

CROATIA

Country-specific roadmap for effective child safeguarding in sport policies



**Child safeguarding
in sport**

**” Up your game,
strengthen your squad!**

European Commission (Erasmus+) & Council of Europe (Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport)

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INTRODUCTION

Sport is great for children. It brings joy, boosts self-esteem, teaches healthy habits and important life skills. Sport also creates a sense of belonging and supports children adhere to key values like fairness, teamwork, equality, discipline, inclusion, respect and integrity. Unfortunately, children can be at risk in a sports environment. Violence against children in sport, happens far too often in all countries, in all disciplines and from grassroots to elite sport.

Public authorities and sport organisations must overcome the narrative of denial, break down taboos and take concrete measures to protect children and prevent and respond to all forms of violence in sport. To achieve this, comprehensive child safeguarding policies and action plans must be urgently developed and efficiently implemented to keep all children¹ safe in sport.

“Child Safeguarding in Sport” (CSiS) is a European Union (EU) and Council of Europe (COE) joint project implemented from 1 March 2020 to 30 June 2022.² Its main aims are to guide and accompany partner countries towards developing effective child safeguarding policies to ensure safe, positive and empowering sport environments for all children. This is achieved through the provision of national tailor-made roadmaps for the development and implementation of child safeguarding policies. Central to the roadmap will be the establishment of the Child Safeguarding Officers (CSOs) who will be key players in the delivery of such policies.

Six countries are partners in the project: Austria, Belgium, **Croatia**, Israel, Norway and Portugal. All are supported by experts at national level and by good practice examples³ from European countries as well as by expert consultants from Safe Sport International (SSI) – a non-governmental international organisation based in the United Kingdom.

In Croatia, the lead as national co-ordinator has been taken by **the Ministry of Tourism and Sport** which was supported by a consultant at the national level and by the international expert organisation SSI.

The project has the following main expected outcomes:

- ▶ Country-specific roadmaps for (more) effective child safeguarding in sport policies, including concrete steps for setting up CSO roles in sport.
- ▶ The development of competencies and skills among those who will have a role to play in implementing the roadmaps and in setting up CSO roles.
- ▶ Equipping all those who can play a role in ensuring a safe sport environment for all children (CSOs, decision-makers, coaches, sport leaders, trainers, etc.) with resources and examples of good practice, available from the updated and extended Online Resource Centre.⁴
- ▶ Providing opportunities for peer-learning, capacity-building and fostering exchanges between those who have a role to play in combating and preventing violence towards children in the field of sport, through the establishment a Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport.

1 In this document the term “children” is used to refer to those below the age of 18 years in line with the definition of who benefits from child safeguarding in sport.

2 Implementation of the CSiS project was initially planned for 1 March 2020 to 31 October 2021 but was extended to 30 June 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

3 The examples of good practice for the project came from Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland, Sport Ireland, NSPCC-CPSU, Dutch NOC*NSF, German Sport Youth.

4 The Online Resource Centre was established in 2017, under the “Pro Safe Sport+” project, to share practices and resources on preventing sexual violence against children in sport. Within the CSiS project, the Online Resource Centre will be updated and extended to cover all forms of violence and abuse against children in sport.



CHAPTER 1: TOWARDS CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN SPORT - DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROADMAP

A collaborative approach

One of the main outcomes of the CSiS project is the development of country-specific roadmaps. The roadmaps have been designed in a collaborative way, involving all the stakeholders that (can) have a role in protecting victims and preventing children from being harmed and abused in sport. This includes, but is not limited to, public authorities responsible for sport and children's rights, sports organisations, child protection agencies, people with lived experience of abuse in sport, specialist NGOs working with victims and survivors of abuse.

In each partner country two entities were set up.

1. A steering committee led by the CSiS national coordinators (one of the key stakeholders).

This is a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary forum that engaged with the COE, the national experts/consultants and international experts in the design of the roadmap. This entity should ideally become a permanent co-ordinating forum for each country's long-term commitment to the implementation and further strengthening of child safeguarding in sport.

2. A core group made up of the key members of the steering committee more closely engaged in the drafting process of the roadmap and consulting regularly with the steering committee.

The COE project lead and the SSI expert have discussed progress of the roadmap development with national co-ordinators and national experts on a regular basis and provided support and guidance for the work of the core group.

Alongside support from international and national experts on safe sport the partner countries benefited from the sharing of good practice examples from European states who had successfully implemented systems including CSOs⁵.

The roadmap development methodology

The CSiS project designed a **methodology** that would accompany and support each partner country in the development of its roadmap. The methodology is an inclusive process that begins with desk research to undertake a needs and gaps assessment, followed by recommendations, mapping of stakeholders and discussions of expectations. These discussions then lead onto a self-assessment activity undertaken by national stakeholders of the current state of play and identification of measures to be taken in relation to five of the nine building blocks included in the "International Safeguards for Children in Sport"⁶. Once the actions are identified they are integrated into the roadmap.

The "International Safeguards for Children in Sport" describe what organisations need to put in place if they are providing sports activities for children. These safeguards which have been tested with over 50 sport organisations around the world were adapted for the CSiS project to reflect the inclusion of public authorities and other stakeholders in the development of a national strategic framework that ensured a multi-agency approach to safeguarding children in and through sport.

5 In the project a series of webinars organised by the COE showcased five successfully implemented systems of CSOs <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/pss/webinars>

6 <https://www.sportanddev.org/en/toolkit/child-protection-and-safeguarding/international-safeguards-children-sport>

The following **five priority building blocks** were considered particularly relevant for this project:

1. National policy framework for safeguarding and protecting children in sport
2. Partnerships
3. System and structure for responding to concerns about children and young people
4. Advice and support
5. Education and training framework

Although the project does not elaborate on them, partners are encouraged to consider doing work regarding the additional building blocks:

6. Minimum operating standards/quality assurance frameworks
7. Guidelines for ethics and behaviour
8. Safe recruitment system
9. Monitoring and evaluation

The initial desk research on the gaps and needs assessment was conducted by SSI in collaboration with each partner country to identify the country's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in terms of developing a strategy or policy and an implementation plan for child safeguarding in sport.

In the case of Croatia, analysis and recommendations were made concerning the five priority building blocks listed above. Those recommendations made by SSI were shared at the initial round table meeting and became the foundation for the development of the roadmap.

Following feedback from the first round table, the CSiS Secretariat and SSI expert created a standardised planning document "Stages of the journey towards the roadmap". The aim of this working document was to assist each country construct a more detailed self-assessment of how it was going to develop its roadmap.

The "Stages of the journey towards the roadmap" contained the following:

- ▶ Summary of the desk research findings
- ▶ SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis
- ▶ Description of each building block with expectations and the recommendations from SSI
- ▶ Description of the steps to be completed which include:
 - Agreeing on values and principles
 - Stakeholder mapping
 - Setting the aims for each building block
 - Agreeing who the key partners are
 - Clarifying roles and responsibilities
 - Setting priorities for the short, medium and long term
 - Creating an action plan.

The first draft of the roadmap was prepared based on the information provided in the working document.

Development of the roadmap: the process

The following stakeholders joined the country's **steering committee**:

- ▶ Ministry of Tourism and Sport
- ▶ Ombudsperson for Children
- ▶ Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy
- ▶ Croatian Olympic Committee
- ▶ Brave Phone
- ▶ Faculty of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb

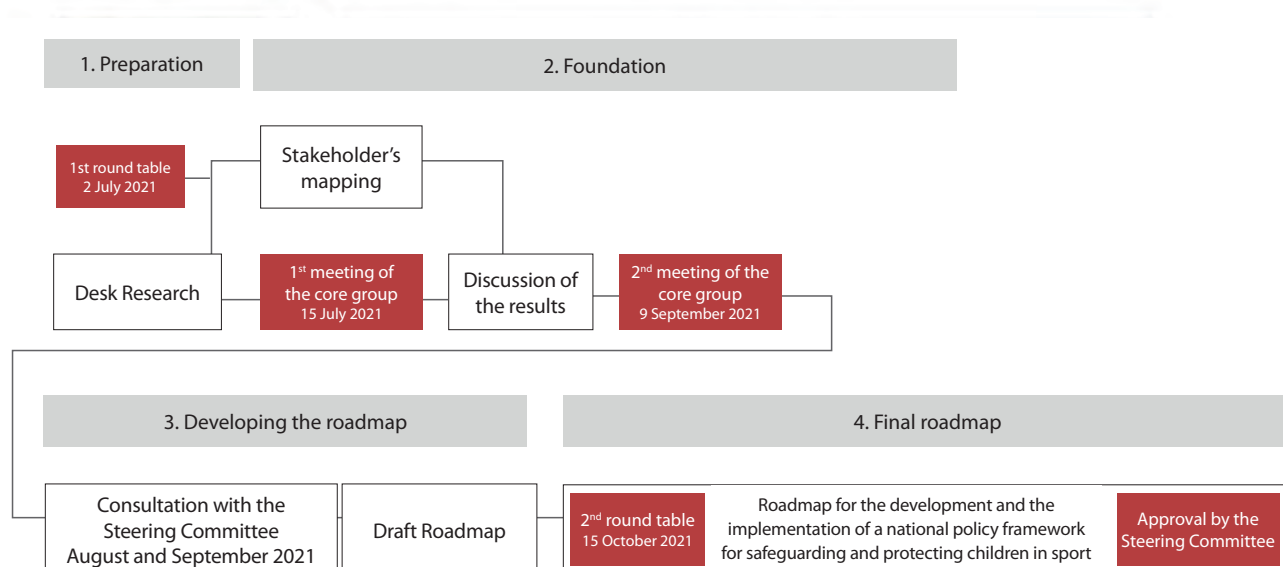
- ▶ Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb
- ▶ Ministry of Science and Education
- ▶ Ministry of Justice and Administration
- ▶ Ministry of the Interior
- ▶ Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb
- ▶ Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb
- ▶ Croatian School Sports Federation
- ▶ Croatian Football Federation
- ▶ Croatian Handball Federation
- ▶ Croatian Volleyball Federation

The core group member organisations are:

1. Ministry of Tourism and Sport
2. Ombudsperson for Children
3. Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy
4. Croatian Olympic Committee
5. Brave Phone
6. Faculty of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb
7. Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb

The process for the development of a country-specific roadmap in Croatia is shown in chart below.

ROADMAP DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY



The first round table was held on 02 July 2021. The project was presented in full to members of the steering committee and the desk research findings were outlined. Participants had the opportunity to discuss the findings and start to identify the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to consider when developing their country specific roadmap. Sport Ireland’s good practice CSO model was identified by Croatia to be presented to the committee.

The following outcomes were expected:

- ▶ Clear understanding of the roadmap development methodology
- ▶ Based on the results of the desk research, concrete ideas (standards, actions, measures, role of the stakeholders, etc.) for improving the efficiency of the child safeguarding in sport policy
- ▶ Agreement on the model for the roadmap, its core values and scope and the role and responsibilities of the steering committee/inter-sectoral group members
- ▶ Agreement on the model for CSO roles to be further discussed, its scope in relevant organisations, prerequisite knowledge and skills and support needs.

As a next step, the “working document” was drawn up by the national co-ordinator and national consultant in close co-operation with the core group, steering committee and support from the international consultant. The “working document” was the basis for the preparation of the draft roadmap.

The second round table took place on 15 October 2021, at which time the draft roadmap was presented to the steering committee. Discussions took place on the process for finalising the model for CSO roles, its scope in relevant organisations, prerequisite knowledge and skills and support needed.

The roadmap was finalised, taking account of additional comments and inputs and approved by the steering committee (June 2022).

At the end of the process, national events were planned in each partner country to present and promote the roadmap. Support is provided by the Council of Europe to design and deliver a communication plan and awareness-raising video.



CHAPTER 2: STATE OF PLAY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines the main findings of the desk research and addresses each of the five priority building blocks for the development of child safeguarding in sport policies. In 2021, the SSI carried out desk research together with the SWOT analysis which led to specific recommendations for Croatia. Following those recommendations and the expectations defined for each building block, the core group made a self-assessment of the current “State of play”.

The main findings of the desk research (2021) are as follows:

- ▶ The protection of children against violence in Croatia has a multi-stakeholder approach, bringing together many different stakeholders. While this is positive, the challenge with the approach is that very little is sport-specific.
- ▶ With respect to safeguarding children in sport, a systematic approach and overall programme seems to be lacking.
- ▶ Educating and appointing safeguarding officers at relevant points in the sport system will therefore be important. It would be reasonable to include a paragraph in the Sports Law about safeguarding.
- ▶ There is no data on sport cases.
- ▶ There are no national standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport, nor sport connected case management systems.
- ▶ There are no current CSO roles at any point in the sport system, from national to club level.

The full version of the desk research prepared by SSI is available in the appendix.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths and Opportunities

- ▶ The Croatian legal system for the protection of children is generally well established in legislation and policy. Although there are no sport-specific provisions, there are a few exceptions. The state administration bodies of the Republic of Croatia have the right, within the scope of their competence and for the purposes of conducting certain proceedings, to request an excerpt from the criminal records of the Ministry of Justice e.g. sports inspection. In line with the Sports Inspection Act for the purpose of inspection supervision an excerpt from the criminal records may be requested to ascertain whether a specific person has been convicted or not, and a certificate from the competent criminal court as to whether a specific person has a criminal proceeding initiated against them. According to the Sports Act, if criminal proceedings have been initiated against a specific person in sport, for a criminal offence committed against a child or minor, that person will be banned from performing sports activities where they come into contact with children or minors, until the finality of the judgment, i.e. the suspension of the proceedings. However, this provision is not applicable to volunteers in sport.
- ▶ The participation of key ministries in this project represents an excellent opportunity to clarify roles and responsibilities, agree on joint action and develop a holistic approach to safeguarding children in and through sport. This potential can be realised through the establishment of the project steering committee as a permanent strategic forum for co-ordinating the necessary multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach.
- ▶ It will be essential to strengthen the relationship between sport and statutory agencies to develop systems which can respond to reported concerns about children in and through sport. These relationships can facilitate national policy guidance being applied through local joint working arrangements to manage reported child protection concerns in sport.

- ▶ Croatia has established sport legislation and there is an opportunity to consider how this can be strengthened to address human rights issues, including child safeguarding. The role of the Ombudsperson for Children will be very helpful in this area.
- ▶ Croatia's National Sports Programme 2019 – 2026 includes the development of a protocol for dealing with all forms of violence among children in sports clubs. It also foresees the development of a joint Action Plan for the implementation of education programmes for the prevention of violence in sport, at sporting events and beyond. The Ministry of Tourism and Sport in co-operation with relevant bodies and associations (including the Education and Teacher Training Agency, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice and Administration, Croatian Institute of Public Health, Croatian Olympic Committee and Croatian Paralympic Committee) is creating a joint Action Plan which also provides opportunities for an enhanced multi-stakeholder approach.
- ▶ Some national governing bodies of sport have recent experience of their international bodies implementing child safeguarding policies, providing guidance and toolkits and placing requirements on them. This experience will benefit all sport in Croatia.
- ▶ Recent initiatives in school sport on preventing all forms of unacceptable behaviour provide positive examples for sport outside of schools to learn from and for children to receive the same key messages in all environments.
- ▶ As part of the "Start to Talk" campaign⁷, a training kit for prevention of sexual violence against children and young people in sport and how to react when it happens was published. It was translated into Croatian and distributed to all national sports associations, sports clubs and other sport organisations in Croatia.
- ▶ Croatia participated in the "All In: Towards gender balance in sport"⁸ project and is gaining experience in tackling gender-based violence in sport. Further work on safeguarding can build upon this knowledge and experience.

Weaknesses and Threats

- ▶ The legal system is complex with many pieces of legislation developed over time. As a consequence this may be a barrier for grassroots sport to understand the legal framework. It may be worth considering a review of these and assess the opportunity of rationalising the currently fragmented legislative framework.
- ▶ There is no previous history of a comprehensive approach to safeguarding children in sport. Developing safeguarding education and training for the sector including establishing Child Safeguarding Officers roles is amongst the measures being taken.
- ▶ There are no sport-specific ethical guidelines or codes of conduct. Codes that exist in other relevant areas could be applied to or adapted for sport.
- ▶ There appears to be a lack of public awareness and even denial of the nature and extent of violence and abuse against children in society in general. It is likely the lack of knowledge on this topic is lower in sport.
- ▶ There have been some cases of people speaking publicly about their experiences of abuse in sport. To date, Croatia has not experienced the impact of a large-scale scandal. Following awareness-raising activities planned through this project, there is a need to prepare for a significant rise in reported cases of concern. This may potentially be from adults who experienced abuse as children and had nowhere to report concerns or seek support. Notably, in institutional reports of abuse from around the world, non-recent cases constantly reveal high percentages of current risks to children. The developing relationship with Brave Phone may offer a platform for advice and help to sport.
- ▶ Support from agencies with expertise in working with people with lived experience of abuse outside of sport will be necessary until a core group is established that includes survivors from sport who can be invited to engage and support the strategy.
- ▶ Consideration will need to be given as to how children and young people can be involved as key stakeholders in developing and implementing the project's action plan. If children are unaware of their rights in sport and do not have opportunities to be involved in how their sports are made safe, this will undermine the work developed at a strategic level. Children and young people are less likely to come forward to report any concerns if the system created is not child friendly.

⁷ "Start to Talk" campaign: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/sport/start-to-talk>

⁸ Joint EU-COE project "All In: Towards gender balance in sport" <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/home>

BUILDING BLOCK 1: NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Expectations

A policy framework is in place to ensure that all children and young people are safeguarded in and through sport.

