six of the twenty-five countries in the region (**Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Somalia** and **Zimbabwe**). **Kenya** and **South Sudan** improved on this indicator by around 40 per cent. The overall regional average improved from 89.43 in 2025 to 79.47 in 2026.

¹³⁹ 'Iraq National Strategy For Women, Children and Adolescent Health', https://extranet.who.int/uhcpartnershiplivemonitoring/system/files/doc_attachments/Iraq%20WCA%20health%20Strategy%20-%202024%20-2030%20-%20full%20-%20revised%20-%202%20February%2024%20%28002%29.pdf, p. 11.

¹⁴⁰ Taha Dawood et al. 'Outcomes Of Teenage Pregnancy in Al-Sadr City/Baghdad, Iraq 2018', *World Journal of Advance Healthcare Research*, Vol. 9(4), 2025, pp. 11-18, https://www.wjahr.com/admin/assets/article_issue/71032025/1743156728.pdf.

¹⁴¹ Kingdom of Lesotho, 'Education Sector Plan 2016-2026', Ministry of Education and Training, August 2016, https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/education_sector_plan_2016-2026_lesotho_0.pdf, p. 90.

¹⁴² Government of Lesotho, 'Lesotho 2025 Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda For Sustainable Development', 2025, <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2025/VNR%202025%20Lesotho%20Report.pdf>, p. 37.

¹⁴³ Robin Haarr, 'Adolescent Health and Well-Being Brief Lesotho 2023', UNICEF Lesotho, Maseru, 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/lesotho/media/961/file/UNICEF-Lesotho-Adolescent-Health-Brief-2023.pdf>, p. 3.

¹⁴⁴ Lesotho commitment statement by the Honourable Minister of Education and Training, Professor Ntoi Rapapa, during the Summit of the Future, New York, 'Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights: Advancing the Agenda for a Sustainable Future', 23 September 2024, https://pnmch.who.int/docs/librariesprovider9/meeting-reports/lesotho-commitment-to-aaa.pdf?sfvrsn=a266105d_1.

¹⁴⁵ Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports of Honduras', *UN Doc. CRC/C/HND/CO/6-7*, 26 February 2025, para 25.

¹⁴⁶ United Nations Office for Project Services, News, <https://www.unops.org/news-and-stories/news/better-health-services-for-honduran-youth>; Doctors Without Borders, 'Honduras: Bringing Sexual and Reproductive Health Care to the Community, September 2022', <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/honduras-bringing-sexual-and-reproductive-health-care-community>.

¹⁴⁷ Bayuh Asmamaw Hail and Joseph Beyene, 'Adolescent Marriage, Maternity, and Limited Access to Education in 106 countries: Bayesian Analysis of Prevalence, Trend, and Prediction', *Scientific Reports*, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-93893-7>.

¹⁴⁸ Mozambique, The Child Marriage Data Portal, <https://childmarriageportal.org/country-profiles/mozambique/>, p. 2.

¹⁴⁹ United Nations Population Fund, 'Mozambique Sexual and Reproductive Health National Profile', 2024, <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.22330.04804>, p. 10.

¹⁵⁰ UNICEF Mozambique, 'Gender Brief: Mozambique', UNICEF, New York, October 2025, https://www.unicef.org/mozambique/en/media/9651/file/UNICEF%20Mozambique_Thematic%20Briefs_9_Gender_and_10_Adolescents.pdf, p. 5.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Three countries in the region (**Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Uzbekistan**) recorded an increase in adolescent birth rates. **Uzbekistan** (43 per cent) is among the countries which recorded the highest increase on this indicator globally. The **Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine** improved their respective adolescent birth rates by over 40 per cent. The regional average of this indicator also improved from 24.71 to 19.96.

Latin America and the Caribbean: Three of the thirty-three countries in the region (**Antigua and Barbuda, Honduras and Nicaragua**) reported an increase in adolescent birth rates. **Chile** has replaced **Antigua and Barbuda** as the top performing country in the region. In the 2026 KidsRights Index, Chile (87 per cent), Argentina (58 per cent) and Costa Rica (51 per cent) improved the most on this indicator in the region. The regional average improved from 60 in 2025 to 47.85 in 2026.

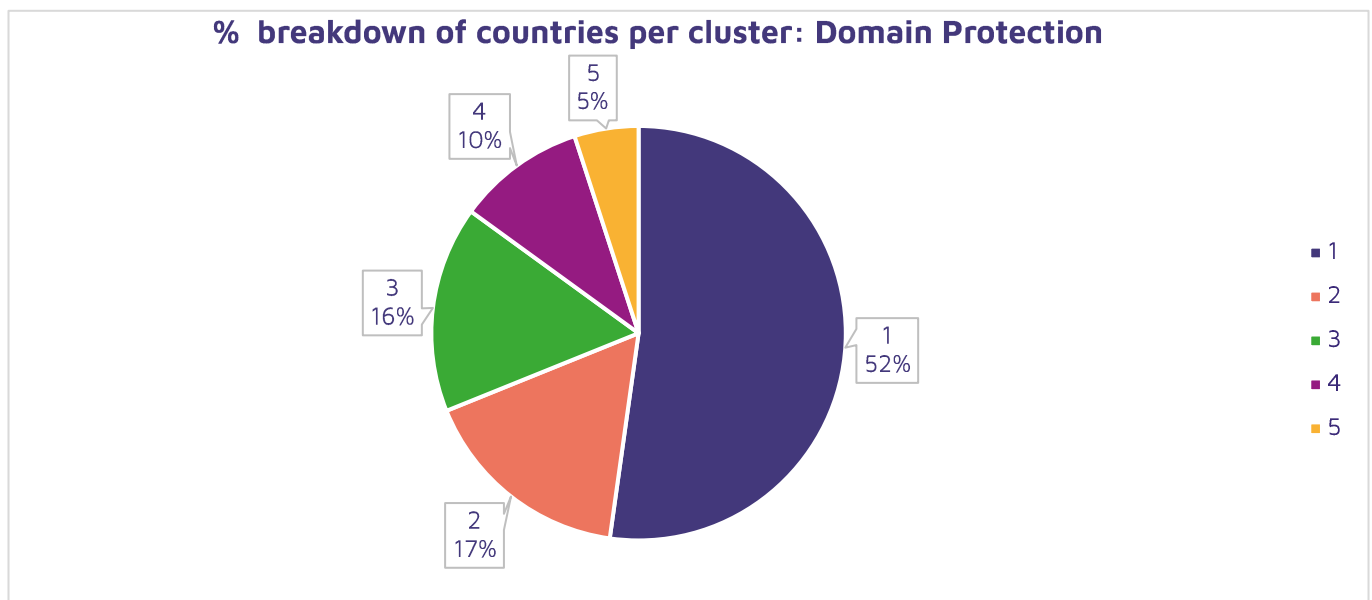
The Middle East and North Africa: Five of the nineteen countries of the region (**Iran, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Yemen**) recorded a spike in adolescent birth rates. However, the regional average improved from 36.04 in 2025 to 21.09 in 2026, an improvement of over 41 per cent. The **United Arab Emirates** (91 per cent), **Kuwait** (75 per cent) and **Iraq** (76 per cent) recorded the highest improvement on this indicator in the region. Kuwait has replaced Tunisia as the best performing country on this indicator in the region.

West and Central Africa: The regional average of West and Central Africa improved from 119.76 in 2025 to 99.1 this year, an improvement of over 17 per cent. Only two of the twenty-four countries in the region (**Gabon and Mauritania**) recorded a rise of adolescent birth rates. **Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Gambia and Nigeria** each improved on this indicator by around 30 per cent. As before, **Cabo Verde** and the **Central African Republic** remain the best and worst performers on this indicator in the region.

Western Europe: The adolescent birth rate improved in all countries in the Western European region, except in **Slovakia** which recorded a 7 per cent increase. Several countries in the region improved on this indicator by around 50 per cent or more, including **Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden**. As a result, the regional average adolescent birth rate improved substantially from 8.47 in 2025 to 5.58 in 2026.

3.5.3. Global cluster insights for the Domain Protection

In the Domain Protection, 69 per cent of the countries are categorised in Clusters 1 and 2, down from 72 per cent in the KRI 2025. Further, the proportion of countries in Clusters 4 and 5 increased from 12 per cent in 2025 to 15 per cent in 2026.



Twenty-two countries declined by a cluster in the Domain Protection. Of these twenty-two countries, seven countries moved from Cluster 2 to Cluster 3, six countries moved from Cluster 1 to Cluster 2, five countries moved from Cluster 3 to 4 and four countries moved from Cluster 4 to 5. Only two countries in this Domain improved their respective cluster positions. One country each improved from Cluster 5 to 4 (**South Sudan**) and from Cluster 3 to 2 (**Iraq**).

Of the eight new countries that received a score for the Domain Protection in this year's Index, six countries – **Andorra, Brunei Darussalam, Cook Islands, Liechtenstein, Monaco** and **San Marino** – are categorized in Cluster 1. The remaining two countries - **Nauru** and **Marshall Islands** - are categorized in Clusters 2 and 3 respectively.

Domain Protection Cluster	No. of countries in 2026	No. of countries in 2025
1	94	94
2	30	29
3	29	27
4	18	16
5	9	6

Table 32: Domain Protection Clusters 2026 vs 2025

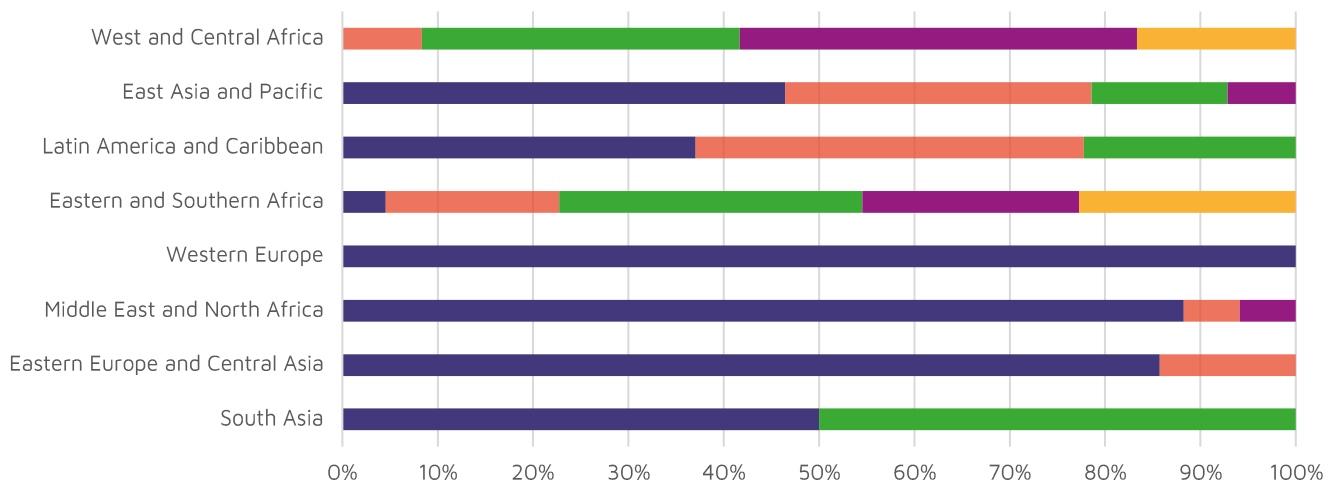
3.5.4. Regional level cluster insights for the Domain Protection

Western Europe (100 per cent), Middle East and North Africa (88 per cent), Eastern Europe and Central Asia (86 per cent), South Asia (50 per cent) and East Asia and the Pacific (46 per cent) have the highest proportion of their respective countries categorized in Cluster 1 of the Domain Protection. A high proportion of countries from Latin America and the Caribbean (41 per cent) are categorized in Cluster 2. A significant proportion of countries from Eastern and Southern Africa are concentrated in Cluster 3 (32 per cent), and from West and Central Africa in Cluster 4 (42 per cent). In Cluster 5 of the Domain Protection, only countries from the Eastern and Southern Africa region and the West and Central Africa region feature. This indicates a need for significant improvement in the realization of the children's right to protection among the countries in these two regions.

Regions	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
South Asia	4	0	4	0	0
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	18	3	0	0	0
Middle East and North Africa	15	1	0	1	0
Western Europe	32	0	0	0	0
Eastern and Southern Africa	1	4	7	5	5
Latin America and Caribbean	10	11	6	0	0
North America	1	0	0	0	0
East Asia and Pacific	13	9	4	2	0
West and Central Africa	0	2	8	10	4

Table 33: Region-wise cluster representation based on Domain Protection scores

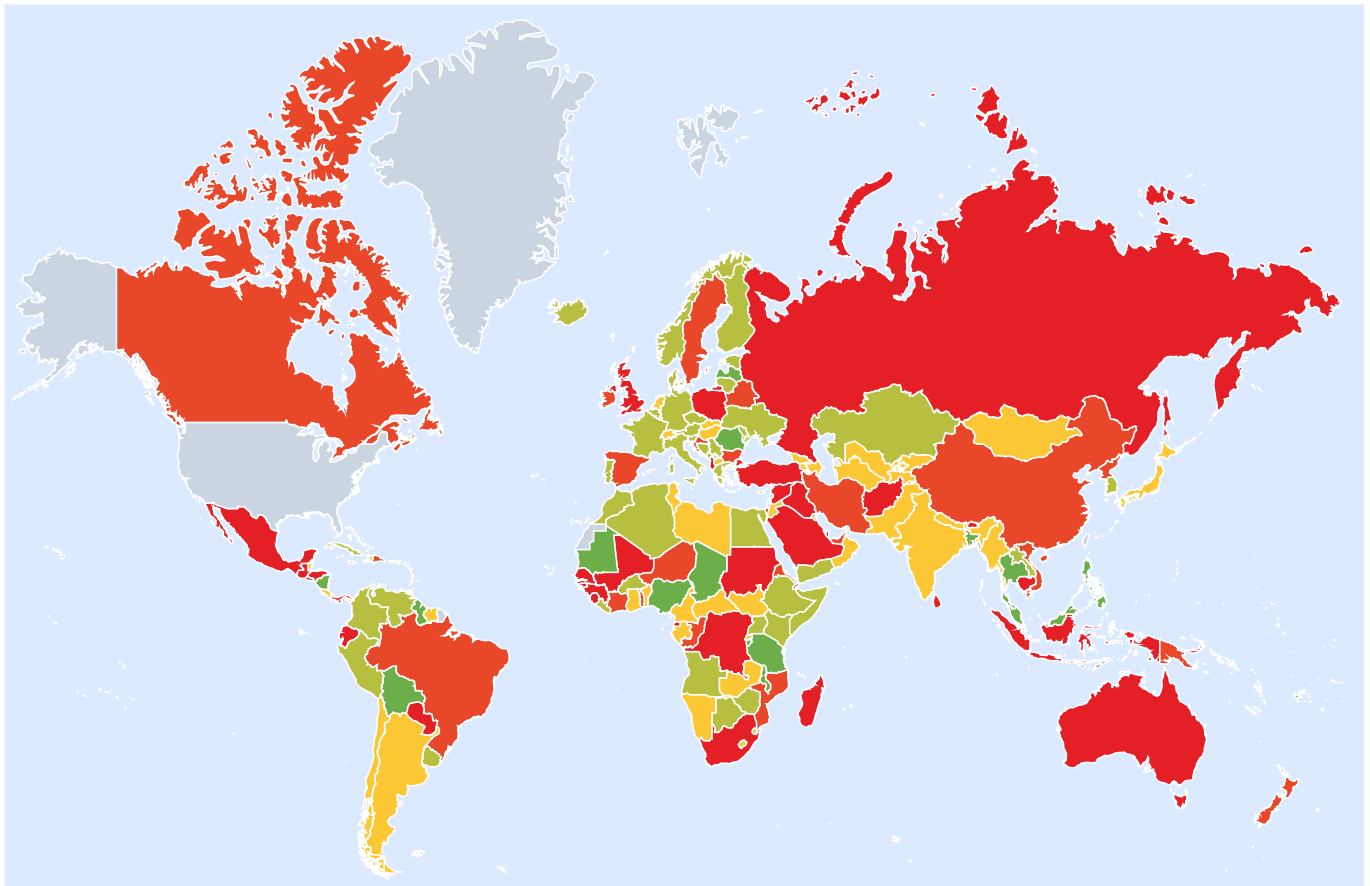
% representation of countries per region in the clusters: Domain Protection



	South Asia	Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Middle East and North Africa	Western Europe	Eastern and Southern Africa	Latin America and Caribbean	East Asia and Pacific	West and Central Africa
Cluster 1	50%	86%	88%	100%	5%	37%	46%	0%
Cluster 2	0%	14%	6%	0%	18%	41%	32%	8%
Cluster 3	50%	0%	0%	0%	32%	22%	14%	33%
Cluster 4	0%	0%	6%	0%	23%	0%	7%	42%
Cluster 5	0%	0%	0%	0%	23%	0%	0%	17%

Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa emerge as the two leading regional performers in this Domain, in addition to Western Europe, featuring 100 per cent and 94 per cent of their respective countries in Clusters 1 and 2. With 78 per cent of their respective countries in Clusters 1 and 2, Latin America and the Caribbean and East Asia and the Pacific also have recorded a notable performance in this Domain.

