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REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

Building a Europe
for and with children



Pilot Training of Trainers on Inter-Agency Cooperation

Agenda and list of participants

5 December 2025 09:00 – 15.30

Venue: Meeting room, Ministry of Justice, Župančičeva 6, Ljubljana

Joint EU-Council of Europe project “Ensuring the Best Interests of the Child in Civil Court Proceeding sin Slovenia” 23SI08

The project is co-funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument, and co-funded and implemented by the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the European Commission, the Reform and Investment Task Force (SG REFORM).

Context

The European Union-Council of Europe Joint Project “**Ensuring the best interests of the child in civil court proceedings in Slovenia**” aims to ensure the better protection of children’s rights in civil court proceedings in Slovenia through ensuring the best interests of the child. Implementation of the Project contributes to the ongoing reform in Slovenia on upholding children’s rights and becoming a pioneer country spreading excellence in child-friendly justice in all EU Member States.

While Slovenia has made big steps forward for the protection of **children’s rights in criminal law proceedings**, significant improvements are still needed to uphold children’s rights **in the area of civil law**, particularly as regards delays in family law proceedings involving children. According to the **Slovenian Supreme Court report**, the main two challenges to overcome these delays are:

- **The lack of court experts in clinical psychology**, who are the most appointed experts in family law proceedings.
- **The excessive use of legal instruments**, as the law is often ineffective during the process and there is lack of systemic approach.

The project is co-funded by the **European Union** and the **Council of Europe** and is implemented by the Council of Europe’s Children’s Rights Division in close co-operation with the **Slovenian Ministry of Justice** from 1 September 2023 to 28 February 2026, and has been extended until 30 June 2026.

The project is divided in two outcomes:

1. A comprehensive Action Plan to reform Slovenia’s legal framework in the field of civil court proceedings involving children is adopted;
2. The implementation of the Action Plan has been initiated.

State of play of the Project

During the inception phase which preceded the implementation of the project outputs and activities, the Council of Europe, with the support of the Ministry of Justice of Slovenia, organised a series of bilateral consultations with the national stakeholders to take stock of the project’s starting point. The results of these consultations and research are included in the [project’s inception report](#), which was endorsed by the Inter-ministerial working group (IMWG) before its presentation at the [project launch conference](#) on 13 February 2024 in Bled.

Following the launch conference, the project entered into a more analytical phase with the preparation of three reports:

- [an assessment of the current legal, policy and institutional framework](#) with a focus on priority issues identified with the Ministry of Justice and the IMWG,
- [a training gap analysis for professionals working with and for child involved civil court proceedings](#),
- [a comparative study of services, methods and tools](#) suitable to secure the best interests of the child in family proceedings in Council of Europe member and observer States. ([Summary report in English](#))

The first two reports were prepared by teams of national consultants selected through the official call for national expertise launched in early 2024. The comparative study has been developed by Daja Wenke, Independent Researcher and Policy Analyst, Rights of the Child - Implementation of International Standards. An online IMWG meeting was held on 18 September 2024 to present and exchange views on the first two above-mentioned reports, endorse them, and provide an overview of the state of play of the project.

A [Roundtable](#) was held on 24 October 2024 to present the challenges, gaps, and recommendations identified in the two national reports to a wider audience, initiate a dialogue between the expert teams and the participants, and ensure ownership of the recommended measures by key stakeholders, including NGOs, Academia, and civil society.

Following the above-mentioned activities and deliverables, Susanna Greijer, International Researcher, Legal & Policy Consultant on Children's Rights and Violence against Children prepared the Strategy and National Action Plan for ensuring the best interests of the child in civil court proceedings in Slovenia.

The first draft strategy and national action plan and the final comparative study were presented and discussed at the fourth meeting of the IMWG, which took place on 6 March 2025. The second draft of the strategy and national action was also commented in writing by the IMWG, and the feedback was incorporated into the final version dated 22 May 2025.

On 6 June 2025, a second roundtable was organised to present the findings of the comparative study and some particularly relevant practices and methods that could be adapted to the Slovenian context and to exchange views with the Slovenian stakeholders, and the Strategy and national action plan for ensuring the best interests of the child in civil court proceedings in Slovenia and to exchange views with the participants on its future implementation.

Following the training-gap analysis, PIC, the Legal Centre for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, developed training materials for a Training of Trainers on Inter-Agency Cooperation. On the basis of the materials, a Pilot Training of Trainers has been organised to take place at the Ministry of Justice on 5 December 2025. The training aims to:

- Strengthen the understanding and practical skills of all professionals involved in civil proceedings concerning children, with a focus on the roles and responsibilities of the various services engaged in such cases
- Improve inter-agency and multidisciplinary cooperation in practice
- Ensure the best interests of children in civil court proceedings in Slovenia through inter-agency cooperation

Agenda	
8:45-09:00	Registration of participants
10:00-10:15	Welcoming remarks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Katarina Bervar Sternad, Lawyer, Director of PIC – Legal Centre for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment</i> • <i>Dr. Maja Čarni Pretnar, State Secretary, Ministry of Justice</i>
09:15-09:45	Overview of the training materials and the work of courts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Katarina Bervar Sternad, Lawyer, Director of PIC – Legal Centre for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment</i> • <i>Ana Bajt, LL.M Kingdom of the Netherlands, legal expert at PIC – Legal Centre for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment</i>
09:45-10:15	Role and tasks of social work centres
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Špela Zupan, Lawyer, SCSD – Association of Centres for Social Work</i>
10:15-11:00	Role and tasks of social work centres
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maša Gril, Special education teacher, Šenčur Primary School, Regional advocacy coordinator for the Gorenjska region</i>
11:00-11:15	<i>Coffee break</i>

11:15-12:00	Role of <i>guardians ad litem</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Zoran Stankić Rupnik, lawyer, guardian ad litem</i>
12:00-12:45	Forensic expertise in family proceedings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Barbara Šegula Škoberne, M.D, specialist in child and adolescent psychiatry, court expert in the field of child and adolescent psychiatry</i>
12:45-13:30	<i>Group photo and Lunch</i>
13:30-13:45	Family mediation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Katarina Bervar Sternad, Lawyer, Director of PIC – Legal Centre for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment</i>
13:45-14:30	The work of non-governmental organisations in the field
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jasna Zakonjšek, Zakonjšek Law Office, Lawyer, External expert associate of the Association for Non-Violent Communication</i>
14:30-15:30	Discussion and opinions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Moderated by Katarina Bervar Sternad, Lawyer, Director of PIC – Legal Centre for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment</i>