This should include:

- ▶ Agreed national values and principles based on a child rights approach
- ▶ Written policy document that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children and sets out expectations of key stakeholders
- ▶ Multi-stakeholder approach supported by government departments and organisations with devolved responsibility for child protection and for sport
- ▶ An agreed action plan which sets out clear roles and responsibilities for implementation. Safeguarding children is everyone's business and no agency or organisation can provide effective safeguards on their own

A multi-agency, multi-disciplinary approach is essential for successful outcomes for children.

NB: please cross reference with Building Block 2: Partnerships

The **recommendations** made based on the desk research were as follows:

- ▶ The multi-agency steering committee established for this project should form the basis for a permanent strategic working group tasked with safeguarding children in and through sport in Croatia.
- ▶ A policy framework for safeguarding children in sport, based on a child rights approach needs to be created, operationalised and embedded, building on the existing child safeguarding and protection framework.
- ▶ The strength of the cross-ministry collaborative approach can be maximised to review and revise existing legislation, policy and practice guidance to ensure that sport is properly referenced and included.
- ▶ The intentions of the policy framework should be clearly communicated to all stakeholders.
- ▶ A plan needs to be created to raise awareness with the public in general and sport stakeholders at national and grassroots levels as to the nature of the issue and what they can do to realise safe, enjoyable and inclusive sport for all children in Croatia. Stakeholders in sport need to also be aware of the vital role they can play in identifying and responding to children who are experiencing abuse in their community.

Self-assessment by the steering committee (State of play 2021)

In Croatia, there are several laws covering the responsibilities of various ministries related to different aspects of children's lives (as shown in the desk research). However, they do not contain sport-specific provisions. The Sports Act prescribes that a person against whom criminal proceedings have been instituted for a criminal offence committed to the detriment of a child or a minor, shall be distanced from performing activities in sports, in which he/she, comes into contact with children or minors, until the verdict becomes final, or the proceedings are suspended.

At the strategic level, the "National Sports Programme 2019-2026: Towards a healthy and active nation proud of its achievements"⁹ is the first development planning act of its kind in the field of sport in Croatia. The document was adopted by the Croatian Parliament at the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, for a period of eight years. The Programme sets out the development objectives for sport which include

9 National Sports Programme 2019 – 2026: <https://mint.gov.hr/UserDocImages//dokumenti-sdus/docs//NATIONAL%20SPORTS%20PROGRAM.pdf>

measures and activities necessary for the implementation of these objectives, the responsible authorities and implementers for the development and the control measures as defined by the Sports Act.

Within the measures and activities in the National Sports Programme, there is a measure that tasks the development of a protocol for dealing with violence among children in sports clubs (Specific Objective 6.3., Measure 6.3.2.). Additionally, the development of a joint Action Plan for the implementation of an education measures programme for the prevention of violence in sport, at sporting events and beyond, is also envisaged (Specific Objective 6.1., Measure 6.1.4.). Both documents are being developed.

Although the National Sports Programme could be seen as a good starting point, the described measures and activities are not yet operational and only address some aspects of prevention of violence in sport. There is no specific system and structure for responding to concerns about children and young people in sport. However, through connecting the priorities of the CSiS project and the National Sports Programme, the need to develop a policy framework for child safeguarding will be reinforced.

While starting activities within the CSiS project, which included consultations with members of the steering committee, it was emphasised that reviewing the existing national legislative framework related to child safeguarding in sport was important. This review will be considered while developing the national policy framework and following the aims of the roadmap prepared within the CSiS project. To develop such a framework, a more detailed analysis of the existing legislation and measures is required.

BUILDING BLOCK 2: PARTNERSHIPS

Expectations:

Action is taken by key stakeholders at national level (public authorities responsible for sport, major sport organisations, children's rights agencies, etc.) to develop partnerships to ensure that children are safeguarded in and through sport; to promote and influence safeguarding developments.

This should specifically include that:

- ▶ Inter-sectoral sport safeguarding partnership arrangements are in place at national strategic level and at relevant regional/provincial/local levels.
- ▶ Partnership arrangements cover the distribution of safeguarding roles and responsibilities and that funding arrangements contain safeguarding criteria.
- ▶ Partnerships provide written guidance to their stakeholders on safeguarding expectations.

The **recommendations** made based on the desk research were as follows:

- ▶ Existing partnerships need to be reviewed and consolidated to address both the short term aims of this project and to establish the partnership arrangements which are needed to achieve safe sport for children in the medium and long term.
- ▶ New partnerships and collaborations with specialist organisations which have knowledge, skills and practical experience in this area need to be established. This should include collaboration between state and local authority agencies responsible for sport and for child protection, health, education and justice as well as specialist non-governmental organisations which provide relevant expertise and services such as Brave Phone.
- ▶ There is a clear need to establish and implement some prevention measures and mechanisms. These mechanisms should involve children and young people in the plans which affect them. They should also build a network of support with survivor organisations which can engage with and support people with non-recent experience of abuse and support these survivors as potential experts, with lived experience, in this area work.
- ▶ Mechanisms need to be in place to regularly monitor and review these arrangements to ensure their effectiveness and to include new partners as required to meet gaps in service provision and expertise.

- ▶ Partnership arrangements need to include clarity of partner contributions i.e. 'in kind' support, time or financial contributions.

Self-assessment by the steering committee (State of play 2021)

As emphasised in the National Sports Programme, sport is a complex and multidisciplinary social phenomenon and its future success depends on the participation with other sectors. To be able to fully perform all its functions the entire sports sector must be empowered. All stakeholders must add value to justify any investment in sport and contribute to the welfare of sport and the interests and welfare of the nation. This partnership approach should equally apply to all aspects of sport, including child safeguarding in and through sport.

Within the National Sports Programme (mentioned under the self-assessment on the national policy framework) there is a measure that requires a protocol be developed that deals with violence among children in sports clubs. The National Sports Programme also tasks the development of a joint action plan to implement an education programme for the prevention of violence in sport, at sporting events and beyond. Implementation of these measures includes a multi-stakeholder approach. The working group for the joint action plan have been appointed and in addition to representatives of the Ministry of Tourism and Sport, it also includes the following stakeholders - all five umbrella sport organisations (Croatian Olympic Committee, Croatian Paralympic Committee, Croatian Deaf Sports Federation, Croatian School Sports Federation and Croatian Academic Sports Federation), Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice and Public Administration and the Croatian Institute for Public Health.

The Croatian steering committee set up under the CSiS project should become the long-term strategic group to drive forward the agenda of safeguarding children in sport and oversee the development and evaluation of CSO training. A working group drawn from members of the steering committee (established within the CSIS project) should be appointed and recognised at national level to create the National framework for development of child safeguarding in sport policy. This working group should be also responsible for the implementation of the roadmap. The need to involve additional relevant stakeholders will be considered, and synergies with the existing working groups (responsible for the implementation of the measures of the National Sport Programme related to the prevention of violence in sport) will be built. The Ministry of Tourism and Sport will co-ordinate the working group's activities.

There are currently no partnerships between different levels to address the issue of child safeguarding in sport in a comprehensive way. A need to develop partnerships between national, regional and local level will be addressed, including clarifying roles and responsibilities of umbrella sport organisations, national federations and sport clubs, as well as sport communities at the level of counties, cities and municipalities.

BUILDING BLOCK 3: SYSTEM AND STRUCTURE FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Expectations:

Case response/management structure and system with step-by-step procedures help to ensure a prompt response to concerns about a child's safety or well-being.

This should specifically include:

- ▶ A national guidance document about the systems and procedures that need to be in place in sports bodies to safeguard and protect children where there are concerns about a child. It should include and cover:
 - the role and responsibilities of statutory agencies and sports bodies and how they should work together where there are concerns about the safety or well-being of child.
 - how allegations against staff or volunteers (particularly where the person is in a position of trust) will be managed between statutory and sport bodies.¹
- ▶ Minimum operating standards for case management systems which clarify expectations for sports bodies (this may be covered by national guidance which applies to all organisations, including sport).
- ▶ Sports bodies which receive public funding should have clear written procedures and step-by-step guidance in place about what action to take if there are concerns about a child's well-being or protection. The guidance should be available to all stakeholders and provided in formats which are easily accessible.
- ▶ That there is a focal point for reporting concerns within each organisation as well as signposting to sources of external help, advice (this may be the national CSO but could also be a component of an existing role which deals with the organisation's response to integrity complaints) and whistleblowing.
- ▶ That children and young people are provided with information about what will happen if they or their parents report their concerns.
- ▶ Processes that are fair and transparent. Arrangements are in place to provide support to children, parents, volunteers and staff during and following an incident, reported concern/allegation and the end of disciplinary/statutory agency processes.

¹ Sports bodies' codes of ethics and behaviour/conduct form the basis for reported concerns.

The **recommendations** made based on the desk research were as follows:

- ▶ The recommendations for Croatia based on Building Block 3 expectations relate to the need to create and establish a child protection system to respond to all forms of reported concerns about non-accidental violence* (in all its forms - see note below) against children in and through sport and to build it upon the mainstream child protection system.
- ▶ This system needs to connect with existing statutory structures and systems, legal and policy requirements. There is an ideal opportunity to learn from existing good practice examples in Europe including those established in some European national sport federations and to build upon these.
- ▶ Systems and structures need to be child-centred and trauma-informed (reflecting the understanding of the long-term impact of all forms of non-accidental violence against victims and survivors, their responses – including through triggering of past memories).
- ▶ Resources will be needed to support sport organisations put in place appropriate safeguards, alongside mechanisms for quality assurance, monitoring and evaluating progress.

- ▶ Ideally these safeguarding requirements should be set out in mandatory national standards which are benchmarked and linked to funding requirements.
- ▶ Independent expertise needs to be provided to key stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability.

*Note: The international definitions of non-accidental violence (abuse) against children include – emotional/psychological violence, physical violence, sexual violence and neglect. Peer abuse and bullying must also be addressed.

Self-assessment by the steering committee (State of play 2021)

There is no specific system and structure for responding to concerns about children and young people in sport. However, there are other existing structures and systems under the competence of different institutions dealing with child protection that are relevant and can be applied to sport under certain circumstances.

At governmental level, in line with their competencies based on different laws, various ministries have responsibilities related to different aspects of children's lives while the main responsibility for child protection sits with the **Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy**.

As an interconnected network under the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy there are 135 **social welfare centres** across Croatia. Social Welfare Centres are public institutions that decide on the recognition of rights from the social welfare system and provide social services to particularly vulnerable groups of citizens which includes; children without parents, children without adequate parental care, children with disabilities, children and young people with behavioural problems, persons with disabilities, young adults or children who are victims of family, peer or other violence and children who are victims of human trafficking. The Ministry handles individual cases based on their territorial jurisdiction and according to relevant legislation. The Social Welfare Centres act on reports from the police, citizens, victims themselves and anonymous reports. They also provide support to act in emergency situations, such as domestic violence and abuse.

The Ombudsperson for Children of the Republic of Croatia monitors the co-ordination of laws and other regulations in Croatia that concern the protection of the rights and interests of children. These include the fulfilment of obligations of the Republic of Croatia arising from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international documents concerned with the protection of the rights and interests of children. They also include implementation of all regulations concerned with the protection and violation of the rights and interests of children and related studies. The Ombudsperson for Children is not allowed to, legally, handle individual cases and acts as an intermediate organisation between victims and Social Welfare Centres.

If in the performance of his/her duties the Ombudsperson for Children discovers a child has been subjected to physical or mental violence, sexual abuse, abuse or exploitation, neglect or negligence, he / she must immediately report the case to the competent state attorney's office, warn the Social Welfare Centre and propose measures to protect the rights and interests of the child. The Ombudsperson for Children can require reports from different institutions about what has been done concerning specific cases. The Ombudsperson is authorised to propose measures intended for the prevention of harmful activities which jeopardise the rights and interests of children to the competent state administration bodies, local and regional administration bodies, the corporation and natural persons and to demand the reports on performed measures.

Brave Phone is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation which aims to help and protect abused and neglected children and implement preventive activities in direct work with children, their parents, and professionals to realise a child's basic legal rights. In addition to offering a helpline for children and parents, Brave Phone supports families through a number of programmes based in schools, communities and online. It is not sport-specific and statistics for sport are not available. Within the framework of its role and responsibilities Brave Phone is not allowed to, legally, handle individual cases and acts as an intermediary organisation between victims and Social Welfare Centres.

The Croatian Olympic Committee has a Single Point of Contact for Integrity in Sport (SPOC). The SPOC was established in collaboration with the European Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Committee. The Croatian Olympic Committee has a Hotline for reporting integrity violations and issues in sport.

As there is no sport-specific system and structure in place for responding to concerns about children and young people in sport, experience and work in the existing structures (institutions/organisations mentioned above) will be used and leveraged and their roles in relation to safeguarding in sport will be clarified. The experiences

and established protocols¹⁰ in other areas will be of immense help to create procedures and provide guidance in cases of concern about children's and young people's safety in sport.

In establishing the system and structure the biggest challenge identified is embedding the CSO role in sport within the existing legal framework and protocols and ensuring appropriate resources for its implementation.

BUILDING BLOCK 4: ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Expectations:

Arrangements are in place for children and young people to be provided with advice and support including information on where to go for help if they are experiencing abuse or violence. Arrangements also need to be in place for adults and people with responsibility for safeguarding in sport when seeking advice and support.

This should specifically include that:

- ▶ Children and young people are provided with information in relevant media about their rights and where to go for help if they have worries.
- ▶ Designated officer functions and roles at appropriate levels from ministry through the sport system are in place – including CSO role(s) in sporting bodies.
- ▶ Access to support and advice for people with responsibilities for safeguarding children in a broad sense (adults, coaches, sport leaders, etc.).
- ▶ Access to support and advice for people in CSO roles.

NB: Education and training are addressed in Building block 5.

The **recommendations** made based on the desk research were as follows:

- ▶ A priority for Croatia is to ensure that mechanisms are in place for children to be made aware of their rights in sport and to know the choices they have about to whom they can turn to inside and outside of sport when they have worries or want to report all forms of unacceptable behaviour (from bullying and peer abuse to non-accidental violence by adults). The provision of services and advice from Brave Phone and the Ombudsperson's office for children will be particularly helpful.
- ▶ Arrangements need to be put in place prior to any promotion to children, young people and parents.
- ▶ Advice and support needs to be easily accessible to all affected persons when responding to reported concerns and the CSO roles will be a critical focal point for this process. These roles need to be in place at different levels (from ministry to club level).
- ▶ A systematic strategic plan needs to be developed to set out role descriptions and person specifications for all levels of CSO. This activity will need considerable resourcing and should include access to professional supervision and support for all those responding to concerns about children and/or the behaviour of adults or peers towards them. Training and continuous professional development opportunities need to be in place as well as opportunities for developing peer support mechanisms from the national to the local level.

Self-assessment by the steering committee (State of play 2021)

There is no specific advice and support system for child safeguarding in sport. However, similarly to the Building Block 3, there are other existing structures and systems, including different institutions and organisations that provide advice and support in relation to violence and abuse. In this regard, Social Welfare Centres, Brave Phone and the Ombudsperson for Children have different roles and responsibilities.

¹⁰ Protocol on procedure in cases of sexual violence, Protocol on procedure in case of violence among children and youth, Protocol on the procedure in case of abuse and neglect of children, Protocol on procedure in the case of domestic violence.

Social Welfare Centres legally handle individual cases and provide advice and support. Furthermore, according to the Social Welfare Act, professional staff involved in social welfare activities have the right to supervision at least once a year as a support method for professionals. This enables the process of learning and development and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills in order to improve the quality of their professional work.

Brave Phone is not allowed to, legally, handle individual cases and acts as an intermediary organisation between victims and Social Welfare Centres providing advice and support for children and parents. It is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation which aims to advise, support, help and protect abused and neglected children and implement preventive activities. In addition to offering a helpline for children and parents, Brave Phone supports families through a number of programmes based in schools, communities and online. It implements different activities to raise public awareness about violence and abuse and in co-operation with different faculties (Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, Faculty of Philosophy in Osijek, Croatian Studies - Department of Psychology, Study Centre for Social Work, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation and Faculty of Teacher Education) it provides education and training for volunteers and experts from other institutions and organisations working with children.

The Ombudsperson for Children is not allowed to, legally, handle individual cases. Among other responsibilities the Ombudsperson for Children monitors the violation of individual rights of children and informs and advises children on their rights and interests. It also collaborates with children and encourages them to express their views and respects their opinion.

While developing an advice and support system for child safeguarding in sport it will be important to collaborate with the above mentioned institutions and organisations, building upon their knowledge and experience and taking into account their different roles and responsibilities.

BUILDING BLOCK 5: EDUCATION AND TRAINING FRAMEWORK

Expectations:

Everyone with responsibilities in sport for children and young people has access to information, education and training to help them to fulfil their roles in safeguarding children in and through sport including coaches, sport leaders, managers and volunteers. Those with specialist roles, such as CSOs, will need a higher level of training.

This should include:

- ▶ Core competencies are agreed from which curricula for training courses for all roles are developed.
- ▶ Training courses are available to all who need them through approved providers.
- ▶ Training providers (organisations and trainers) meet core competencies.
- ▶ Specific training framework for CSOs is in place.