3.6. Overview of the Domain Enabling Environment for Children’s Rights



Map 6: Domain Enabling Environment for Children’s Rights

Top ten countries Domain Enabling Environment	Enabling Environment Rank KRI 2026	Enabling Environment Score KRI 2026
Thailand	1	0,750
Luxembourg	2	0,714
Mauritania	3	0,714
Antigua and Barbuda	4	0,667
Barbados	5	0,667
Guyana	6	0,667
Liechtenstein	7	0,667
Malawi	8	0,667
Malaysia	9	0,667
Timor-Leste	10	0,667

Table 34: Top ten countries in the Domain Enabling Environment in KRI 2026

Thailand, Luxembourg and Mauritania remained the top three performers in the Domain Enabling Environment. This year, after a critical review by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, **Qatar** dropped from the 4th to the 187th rank in this Domain, a decline of no less than 183 ranks. Due to Qatar’s downgrade, **Timor-Leste** now features among the top ten performing countries in this Domain in 2026. Only thirteen countries received new Concluding Observations from the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2025, in comparison to nineteen countries each in the previous two years. This outcome is likely to be directly attributable to the cancellation of the 100th session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child scheduled for September 2025, due to liquidity crisis hampering the work of the United Nations.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ OHCHR, ‘Committee on the Rights of the Child Closes One Hundredth Session after Adopting Concluding Observations on Reports of Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan and Spain’, 30 January 2026, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/media->

Brazil, Ecuador, Eritrea, Gambia, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Norway, Peru, Qatar, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Slovakia are the thirteen countries that received new Concluding Observations from the Committee in 2025. Accordingly, eight of these countries saw substantial changes in their Domain Enabling Environment rankings. **Brazil, Indonesia, Iraq, Norway, and Saint Kitts and Nevis** maintained nearly the same level of performance as before.

Romania, Andorra and Austria are three new countries among the top twenty-five in this Domain. **Qatar, Honduras and Peru**, which were previously among the top twenty-five countries in this Domain, have substantially declined in their rankings after having received their respective COs in 2025.

The top twenty-five countries in this Domain consist of six countries from Western Europe, five countries each from the East Asia and Pacific region and the Latin America and Caribbean region, four countries from West and Central Africa, three countries from Eastern and Southern Africa, one country from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and one country from South Asia. Due to Qatar's decline, in the KidsRights Index 2026 none of the countries from the Middle East and North Africa region feature among the top twenty-five countries in the Domain Enabling Environment for children's rights.

The average score of countries in the Domain Enabling Environment has further reduced from 0.396 in 2025 to 0.388 in 2026. Similar minor reductions can be observed in the average domain score of the top ten performing countries and the average domain score of the bottom ten performing countries.

3.6.1. Biggest movers in the Domain Enabling Environment

Ascenders

Romania recorded the most significant improvement in this Domain as it climbed 137 ranks, from 158th in 2025 to 21st in 2026. **Gambia** climbed twenty-four ranks, from 85th in 2025 to 61st in 2026. **Slovakia** also improved by twenty-one ranks in this Domain.

Descenders

Qatar declined the most in this Domain, by 183 ranks. Qatar is followed by **Honduras** which dropped by 145 ranks, from being 18th last year to 163rd in the KidsRights Index 2026. **Ecuador** dropped by 111 ranks to the 193rd rank in this Domain, with the lowest possible score (0.010). **Eritrea** and **Peru** also declined, by fifty-three and forty-nine ranks respectively.

3.6.2. Underlying indicator data for the Domain Enabling Environment for Children's Rights

The scores on the Domain Enabling Environment are based on seven qualitative indicators that are rooted in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The actual scores are derived from the latest Concluding Observations, the document adopted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child at the end of the periodical state reporting procedure under the Convention. The first three selected indicators listed reflect generally applicable general principles of the Convention: non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, and respect for the views of the child or child participation. The other four indicators are elements of the general enabling environment for children's rights that all states parties must have, foster and strengthen in order to be able to implement the Convention. These comprise: enabling legislation, allocation of budget/resources, collection and analysis of disaggregated data, and state-civil society cooperation for child rights. For these seven qualitative indicators, the indicator scores range between 1 to 3, with 1 being the lowest and 3 being the highest. In case of non-availability of data, no score is provided for an indicator but NA (for non-available) instead.¹⁵² The

[advisories/2026/01/committee-rights-child-closes-one-hundredth-session-after-adopting](https://www.kidsrights.org/kidsrights-index/). See also Ann Skelton, 'Cash Strapped! Can the Multi-lateral Human Rights System Survive the UN Financial Crisis?', 43 *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights* no. 4, 2025, pp. 209-2016.

¹⁵² For more specifics on the indicators and scoring, see the KidsRights Index methodology note in Section 2.2 of this Report, also available at <https://www.kidsrights.org/kidsrights-index/>.

following table provides a detailed overview of the indicator scores received by the thirteen countries that were reviewed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2025, in comparison with their previous record.

Legend for the table:

Red	Negative change
Orange	Stayed the same
Green	Positive change

Country (Year in which CO was issued) ¹⁵³	Non-discrimination	Best interests of the child	Respect for the views of the child	Enabling legislation	Best available budget / Resources	Collection and analysis of disaggregated data	State-civil society cooperation for child rights
Brazil (2015)	1	NA	2	2	1	1	2
Brazil (2025)	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
Ecuador (2017)	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
Ecuador (2025)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Eritrea (2015)	2	2	1	2	1	2	1
Eritrea (2025)	1	2	2	1	2	1	1
Gambia (2015)	2	2	1	2	2	1	1
Gambia (2025)	1	2	2	2	2	2	NA
Honduras (2015)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Honduras (2025)	1	1	2	1	1	1	2
Indonesia (2014)	2	1	2	1	2	1	NA
Indonesia (2025)	1	1	1	1	1	2	NA
Iraq (2015)	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Iraq (2025)	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Norway (2018)	2	1	2	3	1	2	NA
Norway (2025)	2	2	2	2	1	1	NA
Peru (2016)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Peru (2025)	2	1	2	2	2	2	NA
Qatar (2017)	2	2	2	2	NA	2	NA
Qatar (2025)	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Romania (2017)	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
Romania (2025)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Saint Kitts and Nevis (1999)	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
Saint Kitts and Nevis (2025)	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Slovakia (2016)	1	2	1	3	1	1	1
Slovakia (2025)	2	2	2	1	1	1	1

Table 35: Domain 5 indicator scores of countries that received COs in 2025 compared to their previous scores

It is striking that for 54 per cent of the countries reviewed by the CRC Committee in 2025, or seven out of the thirteen, their previous COs were adopted ten or more years ago (all marked in red above). While six of these seven countries experienced a delay of around five years, the previous COs of **Saint Kitts and Nevis** were from 1999. The latter amounts to a delay of nearly two decades.

Consequences of the changes in indicator scores of the thirteen countries that received COs in 2025

The new indicator scores of the thirteen countries based on the COs adopted in 2025 resulted in changes in domain scores and ranks.

¹⁵³ The year appears in red when there was a period of more than 10 years between the adoption of the 2025 Concluding Observations and the previous ones.

Domain Enabling Environment: Change in indicator score	Number of datapoints (out of 91)	Percentage change
Negative change	32	35%
No change	41	45%
Positive change	18	20%

Table 36: 13 countries with new indicator scores in KRI 2026 vs previous indicator scores

The above table provides a cumulative overview of the changes in the indicator scores of the thirteen countries reviewed in 2025, compared to the indicator scores derived from their earlier COs. This overview helps in analyzing the progress states parties make in implementing the UNCRC and the recommendations previously received from the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

20 per cent of the indicator scores improved when compared to the previous scores. This positive change in the indicator scores is slightly higher than it was last year, up from 16 to 20 per cent.¹⁵⁴ However, 35 per cent of the indicator scores show a decline compared to the previous scores. Most of the new indicator scores (45 per cent) remained the same as before. These findings indicate that there is little overall progress in implementing the UNCRC, especially considering that the majority of the countries received their new COs after a period of at least ten years.

Improved indicator scores: **Romania** shows exceptional improvement as it received enhanced scores on five of the seven indicators in this Domain. Conversely, **Ecuador, Honduras** and **Peru** have not improved on any of the seven indicators. **Eritrea, Gambia, Qatar** and **Slovakia** improved on two indicators each, and the remaining countries - **Brazil, Indonesia, Iraq, Norway**, and **Saint Kitts and Nevis** improved on only one indicator each.

Downgraded indicator scores: **Ecuador, Honduras** and **Qatar** received lower scores on five indicators. With this development, **Ecuador** now has the lowest score (1) on all seven indicators in this domain, and **Qatar** has the lowest score (1) on six indicators in the domain. They are followed by **Eritrea, Indonesia** and **Norway** which received a lower score on three indicators. **Iraq, Peru**, and **Saint Kitts and Nevis** maintained their previous scores on five indicators. **Brazil** and **Slovakia** stayed the same on four indicators.

Indicator-level movement of scores

Positive score movement: The performance of the reviewed countries improved the most on the indicator respect for the views of the child as five countries received a higher score: **Eritrea, Gambia, Iraq, Romania**, and **Slovakia**. All five countries improved from the lowest score (1) to the middle score (2) on this indicator. This development is closely followed by improvements on the indicator best available budget with four countries - **Eritrea, Qatar, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis** - receiving a higher score of 2. For **Qatar**, data on this indicator was previously unavailable.

Three countries (**Brazil, Norway, Romania**) improved on the indicator best interests of the child by now receiving the middle score (2). Data was previously unavailable for Brazil on this indicator. Two countries each received a higher score (of 2) on the indicators collection and analysis of disaggregated data (**Gambia** and **Indonesia**) and state civil society cooperation (**Qatar** and **Romania**). Data was previously unavailable for Qatar on state civil society cooperation. Only one country each improved on the indicators non-discrimination (**Slovakia**) and enabling environment (**Romania**) by receiving the middle score (2) from lowest score (1).

Negative score movement: The indicator enabling legislation shows the largest downfall as eight of the thirteen countries received a downgrade compared to their previous scores, including **Brazil, Ecuador, Eritrea, Honduras, Iraq, Norway, Qatar** and **Slovakia**. Except Norway and Slovakia, the remaining six

¹⁵⁴ 'Specific results of the KidsRights Index 2025', in Karin Arts (ISS), Avinash Reddy Pichhili (KidsRights) and Tolga Doğan (KidsRights) - with data inputs from Mirthe Hendriks (ESE) and Philip Hans Franses (ESE), 'The KidsRights Index Report 2025', Section 3, <https://files.kidsrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/10223817/KidsRights-Index-2025-Report.pdf>, p. 79.

of these countries have been downgraded from the middle score (2) on this indicator to the lowest score (1). Slovakia has been downgraded from the highest score (3) to the lowest score (1), and Norway has been downgraded from the highest score (3) to the middle score (2) on this indicator. This could be attributed to the Committee's focus on implementation of the enabling legislation for children's rights, as compared to previous rounds of review when the focus was perhaps more on developing and enacting enabling legislation. Further, none of the thirteen countries reviewed in 2025 have received or retained the highest score (3) on any of the seven indicators in this domain.

Five countries each received the lowest score (1) in this assessment round by the CRC Committee, compared to a middle score (2) previously, on the indicators non-discrimination, respect for the views of the child and collection and analysis of disaggregated data. On the indicators best interests of the child and best available budget, four and three countries respectively received the lowest score (1) going down from the middle score (2).

The indicator state civil society cooperation recorded the least decline as only two of the thirteen most recently reviewed countries – Gambia and Peru – received a score of 'Not Available' due to unavailability of data for this indicator in their latest COs. No other decline was recorded on this indicator.

No changes in the indicator scores: On state-civil society cooperation, nine of the thirteen countries maintained the same score as before. Of these nine countries, five countries remained at the lowest score (1), including **Ecuador, Eritrea, Iraq, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Slovakia**. These countries have not received any positive remarks from the Committee on their efforts to improve state-civil society cooperation. For Eritrea, Iraq, and Saint Kitts and Nevis, this indicates an extremely concerning situation for state-civil society cooperation over a prolonged period of time, considering that their latest COs were adopted more than a decade after the previous COs.

Four countries each have remained at the lowest score (1) on the indicators non-discrimination, best available budget, and collection and analysis of disaggregated data as, according to the latest COs they did not show any progress on these indicators.

Three countries – **Norway, Peru and Romania** – maintained their middle score (2) on the indicator non-discrimination. **Peru** also maintained its middle score (2) on four more indicators – respect for the views of the child, enabling legislation, best available budget and collection and analysis of disaggregated data. Based on its 2025 COs, **Gambia** also held on to its middle score (2) on three indicators (best interests of the child, enabling environment and best available budget. Similarly, **Honduras, Norway, and Romania** each maintained their middle score (2) on the two of the seven indicators.

The following overview indicates inadequate efforts and lack of substantial progress by the reviewed states parties in implementing the UNCRC.

Domain enabling environment indicator scores	Based on previous COs (out of 91)	Based on 2025 COs (out of 91)
NA	5	4
1	37	51
2	47	36
3	2	0

Table 37: Breakdown of Domain 5 indicator scores of the thirteen countries that received COs in 2025 compared to their previous scores

As shown in the above table, the indicator scores of countries in the Domain Enabling Environment are consistently declining. The indicator scores are heavily concentrated on the lowest end, up from 37 (of 91) to 51 based on their latest COs. This means that, over 56 per cent of the latest indicator scores of the thirteen countries are at the level of the lowest possible score of 1. Further, none of the thirteen countries received the highest score (3) on any of the seven indicators in this Domain. Therefore, the middle score (2) is the highest received by the countries reviewed by the CRC Committee in 2025 for

any of the seven indicators in this Domain. Eight of the thirteen countries received the middle score (2) on the indicator respect for the views of the child, which is the highest result among all the seven indicators. The countries are: **Eritrea, Gambia, Honduras, Iraq, Norway, Peru, Romania, and Slovakia**. Six countries each have received or maintained the middle score (2) on the indicators best interests of the child (**Brazil, Eritrea, Gambia, Norway, Romania, Slovakia**) and best available budget (**Eritrea, Gambia, Peru, Qatar, Romania** and **Saint Kitts and Nevis**).

