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REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Ministry of Justice, Public Administration
and Digital Transformation

Building a Europe
for and with children



Second Roundtable to present the project's deliverables: Roadmap and Cost Structure Analysis, Memorandum of Understanding and Survey on child sexual abuse

27 May 2025

Venue DoubleTree by Hilton (Ulica Grada Vukovara 269a, Zagreb)

(Room Mimosa I+ Mimosa II)

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

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

Context

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

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

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

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

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

State of play of the Project

During the inception phase, which preceded the implementation of the project outputs and activities, consultations were held in Zagreb from 24 to 26 October 2023 as part of a fact-finding mission. The results of these consultations are included in the [project's inception report](#), which was endorsed by the Project Advisory Group (AG) at their first meeting on 12 December 2023 and presented at the [launch conference](#) on 30 January 2024.

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

- [an assessment of the current legal, policy and institutional framework in view of the implementation of the Barnahus model in Croatia](#) and
- [a training gap analysis for professionals working with and for child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation](#).

Both reports were prepared by teams of national consultants selected through the official call for national expertise launched in early 2024. A second AG meeting took place online on 10 September 2024 where the above-mentioned reports were presented. Participants also exchanged their views and endorsed the reports.

A [Roundtable](#) was held on 8 October 2024, to present the challenges, gaps, and recommendations identified in both reports to a wider audience. The event initiated a dialogue between the expert teams and participants, fostering ownership of the recommended measures among key stakeholders, including NGOs, academia, and civil society.

In addition, a [study visit](#) was organised on 4 and 5 November 2024 in Helsinki with the support of the Finnish authorities to exchange information with Croatian professionals working with and for children (all of them were members of the AG). The visit provided an opportunity to learn about the challenges and opportunities encountered in the implementation of the Barnahus model in Finland and to strengthen international relations between Council of Europe member states. A lessons-learned report was prepared by the Croatian participants under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation.

Following the above-mentioned activities and deliverables, three additional documents have been developed by national and international experts:

- A Roadmap including a Cost Structure Analysis for the implementation of the Barnahus Model in Croatia by Liisa Järvillehto and Tom Pakkanen (in [English](#) and [Croatian](#))
- A Report on procedures and protocols supporting an inter-service agreement between ministries and other stakeholders which includes a Memorandum of Understanding on implementing the Barnahus model in Croatia by Ivana Celio Cega (in [English](#) and [Croatian](#))
- A Survey on perceptions of child sexual abuse in Croatia by IPSOS d.o.o.(in [English](#) and [Croatian](#))

The first drafts of the Roadmap and the Cost Structure Analysis, as well as the Memorandum of Understanding and the Lessons Learned Report of the study visit to Finland, were presented and discussed at the third meeting of the AG, which took place on 20 February 2025. The second drafts of these documents were also commented in writing by the AG, the feedback was discussed with the expert consultants as necessary and incorporated into the final versions from February to May 2025. The final roadmap including all the comments from the AG members and deemed approved was sent to the AG on 14 May 2025. The report on procedures and protocols supporting an inter-agency agreement including the Memorandum of Understanding which needed more time to incorporate the feedback from the AG members was finalised, sent and deemed approved on 22 May 2025. Meanwhile, a Survey on perceptions of child sexual abuse has been conducted by IPSOS to assess the general understanding of child sexual abuse in Croatia. This survey will help to identify priority needs and gaps for intervention and to determine key communication messages for the future.

The purpose of this second roundtable, to be held on 27 May 2025, is to present the final Roadmap and Cost Structure Analysis that will guide the implementation of at least four Barnahus units in Croatia (a central Barnahus hub in Zagreb and three additional units in the regions). The Report on procedures and protocols, including a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by all ministries and agencies at the final conference of the project, and the results of the survey on perceptions of child sexual abuse in Croatia will also be presented to national stakeholders.

Agenda	
8:15-9:00	Registration of participants
9:00-9:20	Welcoming remarks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ana Kordej, Acting Director, Directorate for Criminal Law, Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation Rima Joujou, Resident Country Coordinator, SG REFORM, European Commission Zaruhi Gasparyan, Head of Cooperation and Capacity Building Unit, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe
9:20-10:00	Presentation of the Report on procedures and protocols supporting an inter-agency agreement between ministries and other stakeholders which includes a Memorandum of Understanding on implementing the Barnahus model in Croatia
	<p>Moderator: Edita Bodružić, Head of the Department for Juvenile Law and the Law of Persons with Mental Disorders, Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ivana Celio Cega, Human Rights Independent Expert <p>Q&A session</p>
10:00-10:20	<i>Coffee Break</i>
10:20-11:30	Presentation of the roadmap and cost structure analysis for the implementation of the Barnahus model in Croatia
	<p>Moderator: Ana Kordej, Acting Director, Directorate for Criminal Law, Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liisa Järvillehto, Clinical Psychologist, Forensic Psychology Centre for Children and Adolescents (HUS), Helsinki University Hospital, Finland Tom Pakkanen, Forensic Psychologist (PhD), Forensic Psychology Centre for Children and Adolescents (HUS), Helsinki University Hospital, Finland <p>Q&A session</p>
11:30 – 12:20	Presentation of the findings of the Survey on perceptions of child sexual abuse in Croatia
	<p>Moderator: Alma Bernat, Senior Counsellor - Specialist, Ministry of Labour, Pension system, Family and Social Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tatjana Petrović, Service Line Leader for Public Affairs, Ipsos Croatia Lana Penezić, Research Manager for Public Affairs, Ipsos Croatia Mirna Cvitan, Research Manager for Public Affairs, Ipsos Croatia <p>Q&A session</p>
12:20 – 12:30	Closing remarks and way forward
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ana Kordej, Acting Director, Directorate for Criminal Law, Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation Rima Joujou, Resident Country Coordinator, SG REFORM, European Commission Frederique Privat de Fortunie, Senior Project Officer, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe
12:30-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00-16:00	Restricted 4th Advisory Group meeting on Change Management Plan