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REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Ministry of Justice and Public Administration

Building a Europe
for and with children



Project Launch Conference

30 January 2024

Zagreb, Croatia

National and University Library in Zagreb

Joint EU-Council of Europe project “Implementing the Barnahus Model in Croatia” **23HR02**

The project is co-funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument, and co-funded and implemented by the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the European Commission, Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM).

Context

The European Union-Council of Europe Joint Project “**Implementing the Barnahus Model in Croatia**” aims to improve the access and quality of the justice system for child victims of violence in Croatia, to ensure that undue delays in the treatment of such cases is diminished, and that all children who are victims of sexual violence benefit from a child-friendly access to justice.

Building on the work already carried out by Croatia, the project aims to support the Croatian authorities in its first steps towards the establishment of a Barnahus in the country. The Barnahus Model is a child-friendly response model for the coordination of criminal and child welfare investigations of child abuse cases and providing support services for child victims and their families under one roof. The Barnahus model was recognised as a promising practice by the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Committee) in 2015. The model has been replicated in Finland, Ireland, Norway, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

The project is co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe and is implemented by the Council of Europe's Children's Rights Division in close co-operation with the Croatian Ministry of Justice and Public Administration and DG Reform, European Commission from 1 September 2023 to 28 February 2026.

The project is divided into three components, leading to the following outcomes:

- 1. Legal, policy and institutional framework is established for the sustainable operation of Barnahus model in Croatia**
- 2. Enhanced knowledge and capacities of professionals working with and for children to respond to child sexual abuse**
- 3. Awareness of professionals and the wider public on the situation of child sexual abuse in Croatia is enhanced**

State of play of the Project

A three-month inception phase was carried out prior to the implementation of the project outputs and activities. Following the kick-off meeting held on 7 September 2023, the Council of Europe, with the support of the Ministry of Justice of Croatia, organised a series of bilateral consultations with the project stakeholders to take stock of the project's starting point, including a review of the documents produced so far. The purpose of these bilateral consultations was to assess the legal, institutional and policy gaps in ensuring child-friendly justice and effective inter-agency coordination in cases of sexual violence against children, the training needs and the existing child participation practices in Croatia in order to identify concrete needs and preliminary recommendations. These consultations took place in Zagreb from 24 to 26 October as part of a fact-finding mission. Additional consultations with the High Criminal Court and the Croatian Chamber of Psychology took place online on 28 November 2023.

The results of these consultations and research are included in the project's inception report, which will be presented at the launch conference. The inception report was shared with the beneficiary authorities and EC/DG REFORM and approved by the Project Advisory Group at its 1st meeting on 12 December 2023.

The project launch conference, which take place on 30 January, will bring together the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration as the beneficiary authority, DG REFORM, the Council of Europe, the members of the Advisory Group and other national stakeholders who will work with the project, including NGOs, and civil society. The conference will be an opportunity to promote the Barnahus model at national level to a wider audience, to present the results of the inception report and to share different national Barnahus experiences.

Agenda

8:30-10:00	<p>Security check and registration of participants <i>Please note that a photo ID is REQUIRED to access the building</i> <i>Welcome coffee</i></p>
10:00-10:40	<p>Welcoming remarks</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ivan Malenica, Minister of Justice and Public Administration of Croatia</i> • <i>Irena Petrijević, State Secretary, Ministry of the Interior of Croatia</i> • <i>Iva Ivanković, State Secretary, Ministry of Science and Education of Croatia</i> • <i>Danica Kramarić, M.D., Director of the Directorate for primary health care, health tourism, medicines and medical products, public health and public health protection Ministry of Health of Croatia</i> • <i>Helena Pirnat Dragičević, Ombudswoman for children</i> • <i>Kjartan Björnsson, Deputy Director, Directorate General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) of the European Commission [recorded message]</i> • <i>Regina Jensdottir, Head of the Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i>
10:40-10:50	<p>Official picture with all the participants (in front of the conference banner)</p>
10:50-11:30	<p>Keynote speech</p>
	<p><i>Moderator: Zara Gasparyan, Head of Cooperation Projects Unit, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i></p> <p>Barnahus: innovative services to protect children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Susanna Greijer, Researcher, Legal & Policy Consultant on Children's Rights and Violence against Children; co-author of Barnahus: a European journey Mapping study on multidisciplinary and interagency child-friendly justice models responding to violence against children in Council of Europe member states</i> <p>Q&A session</p>
11:30-12:10	<p>Panel I: Presentation of the Project "Implementing the Barnahus model in Croatia"</p>
	<p><i>Moderator: Zara Gasparyan, Head of Cooperation Projects Unit, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i></p> <p>Project impact and dynamics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ana Kordej, Head of Sector for Criminal Law legislation, Directorate for Criminal Law, Ministry of Justice and Public Administration</i> <p>Presentation of the findings of the Inception Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Frederique Privat de Fortunie, Senior Project manager, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe</i> <p>Q&A session</p>
12:10-13:30	<p>Official Lunch</p>

13:30-14:30	Panel II: Lessons learnt and country specific achievements in setting up Barnahus
	<p><i>Moderator: Zara Gasparyan, Head of Cooperation Projects Unit, Children’s Rights Division, Council of Europe</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iceland: <i>Ólöf Ásta Farestveit, Director General, National Agency for Children and Families, Reykjavik</i> • Finland: <i>Taina Laajasalo, Chief Researcher at the National Institute of Health and Welfare; Forensic Psychologist (PhD)</i> • Slovenia: <i>Andrej Del Fabro, Head of the Child-friendly Criminal Justice Department, Ministry of Justice of Slovenia and Simona Mikec, Director, Children’s House, Ljubljana</i> <p>Q&A session</p>
14:30-14:50	Closing Remarks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ana Kordej, Head of Sector for Criminal Law legislation, Directorate for Criminal Law, Ministry of Justice and Public Administration</i> • <i>Aleksandra Marchewka, Policy Officer, DG Reform, European Commission</i> • <i>Zaruhi Gasparyan, Head of Cooperation Projects Unit, Children’s Rights Division, Council of Europe</i>