On the indicator enabling legislation, five countries – **Gambia, Norway, Peru, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis** – have received the middle score. Four countries each received the middle score on the indicators non-discrimination (**Norway, Peru, Romania** and **Slovakia**) and collection and analysis of disaggregated data (**Gambia, Indonesia, Peru** and **Romania**).

Only three of the thirteen countries – **Brazil, Honduras** and **Romania** – received the middle score on the indicator state civil society cooperation, which is the lowest performance among all the indicators in this Domain.

Availability of indicator data points

Previously, indicator scores were unavailable for 5 of the 91 indicator data points – two of Qatar, and one each of Brazil, Indonesia and Norway. For the thirteen countries that received their COs in 2025, scores are unavailable for 4 indicator data points as Gambia, Indonesia, Norway and Peru are all missing information on the indicator state civil society cooperation. Except for the indicator state civil society cooperation, all six indicator scores are available for the thirteen countries.

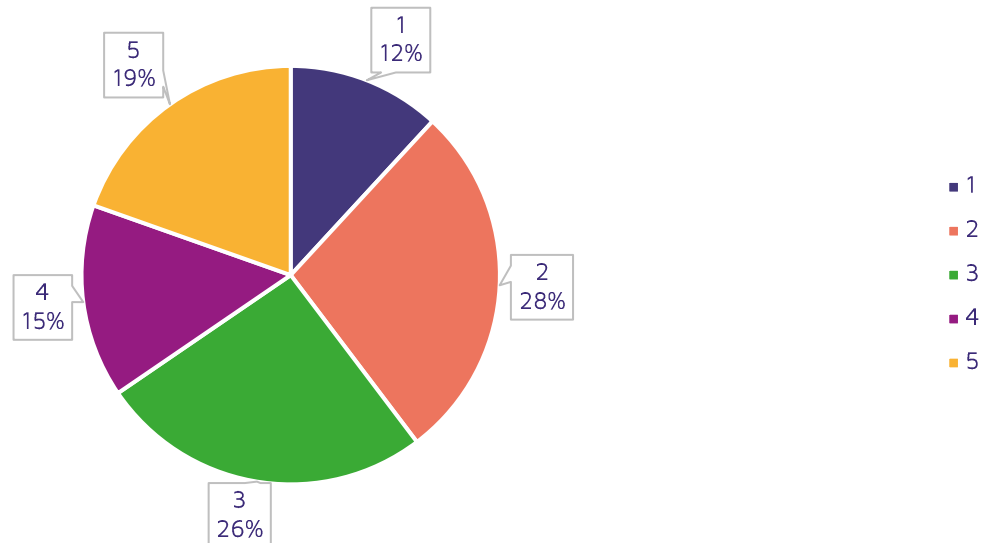
3.6.3. Global cluster insights for the Domain Enabling Environment for children's rights

After receiving their new Concluding Observations in 2025, three countries – **Honduras, Qatar** and **Peru** – fell out of Cluster 1 of the Domain Enabling Environment in the KRI 2026. Honduras and Qatar fell from Cluster 1 to 5, the maximum possible downward cluster change and now feature among the bottom performers in this Domain. Peru declined from Cluster 1 to 2. Among all the domains, the Domain Enabling Environment has the second lowest number of countries in Cluster 1 (the Domain Education being the lowest). The proportion of countries in Clusters 1 and 2 remains constant at 40 per cent.

Ecuador and **Indonesia** fell by two clusters each, from Cluster 3 to 5, after having received their respective new COs from the Committee on the Rights of the Child. **Eritrea** declined by a cluster, from Cluster 3 to 4.

The number of countries in Cluster 5 increased by four, from thirty-four in 2025 to thirty-eight in 2026. Nineteen per cent of the countries in this Domain are categorized in Cluster 5, which is the highest among all the Domains by a significant margin. The second highest being six per cent in the Domain Education. The low proportion of countries in Cluster 1 combined with the high proportion of countries in Cluster 5 reflects a worrisome situation for children's rights. The highest proportion of countries in this Domain are concentrated in Cluster 2 (28 per cent), followed by Cluster 3 (26 per cent).

% breakdown of clusters: Domain Enabling Environment



Romania improved by three clusters, moving from Cluster 4 to 1, after having received positive remarks from the Committee. **Gambia** and **Slovakia** also improved by a cluster each in this Domain. All the other countries remained in the same cluster as before in this Domain. It is especially concerning that **Brazil** (Cluster 4), **Iraq** (Cluster 5) and **Saint Kitts and Nevis** (Cluster 5) could not record an improvement in their cluster position after having received their latest COs in 2025, despite being among the lowest clusters.

Domain Enabling Environment Cluster	No. of countries in 2026	No. of countries in 2025
1	23	25
2	54	52
3	50	53
4	29	30
5	38	34

Table 38: Domain Enabling Environment Clusters 2026 vs 2025

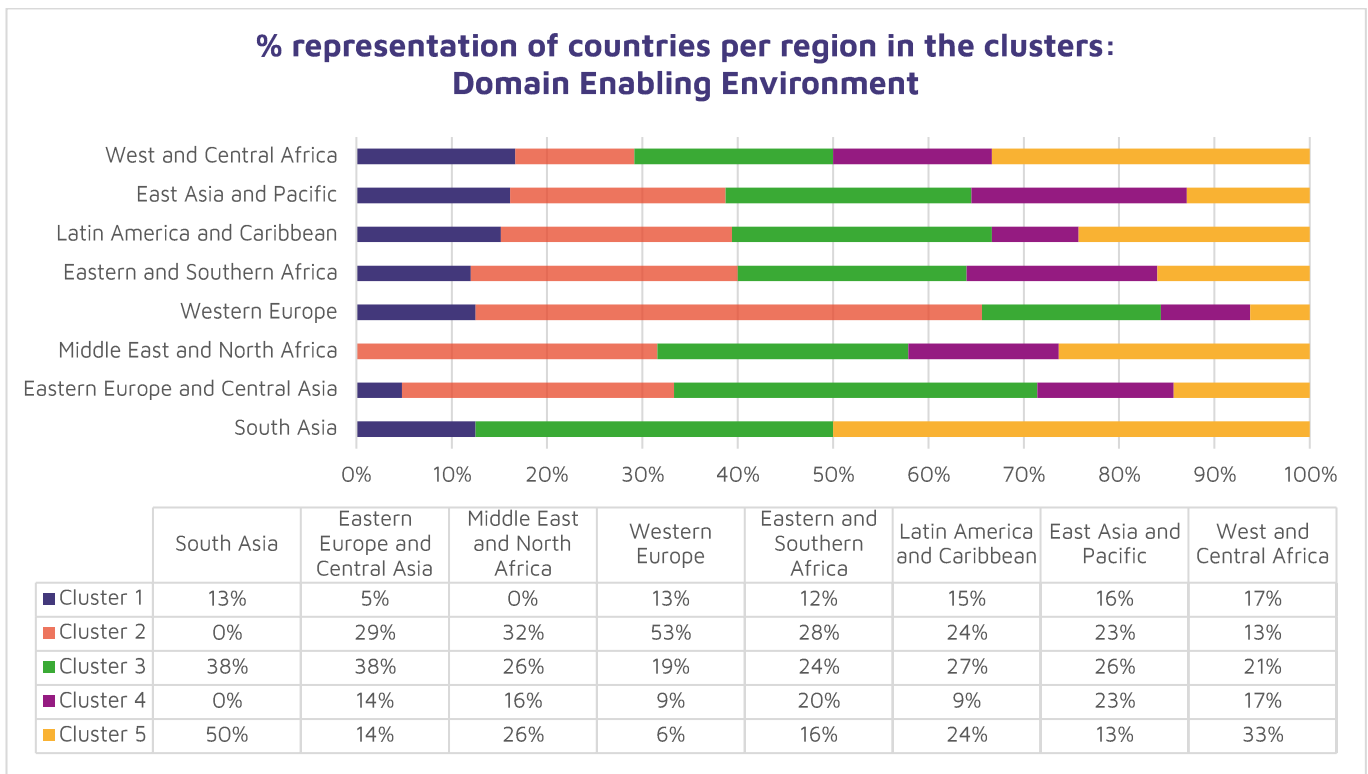
3.6.4. Regional level cluster insights for the Domain Enabling Environment for children's rights

All regions except the Middle East and North Africa are represented in Cluster 1 of the Domain Enabling Environment. However, none of the regions have their highest proportion of countries in Cluster 1. Western Europe (66 per cent), Eastern and Southern Africa (40 per cent), East Asia and the Pacific (39 per cent) and Latin America and the Caribbean (39 per cent) are the regions with a considerable proportion of countries in Clusters 1 and 2.

The most significant negative change can be observed in the region Latin America and the Caribbean as its proportion of countries in Cluster 1 decreased from twenty-one per cent in 2025 to fifteen per cent in 2026. The region's presence in Cluster 5 went up, from eighteen per cent in 2025 to twenty-four per cent in 2026. With eight countries each in Cluster 5, Latin America and the Caribbean and the West and Central Africa region contributed the highest number of countries to the lowest cluster.

Regions	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5
South Asia	1	0	3	0	4
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	1	6	8	3	3
Middle East and North Africa	0	6	5	3	5
Western Europe	4	17	6	3	2
Eastern and Southern Africa	3	7	6	5	4
Latin America and Caribbean	5	8	9	3	8
North America	0	0	0	1	0
East Asia and Pacific	5	7	8	7	4
West and Central Africa	4	3	5	4	8

Table 39: Region-level cluster representation based on Domain Enabling Environment scores



3.6.5. Specific insights into the UNCRC performance record of the 13 states parties that obtained new scores on the Domain Enabling Environment for children's rights

Brazil

In the Domain Enabling Environment, **Brazil** marginally fell from ranking 148th in the KRI 2025 to 149th in 2026, and thus maintains a similar status on children's rights as before. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child welcomed Brazil's newly established Ministries of Indigenous Peoples and Racial Equality,¹⁵⁵ but expressed concerns about the serious impact of "intersecting forms of discrimination" and hate crimes reported against children.¹⁵⁶ It issued a range of recommendations to address discrimination, including the adoption of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law.¹⁵⁷ The Committee also urged Brazil to undertake measures to address structural discrimination, stereotypes, and discrimination against LGBTI children and children from marginalized backgrounds.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth to Seventh Periodic Reports of Brazil', *UN Doc. CRC/C/BRA/CO/5-7*, 25 July 2025, para. 3.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 17.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 18 (a).

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 18.

In relation to respect for the views of the child and enabling legislation, the Committee focused on the need for effective implementation of the legislation that provides for the children’s right to be heard,¹⁵⁹ and recommended state and municipal level compliance of federal laws enumerating children’s rights.¹⁶⁰ Brazil’s Statute of the Child and Adolescent forms the basis for the implementation of children’s rights, including their participation rights.¹⁶¹ It is noteworthy that Brazil has recently enacted the Digital Statute of the Child and Adolescent to safeguard children’s rights in the online environment.¹⁶²

The Committee also recommended Brazil to improve the integration and implementation of the best interests of the child principle in all proceedings concerning them.¹⁶³ It also recommended Brazil to strengthen its data collection system by collecting disaggregated data covering all children’s rights.¹⁶⁴ The Committee called on Brazil to increase investments in areas related to children’s rights, including health, education, food and social security and to include children’s perspectives in the budgeting process.¹⁶⁵

While appreciating Brazil’s efforts in strengthening state–civil society cooperation by facilitating the participation of children’s rights NGOs in the national, state, and municipal children and adolescents rights councils, the Committee called for strengthening protection and accountability measures to safeguard NGOs and child and human rights defenders.¹⁶⁶

Ecuador

Ecuador records a decline of 111 ranks in the Domain Enabling Environment after having received its latest Concluding Observations. In this domain, Ecuador fell from the 82nd position in the KRI 2025 to 193rd in 2026, with the lowest possible Domain score of 0.01.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed severe concerns about structural discrimination against children, especially based on their gender and ethnicity.¹⁶⁷ It also raised concerns about the delay in adopting the updates to the Code on Children and Adolescents, and recommended Ecuador ensure that its contents, and other legislations, are in compliance with the UNCRC.¹⁶⁸ Despite the Committee’s recommendations and as noted in its separate statement, Ecuador’s latest reforms¹⁶⁹ of the Code on Children and Adolescents run contrary to the rights of children in the justice system.¹⁷⁰ Among others, these reforms put children’s rights at grave risk by: increasing the pretrial detention period from ninety days to a year for serious crimes; increasing the maximum incarceration from eight to fifteen years for crimes committed during internal armed conflicts; and by placing extremely restrictive incarceration conditions for crimes carrying a sentence of five years or more.¹⁷¹

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., para. 22.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., para. 7.

¹⁶¹ Article 16, Statute of the Child and Adolescent, Law n° 8,069, 1990, <https://www.refworld.org/legal/legislation/natlegbod/1990/74276>.

¹⁶² Law No. 15,211, September 2025, <https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2025/novembro/brasil-apresenta-avancos-em-seguranca-digital-da-infancia-e-lanca-eca-digital-em-ingles-durante-cupula-social-do-g20-na-africa-do-sul/eca-digital-ing-v2.pdf>.

¹⁶³ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth to Seventh Periodic Reports of Brazil’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/BRA/CO/5-7*, 25 July 2025, para. 19.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., para 11.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., para 10.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., para 15.

¹⁶⁷ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Seventh Periodic Report of Ecuador’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/ECU/CO/7*, 27 February 2025, para. 16.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., para. 6.

¹⁶⁹ Ecuador, Public Integrity Law, 26 June 2025, https://esacc.corteconstitucional.gob.ec/storage/api/v1/10_DWL_FL/eyJYXJwZXRhIjoicm8iLCJ1dWlkIjoieYmU4NDg4OTctMzIzNy00YjBiLWlWl0NWitNWl3YTaxYmJmOTA5LnBkZiJ9.

¹⁷⁰ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Statement on Ecuador’, 22 July 2025, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/crc/statements/2025-07-22-stm-crc-ecuador-en.pdf>.

¹⁷¹ Human Rights Watch, ‘Ecuador: Public Integrity Law Endangers Children’, 27 June 2025, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2025/06/27/ecuador-public-integrity-law-endangers-children>.