The **recommendations** made based on the desk research were as follows:

- ▶ A national training framework needs to be put in place for everyone with responsibility for sport delivery and management in Croatia, which is resourced and timetabled.
- ▶ Mapping of national training needs for the sector will need to be completed.
- ▶ Curricula need to be developed based on national occupational standards which set out the knowledge, skills and competencies for staff and volunteers.
- ▶ Those with specialist roles such as CSOs and those involved in case management will need a higher level of training.
- ▶ Education and training should also be provided to sport managers and boards as they are accountable for their organisations' safeguarding work.
- ▶ An education and training delivery plan will need to be created to ensure there is an adequate educator/trainer base.
- ▶ Children and young people will need access to age-appropriate education about their rights and responsibilities.

Self-assessment by the steering committee (State of play 2021)

There is no specific education and training framework for safeguarding children in and through sport in Croatia.

Different levels of formal education are required in accordance with the Sports Act to perform a range of professional roles in the field of sport. Education and training for the protection of children in and through sport is not specifically addressed as an individual subject but rather as a topic integrated into the various programmes offered by formal education institutions. Within the curriculum of different educational institutions, specific subjects, such as psychology, pedagogy, etc., address issues related to the protection of children from violence of any kind in the field of sport.

In line with the recommendations, it will be necessary for the development of an education and training framework to begin with mapping national training needs. This should cover formal education and non-formal education programs.



CHAPTER 3: STRATEGY FOR SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN IN SPORT

This section sets out the strategy for consolidating each building block in the roadmap step by step. It is an action-oriented strategy which considers the identified expectations and recommendations made for each building block, as well as the State of play (all presented in Chapter 2).

This strategy reflects the following main aspects:

- ▶ What is needed to fully meet the requirements of the key elements of each building block
- ▶ The stakeholders that should be involved
- ▶ The aims of the child safeguarding in sport strategy
- ▶ The key milestones.

BUILDING BLOCK 1: NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Safeguarding children can only be effectively achieved by a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach with ministries and child protection and sport organisations collaborating with all key stakeholders such as expert NGOs, affected persons, parents or guardians and young people themselves. At a strategic level there is a need for a national policy framework which brings key stakeholders together. This needs to be underpinned by clear values (what we believe in) and principles (how we apply the values in practice).

Values and principles identified by Croatia to guide the National framework for child safeguarding in sport, its aims and expected achievements.

Croatia is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child as of the date of its independence, 8 October 1991.

Furthermore, the National Sports Programme addresses the protection of children and young people in the sport system by emphasising the importance of special care of children and young people with the aim of protecting them from any kind of violence and providing them with a safe environment while engaging in sports activities.

A consensus has been reached by all relevant stakeholders at the national level and accordingly the national policy framework will be based on following values and principles.

Values:

- ▶ Best interests of the child and their well-being shall be a primary consideration in all settings, including sport.
- ▶ The child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child.
- ▶ All children and young people have a right to participate in recreational and sport activities and they should be encouraged to fulfil their potential and provided with support to overcome obstacles.
- ▶ All children and young people have a right to enjoy sport, free from all forms of violence and abuse.

Principles:

- ▶ A child-centred approach should be applied in all activities which means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and ensuring their participation.
- ▶ Child well-being comes before performance.
- ▶ Sport organisations are responsible for the care of children and young people participating in sport activities.

Aims and priorities

1.1 The National framework for child safeguarding in sport (National framework) is created and adopted.

1.2 The general public and the sport sector are aware of the importance of safeguarding children in and through sport.

Stakeholders to be involved¹¹ and their role and responsibilities

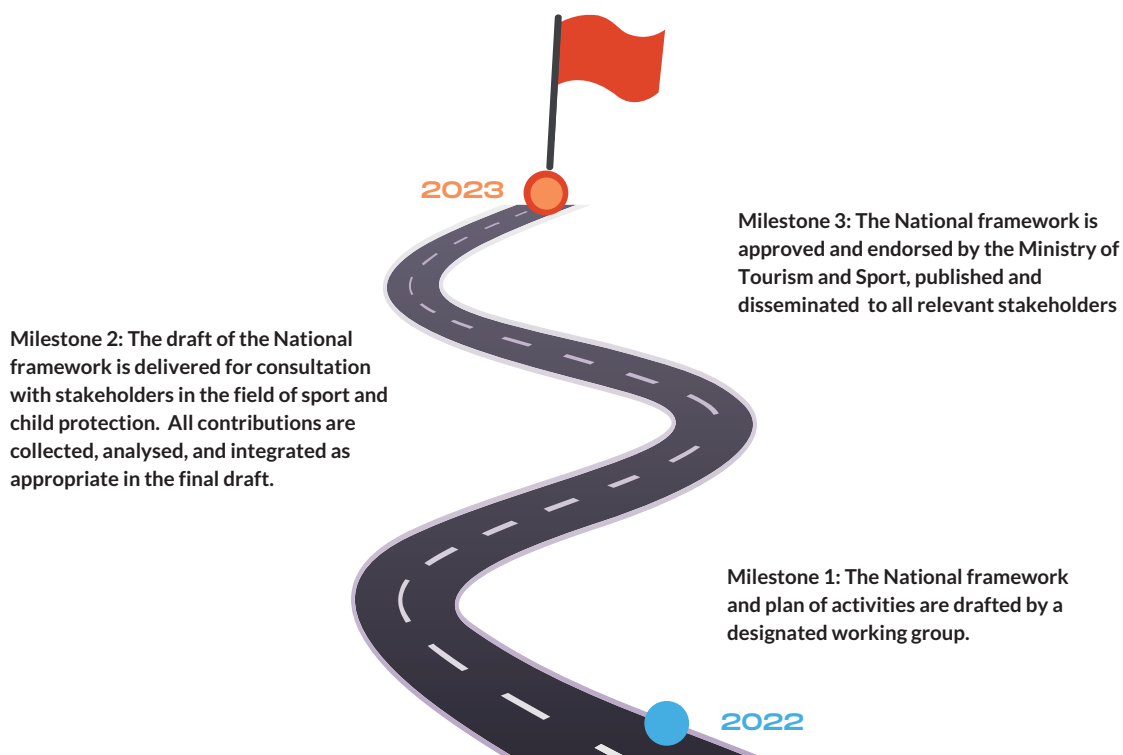
Stakeholders	Role and responsibilities in the achievement of the aims
Ministry of Tourism and Sport	Co-ordinator of the working group for the creation and implementation of the National framework (working group). Initiate co-operation with other responsible ministries and NGOs and co-ordinate the activities of the working group. Collect and analyse the contributions made by the stakeholders. Prepare and present drafts and the final version of the National framework for child safeguarding in sport policy and plan of activities to all stakeholders. Approve and endorse the National framework. Co-ordinate implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Ombudsperson for Children	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities. Carry out own initiatives regarding changes in the existing legislation related to the protection of children.
Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Croatian Olympic Committee	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Brave Phone	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Faculty of Croatian Studies (Department of Psychology), University of Zagreb	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Conduct research to better understand the issue and to identify the prevalence of different forms of non-accidental violence in sport in Croatia Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Conduct research to better understand the issue and to identify the prevalence of different forms of non-accidental violence in sport in Croatia Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Ministry of Science and Education	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Ministry of Justice and Administration	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.

¹¹ In addition to members of the steering committee established under the CSiS project, other relevant stakeholders will be invited to take part in the development and/or implementation of the National framework, including Croatian Paralympic Committee, Croatian Deaf Sport Federation, Croatian Academic Sports Federation, representatives of national sport federations and county sport communities. Their roles are envisaged in the stakeholder mapping (Appendix I).

Ministry of the Interior	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Kinesiology	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness raising activities.
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Croatian School Sports Federation	Member of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.
Croatian Football Federation Croatian Handball Federation Croatian Volleyball Federation	Members of the working group. Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities. Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.

Key milestones

Aim 1.1. The National framework for child safeguarding in sport is created and adopted.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
1.1. The National framework for child safeguarding in sport is created and adopted.	1.1.1. The National framework and plan of activities are drafted by a designated working group.					
	1.1.2. The draft of the National framework is delivered for consultation with stakeholders in the field of sport and child protection. All contributions are collected, analysed, and integrated as appropriate in the final draft.					
	1.1.3. The National framework is approved and endorsed by the Ministry of Tourism and Sport, published and disseminated to all relevant stakeholders.					

Aim 1.2. The general public and the sport sector are aware of the importance of safeguarding children in and through sport.



Aims	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
1.2. The general public and the sport sector are aware of the importance of safeguarding children in and through sport.	1.2.1. The communication plan and the campaign for raising awareness of the importance of safeguarding children in and through sport is developed.					
	1.2.2. Initial online research about violence and abuse of any kind against children in sport is conducted and presented.					
	1.2.3. The campaign and awareness-raising activities are implemented.					

Potential obstacles

The National framework will be developed through a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach. Stakeholders in the field of sport and child protection should be consulted. A potential obstacle is the lack of engagement and contributions in the consultation process. To mitigate this risk, it would be necessary to regularly inform relevant stakeholders about the development of the National framework and to ensure appropriate channels to collect contributions. The process of approval can take longer than expected and presents a potential risk for the National framework to not be disseminated widely enough. In this regard, all relevant stakeholders (including internal departments of the Ministry of Tourism and Sport and external partners) should be regularly informed about the process and feedback should be requested within reasonable deadlines. Different communication channels should be used for providing information. When it comes to the communication campaign and awareness-raising initiative, a potential risk arises with the lack of knowledge in terms of technical aspects and specificities of this sensitive subject. This could be mitigated by engaging communication consultancy.

BUILDING BLOCK 2: PARTNERSHIPS

It is essential for children and young people that the adults in their community – both as individuals and in organisations – work together to ensure they are safeguarded and protected. For this to be achieved consistently for every child, organisations need to ensure a collaborative approach from national to local level which is established in clear partnerships where everyone understands their role, responsibilities and contribution. Multi-disciplinary and multi-agency work is the basis for sound safeguarding systems. Bringing together sport, statutory agencies and NGOs with relevant expertise is a new dynamic for safeguarding in sport in Croatia. Meeting the aims of this building block is a particularly critical step for Croatia.

Aims and priorities

2.1. The working group for the creation and implementation of the National framework for child safeguarding in sport is established.

2.2. Partnerships are in place for the establishment of the CSOs at different levels.

Stakeholders to be involved and their role and responsibilities

Stakeholders	Role and responsibilities in the achievement of the aims
Ministry of Tourism and Sport	Co-ordinator of the working group. Implements and monitors the overall implementation of the National framework and plan of activities.
Ombudsperson for Children	Member of the working group. Acts as an advisor and promotor of activities related to the protection of children. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Croatian Olympic Committee	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members - national sports federations.
Brave Phone	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Faculty of Croatian Studies (Department of Psychology), University of Zagreb	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Ministry of Science and Education	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Ministry of Justice and Administration	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Ministry of the Interior	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.

University of Zagreb, Faculty of Kinesiology	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences	Member of the working group. Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.
Croatian School Sports Federation	Member of the working group. Implements the plan of activities within its competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members - school sport organisations.
Croatian Football Federation Croatian Handball Federation Croatian Volleyball federation	Members of the working group. Implements the plan of activities within its competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members – clubs.

Key milestones

Aim 2.1. The working group for the creation and implementation of the National framework for child safeguarding in sport is established.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
2.1. The working group for the creation and implementation of the National framework for child safeguarding in sport is established.	2.1.1. The working group for the creation and implementation of the National framework is established.					
	2.1.2. The terms of reference of the working group are formalised.					

Aim 2.2. Partnerships are in place for the establishment of the CSOs at different levels.



Aims	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
2.2. Partnerships are in place for the establishment of the CSOs at different levels.	2.3.1. A map of the current structure and dynamics of partnerships is prepared by the working group.					
	2.3.2. Potential synergies with existing working groups responsible for the implementation of the measures of the National Sports Programme 2019 – 2026 (related to the prevention of violence in sport) are analysed by the working group.					
	2.3.3. A proposal for development of partnerships between national, regional and local level is prepared by the working group.					
	2.3.4. The new structure of the partnerships needed for the establishment of the CSOs at all levels is prepared and validated by the working group.					
	3.2.5. Partnerships are created for the establishment of the COSs, in line with their roles and responsibilities, at different levels.					

Potential obstacles

A working group for the creation and implementation of the National framework for child safeguarding in sport will be drawn from members of the steering committee established within the CSIS project. However, there is a need to involve additional relevant stakeholders, especially regarding the partnerships needed for the establishment of CSOs at different levels. Since there are currently no partnerships between different levels

to address the issue of child safeguarding in sport, a potential obstacle is seen in reaching the local level. A proposal for a new structure of partnerships at different levels is to be prepared by the working group and should include options for how to reach the local level, for example, through national sport federations and county sport communities.

BUILDING BLOCK 3: SYSTEM AND STRUCTURE FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

When concerns about a child’s safety or well-being arise, it is essential these are managed in a child-centred way with a documented process for responding that everyone understands. Sports bodies need to have step-by-step procedures which operate within structures and systems that complement those of statutory agencies. They need to be able to respond to concerns in sport as well as concerns about children in their communities. Concerns often begin with early indicators that something is wrong, and sports bodies need to be responsive – particularly where the concern may not meet the threshold for statutory agency action.

Sports bodies and statutory agencies need to understand and work with each other’s roles and responsibilities. While most interventions by statutory agencies tend to focus on cases of higher thresholds of abuse, sports bodies still retain responsibilities for ensuring that individuals are safe to work with children and have procedures and systems for responding to concerns. For example, if a criminal justice case fails in respect of an individual working with children in sport, the sport body still needs to consider what action should be taken in terms of potential breaches of its codes of ethics and conduct. Procedures and case management systems need to be reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect current issues such as online abuse, peer abuse and so on. Everyone involved needs access to advice and support.

Aims and priorities

- 3.1. Procedures are in place with step-by-step guidance on actions to be taken if there are concerns about children’s and young people’s safety and well-being in sport.
- 3.2. Baseline information before intervention/action is established and the effectiveness of interventions/activities on children is evaluated.
- 3.3. The sport sector is aware of existing helplines for victim support organisations and those organisations are working alongside the National framework and its reporting arrangements.
- 3.4. A case response and case management system for responding to concerns is developed and implemented.

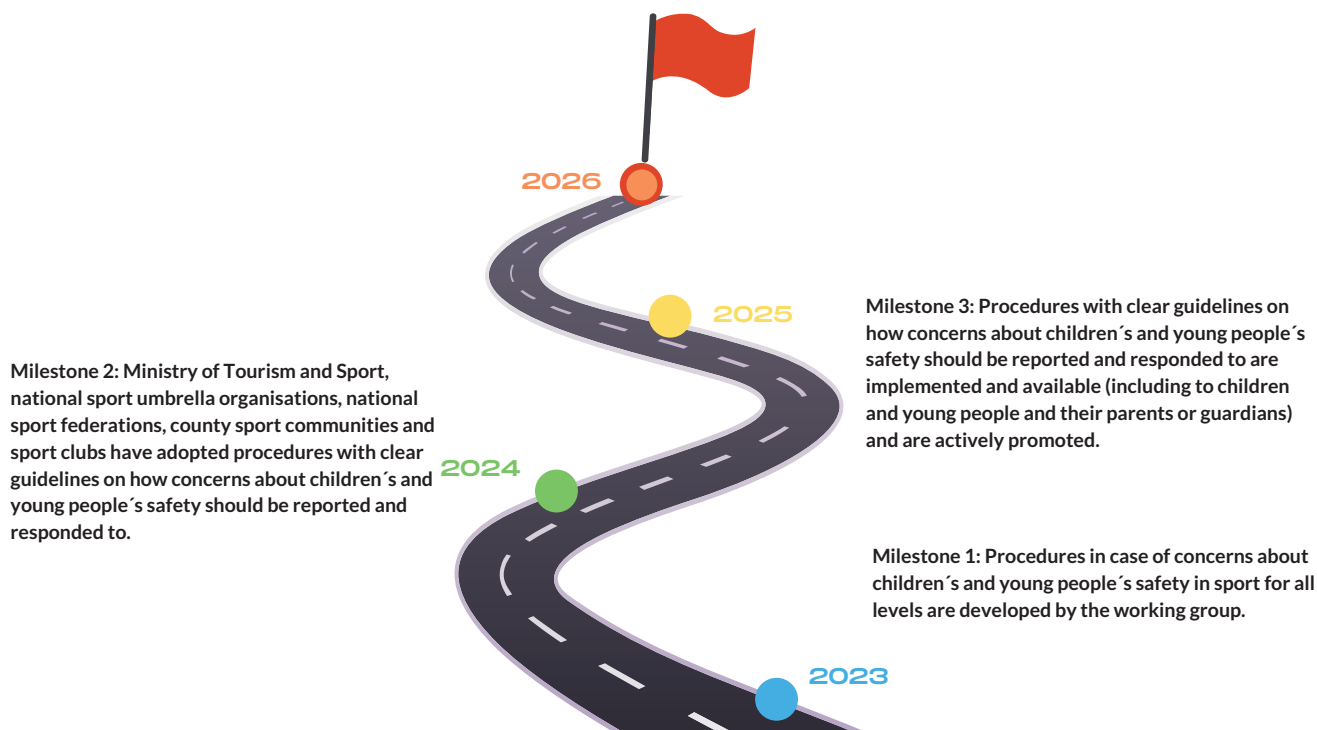
Stakeholders to be involved and their role and responsibilities

Stakeholders	Role and responsibilities in the achievement of the aims
Ministry of Tourism and Sport	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children’s and young people’s safety. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and the case management system. Enabling the establishment of baseline information and evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions/activities. Making proposals for the inclusion of the safeguarding requirements for sport organisations to obtain public funding.
Ombudsperson for Children	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children’s and young people’s safety. Enabling the establishment of baseline information and evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions/activities. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system.

Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system.
Croatian Olympic Committee	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system.
Brave Phone	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system.
Faculty of Croatian Studies, (Department of Psychology), University of Zagreb	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of information about the helplines.
Ministry of Science and Education	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system.
Ministry of Justice and Administration	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system.
Ministry of the Interior	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system.
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Kinesiology	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of information about the helplines.
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of information about the helplines.
Croatian School Sports Federation	Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system.
Croatian Football Federation Croatian Handball Federation Croatian Volleyball Federation	Providing feedback on draft procedures for concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of information about the helplines. Participation in the process of development of the case response and case management system.

Key milestones

Aim 3.1. Procedures are in place with step-by-step guidance on actions to be taken in case of concerns about children’s and young people’s safety in sport.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
3.1. Procedures are in place with step-by-step guidance on actions to be taken in case of concerns about children’s and young people’s safety in sport.	3.1.1. Procedures in case of concerns about children’s and young people’s safety in sport for all levels are developed by the working group.					
	3.1.2. Ministry of Tourism and Sport, national sport umbrella organisations, national sport federations, county sport communities and sport clubs have adopted procedures with clear guidelines on how concerns about children’s and young people’s safety should be reported and responded to.					
	3.1.3. Procedures with clear guidelines on how concerns about children’s and young people’s safety should be reported and responded to are implemented and available (including to children and young people and their parents or guardians) and are actively promoted.					

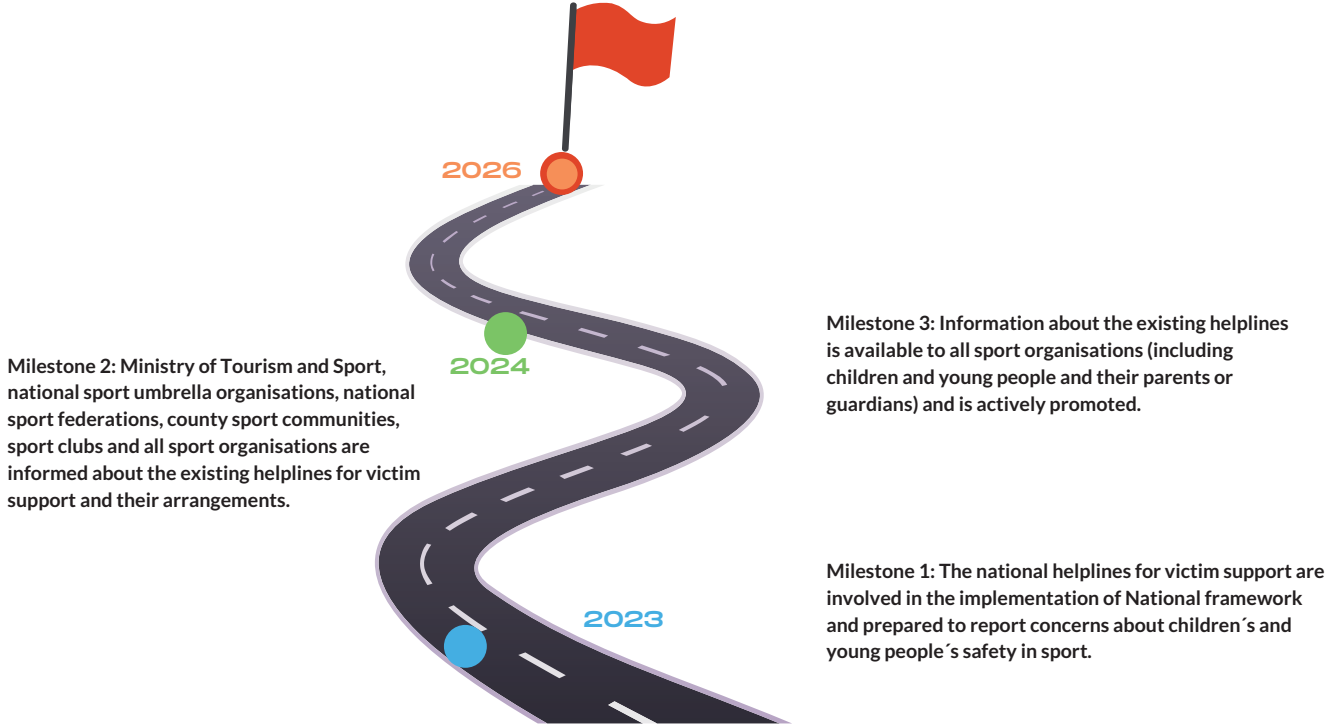
Aim 3.2. Baseline information before intervention/action is established and the effectiveness of interventions/activities on children is evaluated.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
3.2. Baseline information before interventions/ actions are established and the effectiveness of interventions/activities on children is evaluated.	3.2.1. Establishing baseline information before interventions/actions on children (Child Rights Impact Assessment-CRIA ¹²).					
	3.2.2. Evaluating the effectiveness of interventions/activities on children (Child Rights Impact Evaluation-CRIE).					

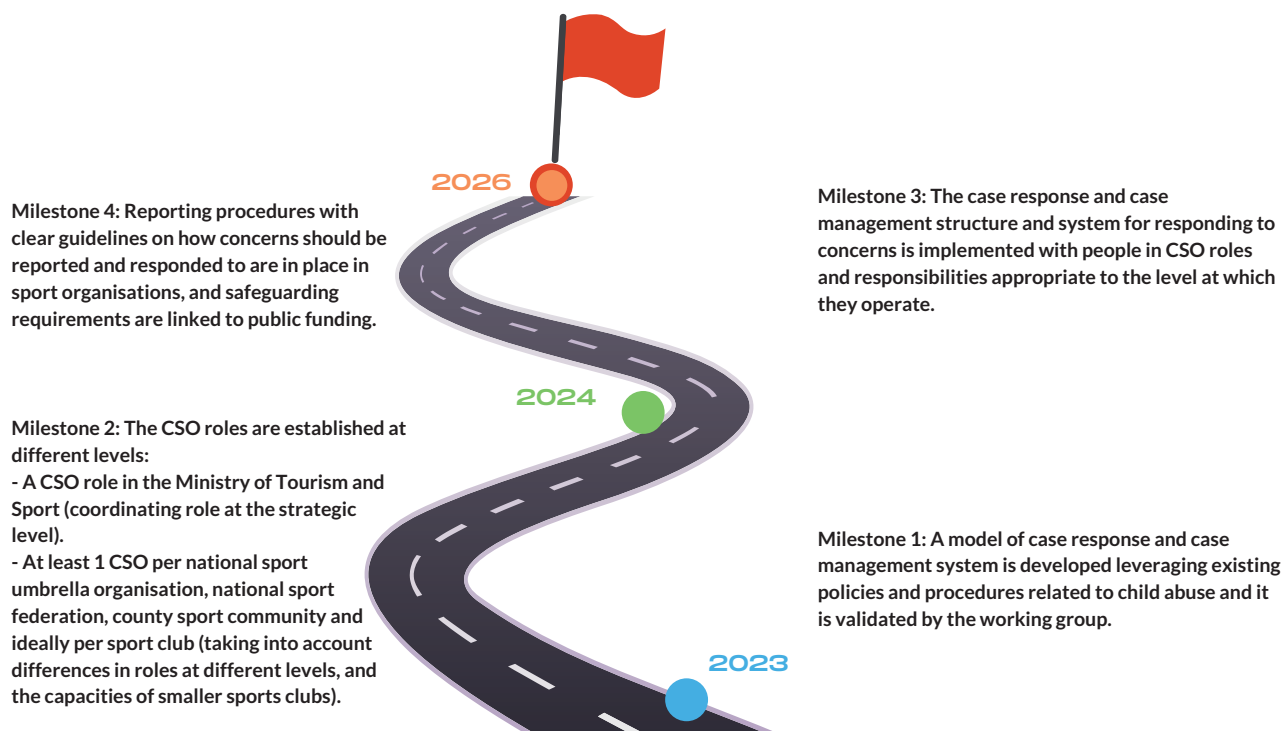
¹² Child Rights Impact Assessment – CRIA and Child Rights Impact Evaluation-CRIE: http://enoc.eu/?page_id=3718

Aim 3.3. Sport sector is aware of existing helplines for victim support and those organisations are working alongside the National framework for safeguarding in sport and its reporting arrangements.



Aims	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
3.3. The sport sector is aware of existing helplines for victim support and the victim support organisations are working alongside the National framework for safeguarding in sport and its reporting arrangements.	3.3.1. The national helplines for victim support are involved in the implementation of National framework and prepared to report concerns about children’s and young people’s safety in sport.					
	3.3.2. Ministry of Tourism and Sport, national sport umbrella organisations, national sport federations, county sport communities, sport clubs and all sport organisations are informed about the existing helplines for victim support and their arrangements.					
	3.3.3. Information about the existing helplines is available to all sport organisations (including children and young people and their parents or guardians) and is actively promoted.					

Aim 3.4. A case response and case management system for responding to concerns is developed and implemented.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
3.4. A case response and case management system for responding to concerns is developed and implemented	3.4.1. A model of case response and case management system is developed leveraging existing policies and procedures related to child abuse and is validated by the working group.					
	3.4.2. The CSO roles are established at different levels: - A CSO role in the Ministry of Tourism and Sport (coordinating role at the strategic level). - At least one CSO per national sport umbrella organisation, national sport federation, county sport community and ideally per sport club (taking into account differences in roles at different levels, and the capacities of smaller sports clubs).					
	3.4.3. The case response and case management structure and system for responding to concerns is implemented with people in CSO roles and responsibilities appropriate to the level at which they operate.					
	3.4.4. Reporting procedures with clear guidelines on how concerns should be reported and responded to are in place in sport organisations and safeguarding requirements are linked to public funding.					

Potential obstacles

To develop the system and structure for responding to concerns about children and young people, relevant stakeholders (Ministry of Tourism and Sport, national sport umbrella organisations, national sport federations, county sport communities and sport clubs) need to adopt procedures with clear guidelines on how concerns about children's and young people's safety should be reported and responded to. Accounting for a great number of stakeholders, there is a challenge in establishing the system for everyone at the same time. As a potential solution, the levels of implementation should be defined, for example starting with the largest organisations or those that involve large numbers of children.

Regarding the establishment of the CSOs at different levels, there is an obstacle to appointing a CSO in every sport club or local sport associations. It would be important to agree on the role of the contact person in small sport clubs. For example, in small clubs CSOs could have the role of "liaison" officer working towards full capacity CSO at an upper level, or they could share a CSO with other larger clubs in the same area/sport. The working group will need to analyse the situation and consult with relevant stakeholders to propose the most suitable model.

When it comes to linking safeguarding requirements with public funding, the potential obstacle is the different sources of public funding related to different procedures and competences for allocation. For example, based on the current legal framework financing of sport at national level comes from the state budget, whereas financing of sport at regional and local levels comes from the budget of local and county/regional self-governing units. Introducing safeguarding requirements as one criterion for financing might require certain changes to the Sports Act.

While preparing the proposal for the safeguarding requirements for public funding at national level the working group will have to assess and consider the potentially necessary changes to the Sports Act. As this goal might be difficult to achieve within the given timeframe and at all levels, the working group might start by considering including safeguarding requirements in public calls for sport associations as an incentive i.e. as one of the advantages of obtaining public funding. In addition, it is important to note that following the Law on Local and Regional Self-Government, counties, towns and municipalities are independent in making decisions within their self-governmental remit. It would therefore be important to enhance co-ordination and co-operation with regional and local self-governments to apply safeguarding requirements when funding sports associations at that level.

BUILDING BLOCK 4: ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Responding to concerns about children, particularly where an alleged perpetrator is known in the sport organisation can be extremely stressful for all affected persons. Advice for children and their parents or guardians about their rights and about what they should expect from the organisation should be provided in appropriate formats upon joining the organisation. Many victims of abuse report that they did not understand their rights or know what was considered acceptable behaviour in the sport context. If a child or parent raises concerns these must be treated seriously and information must be provided to them on sources of help and support, inside and outside of sport, and the process that will be followed when the concern is assessed and/or investigated. For bystanders such as coaches, volunteers and other affected persons, advice and support must also be signposted. Where a person is accused of abusing and causing harm to a child they must also be provided with information about their rights and the concerns must be addressed in a fair and transparent process. People with specific roles in responding to and managing cases need access to professional support and supervision, particularly CSOs operating at higher levels (e.g., national or event safeguarding officers).

Aims and priorities

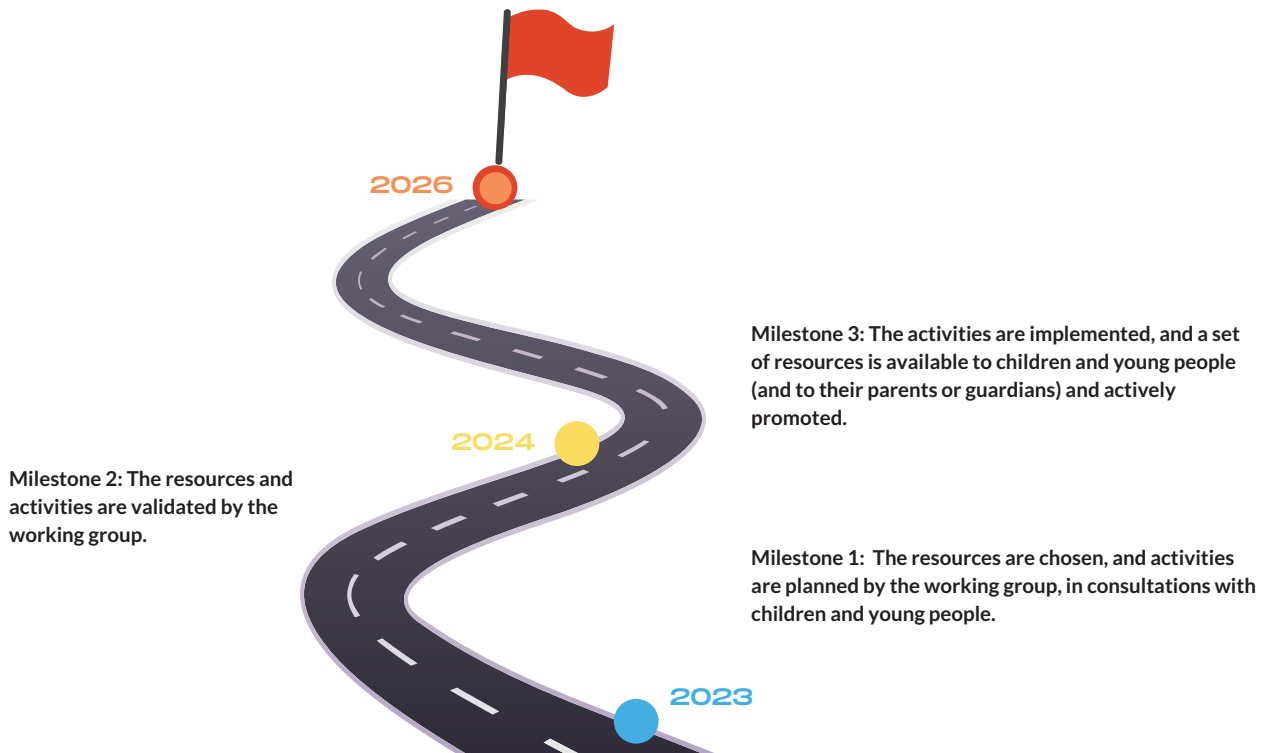
- 4.1. A set of resources is developed and activities are implemented to inform children and young people about their rights, how to recognise violence and abuse, where to go to for help and what the procedure is upon reporting.
- 4.2. Arrangements for providing professional supervision to staff and volunteers and support and advice to children and parents or guardians, during and following an incident or allegation, are in place.
- 4.3. People with responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people (adults, coaches, sport leaders, etc.) and people in CSO roles have access to advice, support, and information.

