

2026 Advocacy snapshot: United Kingdom

Overview of findings:



(global average: 52.6/100)

Point of recognition: The United Kingdom (UK) secured the 2nd position in the Index globally and received the highest score in the Europe and Central Asia region.

Explore the UK's full results in the 2026 Out of the Shadows Index at: outoftheshadows.global/united-kingdom

“The UK has the knowledge. It has the evidence. Now it has the responsibility to place survivors and lived experience expertise at the heart of reform. It is essential every child regardless of location, race, class, community or faith, is protected by robust safeguarding, specialist support, and access to justice.”

- Nikella Holmes, Survivor leader

Calls to action

**brave
movement.**

- **Fully establish and publicly announce a functioning government-funded National Survivor Council** to leverage the lived experience and expertise of survivors and strengthen policy development.
- **Ban corporal punishment** of children and adolescents in all settings.
- **Establish mandatory medical provider training** to identify and respond to sexual violence against children and adolescents.

Governance and accountability

75.3/100 (2nd in the region)

Area of progress: The UK received full points for having recently undertaken **data collection** on the prevalence of sexual violence against children and adolescents (including online).

Opportunity for change:

The UK's **national action plan** to address sexual violence against children and adolescents could be strengthened with clearly assigned responsibilities, defined timelines, and full costings for each related strategy, objective and/or activity.

Prevention

80/100 (1st in the region)

Area of progress: The UK is one of nine countries in the Index that include comprehensive **life-skills sexual education** in their national curricula.

Opportunity for change: There is no publicly available evidence that national legislation in the UK requires **pre-service or recurring training** on sexual violence against children for general medical doctors who provide primary care to children. Only two countries in the Index (Colombia and Kazakhstan) require such training, providing an opportunity for the UK's leadership.

Explore our digital advocacy tools to support your advocacy efforts at outoftheshadows.global/en/advocacy-tools

Healing

65/100 (6th in the region)

Area of progress: England has issued **national guidelines** for the clinical and forensic evaluation of children and adolescents who may have experienced sexual violence, including how to preserve evidence - something half of all countries in the Index do not yet have in place.

Opportunity for change:

In the UK, not all crime victims and survivors are entitled to **legal aid**, nor is there an explicit entitlement for child victims to have a guardian or support person present.

Justice

82.4 /100 (1st in the region)

Area of progress: The UK is one of the few G7 countries to have eliminated criminal **statutes of limitations** for sexual violence against children and leads the G7 in **online safety** reforms.

Opportunity for change:

UK national legislation does not require internet service providers to **report suspected child sexual abuse material** to law enforcement or mandated agencies.

Tip: Your country made pledges at the First Global Ministerial to End Violence Against Children in 2024. Use the Index findings to show your government where more action is needed to deliver on those pledges. Explore pledges at endviolenceagainstchildrenconference.org

About the Out of the Shadows Index:

The Out of the Shadows Index is the global benchmark of national governments' efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children and adolescents. The Index is researched and developed by Economist Enterprise, with advocacy and engagement efforts led by Together for Girls. Learn more at outoftheshadows.global.