The Committee explicitly urged Ecuador to: codify the children’s right to be heard in all proceedings affecting them and to facilitate children’s participation in national legislative processes;¹⁷² legally integrate and implement the best interests of the child principle in all proceedings;¹⁷³ and to strengthen state-civil society cooperation by facilitating the participation of civil society organisations and child rights defenders in the legislative and policymaking processes.¹⁷⁴

Eritrea

In the Domain Enabling Environment, **Eritrea** fell from the 83rd position in the KRI 2025 to the 136th position in 2026, which is a decline of 53 ranks.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed serious concerns about discrimination against children belonging to certain ethnic groups, LGBT children and children of individuals subjected to enforced disappearances.¹⁷⁵ It also raised concerns about the legal and practical restrictions impeding the independence and freedom of civil society organisations, and recommended Eritrea to amend Proclamation No. 145/2005 to address the undue restrictions and regulatory overload.¹⁷⁶

Taking note of the legislative gaps, the Committee recommended Eritrea to: develop a comprehensive children’s rights law that addresses the existing gaps; allocate the required resources for its implementation; and ensure that the new civil and criminal laws and the Constitution comply with the provisions of the UNCRC and its Optional Protocols.¹⁷⁷

The Committee recommended Eritrea to expedite the establishment of its Child and Social Protection Information Management System and the Education Management Information System to improve disaggregate data collection and analysis relating to children’s rights.¹⁷⁸

Acknowledging that Eritrea’s 2015 Civil Code incorporates the best interests of the child principle as a children’s right,¹⁷⁹ the Committee recommended its consistent application across all proceedings and decision-making processes, and to systematically build the capacity of professionals who assess and determine the best interests of children.¹⁸⁰ The Committee also recommended a further strengthening of the children’s right to be heard and for them to meaningfully participate in all settings,¹⁸¹ and to use a child rights-based approach for budgeting, including prioritization of their needs in the face of emergencies and economic constraints.¹⁸²

Gambia

In this Domain, **Gambia** improved by twenty-four ranks – from 85th in the KRI 2025 to 61st in 2026. This is the result of having received largely positive remarks from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in its latest COs. The Committee’s primary concerns related to: the prevailing discrimination against children; the lack of a comprehensive data collection and management system; and the need to ensure that Gambia’s Children’s Act is totally compliant with the rights enshrined in the UNCRC. The Committee specifically expressed concerns regarding the persistent discrimination against “girls, children with disabilities, children of unmarried parents, children living in poverty, working children,

¹⁷² Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Seventh Periodic Report of Ecuador’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/ECU/CO/7*, 27 February 2025, para. 20.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, para. 18.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 13.

¹⁷⁵ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Eritrea’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/ERI/CO/5-6*, 5 March 2025, para. 15.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 14.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 7.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 11.

¹⁷⁹ Civil Code of the State of Eritrea, 2015, art. 186, <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/22800>.

¹⁸⁰ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Eritrea’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/ERI/CO/5-6*, 5 March 2025, para. 17.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, para. 18.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, para 10.

children with albinism, children in street situations, children living in rural areas, refugee children, LGBTI children and other children in vulnerable situations.”¹⁸³

The Committee praised the Children’s Act 2005 for incorporating the best interests of the child principle¹⁸⁴ and the right of children to be heard.¹⁸⁵ In addition, it welcomed the 2016 amendment which criminalized child marriage.¹⁸⁶ It recommended effective implementation of the Children’s Act and reiterated once more that it should be made fully compliant with the provisions of the UNCRC.¹⁸⁷

While acknowledging the developments in the data collection system, including the Gender Management Information System and the Gambia Social Registry Information System, for addressing child protection issues, the Committee recommended implementing a data collection and management system covering all the aspects of the UNCRC.¹⁸⁸

Honduras

In the Domain Enabling Environment, **Honduras** fell from the 18th position in the KRI 2025 to 163rd in KRI 2026, a dramatic decline of 145 ranks and the second highest in this Domain in 2026.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child’s main recommendations to Honduras are based on the need to harmonize the domestic legislations to fully align with the provisions of the UNCRC and the need to effectively implement the existing laws relating to various children’s rights. It recommended implementation of the *Public Policy against Racism and Racial Discrimination for the Comprehensive Development of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples 2016–2026* and to carrying out campaigns to change societal norms contributing to discriminatory practices.¹⁸⁹

The Committee reiterated its previous Concluding Observations to Honduras: to effectively implement the best interests of the child principle in all proceedings and decision-making processes;¹⁹⁰ to collect disaggregated data on all aspects of the UNCRC;¹⁹¹ to provide adequate resources to carry out the data collection processes;¹⁹² and to use a data-driven and child rights-based approach to budgeting.¹⁹³

The Committee acknowledged the creation of the *Children’s Congress* to strengthen the children’s right to be heard, and recommended Honduras to ensure effective implementation of the legal framework concerning the children’s right to be heard and facilitate the meaningful participation of children in national and local decision-making processes.¹⁹⁴

Among others, the Committee also recommended Honduras to ensure its legislations, including its criminal code and the Children and Adolescents’ Code, comply with the provisions of the UNCRC, and to enact social protection legislation extending healthcare services to children.¹⁹⁵

Indonesia

After receiving its 2025 Concluding Observations, **Indonesia** declined in this Domain from the 128th position in the KRI 2025 to 175th in 2026. The Committee’s main concerns related to: discriminatory

¹⁸³ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Combined Fourth to Seventh Periodic Reports of the Gambia’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/GMB/CO/4-7*, 28 February 2025, para. 17.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 18.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 18.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 7.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 11.

¹⁸⁹ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports of Honduras’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/HND/CO/6-7*, 26 February 2025, para. 15.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 28.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, para. 10.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, para. 16.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, para. 9.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 18.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 6.

access to essential services; non-implementation of the best interests of the child principle; absence of legal recognition for the children's right to be heard; and non-alignment of its domestic legislations with the provisions of the UNCRC.

The Committee expressed specific concerns about children in the eastern provinces of Indonesia facing unequal access to services, including healthcare, education, sanitation and social security. Thus, it recommended Indonesia to undertake targeted measures to facilitate realizations of children's rights across Indonesia in an equitable manner.¹⁹⁶ It also raised concerns about the non-application of the best interests of the child principle while relying on Sharia Law for decisions relating to custody and adoption of children.¹⁹⁷

The Committee recommended legislative amendments to ensure the children's right to be heard is integrated and effectively implemented in all proceedings and decision-making processes.¹⁹⁸ It also urged Indonesia to fully incorporate the provisions of the UNCRC in the relevant national legislations, including Indonesia's Child Protection Law and Criminal Code, and specifically to facilitate access to information and services relating to sexual and reproductive health.¹⁹⁹

Acknowledging the progress made by Indonesia with respect to the collection and analysis of disaggregated data, the Committee recommended Indonesia to ensure that the data collection process covers all aspects addressed in the UNCRC and its Optional Protocols.²⁰⁰

The Committee also recommended Indonesia to adopt a child rights-based approach to budgeting and allocate adequate resources towards critical areas relating to children, including social protection, education, healthcare, water and sanitation.²⁰¹

Iraq

Iraq maintained its score of 0.071 in the Domain Enabling Environment in the KRI 2026, recording no clear improvement or downfall as such. It occupies the 186th position in the KRI 2026, compared to 188th in 2025. In the 2025 Concluding Observations, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child raised specific concerns about the discriminatory and harmful practices against girls and children from Kurdistan, and recommended Iraq to facilitate the realization of children's rights in an equitable and inclusive manner.²⁰²

More specifically, the Committee raised concerns about: the narrow scope of the non-discrimination article in Iraq's Constitution; continued gender-based discrimination faced by girl; lack of a comprehensive legal framework to prohibit discrimination; and the lack of systemic efforts to combat discriminatory practices.²⁰³ The Committee reiterated its recommendations to incorporate and implement the best interests of the child principle across all proceedings and processes with an impact on children.²⁰⁴ Welcoming the *National Framework for Youth Participation*, the Committee recommended Iraq to raise awareness about the framework and facilitate meaningful participation of children, including adolescent girls and children from Kurdistan and other regions.²⁰⁵ It also

¹⁹⁶ Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding observations on the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Indonesia', *UN Doc. CRC/C/IDN/CO/5-6*, 28 July 2025, para. 15.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 17.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 19.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 7.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 11.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, para. 10.

²⁰² Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Iraq', *UN Doc. CRC/C/IRQ/CO/5-6*, 18 July 2025, para. 19.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, para. 18.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 20; see also Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Second to Fourth Periodic Reports of Iraq', *UN Doc. CRC/C/IRQ/CO/2-4*, 3 March 2015, para. 22.

²⁰⁵ Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Iraq', *UN Doc. CRC/C/IRQ/CO/5-6*, 18 July 2025, para. 23.

recommended Iraq to strengthen the protection afforded to human rights defenders and to facilitate the participation of civil society in the development of child rights-related policies and programmes.²⁰⁶

The Committee expressed concerns regarding the delays in adopting legislation on child protection and the protection of children in Kurdistan regions, as well as the Personal Status Act which allows child marriages.²⁰⁷

The Committee recommended Iraq to adopt a child rights-based approach to budgeting, including assessment of budgetary needs and allocation of adequate resources to facilitate access to essential services for children, such as birth registration services, education, social protection, and healthcare.²⁰⁸ Finally, the Committee recommended Iraq to ensure the allocation of adequate budget for the functioning of its National Child Data Portal and to cover all children's rights while carrying out data collection and analysis.²⁰⁹

Norway

Norway maintained its score of 0.500 in the Domain Enabling Environment after having received its Concluding Observations in 2025. It occupies the 70th position in this Domain, which is marginally up from the 71st position last year. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child assessed positively Norway's legislative measures covering children's rights provided in the UNCRC and focused its recommendations on the necessary implementation measures for the effective realization of those children's rights.

The Committee positively noted Norway's efforts aimed at combating discrimination through the *Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity (2023–2026)*.²¹⁰ It also welcomed the incorporation of the best interests of the child principle²¹¹ and the children's right to be heard into domestic legislation,²¹² as well as Norway's various legislative measures facilitating the implementation of the UNCRC.²¹³ The Committee recommended Norway to develop and implement guidelines and strategies detailing the application of the child right to be heard and to ensure consistent application of the best interests of the child principle by all authorities.²¹⁴

The Committee did not make any positive observations on the areas relating to the allocation of budget and the collection and analysis of disaggregated data. It recommended Norway to adopt a child rights-based approach to budgeting, including children's participation, in the budgeting processes.²¹⁵ It also reiterated its previous recommendations to strengthen the data collection system to collect and analyse disaggregated data covering areas relating to all children's rights.²¹⁶

Peru

Peru declined by forty-nine ranks in this Domain, from the 22nd position in the KRI 2025 to 71st in 2026. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concerns about the lack of respect towards the right to non-discrimination and advised Peru to address the prevailing *de facto* discrimination

²⁰⁶ Ibid., para. 16.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., para. 8.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., para. 11.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., para. 12.

²¹⁰ Norwegian Ministry of Culture and Equality, 'The Norwegian Government's Action Plan on Gender and Sexual Diversity (2023–2026)', <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/cae838ecc4204787857a0499fd8b7c11/en-gb/pdfs/action-plan-on-gender-and-sexual-diversity.pdf>.

²¹¹ Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Seventh Periodic Report of Norway', *UN Doc. CRC/C/NOR/CO/7*, 22 July 2025, para. 14.

²¹² Ibid., para. 15.

²¹³ Ibid., para. 3.

²¹⁴ Ibid., para. 14, 15.

²¹⁵ Ibid., para. 8.

²¹⁶ Ibid., para. 9.

against marginalized children.²¹⁷ It recommended Peru to improve its data collection and analysis system to cover all children's rights, and to gather data on highly vulnerable groups and issues relating to sexual and reproductive health and access to justice.²¹⁸ It also recommended Peru to ensure systematic implementation of the best interests of the child principle in all proceedings and decision-making processes.²¹⁹ The Committee positively noted the role of the Consultative Council for Children and Adolescents in strengthening children's participation rights²²⁰ as well as the increase in budget allocations on children.²²¹

The Committee pointed out the implementation gaps impacting the realization of children's rights, and the legislative developments that are not in consonance with the international human rights standards.²²² In this regard, the Committee recommended Peru to align the legislative framework with international human rights standards and called on Peru to effectively implement legislations relating to children's rights.²²³

Qatar

Qatar declined the most of all in this Domain, falling from the 4th position in 2025 to 187th in the KRI 2026. It received negative remarks from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on all seven indicators. The Committee expressed serious concerns about the delay in adopting the Children's Act and recommended Qatar to expedite the adoption process and ensure that it aligns with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.²²⁴ There are also concerns about the limited scope of legal protection against discrimination, as the Committee recommended Qatar to align non-discrimination provisions in its Constitution and legislation with Article 2 of the UNCRC.²²⁵

The Committee reiterated its previous recommendations to Qatar to undertake measures to consistently apply the best interests of the child principle, by developing appropriate guidelines and criteria and by training the relevant professionals.²²⁶ It also recommended Qatar to facilitate children's participation in all settings including by conducting research on issues that matter to them, by raising awareness to promote their participation, and by establishing a mechanism that can facilitate their engagement with laws, policies and programs concerning them.²²⁷

The Committee called for an increase in budget allocations towards sectors such as health, education, social protection, and recommended adopting a child rights-based approach to budgeting.²²⁸ It also recommended Qatar to improve its data collection system and cover all aspects of children's rights with disaggregated data.²²⁹ And last but not least, the Committee recommended Qatar to ensure that human rights defenders and organizations can operate freely and to facilitate the participation of civil society in the development, implementation, and monitoring of child rights-related programmes and policies.²³⁰

²¹⁷ Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Sixth and Seventh Periodic Reports of Peru', *UN Doc. CRC/C/PER/CO/6-7*, 26 February 2025, para. 13.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 9.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 14.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 16.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, para. 8.

²²² *Ibid.*, para. 6.

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ Committee on the Rights of the Child, 'Concluding Observations on the Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports of Qatar', *UN Doc. CRC/C/QAT/CO/5-6*, 11 July 2025, para. 7.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, paras. 19 and 20.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 21.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 24.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 11.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 12.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 12.

Romania

Romania climbed an impressive 137 positions in the Domain Enabling Environment, from 158th in 2025 to 21st this year. It improved the most in this Domain out of all countries that received their respective Concluding Observations in 2025.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child welcomed the implementation of the Pre-University Education Law No. 198/2023 to prohibit school segregation. This Law addresses the shortcomings of the previously issued ministerial orders in 2007 and 2016 to prohibit segregation, strengthening the legal protection for inclusive education.²³¹ The Committee reiterated its previous Concluding Observations to Romania to address discrimination against marginalized and vulnerable children and to facilitate the inclusion of Roma children in mainstream schools.²³²

The Committee positively noted the amendments to Law No. 272/2004 for integrating the best interests of the principle,²³³ strengthening child protection and participation rights for “asylum-seeking children and children under international protection”,²³⁴ and for facilitating children’s participation in the legislative processes at both the national and local levels.²³⁵ Romania has been advised to effectively implement the amended Law, among other things, by allocating adequate resources and developing secondary legislation.²³⁶ The Committee expressed concerns about a proposed amendment to this Law which is discriminatory against LGBTQ children and asked the Romanian government to review with a view to rejecting proposed amendment No. 243/2022 to Law No. 272/2004 suggesting protecting children “against popularization of homosexuality or of sex change”, which is discriminatory against LGBTQ children.²³⁷

The Committee recommended Romania to improve its data collection system by enabling data-sharing between different sectors to cover all aspects of the UNCRC including the situations of vulnerable children such as “Roma children, children living in poverty, children with disabilities, refugee and asylum-seeking children, including Ukrainian children, adolescent pregnancy and mental health”.²³⁸

It welcomed the increase in budgetary allocations for services related to children while recommending Romania to adopt a child rights-based approach to budgeting.²³⁹ The Committee also recommended Romania to ensure sustainable funding to civil society while positively noting its “reliance on civil society to deliver social services”.²⁴⁰

Saint Kitts and Nevis

Saint Kitts and Nevis maintained nearly the same position as before in this Domain, slightly up from 173rd to 170th in the KRI 2026, after having received its 2025 Concluding Observations. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child’s primary concerns are rooted in the lack of legislative measures to safeguard children’s rights, including the non-incorporation of the UNCRC in the domestic legislation.²⁴¹ While appreciating the budget consultation processes in 2024 and 2025, the Committee raised concerns about the inadequate budget allocation for Nevis, lack of transparency and participation in the budget allocation process, and the lack of focus on children.²⁴²

²³¹ See also UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, ‘School Desegregation in Romania: A Systemic Journey toward Inclusive Education: Case Study’, UNICEF, Geneva, 2025, pp. 2-3.