Stakeholders to be involved and their role and responsibilities

Stakeholders	Role and responsibilities in the achievement of the aims
Ministry of Tourism and Sport	<p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Prepare and disseminate information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</p> <p>Identify the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels.</p> <p>Develop a support network for CSOs.</p>
Ombudsperson for Children	<p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Prepare and disseminate information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</p> <p>Identify the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels.</p> <p>Develop a support network for CSOs.</p>
Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy	<p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Prepare and disseminate information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</p> <p>Identify the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels.</p> <p>Develop a support network for CSOs.</p>
Croatian Olympic Committee	<p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Identify the needs for advice, support and information of the CSOs at all levels.</p> <p>Disseminate resources and activities.</p>
Brave Phone	<p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Share knowledge and experience in providing professional supervision, advice and support.</p> <p>Prepare and disseminate information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</p> <p>Identify the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels.</p> <p>Develop a support network for CSOs.</p>
Faculty of Croatian Studies (Department of Psychology), University of Zagreb	<p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Prepare and disseminate information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</p> <p>Identify the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels.</p>
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb	<p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Prepare and disseminate information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</p> <p>Identify the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels.</p>
Ministry of the Interior	<p>Prepare and disseminate information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</p>
Croatian School Sports Federation	<p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Disseminate resources and implement activities</p>

Key milestones

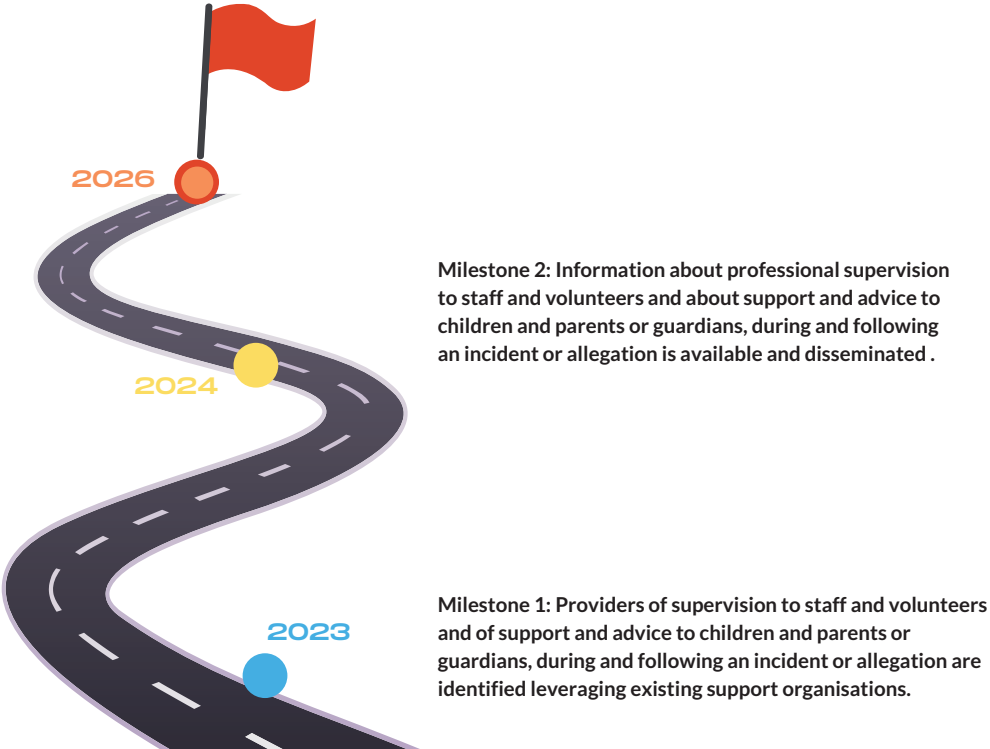
Aim 4.1. A set of resources is developed and activities are implemented to inform children and young people about their rights, how to recognise violence and abuse, where to go to for help, and what the procedure is upon reporting.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
4.1. A set of resources is developed and activities are implemented to inform children and young people about their rights, how to recognise violence and abuse, where to go to for help and what the procedure is upon reporting.	4.1.1. The resources are chosen, and activities are planned by the working group, in consultations with children and young people. ¹³					
	4.1.2. The resources and activities are validated by the working group.					
	4.1.3. The activities are implemented and a set of resources is available to children and young people (and to their parents or guardians) and actively promoted.					

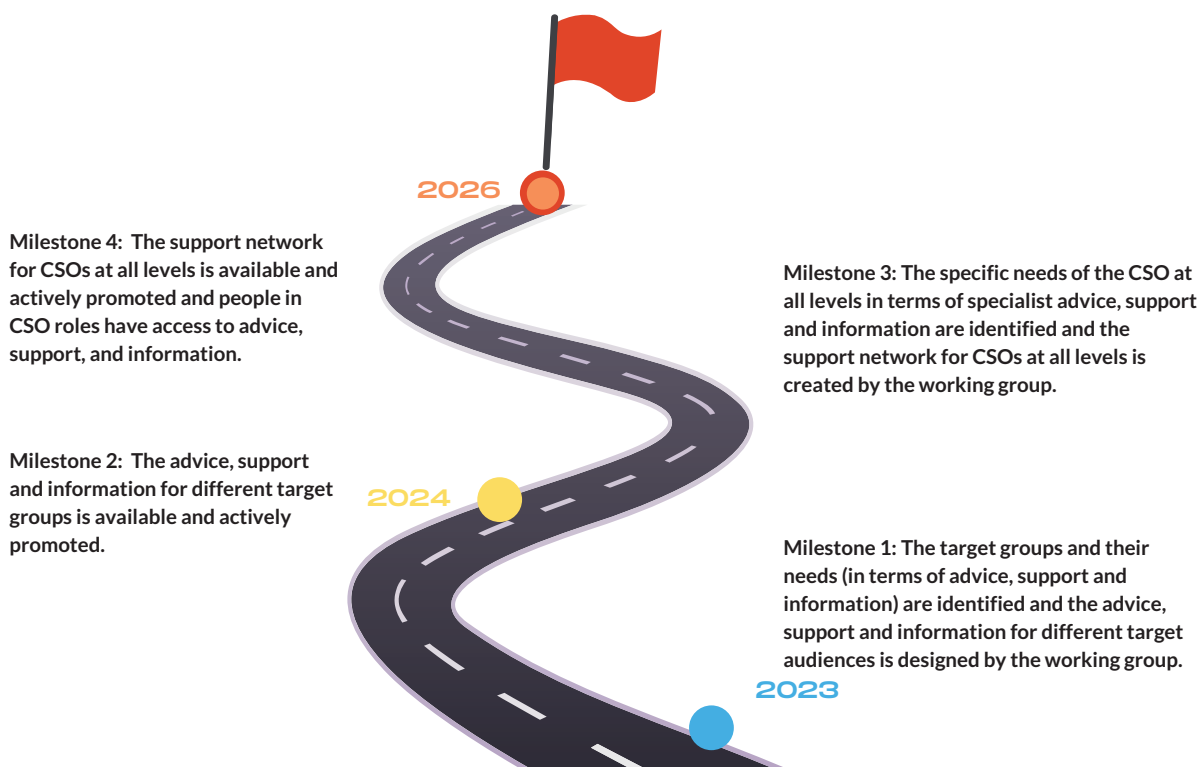
¹³ Organise the consultations with children and young people (young athletes) and involve them in this process to take into account what would be important to them in these situations and what is the best way to make information available for them (e.g. through social networks or other media).

Aim 4.2. Arrangements for providing professional supervision to staff and volunteers and support and advice to children and parents or guardians during and following an incident or allegation, are in place.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
4.2. Arrangements for providing professional supervision to staff and volunteers and support and advice to children and parents or guardians during and following an incident or allegation, are in place.	4.2.1. Providers of supervision to staff and volunteers and of support and advice to children and parents or guardians, during and following an incident or allegation are identified leveraging existing support organisations.					
	4.2.2. Information about professional supervision to staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians during and following an incident or allegation is available and disseminated.					

Aim 4.3. People with responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people (adults, coaches, sport leaders, etc.) and people in CSO roles have access to advice, support and information.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
4.3. People with responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people (adults, coaches, sport leaders, etc.) and people in CSO roles have access to advice, support and information.	4.3.1. The target groups and their needs (in terms of advice, support and information) are identified and the advice, support and information for different target audiences is designed by the working group.					
	4.3.2. The advice, support and information for different target groups is available and actively promoted.					
	4.3.3. The specific needs of the CSO at all levels in terms of specialist advice, support and information are identified and the support network for CSOs at all levels is created by the working group.					
	4.3.4. The support network for CSOs at all levels is available and actively promoted and people in CSO roles have access to advice, support, and information.					

Potential obstacles

In developing advice and support systems, a potential obstacle is identifying possible providers of professional supervision and support and their availability to engage with the sport sector. There is also a challenge to ensure support meets the real needs of different target groups. To mitigate these challenges, it would be important to first establish connections with existing support systems in other areas (social welfare, child protection and specialist NGOs) and on the basis of their knowledge, experience and work develop support teams that are sport-specific. To respond to real needs, it would be necessary to consult different target groups, especially people with lived experience of violence and abuse in sport and take their contributions as crucial in designing the whole support system to meet needs and address the specificities of sport.

BUILDING BLOCK 5: EDUCATION AND TRAINING FRAMEWORK

The development of a national system for safeguarding education and training is essential and needs resource prioritisation. Everyone in sport has a role to play – officials, administrators, coaches etc., whether they are volunteers or paid staff. Everyone needs to be familiar with their organisation’s policies and procedures and with what to do if a concern is raised with them. People with significant contact with children need safeguarding training to be a core part of their professional training. Those with specialist roles, such as Child Safeguarding Officers, need a higher level of training to ensure they have the right skills, knowledge and competencies to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Senior administrators, executive and non-executive board members also need to understand their responsibilities as safeguarding is a key part of good governance and overall ethics and integrity management.

Aims and priorities

- 5.1. A national education and training framework for child safeguarding in sport is in place.
- 5.2. The CSO role, job description and competences are defined for every setting and at all levels.
- 5.3. The CSO training standards for all levels are defined and training materials¹⁴ are created.
- 5.4. A training delivery model is established.

Stakeholders to be involved and their role and responsibilities

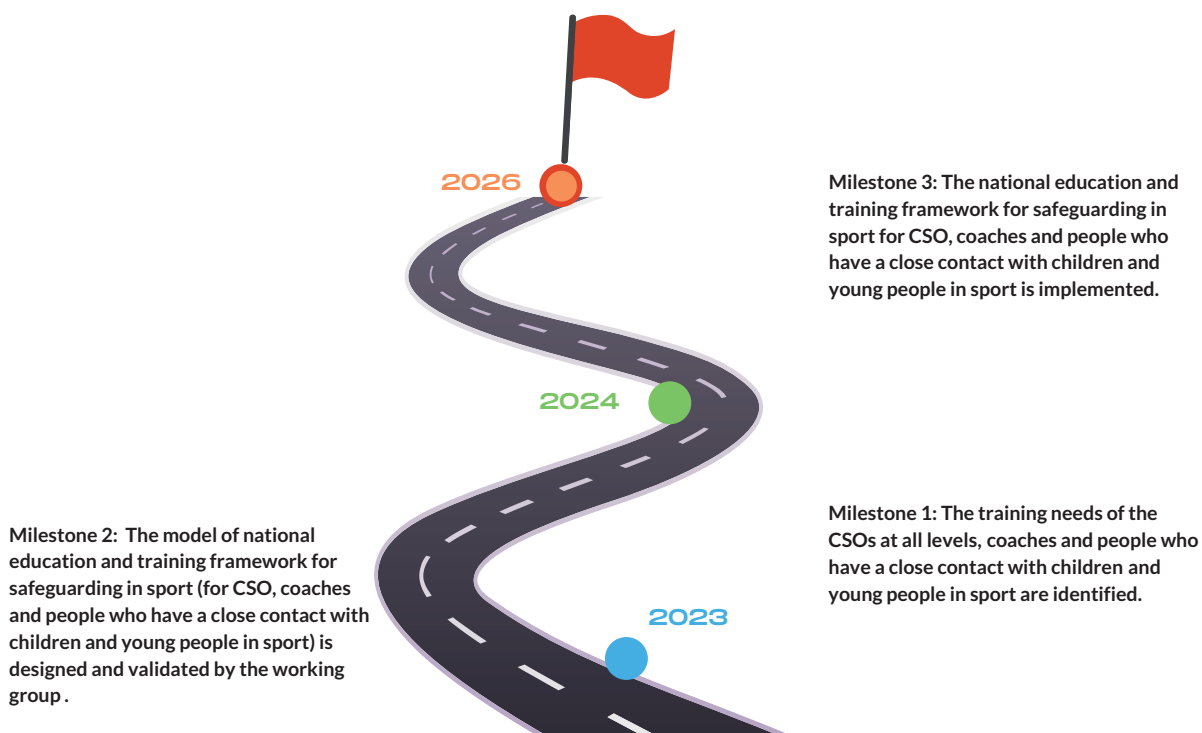
Stakeholders	Role and responsibilities in the achievement of the aims
Ministry of Tourism and Sport	Design the national education and training framework. Identify the training needs. Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials.
Ombudsperson for Children	Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials.
Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy	Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials.
Croatian Olympic Committee	Design the national education and training framework. Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials. Offer training and train the trainers.
Brave Phone	Design the national education and training framework. Identify the training needs Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials.

¹⁴ When creating training materials, existing good practices from other countries and international sport organisations will be analysed and considered.

Faculty of Croatian Studies (Department of Psychology), University of Zagreb	Identify the training needs. Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials. Provide education and training to CSO, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and youth in sports.
Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb	Identify the training needs. Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials. Provide education and training to CSO, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and youth in sports.
Ministry of Science and Education	Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials.
Ministry of Justice and Administration	Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials.
Ministry of the Interior	Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials.
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Kinesiology	Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials. Offering trainings and train the trainers.
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences	Define the CSO role, job description, competences and training standards and create training materials.
Croatian School Sports Federation	Train the trainers. Offer training.

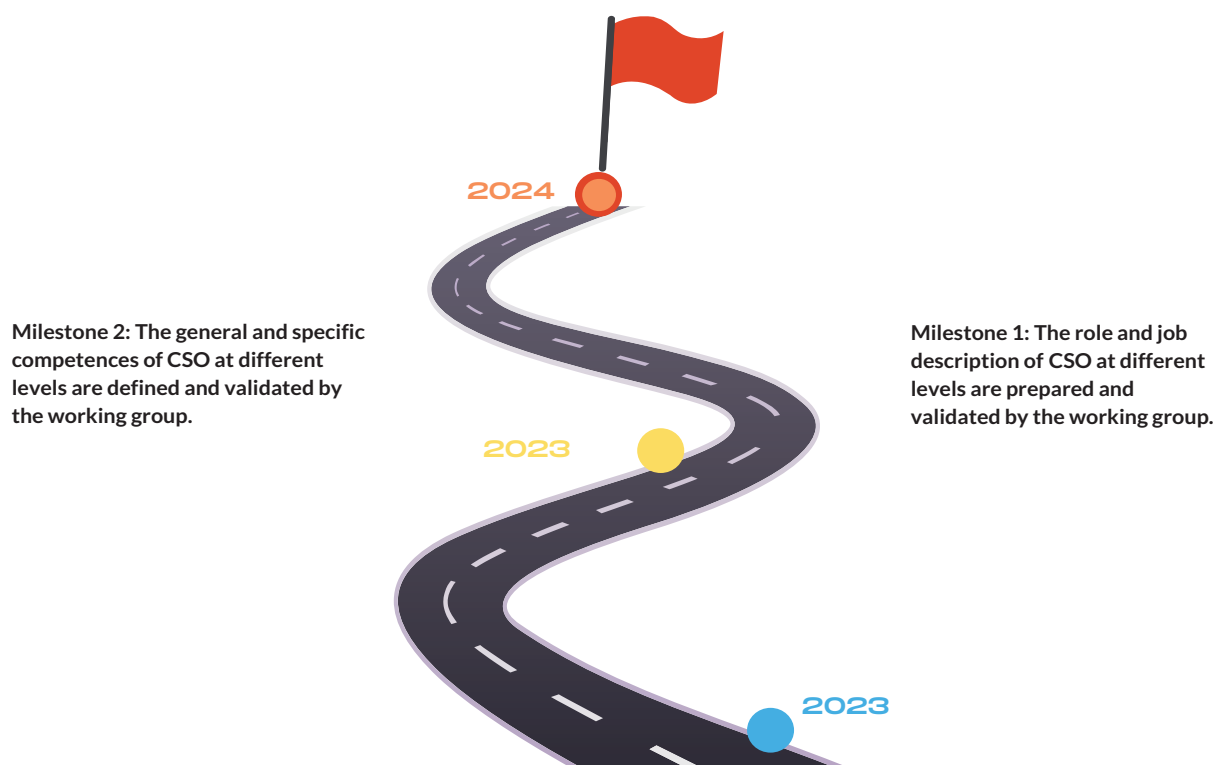
Key milestones

Aim 5.1. A national education and training framework for safeguarding in sport is in place.



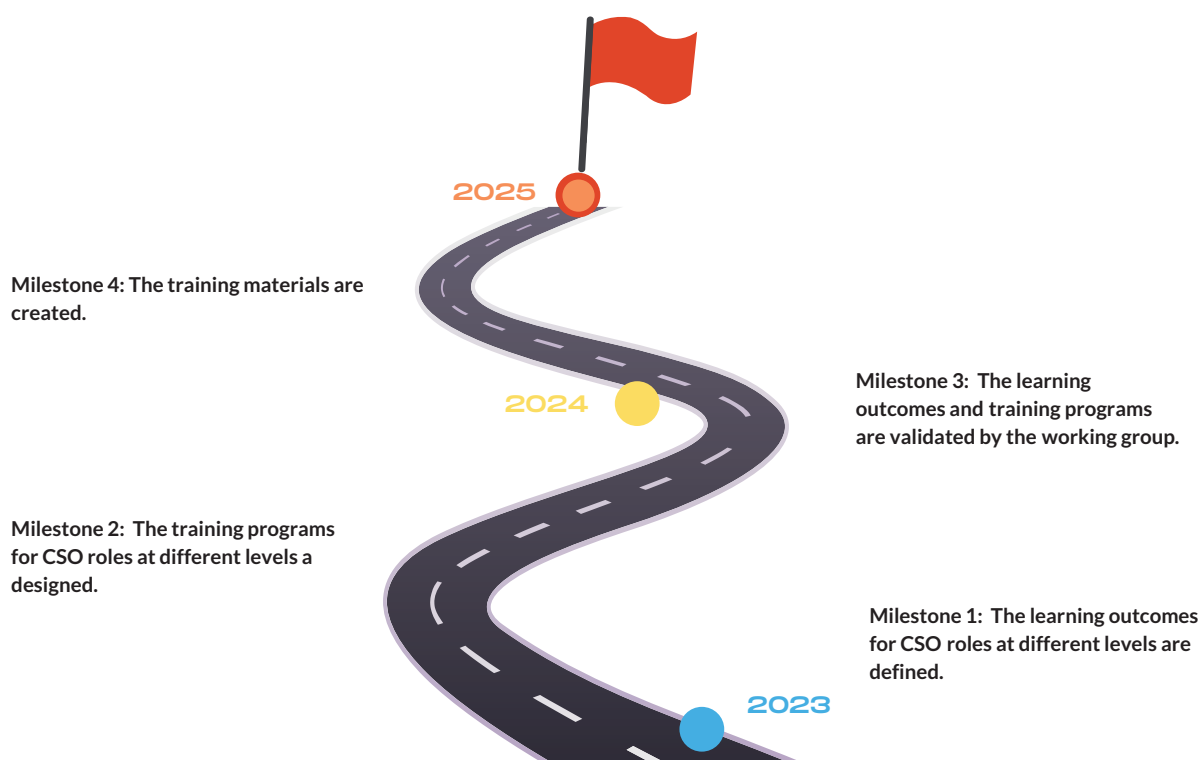
Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
5.1. A national education and training framework for safeguarding in sport is in place.	5.1.1. The training needs of the CSOs at all levels, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and young people in sport are identified.					
	5.1.2. The model of national education and training framework for safeguarding in sport (for CSO, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and young people in sport) is designed and validated by the working group.					
	5.1.3 The national education and training framework for safeguarding in sport for CSO, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and young people in sport is implemented.					

