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European Union – Council of Europe joint project

Strengthening child friendly justice through effective cooperation and coordination  
among different Barnahus-type services in the regions of Spain

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# CONSULTATION WITH CHILDREN OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHILDREN PARTICIPATION (CEPIA) ABOUT BARNAHUS SPAIN

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Authors:

Mabel Taravilla Herrera, Plataforma de Infancia as Council of Europe independent expert

Children participant in the Council for Child and Adolescent Participation: René, Rim, Rafael, Iraya, Uxía, Rayco, Aya, Irene, Jorge, Antonio y Coral.

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The joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe 'Strengthening child-friendly justice through effective cooperation and coordination between different Barnahus services in the regions of Spain', implemented by the Council of Europe in close collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Children during the period 06/07/2022-05/07/2024, aims to ensure that all child victims of sexual violence benefit from access to child-friendly justice and comprehensive and coordinated services by promoting the implementation of the 'Barnahus model' throughout Spain.

In addition, the project includes a phase with children participating in the Council for Child and Adolescent Participation, hereinafter CEPIA, can contribute their vision and proposals to the following key deliverables: National Roadmap to implement the Barnahus model in Spain and Communication Guide. A participatory consultation has been carried out, designed and promoted by Plataforma de Infancia as an independent consultant of the Council of Europe, and children have been informed about the Barnahus model, the strategic documents and have had the opportunity to make proposals.

This consultation allows children to exercise their rights to be heard and considered in those issues that affect them.

The CEPIA, is a permanent and stable body for consultation, representation and participation of children and adolescents in our country, attached to the Ministry of Youth and Childhood.

It is a participatory and consultative group which, in this case, was considered appropriate due to its representation, involvement, trajectory and its links with the Ministry of Youth and Childhood, an ally in the development of the Barnahus Strategy.

For this purpose, CEPIA was providing the contents and planning in advance. The dates of the sessions were chosen by CEPIA and finally entailed 3 working sessions.

Specific contents of the Communication Guide and the National Roadmap were reviewed. Children elaborated proposals and formulated many questions that were considered of interest to compile for the orientation of the key documents.

The children of CEPIA, after the revision of the strategic documents, highlight 5 main lines or contributions as a conclusion of this process:

- Sexual violence is something that they want to know about and that they want to know in order to be able to detect and act against it. They want to talk about it, they have many questions about how this violence is exercised and how the damage caused can be repaired. It is true that it is a subject that requires a lot of talking, but that does not stop them from wanting to talk about it. They are looking for ways to talk about it in the most sensitive and empathetic way, but they do not want to look away from it and they want it to be known. Furthermore, they believe that not only information should be provided, but also training, and they propose educational centres as a place where this can be provided.

- They recognise the importance of victims reparation and they also focus on the aggressors to find out why they do this, and how they can correct and help them not to continue doing it.
- Sexual violence against children is suffered by children, but it may be that you report it when you are older, or that the delay in resolving your case goes beyond the age of 18. They insist on the importance of making people over 18 aware of the resource and what this violence is.
- They show special sensitivity towards people with disabilities or those who live in more isolated places. They propose options and resources so that this information reaches everyone - and they emphasise that the dissemination should not only be 'online' or in digital format, but that materials should be made that can reach places such as the market, village bars, schools...
- They want to be an active part of the whole process and its follow-up. It is a resource for children, so it is important for children to be able to give their opinions and evaluate it; being able to count on children who have used the resource to be able to evaluate it is something they value as interesting.

This consultation reiterates the need to have children and adolescents involved in issues that affect them, and a reminder that they want to know, speak and be part of it. They demand clear information and training to enable them to exercise their rights and be active citizens.