²³² Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Combined Six and Seventh Periodic Reports of Romania’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/ROU/CO/6-7*, 28 July 2025, para. 15.

²³³ *Ibid.*, para. 16.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 6.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 17.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 6.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 15(e).

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 9.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 8.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 12.

²⁴¹ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Second Periodic Report of Saint Kitts and Nevis’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/KNA/CO/2*, 26 February 2025, para. 7.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, para. 12.

There are concerns about the prevalent discrimination of children which is reflected in unequal access to services specifically for children with disabilities, girls, and LGBTI children.²⁴³ The Committee also expressed concerns about the limited involvement of civil society organizations in children’s rights matters.²⁴⁴

The Committee reiterated its previous Concluding Observations and recommended Saint Kitts and Nevis to undertake measures for the implementation of the best interests of the child principle,²⁴⁵ facilitate participation of children in all processes and at all levels,²⁴⁶ and to improve its data collection system by covering all areas of the UNCRC.²⁴⁷

Slovakia

Slovakia improved from 142nd last year to the 121st position in this Domain in the KRI 2026. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child appreciated Slovakia’s legislative efforts in providing domestic legal recognition to certain aspects of children’s rights, while also flagging the lack of a comprehensive legislation covering all children’s rights.²⁴⁸

While the Committee positively noted *Slovakia’s Strategy for Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Roma until 2030* which sets clear and measurable objectives relating to employment, education, health and housing,²⁴⁹ it flagged reports of discrimination against Roma children, non-citizens, and LGBTI children.²⁵⁰ The Committee also appreciated Slovakia for incorporating the best interests of the child principle and an assessment criteria to evaluate best interests in its *Family Law Act*.²⁵¹

The Committee specifically recommended Slovakia to provide legal recognition of the child right to be heard.²⁵² It also advised Slovakia to ensure the independence of civil society organizations so that they can operate in a conducive environment.²⁵³ Some of the other recommendations of the Committee include: the enactment of a comprehensive law covering all children’s rights;²⁵⁴ adopting a child rights-based approach to budgeting and tracking the allocation of resources for children;²⁵⁵ improving its data collection system covering all children’s rights;²⁵⁶ and facilitating the participation of civil society and NGOs in policy, legislative and programmatic aspects relating to children’s rights.²⁵⁷

²⁴³ Ibid., para 22.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., para. 20.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., para. 24.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., para. 27.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., para. 14.

²⁴⁸ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Sixth Periodic Report of Slovakia’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/SVK/CO/6*, 24 March 2025, para. 6.

²⁴⁹ Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Roma Communities, ‘Strategy of Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Roma until 2030’, https://www.romovia.vlada.gov.sk/site/assets/files/1526/strategy_of_equality_inclusion_and_participation_of_roma_until_2030.pdf?csrt=238602596976372022, pp. 46–58.

²⁵⁰ Committee on the Rights of the Child, ‘Concluding Observations on the Sixth Periodic Report of Slovakia’, *UN Doc. CRC/C/SVK/CO/6*, 24 March 2025, para. 15.

²⁵¹ Ibid., para. 16.

²⁵² Ibid., para. 17.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., para. 6.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., para. 9.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., para. 10.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., para. 14.

5. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

5.1. Children's Rights and the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP)

In its previous three editions, the KidsRights Index has delved into the disproportionate impact of climate change on children's rights, highlighting the need for states and the international community to prioritize children's rights in their climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. This year we also highlight some important developments at the intersection of climate change and children's rights, especially the developments relating to the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP).

In 2025, the thirtieth Conference of the Parties' *Global Mutirão: Uniting Humanity in a Global Mobilization Against Climate Change* has recognized children as one of the stakeholder groups with an important participatory role in working towards the Paris Agreement goals.²⁵⁸ Building on the Paris Agreement, *Global Mutirão* refers to the importance of considering intergenerational equity for children and youth in climate action.²⁵⁹

During the COP 29 in 2024, it was decided that the final outcomes of the *United Arab Emirates–Belém Work Programme*²⁶⁰ should include indicators that specifically relate to children's unique vulnerabilities to climate change.²⁶¹ Subsequently, the COP adopted the *Belém Adaptation Indicators* during COP 30 in 2025 in Brazil.²⁶² The list of Adaptation Indicators is recommendatory in nature, providing leeway to the Parties to determine the nature and extent of disaggregation – the sub-categories for each indicator – based on social categories (vulnerability, gender, age, disability, race, status as indigenous peoples and migrants, children and young people), climate-related hazards (country specific extreme climate events), administrative and settlement levels (national, local, urban, rural), among others.²⁶³ The Parties can therefore collect adaptation indicator data for the sub-category of children and young people.²⁶⁴ For instance, the Adaptation Indicators sub-categorized for children and young people can include aspects such as climate-resilient WASH facilities (children's access),²⁶⁵ level of population living in poverty (child poverty levels),²⁶⁶ and proportion of population with equitable access to adequate food and nutrition (children's access).²⁶⁷

These developments could lead to improved and more consistent data generation on aspects related to climate change adaptation and children's rights, providing us with greater insights into countries' adaptation efforts.

Considerable progress has also been made in the monitoring and reporting processes under the Paris Agreement which targets a global response to "combat climate change and adapt to its effects".²⁶⁸ Parties to the Paris Agreement report through Biennial Transparency Reports (mandatory reporting), National Adaptation Plans (adaptation) and Nationally Determined Contributions (mitigation). The

²⁵⁸ UNFCCC, 'Global Mutirão: Uniting Humanity in a Global Mobilization Against Climate Change', 22 November 2025, FCCC/PA/CMA/2025/L.24, p. 2, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2025_L24_adv.pdf.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁶⁰ The United Arab Emirates–Belém work programme is part of the 'Global Goal on Adaptation Framework' adopted at COP28. It is a two-year work programme on indicators for measuring progress towards the targets identified in the Adaptation Framework.

²⁶¹ UNFCCC, 'Decisions Adopted by the Conference of the Parties Serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement at its Sixth Session', Decision 3/CMA.6, 27 March 2025, FCCC/PA/CMA/2024/17/Add.1, p. 12, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2024_17a01_adv.pdf.

²⁶² UNFCCC, 'Matters Relating to Adaptation, Global Goal on Adaptation', 22 November 2025, FCCC/PA/CMA/2025/L.25, p. 2, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2025_L25_adv.pdf.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, para 1, p. 6.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, para 1(a), p. 6.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 3, pp. 6–7.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 8(a), p. 8.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 4(e), p. 7.

²⁶⁸ Article 2, Paris Agreement 2015, https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/2016/02/20160215%2006-03%20PM/Ch_XXVII-7-d.pdf.

reporting process under the Paris Agreement can also help us gain insights into the States Parties' efforts in prioritizing children's rights in the context of climate change.

Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs)²⁶⁹

The first Biennial Transparency Reports due in 2024 and 2025 have been submitted by the Parties. Reporting on adaptation efforts is not mandatory under the Paris Agreement, but nevertheless most of the Parties (90 per cent) included it in their BTR1s (first round of BTRs).²⁷⁰ 65 per cent of the Parties that have reported recognized the vulnerability of children and youth to climate change.²⁷¹ 52 per cent of the Parties that have reported state that they do engage youth in climate change policymaking (participation).²⁷² Adaptation efforts in food security and nutrition were most frequently reported, at 77 per cent.²⁷³ They are followed by the health sector, with 74 per cent of the Parties reporting their adaptation efforts on this topic.²⁷⁴ Adaptation efforts aimed at developing climate resilient health systems, including the availability of healthcare infrastructure and preparedness to address climate change impacts on children's health, are vital for safeguarding children's rights to health and life.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

Parties are required to periodically prepare NDCs that they intend to achieve and outline their mitigation efforts to achieve the set objectives.²⁷⁵ The 2025 Synthesis Report analyzed 64 new NDCs submitted by states parties between 1 January 2024 and 30 September 2025.²⁷⁶ Parties are yet to adopt a child-sensitive approach in NDCs, as only 52 per cent of the new NDCs recognized the heightened vulnerabilities of children, and girl children (27 per cent) more in particular, to the direct and indirect impacts of climate change.²⁷⁷ Further, only about one-third of the new NDCs specifically mentioned child-sensitive climate resilience measures.²⁷⁸ Notably, 88 per cent of the states parties recognize children and youth as "agents of change" in the context of climate change.²⁷⁹ 77 per cent of the states parties also mentioned engaging children and youth in climate policies and 57 per cent doing so specifically in developing the NDCs,²⁸⁰ showcasing their efforts to enable child and youth participation in policies and processes related to climate change.

²⁶⁹ 'Synthesis Report: Biennial Transparency Reports and National Inventory Reports', 31 October 2025, FCCC/PA/CMA/2025/16, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2025_16.pdf.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

²⁷⁵ Article 4, Paris Agreement 2015, https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/2016/02/20160215%2006-03%20PM/Ch_XXVII-7-d.pdf.

²⁷⁶ Synthesis report, 'Nationally Determined Contributions Under the Paris Agreement', FCCC/PA/CMA/2025/8, 28 October 2025, p. 3, <https://unfccc.int/documents/650653>.

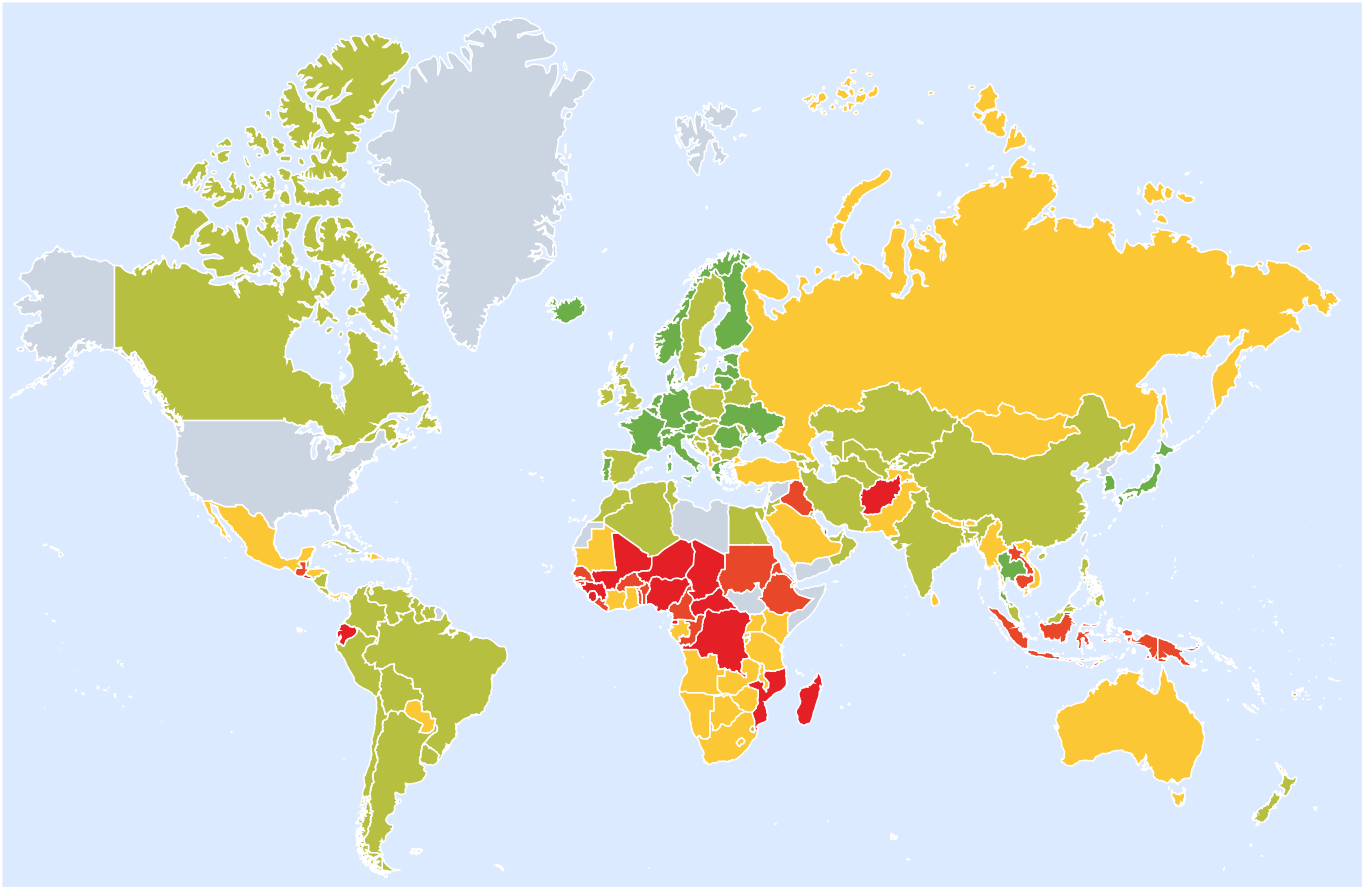
²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3, para. 63.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3, para. 63.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3, para. 63.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3, para. 64.

5.2. The KidsRights Index 2026 with a climate change domain



Map 7: Overall KidsRights Index 2026 with Climate Change Domain

The experimental Climate Change Domain in the KRI 2026 continues to rely on the climate change mitigation scores from the bi-annually updated *Environmental Performance Index* which covers 180 countries.²⁸¹ Of these countries, Taiwan and the United States of America are not yet included in the KRI as they are not states parties to the UNCRC. The KidsRights Index 2026 with the Climate Change Domain therefore only covers 178 countries, which is the same number as in 2025.

When the experimental Climate Change Domain is integrated with the results of the regular KidsRights Index 2026 consisting of the five original domains, **Germany** climbs three ranks to become the top performer in the Index, replacing **Luxembourg**. **Finland** (+7 ranks) and **Estonia** (+19 ranks) also improve and come to feature among the top ten performing countries. The following table showcases the top ten countries in the KidsRights Index 2026 after considering the results on the climate change Domain.

²⁸¹ Sebastián Block et al., *Environmental Performance Index 2024*, New Haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy, 2024, <https://epi.yale.edu/downloads/2024-epi-report-20250106.pdf>, p. 32, Table 3.1.