Aim 5.2. The CSO role, job descriptions and competences are defined for every sport setting and at all levels.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
5.2. The role, job description and competences of CSO are defined and in place for each setting and level.	5.2.1. The role and job description of CSO at different levels are prepared and validated by the working group.		■	■		
	5.2.2. The general and specific competences of CSO at different levels are defined and validated by the working group.		■	■		

Aim 5.3. The CSO training standards for all levels are defined and the training materials are created.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
5.3. The CSO training standards for all levels are defined and training materials are created.	5.3.1. The learning outcomes for CSO roles at different levels are defined.		■	■		
	5.3.2. The training programs for CSO roles at different levels are designed.		■	■		
	5.3.3. The learning outcomes and training programs are validated by the working group.			■		
	5.3.4. The training materials are created.			■	■	

Aim 5.4. A training delivery model is established.



Aim	Key milestones	Timescale				
		2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
5.4. A training delivery model is established.	5.4.1. The training delivery options, partners and approaches are identified.					
	5.4.2 The training delivery model is designed and validated by the working group.					
	5.4.3 A training model is implemented, available and actively promoted.					

Potential obstacles

Development of a national education and training framework for safeguarding in sport should start with identifying training needs of the CSOs at all levels, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and young people in sport. A model with different training levels should be proposed which accounts for the diverse training needs of people in different roles and at different levels. The challenge of delivery may arise given the large number of sport federations and their different sizes in terms of number of member organisations – clubs and in terms of overall number of children and staff. It would be difficult to implement the same training for all and tailored-made training offers should be developed.



CHAPTER 4: THE SETTING UP THE CSO ROLES IN SPORT

To keep children safe from any kind of violence and abuse it is necessary to ensure that advice, support and information are provided to children, victims of violence and abuse, and their families.

In Croatia, the National framework for child safeguarding in sport (National framework) will be created, building upon existing work in this area. The working group for the development and implementation of the National framework will be drawn from the steering committee established within the CSiS project and will gather relevant stakeholders from the child protection and sport sectors. To develop such a framework, more detailed analysis of existing legislation and measures, as well as necessary amendments, should be one of the first steps.

The research will be conducted to identify the prevalence of different forms of non-accidental violence towards children and young people in sport, in Croatia. This will contribute to evidence-based decisions and awareness-raising activities.

The final aim is to establish Child Safeguarding Officer (CSO) roles in sport to ensure children can enjoy sport and feel safe and supported. The CSO roles should be in place at different levels by 2026. This adheres to the aims and milestones of the roadmap and the National framework and plan of activities which is to be prepared by the working group. It will also be necessary to develop partnerships at national, regional and local levels as well as at different levels within the sport sector.

The placement, roles and responsibilities of CSOs at different levels should be defined and appropriate financial and other resources need to be identified. Within the CSiS project and through the consultations with the steering committee it was recognised that there is a need for a strategic and co-ordinating role at governmental level (Ministry of Tourism and Sport). The CSO roles should also be established at umbrella sport organisations, national sport federations, sport clubs and county sport communities.

When it comes to goal of having a CSO in every sport club, it will be necessary to account for differences in roles and responsibilities at different levels while also accounting for the limited capacity of smaller sport clubs. In this regard, appropriate solutions need to be found to ensure that every child in every sports club has access to advice and support. The working group will need to analyse the situation and in consultation with relevant stakeholders propose the most suitable model to reach the local level (for example, through national sport federations and county sport communities) and how to enable access to CSOs for children and young people from smaller sport clubs or local sport associations.

Before appointing CSOs at different levels, the procedures should be in place with step-by-step guidance on actions to be taken in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety in sport. A case response and case management system for responding to concerns will be developed together with the appointment of CSOs. At the same time activities will be implemented to ensure the sport sector is aware of the existing helplines for victim support and the victim support organisations should work alongside the National framework for child safeguarding in sport.

Arrangements for providing professional supervision to staff and volunteers and support and advice to children and parents or guardians, during and following an incident or allegation should be in place. Activities are planned to ensure that people with responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people (adults, coaches, sport leaders, etc.) as well as CSOs have access to advice, support and information and that they receive necessary training on child safeguarding.

In this regard, a national education and training framework for child safeguarding in sport will be developed. The CSO role, job description and competencies and training standards will be defined for different levels and the training materials will be created which consider good practices from other countries and international sport organisations. A training delivery model will be established that accounts for, the diverse training needs of people in different roles at different levels.

Baseline information before intervention or action will be established and the effectiveness of interventions and activities with children will be evaluated to facilitate adjustments and improvements of the measures taken.



CONCLUSION

The “Child Safeguarding in Sport” (CSiS) project has enabled the instrumental development of Croatia’s tailor-made roadmap for effective child safeguarding in sport policies to ensure a safe, positive and empowering sport environment for all children.

Croatia joined the project in 2021. National CSiS project co-ordinators and stakeholders gathered in the steering committee and the core group had to work significantly faster than other CSiS partner countries to establish the foundations and develop the roadmap. The experience of European countries sharing their good practice examples and inspiration from other partner countries who had completed their draft roadmaps and shared them as a part of a peer learning process, were instrumental to the fast advancement of the work.

Croatia already had a strong history of cross-sectorial co-operation at governmental level, which is instrumental in addressing the multi-disciplinary and multi-agency approach needed to build a comprehensive approach to safeguarding children and young people in and through sport. It facilitates connections between the different aspects of child safeguarding inside and outside of the sport system.

The National Sports Programme 2019 – 2026 has already foreseen the development of some important policy initiatives which relate particularly to school sport and children’s behaviours (violence between children) and sports events which will align well with the implementation of the country-specific roadmap for effective child safeguarding in sport policies.

The child-centred approach emphasised in the roadmap is essential to ensure that children and young people are made aware of their rights to safe sport and that they know to whom they can turn to if they are in difficulty. The inclusion of plans for involvement of children and young people the roadmap implementation phase will be extremely important.

Developing a comprehensive and effective system and structure for safeguarding in sport is challenging and requires time.

The arrangements envisaged in the roadmap provide the necessary multi-stakeholder structure – starting with the establishment of the working group for development and implementation of the National framework for child safeguarding in sport and development of necessary partnerships. Equal effort will be needed to develop and implement prevention measures i.e. developing the system and structure to respond to reported concerns about children. Engagement with the Children’s Ombudsperson’s office and with NGOs that have relevant expertise, are essential.

Educating and raising awareness with the sport workforce (paid and volunteer) and the wider public as to the nature and extent of abuse in sport and sensitising them to subject matter will be key to sustaining safer sport environments. The development of the safeguarding education and training framework will be another critical step in the successful implementation of the roadmap.

The roadmap and the steps to take are clear. It is now for every concerned party to take ownership of the future long-term strategy and ensure that every child in Croatia has a safe, inclusive and enjoyable experience of sport.

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on children’s physical and mental health and well-being is striking. Sport has never been more important in the process of redressing the balance and helping children to recover. This can only happen if sport is a safe place and children know who they can turn to in case of need. This should be considered when developing and implementing child safeguarding measures and activities.

Appendix

Stakeholder Mapping – Prepared by Croatian CSiS project co-ordination

Sport

Organisation	Role and responsibilities	webpage
<p>Ministry of Tourism and Sport, Directorate for Sport</p>	<p>The Ministry of Tourism and Sport performs administrative and professional tasks related to the development of sport and physical culture. It also promotes recreational, health, school, university, amateur, professional, competitive and promotional significance of sport and athletes, proposing and implementing regulations on the organisation and operation of sport, sport clubs, associations and federations, funding sport programmes and sport development programmes, professional affairs in matters improvement of sport activities and the categorisation of sports and athletes. It proposes and implements regulations on health, education, employment, pensions and other forms of support and recognition of top athletes, proposing a national sports development programme and overall administrative and inspection supervision of sports activities. It participates in the preparation of programmes and projects and the implementation of projects from European Union programmes and other forms of international assistance.</p> <p><i>Co-ordinator of the working group for the development and implementation of the National framework for child safeguarding in sport.</i></p> <p><i>Initiate co-operation with other responsible ministries and NGOs and co-ordinate the activities.</i></p> <p><i>Collect and analyse the contributions made by the stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>Prepare and present drafts and the final version of the National framework and plan of activities to all stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>Approve and endorse the National framework.</i></p> <p><i>Implements and monitors the overall implementation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Draft the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.</i></p> <p><i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i></p> <p>Enable the establishment of baseline information and evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions/activities.</p> <p>Make proposals for the inclusion of the safeguarding requirements for sport organisations to obtain public funding.</p> <p>Develop of the case response and case management system.</p> <p>Plan resources and activities to inform children and young people.</p> <p>Prepare and disseminate information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</p> <p>Identify the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels.</p> <p>Develop a support network for CSOs.</p> <p>Design the national education and training framework.</p> <p>Identify the training needs.</p> <p>Define the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and create training materials.</p>	<p>https://mint.gov.hr/</p>
<p>National Council Sports</p>	<p>The National Sports Council is the highest expert body and is responsible for the development and quality of sport in Croatia and is appointed by the Croatian Parliament at the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Croatia. The tasks of the National Council for Sports proposes and encourages the adoption of measures to improve sport and sets out guidelines for drafting regulations on the categorisation of athletes. It gives opinions and recommendations on draft proposals for regulations related to sport, training programmes for professional work in sport and proposes the conditions that must be met by institutions that provide training for sport staff.</p> <p>Follows the implementation of the National framework.</p>	<p>https://mint.gov.hr/nacionalno-vijece-zasport/21682</p>

Child Protection

Organisation	Role and responsibilities	webpage
<p>Ombudsperson for Children</p>	<p>The Ombudsperson for Children safeguards, monitors and promotes the rights and interests of children in Croatia, acts independently and autonomously, adhering to the principles of equity and morals.</p> <p>The Ombudsperson for Children acts on complaints received, or on his/her own initiative, whether in responding to individual violations of children's rights and interests, or in general.</p> <p>If in the performance of his/her duties the Ombudsperson for Children finds out a child has been subjected to physical or mental violence, sexual abuse, abuse or exploitation, neglect or negligence, he/she must immediately report the concern to the competent state attorney's office and warn the social welfare centre and propose measures to protect the rights and interests of the child.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</p> <p>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</p> <p>Carry out own initiatives regarding changes in the existing legislation related to the protection of children.</p> <p>Act as an advisor and promotor of activities related to the protection of children.</p> <p>Implement the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</p> <p>Enable the establishment of baseline information and evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions/activities.</p> <p>As a member of the working group takes part in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children and young people's safety. Dissemination of information about the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system. Planning resources and activities to inform children and young people. Preparing and disseminating information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians. Identifying the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels. Developing a support network for CSOs. Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies, training standards and creating training materials. 	<p>https://cijete.hr/hr/</p>

<p>Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy</p>	<p>The Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy carries out tasks related to social policy, protection from domestic violence and the development of community work programmes. This includes the development of volunteering and the work of citizens' associations that support parents, families and children, provide counselling for children, parents and victims of domestic violence, research contemporary problems of families and children and provide preventive and therapeutic assistance. The Ministry is in charge of the organisation of 135 Social Welfare Centres and their branches across Croatia. Social Welfare Centres are public institutions that decide on social welfare rights and provide social services to particularly vulnerable groups of citizens which include children without parents, children without adequate parental care, children with disabilities, children and young people with behavioural problems and persons with disabilities. They legally handle individual cases related to the violence and abuse against children.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.</i> <i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i> <i>Development of the case response and case management system.</i> <i>Planning the resources and activities to inform children and young people.</i> <i>Preparing and disseminating information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</i> <i>Identifying the needs of different target groups for advice, support and information, including the specific needs of the CSOs at all levels.</i> <i>Developing a support network for CSOs.</i> <i>Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies, training standards and creating training materials of CSO.</i> 	<p>https://mrosp.gov.hr/</p>
<p>Ministry of Science and Education</p>	<p>The Ministry of Science and Education performs administrative and other tasks related to preschool education, elementary and secondary education in the country and abroad; develops the national curriculum; approves textbooks and introduces regulations and standards, as well as other requirements regarding educational work. The Ministry fosters the development of the school system; works on improving student standards, conducts inspections, establishes educational institutions and supervises the legal aspects of their activities; provides funding and facilities for educational work, enables children, young adults and adults to acquire technical skills and competences and supports organisations invested in education.</p> <p><i>Member of the working group.</i></p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.</i> <i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i> <i>Development of the case response and case management system.</i> <i>Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies, training standards and creating training materials of CSO.</i> 	<p>www.mzo.hr</p>

<p>Ministry of Justice and Administration</p>	<p>The Ministry of Justice and Administration ensures the conditions for quality functioning and further construction of the judicial system of the Republic of Croatia as well as the preservation of its fundamental values.</p> <p><i>Member of the working group.</i></p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <p><i>Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.</i></p> <p><i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i></p> <p><i>Development of the case response and case management system.</i></p> <p><i>Preparing and disseminating information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</i></p> <p><i>Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies, training standards and creating training materials of CSO.</i></p>	<p>https://mpu.gov.hr/</p>
<p>Ministry of the Interior</p>	<p>The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the protection of life and personal safety of people and property and the prevention and detection of criminal offences, finding and apprehending the perpetrators of criminal offences and bringing them before the relevant authorities.</p> <p><i>Member of the working group.</i></p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <p><i>Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.</i></p> <p><i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i></p> <p><i>Development of the case response and case management system.</i></p> <p><i>Preparing and disseminating information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</i></p> <p><i>Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies, training standards and creating training materials of CSO.</i></p>	<p>https://mup.gov.hr/</p>

Sport

Umbrella sport organisations

Croatian Olympic Committee	<p>The Croatian Olympic Committee is one of five umbrella sport organisations in Croatia. As the highest sport association, it has a mission to permanently contribute to the promotion of sport as universal civilization heritage, spreading of Olympic principles, as well as ethical and moral standards in sport, creating the top sport achievements of the Croatian athletes, promotion of the Republic of Croatia as a democratic state and fair relationships among the participants in sport. It represents the Croatian sport (Olympic and non-Olympic) before the International Olympic Committee and other international sport organisations.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members - national sports federations.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.Dissemination of information about the helplines.Development of the case response and case management system.Planning the resources and activities to inform children and young people.Identifying the needs for advice, support and information of the CSOs at all levels.Disseminating resources and activities.Designing the national education and training framework.Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and creating training materials.Offering trainings. and train the trainers.	https://www.hoo.hr/hr/
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<p>Croatian Paralympic Committee</p>	<p>The Croatian Paralympic Committee is one of five umbrella sport organisations in Croatia. It is the highest non-governmental national sports association of athletes with disabilities which organises and implements the system of sports competitions for persons with disabilities, regulates issues related to the registration of athletes with disabilities, the status of athletes and other sports staff, caring for categorised athletes with disabilities and co-operating with state administration bodies. The members of HPO are national sports federations (15), county sport federations (11) and the city sport federations of persons with disabilities (10).</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</p> <p>Participate in the implementation of awareness raising activities.</p> <p>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members – national, county and city sport federations of persons with disabilities.</p> <p>As a member of the working group takes part in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of information about the helplines. Development of the case response and case management system. Planning the resources and activities to inform children and young people. Identifying the needs for advice, support and information of the CSOs at all levels. Disseminating resources and activities. Designing the national education and training framework. Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and create training materials. Offering trainings. 	<p>https://www.hpo.hr/</p>
<p>Croatian School Sports Federation</p>	<p>Croatian School Sports Federation is one of five umbrella sport organisations in Croatia. It encourages and promotes school sport, determines the principles and basic conditions of the system of school sport competitions in Croatia in co-operation with the ministry responsible for sport. It promotes the achievements of children in school sport and their participation in world and European championships and other major international school sport events, co-ordinates the activities of school sport federations in the counties and the city of Zagreb to realise the overall sports programme for children and youth.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members - school sport organisations.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.</i> <i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i> <i>Development of the case response and case management system.</i> <i>Planning the resources and activities to inform children and young people.</i> <i>Identifying the needs for advice, support and information of the CSOs at all levels.</i> <i>Disseminating resources and activities.</i> <i>Designing the national education and training framework.</i> <i>Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and creating training materials.</i> <i>Offering trainings.</i> 	<p>https://skolski-sport.hr/</p>