Countries	Rank KRI 2026 with Climate Change Domain	Score KRI 2026 with Climate Change Domain	Overall Rank KRI 2026	Overall Score KRI 2026	Change in overall rank
Germany	1	0,825	4	0,866	3
Greece	2	0,825	7	0,850	5
Luxembourg	3	0,824	1	0,871	-2
Denmark	4	0,820	6	0,853	2
Finland	5	0,819	12	0,841	7
Belgium	6	0,800	8	0,848	2
Estonia	7	0,798	26	0,792	19
Slovenia	8	0,792	9	0,845	1
Norway	9	0,788	5	0,854	-4
Iceland	10	0,786	2	0,867	-8

Table 40: Top ten countries in the KRI 2026 with Climate Change Domain compared with overall KRI 2026

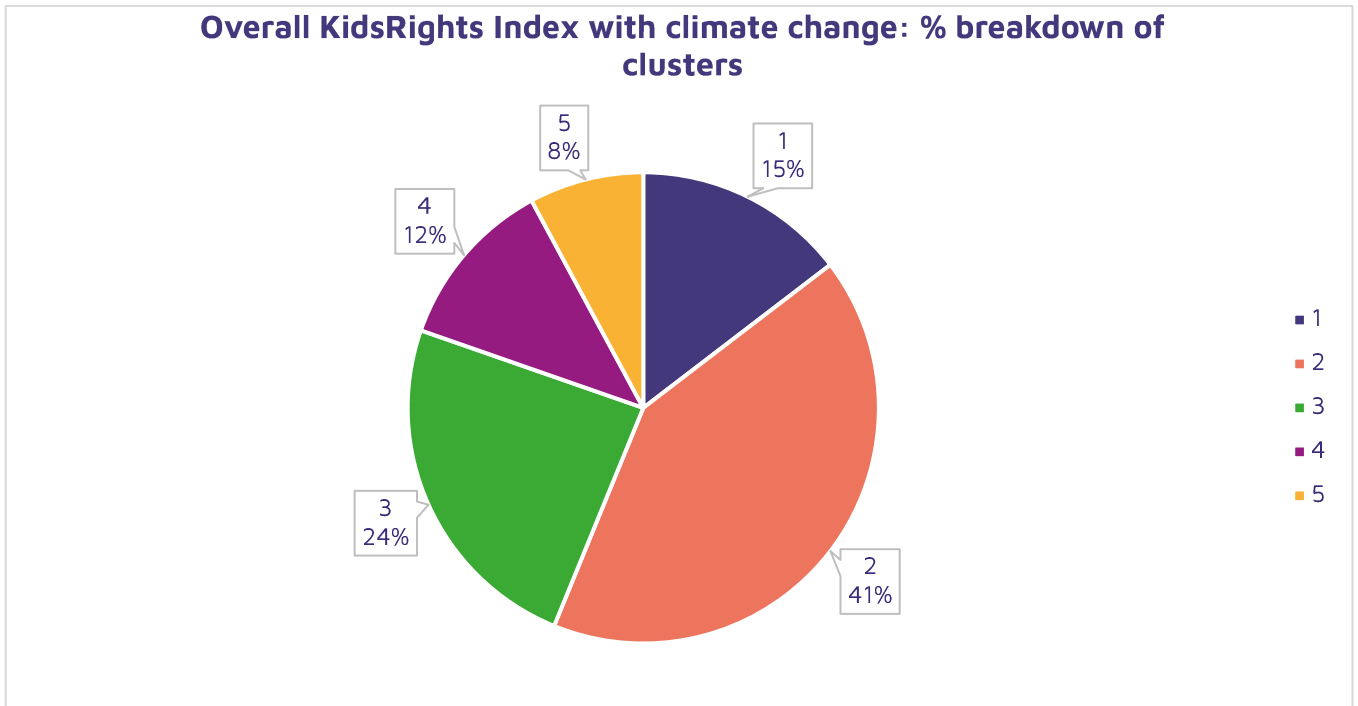
Integrating the results of the Climate Change Domain with the KidsRights Index 2026 results in a decline in the overall scores of all but twelve countries: **Estonia, United Kingdom, Albania, Guinea-Bissau, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ecuador, Sierra Leone, El Salvador, Madagascar, Nigeria** and **Afghanistan**. This means that the climate change mitigation efforts of these twelve countries had a relatively positive impact on their performance in safeguarding children's rights. Interestingly, nine of these twelve countries feature among the bottom twenty countries in the overall KidsRights Index 2026. The **United Kingdom** improves by thirty-four ranks, from 132nd to 98th when the Climate Change Domain is integrated into the KRI 2026.

The **Lao People's Democratic Republic** records the highest decline in its KRI score – by 26 per cent, followed by **Mongolia** (-20.3 per cent), **Vietnam** (-19.9 per cent) and **Tajikistan** (-19.5 per cent) once the Climate Change Domain is considered.

Annex 2 provides the Index results with climate change considered for all states assessed.

5.2.1. Global cluster insights for the KidsRights Index with climate change

Cluster categorizations based on the KRI 2026 with climate change considered show that Cluster 2 has the highest proportion of countries (41 per cent), followed by Cluster 3 (24 per cent). The majority of the countries are therefore concentrated in Clusters 2 and 3. This is similar to the results of the KRI 2025 with climate change considered. Cluster movements observed when comparing the KRI 2025 and 2026 with climate change are directly attributable to the countries' performance in the original five KRI domains considering that the climate change scores were not updated and thus remained the same.



As can be observed in the table below, the number of countries in Cluster 5 has increased from eight in 2025 to fourteen in 2026. It is worrying that six more countries have declined to the lowest cluster compared to last year. Of these six countries, five (El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) declined from Cluster 4 to 5. One country – Ecuador – declined from Cluster 2 to 5. The downward cluster movement of Ecuador (Cluster 2 to 5) and Qatar (Cluster 2 to 4) can be attributed to their significant decline in the overall KidsRights Index 2026.

KidsRights Index with climate change Cluster	No. of countries in 2026	No. of countries in 2025
1	26	27
2	74	78
3	43	44
4	21	21
5	14	8

Table 41: KidsRights Index with climate change considered, clusters 2026 vs 2025

6. MISSING DATA

Missing indicator data points: KRI 2025 vs KRI 2026

The availability of adequate and updated indicator data is crucial for providing an accurate and comprehensive assessment of the performance of countries on various children's rights. The KidsRights Index Report highlights the data gaps annually to urge the states parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil society organizations to gather children's rights data globally at regular intervals. The following table shows the number of missing indicator data points in both the KidsRights Index 2025 and 2026 to track data availability.

Indicators	KidsRights Index 2025	KidsRights Index 2026	Change in availability
Under 5 mortality rate	1	1	0
Life expectancy at birth	0	0	0
Maternal mortality rate	11	1	+10
% of underweight children	85	74	+11
% of overweight children (new indicator in 2026)	<i>Not available</i>	33	<i>Not available</i>
% of obese children (new indicator in 2026)	<i>Not available</i>	4	<i>Not available</i>
Immunisation (MCV1 of children under 1)	1	1	0
Access to improved sanitation	0	1	-1
Access to improved drinking water	1	1	0
Expected years of schooling - Boys	2	1	+1
Expected years of schooling - Girls	2	1	+1
Expected years of schooling - Gender Inequality	2	1	+1
% of child labour	96	96	0
Adolescent birth rate	12	0	+12
% of birth registration (children under 5)	14	14	0
Non-discrimination	2	2	0
Best interests of the child	18	17	+1
Respect for the views of the child	1	1	0
Enabling legislation	1	1	0
Allocation of budget/resources	3	2	+1
Collection and analysis of disaggregated data	0	0	0
State-civil society cooperation	60	61	-1
Total missing indicators	312 (of 3880 indicator data points) ²⁸²	313 (of 4268 indicator data points) ²⁸³	+36 ²⁸⁴

Table 42: Missing indicator data points KRI 2025 vs KRI 2026

For the twenty indicators that constituted the KidsRights Index in 2025, 36 more data points have become available in the KRI 2026. For the two new indicators included in the KRI 2026 – overweight and obesity – indicator data points are not available for 33 countries and 4 countries, respectively. Data availability has considerably improved for the indicators Maternal Mortality Rate (+10), underweight (+11) and adolescent birth rate (+12).

In the KRI 2026, 7.3 per cent of the total indicator data points are unavailable. This is an improvement on the situation last year when over 8 per cent of the total indicator data points were unavailable. However, data remains seriously unavailable for several countries for the indicators child labour (96

²⁸² Calculated for 20 indicators for a total of 194 countries in the KidsRights Index 2025, i.e. $20 \times 194 = 3880$ indicator data points.

²⁸³ Calculated for 22 indicators for a total of 194 countries in the KidsRights Index 2026, i.e. $22 \times 194 = 4268$ indicator data points.

²⁸⁴ Changes in the availability of indicator data points have been calculated for the 20 indicators that constituted the KidsRights Index 2025 and are a part of the KidsRights Index 2026. Data unavailability for the two new indicators is not included in this calculation to present accurate and comparable insights between the two years.

countries), underweight (74 countries), and state-civil society cooperation (61 countries). These three indicators together contribute 231 of the in total 313 unavailable indicator data points in 2026, or 73.8 per cent of the unavailable data points.

The Domains Life and Education are missing only two and three indicator data points respectively, leading over the other Domains in data availability. The indicators life expectancy (Domain Life), adolescent birth rate (Domain Protection), and collection and analysis of disaggregated data (Domain Enabling Environment) are the only three indicators for which data are available for all 194 countries. As noted earlier, the data availability has improved in the KRI 2026 compared to 2025 despite the addition of the two new indicators in the Domain Health resulting in 313 missing indicator data points in total compared to 312 in KRI 2025.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The KidsRights Index 2026 presents the latest child rights performance review of 194 states parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Luxembourg, Iceland and Monaco are the top performers in the KidsRights Index 2026, while Afghanistan, Chad and Guinea are the worst performers. Romania showed the highest improvement in the Index after receiving positive remarks from the Committee on the Rights of Child in its latest Concluding Observations (COs), especially in light of its domestic legislation recognizing the rights of children as provided by the CRC and increased budgetary allocations for children. In contrast, Qatar, Ecuador, Honduras and Indonesia recorded a significant decline in the Index after having received their respective COs. The Committee expressed serious concerns about the failure of these countries to incorporate the child rights enumerated in the CRC into their respective domestic legal frameworks, and expedited measures being necessary to address such legislative gaps.

Nauru improved considerably in the Index due to targeted investments and international partnerships in healthcare and education. The Seychelles recorded a striking improvement in the Domain Education, driven by its legislative and programmatic measures to improve student enrolments and the capacity-building of teachers. Libya and the State of Palestine deteriorated in the Domain Life due to system collapse and active conflict. Similarly, Cameroon declined in the Domain Education as conflict severely impacted children's access to education. Countries such as Iraq, Lesotho, Honduras and Mozambique continue to report high adolescent birth rates. This is due to inadequate access to information on sexual and reproductive health, coupled with social and cultural barriers and high incidence of child marriages. The states involved should internalize child rights-based policymaking and adopt localized measures to address such prevalent child rights violations.

In the introduction to the KidsRights Index Report 2026, we reflected on the persistent children's rights violations due to armed conflicts. While one in five children globally are directly exposed to the severe repercussions of armed conflicts due to their proximity to a conflict area, the resulting breakdown of systems and services – including education, healthcare, nutrition, protection and justice – adversely impacts the rights of many more children. Therefore, the countries with the highest rates of conflict-related child rights violations also feature among the worst performing countries overall in the KidsRights Index.

The introduction to the KidsRights Index 2026 also highlighted childhood obesity as a 'global epidemic', reflecting on its prevalence not only in high-income countries, but increasingly in low- and middle-income countries too. Discussing the lack of progress in reducing the prevalence of overweight and obesity among children, the KidsRights Index team has criticized the reliance on individualistic approaches that lay the responsibility mainly on the food and lifestyle choices of children and their parents. It advocates for a shift to a systemic and child rights-based approach, recognizing the legal obligations of states to regulate commercial determinants and prevent obesogenic environments to safeguard the children's right to health. Based on an analysis of the Concluding Observations, the KidsRights Index team calls on the Committee on the Rights of the Child to yet more consistently address childhood obesity concerns in its Concluding Observations. This includes aspects relating to data collection on the various aspects of child malnutrition, and participation of children living with obesity and overweight in efforts to address these conditions.

Considering the serious child rights implications of obesity and overweight, the KidsRights Index 2026 incorporated these two conditions as new indicators on weight in the Domain Health.

The Index also uses the latest available data on age-specific fertility rates, to further strengthen the findings on adolescent birth rates in the Domain Protection. The KidsRights Index team can only work with the data that is available. The non-availability of overweight data among eighteen countries in the Western European region is a case in point. Lack of data generation and the absence of consistently updated data remain a concern as these impede child rights monitoring and reporting. States should

prioritize consistent data collection on the children’s rights guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child to enable evidence-based analysis, which is a prerequisite for the formulation of effective legislative, policy and programmatic measures for the realization of children’s rights.

The experimental integration of the Climate Change Domain results in a decline in the overall KidsRights scores of all but twelve countries. This downgrade in child rights performance showcases the need for significant improvements in states’ climate change efforts (both striving for mitigation and adaptation). Notably, in the future, the Adaptation Indicators on climate change and the reporting process under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change can potentially result in improved data-generation at the intersection of climate change and children’s rights. This could in turn enhance the climate change measures adopted by states for the benefit of children. Their participation in climate change policymaking and implementation is an important requirement too.

The KidsRights Index 2026 shows that the overall child rights performance of states remains underwhelming. Concerted national and international efforts are necessary to curb the continuing rise in child rights violations and to address the persistent but often overlooked child rights concerns.

8. ANNEX 1: REGIONS KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 2026*

Region	No. of countries	Countries
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	21	Albania; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Georgia; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Macedonia (the former Yugoslav Republic of); Republic of Moldova; Russian Federation; Montenegro; Romania; Serbia; Tajikistan; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; Uzbekistan
Western Europe	32	Andorra; Austria; Belgium; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malta; Monaco; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; San Marino; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
East Asia and Pacific	31	Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Cook Islands; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Fiji; Indonesia; Japan; Kiribati; Korea Republic of; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Marshall Islands; Micronesia (Federates States of); Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru; New Zealand; Palau; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Samoa; Singapore; Solomon Islands; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Tuvalu; Vanuatu; Vietnam
South Asia	8	Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; India; Maldives; Nepal; Pakistan; Sri Lanka
Middle East and North Africa	19	Algeria; Bahrain; Egypt; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Iraq; Israel; Jordan; Kuwait; Lebanon; Libya; Morocco; Oman; Qatar; Saudi Arabia; State of Palestine; Syrian Arab Republic; Tunisia; United Arab Emirates; Yemen
Eastern and Southern Africa	25	Angola; Botswana; Burundi; Comoros; Djibouti; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Kenya; Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Mauritius; Mozambique; Namibia; Rwanda; Seychelles; Somalia; South Africa; South Sudan; Sudan; Swaziland (Eswatini); Uganda; United Republic of Tanzania; Zambia; Zimbabwe
West and Central Africa	24	Benin; Burkina Faso; Cape Verde; Cameroon; Central African Republic; Chad; Congo; Côte d'Ivoire; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Equatorial Guinea; Gabon; Gambia; Ghana; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Liberia; Mali; Mauritania; Niger; Nigeria; Sao Tome and Principe; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Togo
North America	1	Canada
Latin America and Caribbean	33	Antigua and Barbuda; Argentina; Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Bolivia; Brazil; Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; Cuba; Dominica; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador; Grenada; Guatemala; Guyana; Haiti; Honduras; Jamaica; Mexico; Nicaragua; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; Saint Lucia; San Marino; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Suriname; Trinidad and Tobago; Uruguay; Venezuela
*Based on the Regional Classifications by UNICEF, June 2023		

Countries not included in the KidsRights Index due to insufficient data:

East Asia and Pacific: Niue; Tokelau; **Western Europe:** Holy See; **Latin America and Caribbean:** Anguilla; Montserrat; Turks and Caicos Islands; British Virgin Islands; **North America:** USA (which has not ratified the UNCRC and thus no data can be generated for Domain 5).

9. ANNEX 2: KRI 2026 WITH CLIMATE CHANGE VS OVERALL KRI 2026

Countries	Rank KRI 2026 with climate change domain	Score KRI 2026 with climate change domain	Overall Rank KRI 2026	Overall Score KRI 2026	% score change with climate change
Germany	1	0,825	4	0,866	-4,7%
Greece	2	0,825	7	0,850	-2,9%
Luxembourg	3	0,824	1	0,871	-5,4%
Denmark	4	0,820	6	0,853	-3,9%
Finland	5	0,819	12	0,841	-2,6%
Belgium	6	0,800	8	0,848	-5,7%
Estonia	7	0,798	26	0,792	0,7%
Slovenia	8	0,792	9	0,845	-6,2%
Norway	9	0,788	5	0,854	-7,7%
Iceland	10	0,786	2	0,867	-9,3%
France	11	0,785	19	0,825	-4,8%
Austria	12	0,782	10	0,842	-7,2%
Latvia	13	0,776	13	0,839	-7,5%
Netherlands	14	0,775	22	0,814	-4,8%
Portugal	15	0,774	16	0,828	-6,5%
Czechia	16	0,768	15	0,830	-7,5%
Japan	17	0,768	23	0,808	-4,9%
Italy	18	0,768	18	0,826	-7,0%
Lithuania	19	0,765	20	0,825	-7,2%
Thailand	20	0,761	11	0,842	-9,6%
Malta	21	0,750	35	0,775	-3,2%
Republic of Korea	22	0,749	21	0,822	-8,8%
Switzerland	23	0,749	30	0,784	-4,6%
Barbados	24	0,733	37	0,771	-5,0%
Romania	25	0,730	27	0,789	-7,5%
Ukraine	26	0,728	36	0,773	-5,8%
Cuba	27	0,718	45	0,754	-4,7%
Kazakhstan	28	0,717	24	0,797	-10,0%
Hungary	29	0,713	41	0,768	-7,1%
Uruguay	30	0,712	25	0,797	-10,6%
Republic of Moldova	31	0,710	32	0,777	-8,5%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	32	0,709	43	0,761	-6,7%
Serbia	33	0,709	31	0,781	-9,3%
Malaysia	34	0,703	29	0,787	-10,7%
Antigua and Barbuda	35	0,702	42	0,763	-7,9%
Spain	36	0,699	63	0,728	-3,9%
North Macedonia	37	0,699	51	0,744	-6,0%
Singapore	38	0,698	34	0,776	-10,0%
Montenegro	39	0,698	40	0,769	-9,2%
Colombia	40	0,696	39	0,769	-9,6%
Sweden	41	0,694	73	0,708	-1,9%
Cabo Verde	42	0,688	46	0,754	-8,8%
Georgia	43	0,687	52	0,744	-7,7%
Slovakia	44	0,684	59	0,731	-6,5%
Croatia	45	0,683	71	0,711	-3,9%
Timor-Leste	46	0,681	89	0,687	-0,9%
Costa Rica	47	0,681	58	0,735	-7,4%
Morocco	48	0,679	33	0,776	-12,4%
Ireland	49	0,679	68	0,719	-5,6%
Cyprus	50	0,678	53	0,744	-8,8%
Egypt	51	0,676	48	0,749	-9,8%
Argentina	52	0,674	54	0,743	-9,3%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	53	0,673	64	0,727	-7,4%

Countries	Rank KRI 2026 with climate change domain	Score KRI 2026 with climate change domain	Overall Rank KRI 2026	Overall Score KRI 2026	% score change with climate change
New Zealand	54	0,673	67	0,721	-6,7%
Chile	55	0,672	55	0,740	-9,2%
Algeria	56	0,667	44	0,754	-11,5%
Peru	57	0,667	56	0,736	-9,4%
Fiji	58	0,667	76	0,703	-5,1%
Canada	59	0,666	72	0,711	-6,3%
Lebanon	60	0,666	49	0,745	-10,7%
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	61	0,663	62	0,729	-9,0%
Jamaica	62	0,662	87	0,689	-3,9%
Samoa	63	0,661	84	0,695	-5,0%
Tunisia	64	0,660	65	0,725	-8,9%
Armenia	65	0,654	70	0,712	-8,1%
Bahrain	66	0,651	38	0,771	-15,5%
Belarus	67	0,650	77	0,701	-7,4%
Kyrgyzstan	68	0,649	82	0,697	-6,9%
Jordan	69	0,649	79	0,699	-7,3%
Azerbaijan	70	0,646	60	0,731	-11,6%
Trinidad and Tobago	71	0,644	66	0,723	-11,0%
Guyana	72	0,642	50	0,745	-13,8%
Brunei Darussalam	73	0,642	47	0,751	-14,5%
Philippines	74	0,641	57	0,735	-12,8%
Saint Lucia	75	0,640	96	0,679	-5,8%
United Arab Emirates	76	0,639	69	0,718	-11,0%
Tonga	77	0,638	61	0,730	-12,6%
China	78	0,636	81	0,699	-9,0%
Marshall Islands	79	0,625	94	0,680	-8,1%
India	80	0,621	83	0,697	-10,8%
Oman	81	0,621	74	0,706	-12,0%
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	82	0,616	86	0,690	-10,7%
Grenada	83	0,616	91	0,683	-9,9%
Uzbekistan	84	0,615	95	0,679	-9,5%
Nicaragua	85	0,615	97	0,678	-9,4%
Belize	86	0,612	93	0,681	-10,1%
Bangladesh	87	0,612	85	0,692	-11,6%
Bulgaria	88	0,611	102	0,647	-5,6%
Eswatini	89	0,610	109	0,627	-2,7%
Dominica	90	0,610	111	0,626	-2,6%
Turkmenistan	91	0,609	75	0,704	-13,4%
Poland	92	0,604	114	0,619	-2,5%
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	93	0,604	103	0,645	-6,4%
Vanuatu	94	0,604	115	0,618	-2,3%
Brazil	95	0,599	107	0,633	-5,4%
Suriname	96	0,597	105	0,636	-6,1%
Mauritius	97	0,591	112	0,622	-5,0%
United Kingdom	98	0,590	132	0,574	2,8%
Israel	99	0,589	110	0,626	-6,0%
Kuwait	100	0,589	80	0,699	-15,8%
Gabon	101	0,586	122	0,598	-2,1%
Turkey	102	0,580	106	0,635	-8,6%
Botswana	103	0,579	90	0,684	-15,4%
Rwanda	104	0,571	104	0,640	-10,8%
Kiribati	105	0,564	120	0,602	-6,2%
Dominican Republic	106	0,560	117	0,607	-7,8%
Solomon Islands	107	0,559	136	0,565	-1,2%
Zimbabwe	108	0,552	139	0,555	-0,6%
Myanmar	109	0,552	119	0,602	-8,4%
Panama	110	0,549	129	0,580	-5,3%
Mongolia	111	0,549	88	0,689	-20,3%
Tajikistan	112	0,548	92	0,681	-19,5%
Mexico	113	0,548	135	0,566	-3,3%

Countries	Rank KRI 2026 with climate change domain	Score KRI 2026 with climate change domain	Overall Rank KRI 2026	Overall Score KRI 2026	% score change with climate change
Bahamas	114	0,546	137	0,561	-2,7%
Viet Nam	115	0,542	98	0,677	-19,9%
Albania	116	0,534	148	0,523	2,2%
Namibia	117	0,532	124	0,596	-10,7%
Kenya	118	0,532	116	0,611	-12,9%
Australia	119	0,529	142	0,543	-2,6%
Bhutan	120	0,529	134	0,574	-7,8%
Nepal	121	0,523	118	0,603	-13,2%
United Republic of Tanzania	122	0,522	133	0,574	-9,1%
South Africa	123	0,520	146	0,528	-1,6%
Uganda	124	0,519	138	0,559	-7,2%
Seychelles	125	0,517	128	0,585	-11,6%
Gambia	126	0,516	140	0,551	-6,3%
Haiti	127	0,516	147	0,524	-1,5%
Ghana	128	0,515	123	0,597	-13,7%
Sri Lanka	129	0,513	145	0,529	-2,9%
Maldives	130	0,510	131	0,575	-11,4%
Angola	131	0,509	152	0,512	-0,6%
Burundi	132	0,508	130	0,578	-12,2%
Mauritania	133	0,507	127	0,585	-13,3%
Djibouti	134	0,506	153	0,511	-1,1%
Malawi	135	0,503	113	0,620	-18,8%
Lesotho	136	0,500	150	0,519	-3,5%
Paraguay	137	0,500	141	0,547	-8,6%
Saudi Arabia	138	0,497	143	0,539	-7,7%
Côte d'Ivoire	139	0,492	154	0,510	-3,6%
Honduras	140	0,491	156	0,509	-3,5%
Russian Federation	141	0,490	151	0,518	-5,5%
Zambia	142	0,489	155	0,510	-4,1%
Pakistan	143	0,474	149	0,520	-8,8%
Micronesia (Federated States of)	144	0,465	168	0,469	-0,9%
Liberia	145	0,460	167	0,477	-3,6%
Indonesia	146	0,459	160	0,493	-6,9%
Congo	147	0,458	159	0,501	-8,6%
Qatar	148	0,458	157	0,505	-9,3%
Cameroon	149	0,451	169	0,463	-2,6%
Burkina Faso	150	0,448	158	0,504	-11,0%
Sao Tome and Principe	151	0,448	170	0,461	-3,0%
Togo	152	0,447	163	0,489	-8,5%
Lao People's Democratic Republic	153	0,437	125	0,591	-26,1%
Eritrea	154	0,436	173	0,448	-2,6%
Comoros	155	0,433	165	0,482	-10,2%
Sudan	156	0,430	174	0,445	-3,4%
Iraq	157	0,429	166	0,480	-10,6%
Guatemala	158	0,427	171	0,456	-6,4%
Benin	159	0,427	164	0,483	-11,6%
Guinea-Bissau	160	0,411	176	0,410	0,4%
Ethiopia	161	0,399	175	0,425	-6,3%
Papua New Guinea	162	0,395	178	0,399	-0,9%
Senegal	163	0,389	177	0,405	-3,9%
Cambodia	164	0,382	172	0,451	-15,2%
Mozambique	165	0,374	179	0,377	-0,9%
Democratic Republic of the Congo	166	0,368	180	0,362	1,6%
Equatorial Guinea	167	0,356	184	0,339	5,1%
Ecuador	168	0,350	185	0,328	6,8%
Sierra Leone	169	0,345	186	0,325	6,4%
El Salvador	170	0,340	188	0,319	6,5%
Madagascar	171	0,327	187	0,321	2,0%
Nigeria	172	0,323	191	0,304	6,2%
Niger	173	0,318	182	0,351	-9,4%

Countries	Rank KRI 2026 with climate change domain	Score KRI 2026 with climate change domain	Overall Rank KRI 2026	Overall Score KRI 2026	% score change with climate change
Mali	174	0,313	181	0,356	-12,0%
Central African Republic	175	0,311	189	0,311	-0,1%
Guinea	176	0,288	192	0,304	-5,1%
Chad	177	0,286	193	0,304	-5,9%
Afghanistan	178	0,238	194	0,214	10,9%

10. ANNEX 3: INDICATORS IN THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX 2026

Domain 1: Life

Under-5 mortality rate	Probability of dying between birth and exactly 5 years of age, expressed per 1,000 live births.
Life expectancy at birth	Number of years newborn children would live if subject to the mortality risks prevailing for the cross section of population at the time of their birth.
Maternal mortality ratio	Number of deaths of women from pregnancy-related causes per 100,000 live births during the same time period.

Domain 2: Health

Underweight	Percentage of children aged 0–59 months who are below minus two standard deviations from median weight-for-age of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards.
Overweight	Percentage of children aged 0–59 months who are above two standard deviations from median weight-for-height of the WHO Child Growth Standards.
Obesity	Percentage of children and adolescents (5–19 years) with a body mass index greater than 2 standard deviation above the median.
Immunization (MCV1)	Percentage of surviving infants who received the first dose of the measles-containing vaccine.
Use of improved drinking water sources	Percentage of the population using any of the following as their main drinking water source: drinking water supply piped into dwelling, plot, yard or neighbour's yard; public tap or standpipe; tube well or borehole; protected dug well; protected spring; rainwater; bottled water plus one of the previous sources as their secondary source.
Use of improved sanitation facilities	Percentage of the population using any of the following sanitation facilities not shared with other households: flush or pour-flush latrine connected to a piped sewerage system, septic tank or pit latrine; ventilated improved pit latrine; pit latrine with a slab; composting toilet.

Domain 3: Education

Expected years of schooling of girls	Number of years of schooling that a girl of school entrance age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates persist throughout the child's life.
Expected years of schooling of boys	Number of years of schooling that a boy of school entrance age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates persist throughout the child's life.
Gender inequality in expected years of schooling	Number of years of schooling that a child of school entrance age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates persist throughout the child's life, expressed as the absolute difference between girls and boys.

Domain 4: Protection

Child labour	Percentage of children 5–14 years old involved in child labour at the moment of the survey. A child is considered to be involved in child labour under the following conditions: (a) children 5–11 years old who, during the reference week, did at least 1 hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of household chores, or (b) children 12–14 years old who, during the reference week, did at least 14 hours of economic activity or at least 28 hours of household.
Adolescent birth rate	Number of births per 1,000 adolescent girls aged 15–19.
Birth registration	Percentage of children less than 5 years old who were registered at the moment of the survey. The numerator of this indicator includes children reported to have a birth certificate, regardless of whether or not it was seen by the interviewer, and those without a birth certificate whose mother or caregiver says the birth has been registered.

Domain 5: Enabling Environment for children's rights

Best interests of the child (Article 3, CRC)	The extent to which a country has operationalized the general principle of the best interests of the child. The best interests of children must be the primary concern in making decisions that may affect them. All adults should do what is best for children. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. This particularly applies to budget, policy and law makers, public or private welfare institutions, courts of law and administrative authorities.
Non-discrimination (Article 2, CRC)	The extent to which a country has operationalized the general principle of non-discrimination. The CRC applies to all children, whatever their race, religion or abilities; whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from. It doesn't matter where children live, what language they speak, what their parents do, whether they are boys or girls, what their culture is, whether they have a disability or whether they are rich or poor. No child should be discriminated unfairly on any basis.