<p>Croatian Academic Sports Federation</p>	<p>Croatian Academic Sports Federation is one of five umbrella sport organisations in Croatia. It encourages, promotes and takes care of sports at higher education institutions. <i>Disseminate information about child safeguarding in sport activities.</i></p>	<p>https://www.unisport.hr/hr</p>
<p>Croatian Deaf Sports Federation</p>	<p>The Croatian Deaf Sports Federation is one of five umbrella sport organisations in Croatia. It is the highest sport association for deaf people. It organises and implements the system of sports competitions for deaf people, regulates issues related to the registration of deaf athletes, the status of deaf athletes and other sports staff, cares for categorised deaf athletes and co-operates with state administration bodies. The members of the Croatian Deaf Sports Association are three national sports associations of deaf athletes, 12 county and city sport associations of deaf athletes and one national association of deaflympics. Member of the working group. <i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i> <i>Participate in the implementation of awareness raising activities.</i> <i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members - school sport organisations.</i> <i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i> <i>Drafting the procedures in case of concerns about children's and young people's safety.</i> <i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i> <i>Development of the case response and case management system.</i> <i>Planning the resources and activities to inform children and young people.</i> <i>Identifying the needs for advice, support and information of the CSOs at all levels.</i> Disseminating resources and activities. Designing the national education and training framework. Identifying training needs. Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and creating training materials. Offering trainings and train the trainers.</p>	<p>https://www.hssg.hr/</p>

Sport Federations and Sport Communities

Organisation	Role and responsibilities	webpage
<p>Croatian Football Federation</p>	<p>The Croatian Football Federation is the largest sport federation in Croatia in terms of the number of clubs and registered athletes. It has some experience with the subject of child abuse in sport through their involvement with international organisations like FIFA and UEFA where CFF had to comply with their policies like FIFA Safeguarding Policy and UEFA Child Safeguarding Toolkit.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National Framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the plan of activities within their competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members – clubs</i></p> <p><i>Providing feedback on draft procedures for cases of concern about children's and young people's safety.</i></p> <p><i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i></p> <p><i>Participation in the process of development of the case response and case management system.</i></p> <p><i>Offer trainings.</i></p>	<p>https://hns-cff.hr/</p>
<p>Croatian Handball Federation</p>	<p>The Croatian Handball Federation has good practice examples and experience in prevention of all types of violence and abuse in sport.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</p> <p>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</p> <p>Implements the plan of activities within their competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members – clubs</p> <p>Providing feedback on draft procedures for cases of concern about children's and young people's safety.</p> <p>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</p> <p>Participation in the process of development of the case response and case management system.</p> <p>Offer trainings.</p>	<p>https://hrs.hr/</p>
<p>Croatian Volleyball Federation</p>	<p>While the Croatian Football Federation and Croatian Handball Federation has a majority of male athletes the Croatian Volleyball Federation has a majority of female members both adult and children.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p>Contribute to the creation of the National Framework and plan of activities.</p> <p>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</p> <p>Implements the plan of activities within their competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members – clubs.</p> <p>Providing feedback on draft procedures for cases of concern about children's and young people's safety.</p> <p>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</p> <p>Participation in the process of development of the case response and case management system.</p> <p>Offer trainings.</p>	<p>https://hos-cvf.hr/</p>

<p>National Sport Federations</p>	<p>Members of the national sports federations are county sports federations including the city of Zagreb and other cities, as well as sports clubs of the same sport in Croatia. The national sports federations determine the competition system in the sports for which it has been founded and other issues which have been regulated according to Sports Act. The national sports federations promote sport in accordance with the National Sports Programme, organise sports championships, look after the well-being of the national sports team and represent the sports for which it has been founded in the relevant international sports federation.</p> <p>Implements the plan of activities within their competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members – clubs.</p> <p>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</p> <p>Disseminate information about the helplines.</p> <p>Offer trainings.</p>	
<p>Sports communities</p>	<p>To achieve common interests in sport, sports communities are founded in the area of local and regional self-governing units and the city of Zagreb. Members of sports communities in counties, the city of Zagreb and other cities and municipalities are considered legal persons in the sports system. Within their scope, sports communities harmonise the activities of their members and promote sport in accordance with the National Sports Programme, especially sports for children and youth, students and persons with disabilities. The sports communities also unify and harmonise sports programmes, propose sports programmes which meet public needs and participate in their implementation and look after the well-being of categorised athletes.</p> <p>Implements the plan of activities within their competence and monitors the implementation of activities by its members.</p> <p>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</p> <p>Disseminate information about the helplines.</p> <p>Offer trainings.</p>	

Education

Organisation	Role and responsibilities	webpage
<p>University of Zagreb, Faculty of Kinesiology</p>	<p>The Faculty of Kinesiology at the University of Zagreb offers integrated undergraduate and graduate university programmes in the field of kinesiology. Students acquire the necessary competences for teaching physical education classes at all levels of education (from preschool to higher education) and achieve the academic title of Master of Kinesiology.</p> <p>The Faculty has a long tradition of education and research work and has a responsibility to promote kinesiology as a science which supports Croatian sport, recreational sport and physical and health education. Through a strong social role, the Faculty of Kinesiology is often the organiser or conceptual initiator of actions that promote physical activity, movement and health. The faculty bases its work on high academic and ethical values, knowledge based on research and expertise and optimal infrastructure conditions. Its strategic goals are aimed at the quality advancement of the teaching process, ensuring the conditions for creative scientific research work aimed at creating new and deepening existing knowledge in all fields of general and applied kinesiology.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</p> <p>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</p> <p>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</p> <p>As a member of the working group takes part in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting the procedures in cases of concern about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of information about the helplines. Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and creating training materials. Offering trainings and train the trainers. 	<p>https://www.kif.unizg.hr/</p>
<p>Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences</p>	<p>The Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences at University of Zagreb is the only higher education institution in Croatia that creates and offers well established university-level programs in speech-language pathology, educational rehabilitation and social pedagogy in addition to developing and advancing high-quality research, as well as clinical best practices in these areas.</p> <p><i>Member of the working group.</i></p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Conduct research to better understand the issue and to identify the prevalence of different forms of non-accidental violence in youth sport in Croatia.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting the procedures in cases of concern about children's and young people's safety. Dissemination of information about the helplines. Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and creating training materials. 	<p>https://www.erf.unizg.hr/hr/</p>

<p>Faculty of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb Department of Psychology</p>	<p>Represents one of the leading institutions in terms of the number of scientific research in the field of child protection in sport. It offers undergraduate and graduate university study programme in psychology as a social science that studies human behaviour and psychological processes. Its focus is the development of scientific theories based on research, and the implementation of research results in many areas of the human life and functioning.</p> <p><i>Member of the working group.</i></p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Conduct research to better understand the issue and to identify the prevalence of different forms of non-accidental violence in youth sport in Croatia.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <p><i>Drafting the procedures in cases of concern about children's and young people's safety.</i></p> <p><i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i></p> <p><i>Planning the resources and activities to inform children and young people.</i></p> <p><i>Preparing and disseminating information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</i></p> <p><i>Identifying the needs for advice, support and information of the CSOs at all levels.</i></p> <p><i>Designing the national education and training framework.</i></p> <p><i>Identifying training needs.</i></p> <p><i>Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and creating training materials.</i></p> <p><i>Provide education and training to CSOs, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and youth in sports.</i></p>	<p>https://www.hrstud.unizg.hr/diplomski/psihologija</p>
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<p>Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb</p>	<p>The Faculty of Teacher Education is the leading institution for educating primary school and preschool teachers in Croatia. The Faculty also carries out programmes for continuing professional development for professionals working in kindergartens and primary schools.</p> <p><i>Member of the working group.</i></p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Conduct research to better understand the issue and to identify the prevalence of different forms of non-accidental violence in youth sport in Croatia.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <p><i>Drafting the procedures in cases of concern about children's and young people's safety.</i></p> <p><i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i></p> <p><i>Planning the resources and activities to inform children and young people.</i></p> <p><i>Preparing and disseminating information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians</i></p> <p><i>Identifying the needs for advice, support and information of the CSOs at all levels.</i></p> <p><i>Designing the national education and training framework.</i></p> <p><i>Identifying training needs.</i></p> <p><i>Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and creating training materials.</i></p> <p><i>Provide education and training to CSOs, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and youth in sports.</i></p>	<p>https://www.ufzg.unizg.hr/</p>
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Support organisations

Organisation	Role and responsibilities	Contact person(s)
<p>Child and Youth Protection Centre of Zagreb</p>	<p>Child and Youth Protection Centre of Zagreb provides effective and systematic support of traumatised children and their families (i.e. abused and neglected children, families affected by war). This includes sexual, physical and emotional abuse and neglect as well as children at risk of neglect. Alongside diagnostic and forensic assessment, experts from the Centre provide individual and group counselling and support for children and their parents. Within the described array of activities the Centre also organises and carries out education, supervision and professional development for experts that work in institutions directly involved in the issue of abuse.</p>	<p>https://www.poliklinika-djeca.hr/</p>

<p>Brave Phone</p>	<p>Brave Phone is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation that aims to help and protect abused and neglected children and implements preventative activities to protect children's rights in Croatia. As well as offering a helpline for children and parents, Brave Phone supports families through a number of programmes based in schools, communities and online. Brave Phone was established in 1997 as a helpline for abused and neglected children. Till then, there were no documented cases of child abuse, and many refused to believe in its existence. Brave Phone is contributing to the ONE in FIVE Campaign – co-ordinated by the Council of Europe.</p> <p>Member of the working group.</p> <p><i>Contribute to the creation of the National framework and plan of activities.</i></p> <p><i>Participate in the implementation of awareness-raising activities.</i></p> <p><i>Implements the National framework and plan of activities within its competence.</i></p> <p><i>As a member of the working group takes part in:</i></p> <p><i>Drafting the procedures in cases of concern about children's and young people's safety.</i></p> <p><i>Dissemination of information about the helplines.</i></p> <p><i>Development of the case response and case management system.</i></p> <p><i>Planning the resources and activities to inform children and young people.</i></p> <p><i>Preparing and disseminating information about professional supervision for staff and volunteers and about support and advice to children and parents or guardians.</i></p> <p><i>Identifying the needs for advice, support and information of the CSOs at all levels.</i></p> <p><i>Develop a support network for CSOs.</i></p> <p><i>Designing the national education and training framework. Identifying training needs.</i></p> <p><i>Defining the CSO role, job description, competencies and training standards and creating training materials.</i></p> <p><i>Provide education and training to CSOs, coaches and people who have a close contact with children and youth in sports.</i></p>	<p>https://hrabrifon.hr/</p>
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Document prepared by Kari Fasting, Safe Sport International (June, 2021)

The organisation and funding of sport in Croatia

The basic organisational unit of Croatian sport consists of sports clubs associated in local/regional and/or national sport federations, as well as in local sports communities.

The top of the pyramid of the sports system consists of Croatian Olympic Committee (acting as a national Olympic committee) which gathers all Olympic and non-Olympic sports, Croatian Paralympic Committee, Croatian Deaf Sports Association, Croatian University Sports Federation and Croatian School Sports Federation each of which are umbrella organisations and have separate pyramids building their sporting system (see Appendix 1).

The pyramid of public (state) support for the sports system consists of administrative departments responsible for sport within state administration offices in 20 counties and in the city of Zagreb. An overview of the sport system in the Republic of Croatia can be found in Appendix 2.

The National Council for Sport is the highest professional body that takes care of the development and quality of sports in the Republic of Croatia. As shown in Appendix 2 it is directly under the Croatian Parliament which appoints its members. The tasks of the National Council for Sports are, among others, to:

- ▶ Discuss issues of importance for sport and propose and encourage the adoption of measures to improve sports
- ▶ Set out guidelines for drafting regulations on the categorisation of athletes
- ▶ Give opinions and recommendations on draft proposals for regulations related to sport

The sport financing system in the Republic of Croatia is governed by Article 74 of the Sports Act (Appendix 3). Public funds are allocated to finance programmes of public needs in sports. This includes state awards for top athletic achievements, sporting facilities, competition organisation, and/or through tenders, to co-finance specific sports programmes and projects. Public funds for financing sport also include revenues from games of chance.

The Ministry of Tourism and Sport proposes to the Government of the Republic of Croatia programmes to meet public needs related to financing sport for children and young people, in particular the sports activities of the Croatian School Sports Federation. It also proposes programmes meeting national public needs in sport related to the activities of the Croatian Olympic Committee and national sports federations, the organisation and implementation of national championships and international sports competitions and care of top athletes as proposed by the Croatian Olympic Committee.

The Committee is responsible for executing the programme, spending funds and submits a report to the Croatian Parliament and the Ministry of Tourism and Sport on the implementation of the programme of public needs and the spending of funds.

Legal and policy framework for safeguarding and protecting children

In the Republic of Croatia, the policy framework for safeguarding and protection of children is quite fragmented. Although the main responsibility for children lies with their parents and the basic responsibility is under the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy there are more than a few laws and acts covering the responsibilities of different ministries related to different aspects of children's lives. Accordingly, national legislation on the protection of children in general, is found in several different bodies of law. Examples of the most relevant are:

- ▶ Law on the Ombudsperson for Children (Zakon o pravobranitelju za djecu),
- ▶ Rules of Procedure of the Ombudsperson for Children (Poslovnik o radu pravobranitelja za djecu),
- ▶ Foster Care Act (Zakon o udomiteljstvu)

¹ The data is provided by Roberta Karadža and Marija Jurčević from the Ministry of Tourism and Sport and Ante Sarjanović as an independent consultant.

- ▶ Health Care Act (Zakon o zdravstvenoj zaštiti),
- ▶ Gender Equality Act (Zakon o ravnopravnosti spolova),
- ▶ Anti-discrimination Law (Zakon o suzbijanju diskriminacije),
- ▶ Law on Organised Holidays of Children and Youth (Zakon o organiziranom odmoru djece i omladine),
- ▶ Law on Preschool Education (Zakon o predškolskom odgoju i obrazovanju),
- ▶ Law on Education in Primary and Secondary School (Zakon o odgoju i obrazovanju u osnovnoj i srednjoj školi),
- ▶ Law on Juvenile Courts (Zakon o sudovima za mladež)
- ▶ Criminal Law (Kazneni zakon),
- ▶ Criminal Procedure Code (Zakon o kaznenom postupku)
- ▶ Law on Legal Consequences of Conviction, Criminal Records and Rehabilitation (Zakon o pravnim posljedicama osude, kaznenoj evidenciji i rehabilitaciji)

Sixteen EU Member States, including Croatia, have legal provisions that prevent convicted (and in some cases suspected) offenders from undertaking (paid and/or volunteer) roles with children, which includes sport.²

Legal and policy framework for sport

As referred to earlier, Croatia has its own sports law - "The Law on Sports of the Republic of Croatia" (January, 2007) (Appendix 3) and safeguarding appears not to be mentioned. 'Children' are only mentioned a few times and mostly in connection with funding. Paragraph 13, Article 3, prescribes how a person against whom criminal proceedings have been instituted for a criminal offense committed to the detriment of a child or a minor, shall distance himself/herself from performing activities in sports in which he/she comes into contact with children or minors until the verdict becomes final or the proceedings are suspended.

There is also a Sports Inspection Law saying, "The sports inspection conducts inspection supervision over the implementation of the Sports Act and regulations adopted on the basis of the Sports Act and takes the measures and actions for which it is authorised by Sports Inspection Act". For the purpose of performing inspection supervision and within their authority, sports inspectors may request an excerpt from the criminal records of the Ministry of Justice and Administration of the Republic of Croatia from which it is evident whether a certain person has been convicted or not and a certificate from the competent criminal court of the Republic of Croatia whether against certain persons a criminal proceeding has been initiated. If during the inspection procedure sports inspectors determine that criminal proceedings have been initiated against a certain person in sport for a criminal offence committed to the detriment of a child or minor, that person will be banned from performing sports activities in which that person comes into contact with children or minors until the finality of the judgment, i.e. until the suspension of the proceedings, as prescribed by Article 13, paragraph 3 of the Sports Act.

In accordance with Article 13, paragraph 1 of the Sports Act, a person sentenced to imprisonment for a term of at least six months for one of the criminal offences committed with intent, and no suspended sentence is applied, may not participate in sport competitions, organise and conduct sport competitions, perform professional activities in sport, participate in the work of the assembly or governing body of a sports association or company, nor may be authorised to represent that legal entity. An appeal may be lodged against the first-instance decisions of the sport inspection to the Independent Service for Second Instance Administrative Process, which decides on appeals within its competence.

Croatia also has a National Sports Programme 2019 – 2026 (Nacionalni program sporta 2019 – 2026) (Appendix 4). Within this programme is a measure which tasks the development of a protocol for dealing with violence among children in sports clubs (Specific Objective 6.3., Measure 6.3.2.). This protocol is in the development process. Additionally, the development of a joint action plan for the implementation of education measures in the prevention of violence in sport, at sporting events, and beyond has been planned within the same document. (Specific Objective 6.1., Measure 6.1.4.).