Enabling legislation (Article 4, CRC)	<p>The extent to which there is a basic 'infrastructure' for making and implementing child rights policy, with a particular emphasis on the legal framework for protecting and promoting children's rights. According to the CRC, States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the Convention.</p>
Best available budget (Article 4, CRC)	<p>The extent to which there is a basic 'infrastructure' for making and implementing child rights policy in the form of providing the maximum resources available to a country for protecting and promoting children's rights. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation.</p>
Respect for the views of the child/child participation (Article 12, CRC)	<p>The extent to which a country has operationalized the general principle of respect for the views of the child. When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into consideration. The CRC encourages adults to listen to and seriously consider the opinions of children and to involve them in decision-making – but not to give children authority over adults. Article 12 does not interfere with the parental right and responsibility to direct and guide their child in exercising her/his rights or with the parental right to express their views on matters affecting their children. Moreover, the CRC recognizes that the level of a child's participation in decisions must be appropriate to the child's level of maturity or evolving capacities.</p>
Collection and analysis of disaggregate data (implied in Article 4, CRC)	<p>The extent to which there is a basic 'infrastructure' for making and implementing child rights policy in the form of the collection and analysis of disaggregated data (data collected on the situation of particular (groups of) children in a country or children in a particular location) to protect and promote children's rights.</p>
State-civil society cooperation for child rights (implied in Articles 3 and 5, CRC)	<p>The extent to which there is a basic 'infrastructure' for making and implementing child rights policy in the form of an effective cooperation for children's rights between the state and civil society.</p>

11. ANNEX 4: THE KIDSRIGHTS INDEX SCORE TABLE 2026

Overall ranks	Countries	Overall scores	Life	Health	Education	Protection	Enabling environment
1	Luxembourg	0,871	0,950	0,950	0,786	0,989	0,714
2	Iceland	0,867	0,957	0,918	0,965	0,991	0,583
3	Monaco	0,866	0,994		1,000	0,972	0,583
4	Germany	0,866	0,940	0,943	0,957	0,985	0,583
5	Norway	0,854	0,965	0,949	0,992	0,997	0,500
6	Denmark	0,853	0,946	0,955	1,000	0,998	0,500
7	Greece	0,850	0,944	0,838	1,000	0,980	0,571
8	Belgium	0,848	0,948	0,941	0,996	0,990	0,500
9	Slovenia	0,845	0,947	0,916	0,876	0,991	0,571
10	Austria	0,842	0,947	0,922	0,842	0,990	0,583
11	Thailand	0,842	0,862	0,850	0,840	0,920	0,750
12	Finland	0,841	0,948	0,892	1,000	0,992	0,500
13	Latvia	0,839	0,883	0,912	0,820	0,978	0,643
14	Andorra	0,837	0,969	0,932	0,787	0,991	0,583
15	Czechia	0,830	0,927	0,890	0,852	0,983	0,571
16	Portugal	0,828	0,948	0,909	0,923	0,980	0,500
17	San Marino	0,827	0,990		0,790	0,998	0,600
18	Italy	0,826	0,966	0,928	0,862	0,993	0,500
19	France	0,825	0,957	0,961	0,836	0,991	0,500
20	Lithuania	0,825	0,883	0,910	0,843	0,984	0,571
21	Republic of Korea	0,822	0,973	0,905	0,886		0,583
22	Netherlands	0,814	0,947	0,910	1,000	0,996	0,417
23	Japan	0,808	0,979	0,957	0,862	0,996	0,429
24	Kazakhstan	0,797	0,847	0,900	0,765	0,944	0,583
25	Uruguay	0,797	0,894	0,829	0,826	0,918	0,571
26	Estonia	0,792	0,921	0,882	0,780	0,986	0,500
27	Romania	0,789	0,872	0,848	0,715	0,898	0,643
28	Liechtenstein	0,787			0,733	0,996	0,667
29	Malaysia	0,787	0,870	0,819	0,653	0,971	0,667
30	Switzerland	0,784	0,966	0,946	0,912	0,997	0,357
31	Serbia	0,781	0,885	0,828	0,753	0,904	0,583
32	Republic of Moldova	0,777	0,796	0,863	0,775	0,929	0,571
33	Morocco	0,776	0,816	0,901	0,840	0,908	0,500
34	Singapore	0,776	0,969	0,890	0,917	0,994	0,357
35	Malta	0,775	0,953	0,878	0,802	0,970	0,429
36	Ukraine	0,773	0,840	0,817	0,722	0,955	0,583
37	Barbados	0,771	0,856	0,755	0,705	0,895	0,667
38	Bahrain	0,771	0,920	0,872	0,808	0,978	0,429
39	Colombia	0,769	0,859	0,876	0,767	0,817	0,571
40	Montenegro	0,769	0,898	0,729	0,779	0,925	0,571
41	Hungary	0,768	0,891	0,902	0,817	0,948	0,429
42	Antigua and Barbuda	0,763	0,873	0,822	0,706		0,667
43	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0,761	0,796	0,815	0,885		0,583
44	Algeria	0,754	0,813	0,798	0,778	0,965	0,500
45	Cuba	0,754	0,882	0,833	0,682	0,851	0,571
46	Cabo Verde	0,754	0,849	0,867	0,614	0,838	0,643
47	Brunei Darussalam	0,751	0,849	0,813	0,709	0,975	0,500
48	Egypt	0,749	0,793	0,812	0,723	0,888	0,571
49	Lebanon	0,745	0,856	0,800	0,619	0,932	0,583
50	Guyana	0,745	0,734	0,841	0,694	0,806	0,667
51	North Macedonia	0,744	0,900	0,811	0,763	0,954	0,429
52	Georgia	0,744	0,846	0,894	0,894	0,943	0,357
53	Cyprus	0,744	0,940	0,856	0,808	0,980	0,357
54	Argentina	0,743	0,871	0,767	0,907	0,933	0,400
55	Chile	0,740	0,925	0,782	0,907	0,946	0,357
56	Peru	0,736	0,850	0,780	0,820	0,794	0,500
57	Philippines	0,735	0,724	0,818	0,646	0,873	0,643
58	Costa Rica	0,735	0,907	0,869	0,838	0,909	0,357
59	Slovakia	0,731	0,901	0,918	0,763	0,926	0,357

Overall ranks	Countries	Overall scores	Life	Health	Education	Protection	Enabling environment
60	Azerbaijan	0,731	0,819	0,917	0,723	0,895	0,429
61	Tonga	0,730	0,812	0,786	0,868	0,750	0,500
62	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	0,729	0,701	0,720	0,858	0,741	0,643
63	Spain	0,728	0,966	0,926	0,925	0,987	0,250
64	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0,727	0,895	0,705	0,669	0,965	0,500
65	Tunisia	0,725	0,851	0,824	0,700	0,977	0,417
66	Trinidad and Tobago	0,723	0,795	0,751	0,750	0,884	0,500
67	New Zealand	0,721	0,943	0,854	1,000	0,968	0,250
68	Ireland	0,719	0,950	0,820	1,000	0,989	0,250
69	United Arab Emirates	0,718	0,952	0,860	0,822	0,992	0,286
70	Armenia	0,712	0,857	0,854	0,743	0,941	0,357
71	Croatia	0,711	0,908	0,902	0,791	0,981	0,286
72	Canada	0,711	0,946	0,836	0,814	0,987	0,286
73	Sweden	0,708	0,963	0,915	0,944	0,996	0,214
74	Oman	0,706	0,903	0,803	0,687	0,983	0,357
75	Turkmenistan	0,704	0,715	0,950	0,742	0,957	0,357
76	Fiji	0,703	0,709	0,863	0,709	0,789	0,500
77	Belarus	0,701	0,872	0,935	0,763	0,955	0,286
78	Cook Islands	0,700	0,848	0,703		0,938	0,429
79	Jordan	0,699	0,866	0,836	0,680	0,952	0,357
80	Kuwait	0,699	0,913	0,838	0,624		0,500
81	China	0,699	0,893	0,837	0,808	0,969	0,286
82	Kyrgyzstan	0,697	0,787	0,901	0,698	0,777	0,429
83	India	0,697	0,746	0,785	0,727	0,902	0,429
84	Samoa	0,695	0,771	0,798	0,632	0,697	0,600
85	Bangladesh	0,692	0,754	0,833	0,652	0,603	0,643
86	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0,690	0,873	0,894	0,768	0,914	0,286
87	Jamaica	0,689	0,748	0,836	0,550	0,904	0,500
88	Mongolia	0,689	0,797	0,803	0,681	0,852	0,417
89	Timor-Leste	0,687	0,598	0,723	0,716	0,743	0,667
90	Botswana	0,684	0,656	0,795	0,601	0,836	0,571
91	Grenada	0,683	0,818	0,784	0,850		0,400
92	Tajikistan	0,681	0,767	0,913	0,570	0,856	0,429
93	Belize	0,681	0,810	0,783	0,631	0,851	0,429
94	Marshall Islands	0,680	0,666	0,750	0,835	0,697	0,500
95	Uzbekistan	0,679	0,810	0,924	0,694	0,780	0,357
96	Saint Lucia	0,679	0,801	0,774	0,626	0,894	0,417
97	Nicaragua	0,678	0,825		0,627	0,636	0,643
98	Viet Nam	0,677	0,806	0,824	0,854	0,878	0,286
99	Tuvalu	0,674	0,687	0,814	0,663	0,873	0,429
100	Nauru	0,656	0,633	0,733	0,685	0,762	0,500
101	Libya	0,648	0,716	0,804	0,714		0,429
102	Bulgaria	0,647	0,872	0,853	0,807	0,881	0,214
103	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	0,645	0,712	0,766	0,604	0,680	0,500
104	Rwanda	0,640	0,616	0,796	0,703	0,749	0,417
105	Suriname	0,636	0,795	0,791	0,572	0,867	0,333
106	Turkey	0,635	0,865	0,882	1,000	0,945	0,143
107	Brazil	0,633	0,829	0,815	0,791	0,890	0,214
108	State of Palestine	0,627	0,700	0,897	0,621	0,872	0,286
109	Eswatini	0,627	0,600	0,744	0,788	0,643	0,429
110	Israel	0,626	0,952	0,941	0,767	0,982	0,143
111	Dominica	0,626	0,729	0,776	0,680		0,400
112	Mauritius	0,622	0,818	0,892	0,719		0,286
113	Malawi	0,620	0,617	0,733	0,547	0,553	0,667
114	Poland	0,619	0,910	0,874	0,817	0,983	0,143
115	Vanuatu	0,618	0,766	0,666	0,658	0,671	0,400
116	Kenya	0,611	0,522	0,713	0,647	0,705	0,500
117	Dominican Republic	0,607	0,738	0,843	0,630	0,840	0,250
118	Nepal	0,603	0,711	0,858	0,641	0,612	0,333
119	Myanmar	0,602	0,625	0,751	0,591	0,797	0,357
120	Kiribati	0,602	0,607	0,683	0,599	0,761	0,417

Overall ranks	Countries	Overall scores	Life	Health	Education	Protection	Enabling environment
121	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	0,598	0,796	0,707	0,656	0,970	0,214
122	Gabon	0,598	0,640	0,741	0,681	0,712	0,333
123	Ghana	0,597	0,599	0,743	0,633	0,647	0,417
124	Namibia	0,596	0,640	0,726	0,663	0,686	0,357
125	Lao People's Democratic Republic	0,591	0,670	0,781	0,476	0,506	0,571
126	Palau	0,585	0,730	0,809	0,661		0,300
127	Mauritania	0,585	0,578	0,719	0,436	0,528	0,714
128	Seychelles	0,585	0,807	0,805	0,839		0,214
129	Panama	0,580	0,882	0,784	0,664	0,857	0,167
130	Burundi	0,578	0,491	0,646	0,523	0,607	0,643
131	Maldives	0,575	0,921	0,871	0,562	0,979	0,143
132	United Kingdom	0,574	0,935	0,886	0,927	0,976	0,083
133	United Republic of Tanzania	0,574	0,595	0,698	0,475	0,476	0,667
134	Bhutan	0,574	0,781	0,871	0,670	0,958	0,143
135	Mexico	0,566	0,835	0,801	0,737	0,824	0,143
136	Solomon Islands	0,565	0,737	0,597	0,602	0,725	0,300
137	Bahamas	0,561	0,818	0,764	0,635		0,250
138	Uganda	0,559	0,644	0,671	0,608	0,417	0,500
139	Zimbabwe	0,555	0,508	0,726	0,587	0,418	0,583
140	Gambia	0,551	0,541	0,752	0,402	0,618	0,500
141	Paraguay	0,547	0,804	0,797	0,729	0,628	0,167
142	Australia	0,543	0,967	0,699	1,000	0,981	0,071
143	Saudi Arabia	0,539	0,904	0,851	0,856	0,967	0,071
144	Saint Kitts and Nevis	0,538	0,783	0,820	0,912		0,143
145	Sri Lanka	0,529	0,887	0,865	0,672	0,963	0,083
146	South Africa	0,528	0,651	0,765	0,695	0,832	0,143
147	Haiti	0,524	0,508	0,613	0,606	0,584	0,357
148	Albania	0,523	0,904	0,813	0,786	0,947	0,071
149	Pakistan	0,520	0,585	0,753	0,381	0,636	0,357
150	Lesotho	0,519	0,368	0,715	0,582	0,687	0,357
151	Russian Federation	0,518	0,850	0,870	0,735	0,962	0,071
152	Angola	0,512	0,527	0,608	0,605	0,318	0,571
153	Djibouti	0,511	0,589	0,720	0,320	0,901	0,286
154	Côte d'Ivoire	0,510	0,431	0,672	0,604	0,689	0,286
155	Zambia	0,510	0,635	0,692	0,609	0,300	0,429
156	Honduras	0,509	0,802	0,814	0,517	0,711	0,143
157	Qatar	0,505	0,943	0,838	0,588	0,984	0,071
158	Burkina Faso	0,504	0,432	0,649	0,499	0,463	0,500
159	Congo	0,501	0,589	0,603	0,631	0,659	0,214
160	Indonesia	0,493	0,738	0,790	0,712	0,844	0,083
161	Syrian Arab Republic	0,492	0,788	0,745	0,400	0,861	0,143
162	Yemen	0,490	0,671	0,529	0,325	0,488	0,500
163	Togo	0,489	0,469	0,619	0,671	0,500	0,286
164	Benin	0,483	0,334	0,552	0,509	0,670	0,417
165	Comoros	0,482	0,622	0,744	0,696	0,805	0,100
166	Iraq	0,480	0,769	0,869	0,632	0,847	0,071
167	Liberia	0,477	0,326	0,649	0,554	0,422	0,500
168	Micronesia (Federated States of)	0,469	0,693	0,760	0,644		0,143
169	Cameroon	0,463	0,483	0,622	0,542	0,364	0,357
170	Sao Tome and Principe	0,461	0,764	0,746	0,690	0,743	0,071
171	Guatemala	0,456	0,766	0,796	0,585	0,773	0,071
172	Cambodia	0,451	0,727	0,759	0,602	0,785	0,071
173	Eritrea	0,448	0,617	0,608	0,376		0,286
174	Sudan	0,445	0,561	0,641	0,470	0,621	0,167
175	Ethiopia	0,425	0,603	0,526	0,459	0,191	0,500
176	Guinea-Bissau	0,410	0,398	0,599	0,557	0,522	0,167
177	Senegal	0,405	0,627	0,766	0,422	0,646	0,083
178	Papua New Guinea	0,399	0,611	0,343	0,576	0,390	0,214
179	Mozambique	0,377	0,558	0,633	0,569	0,177	0,214
180	Democratic Republic of the Congo	0,362	0,390	0,432	0,553	0,469	0,143
181	Mali	0,356	0,342	0,724	0,321	0,504	0,143

Overall ranks	Countries	Overall scores	Life	Health	Education	Protection	Enabling environment
182	Niger	0,351	0,286	0,515	0,382	0,332	0,286
183	Somalia	0,344	0,221	0,629	0,414	0,143	0,583
184	Equatorial Guinea	0,339	0,501	0,638	0,652	0,300	0,071
185	Ecuador	0,328	0,854	0,810	0,765	0,714	0,010
186	Sierra Leone	0,325	0,351	0,671	0,363	0,591	0,071
187	Madagascar	0,321	0,427	0,511	0,501	0,374	0,083
188	El Salvador	0,319	0,811	0,838	0,579	0,837	0,010
189	Central African Republic	0,311	0,198	0,443	0,286	0,279	0,417
190	South Sudan	0,307	0,181	0,497	0,197	0,371	0,417
191	Nigeria	0,304	0,029	0,652	0,558	0,385	0,643
192	Guinea	0,304	0,291	0,595	0,466	0,450	0,071
193	Chad	0,304	0,129	0,537	0,320	0,182	0,643
194	Afghanistan	0,214	0,454	0,635	0,286	0,549	0,010



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