² European Commission (2016). Study on Gender-Based Violence in Sport. Final report

Any existing standards/quality assurance for safeguarding and protecting children in and through sport

The European Union and Council of Europe joint project “ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport”³ carried out in 2018-2019, revealed that none of the National Olympic sport associations had a policy/action plan to prevent and combat gender-based violence in sport. In contrast four of the sport associations (boxing, handball, weightlifting and wrestling) had implemented actions to prevent and combat gender-based violence. The actions most often taken were procedures for minimising risk (criminal record checks, risk assessment procedure, etc.), developing codes of conduct or ethical guidelines for coaches and people in managerial and decision-making positions. This study further showed that the Olympic Committee had a written plan to prevent and combat gender-based violence in sport and had discussed changing the organisation’s statutes by adding a rule that forbids gender-based violence.

Prevention of violence in sport in schools is implemented through a set of different activities targeting pre-school and elementary school children and teaching them the principles of fair play and good behaviour in sport and at sport competitions. A mapping study about Safeguarding Children in Sport delivered to the European Commission in 2019, concluded that

“The measures implemented by Croatian stakeholders apply a holistic and comprehensive approach to safeguarding against children in violence in sport, especially focusing their efforts on promoting the values of respect and tolerance, which consequently should lead to the reduced peer to peer violence in sport, and create a safer environment for all participants... During the ten year period of the implementation of different measures against violence in sport, the biggest achievement was that the programmes on the prevention of violence in sport became part of mainstream educational curricula and are taught as part of physical education and general classes”⁴.

However, within the National Sports Programme 2019 – 2026 there is a measure which tasks it to develop a protocol for dealing with violence among children in sports clubs (Specific Objective 6.3., Measure 6.3.2.). This protocol is in the development process. Additionally, the development of a joint action plan for the implementation of education measures programme in the prevention of violence in sport, at sporting events and beyond has been planned within the same document. (Specific Objective 6.1., Measure 6.1.4.).

Criminal record checks available to/required of sport

The state administration bodies of the Republic of Croatia have the right, within the scope of their competence, and for the purposes of conducting certain proceedings to request an excerpt from the criminal records of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia. Also the sports inspectors acting as an independent sector (see appendix 2) within the Ministry of Tourism and Sport of the Republic of Croatia may, within its competence, and for the purposes of the inspection procedure, request an excerpt from the criminal records of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia. This implies that such a request is not mandatory, but something one can ask for. Furthermore, in Croatia the applicant must grant his/her permission for a criminal record check to be performed.⁵ Additionally, all employers are provided with the possibility of checking all candidates during the employment procedure in the form of a special certificate, whereby the exchange of information is ensured between the Member States of the European Union.

Any ethical guidelines/code of conducts

There are no sport-specific overall ethical guidelines or codes of conduct, but codes in other areas can be relevant for and applied to sport under certain circumstances, for example:

- ▶ Child Protection Policy of the Ombudsperson for Children
- ▶ Code of Honour of Croatian Journalists
- ▶ Code of Ethics of research with children
- ▶ Protocol on procedure in cases of sexual violence

3 European Union (EU) & Council of Europe (COE) joint project “ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport”. Project website: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/es/web/gender-equality-in-sport/home>

4 Safeguarding Children in Sport: A mapping study (2019). A report to the European Commission written by Ecorys and Tine Vertommen. Directorate for Education and Culture Youth and Sport.

5 European Commission (2016). Study on Gender-Based Violence in Sport. Final report.

- ▶ Protocol on procedure in cases of violence between children and young people
- ▶ Protocol on procedure in cases of abuse and neglect of children
- ▶ Protocol on dealing with cases of domestic violence
- ▶ Protocol on the treatment of unaccompanied children - foreign nationals

The ALL IN study referred to above revealed that two National Olympic Sports Associations had developed codes of conduct or ethical guidelines for coaches and people in managerial and decision-making positions.

Current agency/organisation roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children in public authority and sport organisations

Social Welfare Centres are public institutions that decide on the level of social welfare rights and provide social services to particularly vulnerable groups of citizens such as, children without parents, children without adequate parental care, children with disabilities, children and young people with behavioural problems and persons with disabilities. As an interconnected network under the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy there are 135 Social Welfare Centres, and their branches are all over Croatia. They legally handle individual cases.

Brave Phone is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation which aims to help and protect abused and neglected children and implements preventive activities in direct work with children, their parents and professionals in order to manifest the child's basic legal rights for life and protection. As well as offering a helpline for children and parents, Brave Phone supports families through several programmes based in schools, communities and online. It is not sport-specific and statistics for sport are not available. Brave Phone is contributing to the ONE in FIVE Campaign – co-ordinated by the Council of Europe. It is not allowed to, legally, handle individual cases and is acting as an intermediary organisation between victims and Social Welfare Centres.

“Start to Talk”⁶ is a Council of Europe call for action to public authorities and the sport movement to stop child sexual abuse and was adopted in 2019. “Start to Talk” is about adults breaking the silence and lending children a voice. By joining this call, governments, sports clubs, associations and federations, as well as athletes and coaches, pledge to take concrete measures to prevent and respond to abuse. Brave Phone, which joined the campaign as a counselling line for children and parents, has also opened its lines for cases of sexual violence against children in sport. An online campaign has been launched which shows a video clip on all available platforms in an attempt to encourage children and parents to break the silence on child sexual abuse and raise awareness that unacceptable behaviour must be reported. Other activities which were planned as part of this campaign have unfortunately been postponed due to the COVID 19 pandemic, but they are planned to be carried out in the near future.

The Ombudsperson for Children of the Republic of Croatia monitors the co-ordination of the laws and other regulations in the Republic of Croatia, concerned with the protection of the rights and interests of children. This is through the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the fulfilment of the obligations arising from the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international documents concerned with the protection of the rights and interests of children. The Ombudsperson for Children also monitors the implementation of all regulations concerned with the protection of the rights and interests of children and the violation of individual rights of children and studies trends and acts of violation of the rights and interests of children. The Ombudsperson for Children is not allowed to, legally, handle individual cases and acts as an intermediate organisation between victims and Social Welfare Centres. Lately, the Ombudsperson for Children can ask different institutions about what those institutions have done relating to specific cases.

Prevention of violence through sports in schools' programme

Regarding the action plan for the implementation of education measures programme in the prevention of violence in sport, at sporting events and beyond, the Ministry of Tourism and Sport in co-operation with relevant bodies and associations implements a number of educational measures in the fight against violence in sports. This seeks to prevent all unacceptable forms of behaviour in sport with the aim of raising awareness with children and young people about sport values and the need for cultural and honest cheering, without aggressive behaviour on the sports field. Many sports events have been organised in the last few years with

6 “Start to Talk” campaign: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/sport/start-to-talk>

lots of interesting activities which help children recognise and get closer to the acceptable forms of behaviour when participating in sport.

Current job descriptions and person specifications for designated sport child safeguarding officers in government departments with responsibility for sport, sports councils and NOCs, and in sport federations at national umbrella level, county/regional and club levels

Not applicable

Current number of people in place in these roles

None

Current access to relevant training and coverage of training

The ALL IN study showed that the Central State Office for Sport⁷ had acted to prevent and combat gender-based violence in sport by making presentations at conferences and workshops and that the Croatian Olympic Committee had arranged training seminars and workshops for coaches/decision makers and organised awareness-raising campaigns on this topic. Two of the National Olympic Sport Associations had also organised training seminars and workshops for athletes.

Additionally, as part of the “Start to Talk” campaign, a training kit to prevent and react to situations of potential sexual violence against children and young people in sport was published, translated into Croatian and distributed to all national sports associations, sports clubs and other sports organisations in the Republic of Croatia.

Concluding remarks

The protection of children against violence in Croatia has a multi-stakeholder approach bringing together many different stakeholders. While this is positive, the challenge with this approach is that very little is sport-specific.

With respect to safeguarding children in sport there seems to be a lack of a systematic approach and overall programme appears to be absent and there are no designated people working specifically on safeguarding children in sport. Educating and appointing safeguarding officers at relevant points in the sport system will therefore be important. It would also be reasonable to consider including a paragraph in the Sports Law about safeguarding and should also include a system for case management i.e. a system that takes care of children and young athletes in sport, when something ‘bad’ happens to them. This would add to the actions organised by parents as children’s main guardians and, if necessary, Social Welfare Centres. In developing this work it is essential to have good cross-sectorial co-operation between relevant governmental agencies, child protection authorities and sport administration as well as maximising support from relevant NGOs.

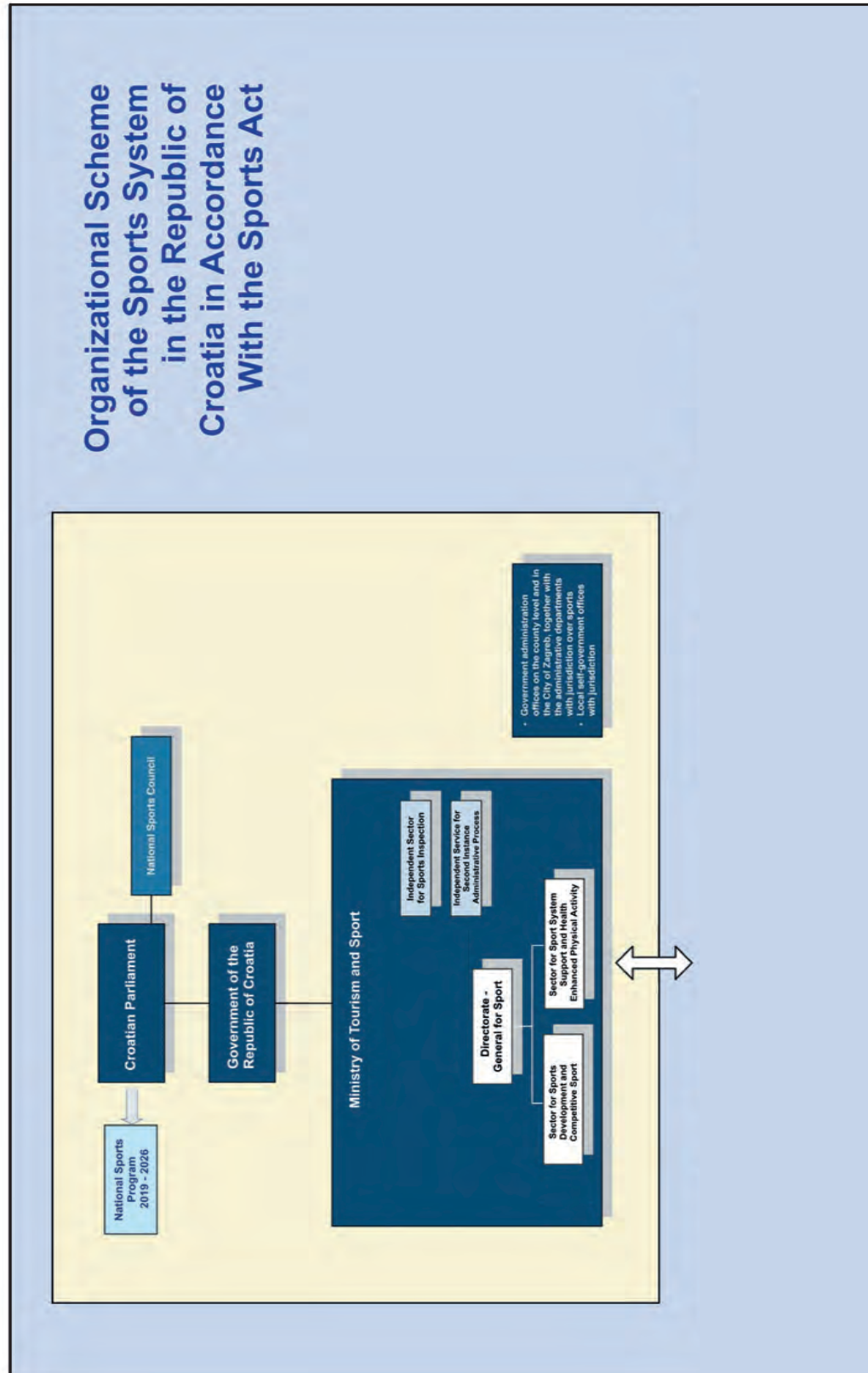
⁷ The Central Office for Sport has from 2020 been incorporated in the Ministry of Tourism and Sport

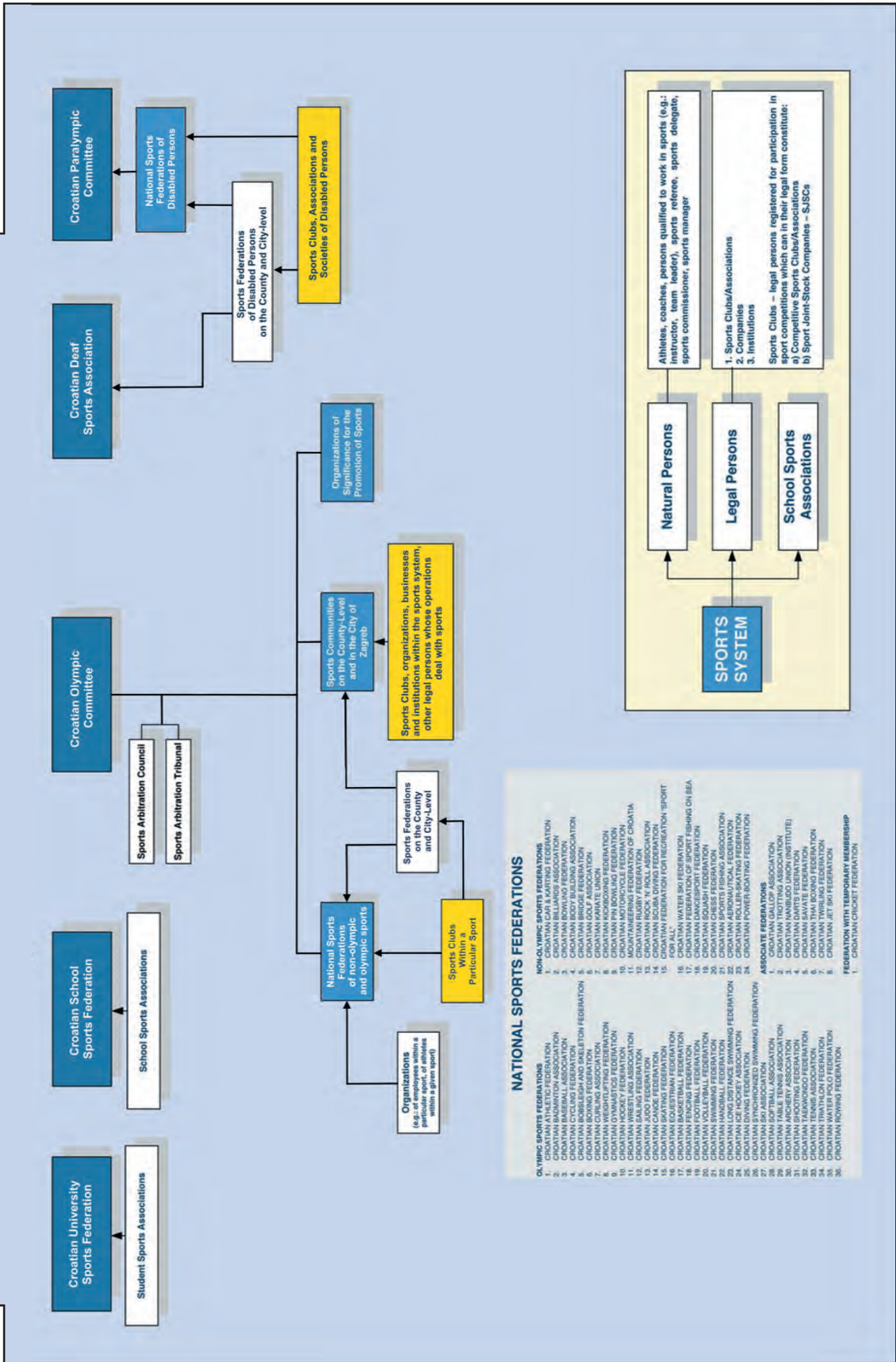
SPORT STRUCTURE IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA



APPENDIX 2

An overview of the sport system in the Republic of Croatia





APPENDIX 3

Sports Act of the Republic of Croatia⁸

APPENDIX 4

National Sports Programme 2019 - 2026⁹

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- 8 <https://www.zakon.hr/z/300/Zakon-o-sportu> (in Croatian), https://mint.gov.hr/UserDocsImages//2022_dokumenti//220627_Appendix%203%20Sports%20Act.pdf (unofficial English translation of the articles relevant to the CSiS project)
- 9 <https://mint.gov.hr/UserDocsImages//dokumenti-sdus/docs//NATIONAL%20SPORTS%20PROGRAM.pdf>



Warm thanks to everyone who has contributed to the development of the roadmap, in particular **Marija Jurčević** and **Roberta Karadža** from the Ministry of Tourism and Sport, **Ante Sarjanović** from “Plavo more”, **Anne Tiivas** and **Kari Fasting** from Safe Sport International and to the Croatian core group and steering committee members.

” Up your game, strengthen your squad!

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“Child Safeguarding in Sport” (CSiS) aims to strengthen the ability of partner countries to prevent violence against children and to promote their well-being in sport, by developing effective child safeguarding in sport policies that ensure safe, positive and empowering sport environments for all children. Activities include:

- Designing country-specific roadmaps which include concrete steps for setting up positions of Child Safeguarding Officers in sport.
- Updating and extending the existing online resource centre with examples of practices and initiatives to cover all forms of violence and abuse against children in sport.



The Council of Europe is the continent’s leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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