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2nd Roundtable - 27 May 2025

# *„Implementing the Barnahus model in Croatia”*

Joint EU – Council of Europe Project

Ivana Celio Cega  
Independent Human Rights Consultant





# Topics for Discussion




01

Report on procedures and protocols supporting an inter-agency agreement between Croatian authorities for implementing the Barnahus model in Croatia

02

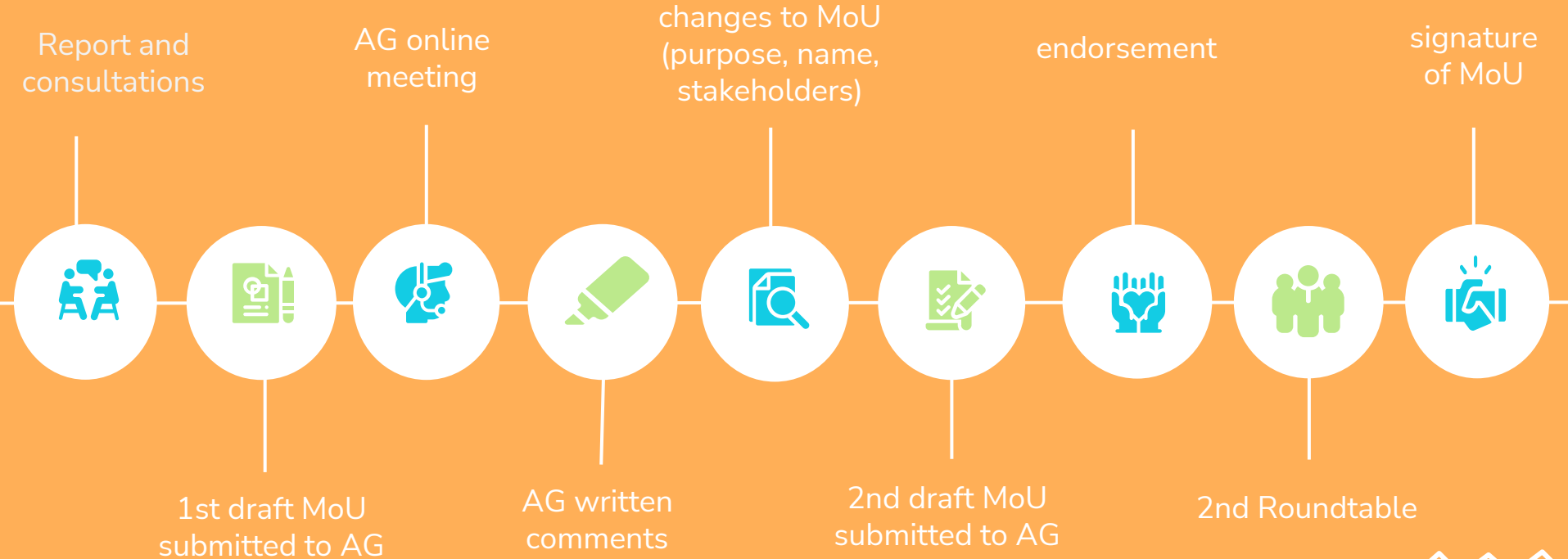
Summary of initial consultations for the drafting of the inter-agency agreement for the implementation of the Barnahus model in Croatia

03



2nd draft of the Memorandum of understanding on implementing the Barnahus model in Croatia

# Timeline





# Sources



01

Analysis of the legislative, policy and institutional framework regarding protection of children and procedures for cases on violence against children, including sexual violence in Croatia

02

National by-laws and applicable agreements

03

Barnahus: a European journey. Mapping study on multidisciplinary and interagency child-friendly justice models responding to violence against children in Council of Europe member states

04

Consultations with national stakeholders and international

# Legal Basis



National Plan for Combating Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment for the period until 2027



Action Plan for Combating Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment for the period until 2024



Special Goal 2 - Measure 6:  
Implementing Children's House  
based on the Barnahus model.  
Performance indicator (2):  
Establishing a legal framework for its  
start of operations



# Applicable Agreements and By-Laws



Inter-agency  
agreement on  
co-operation in  
cases of violence  
against women and  
domestic violence

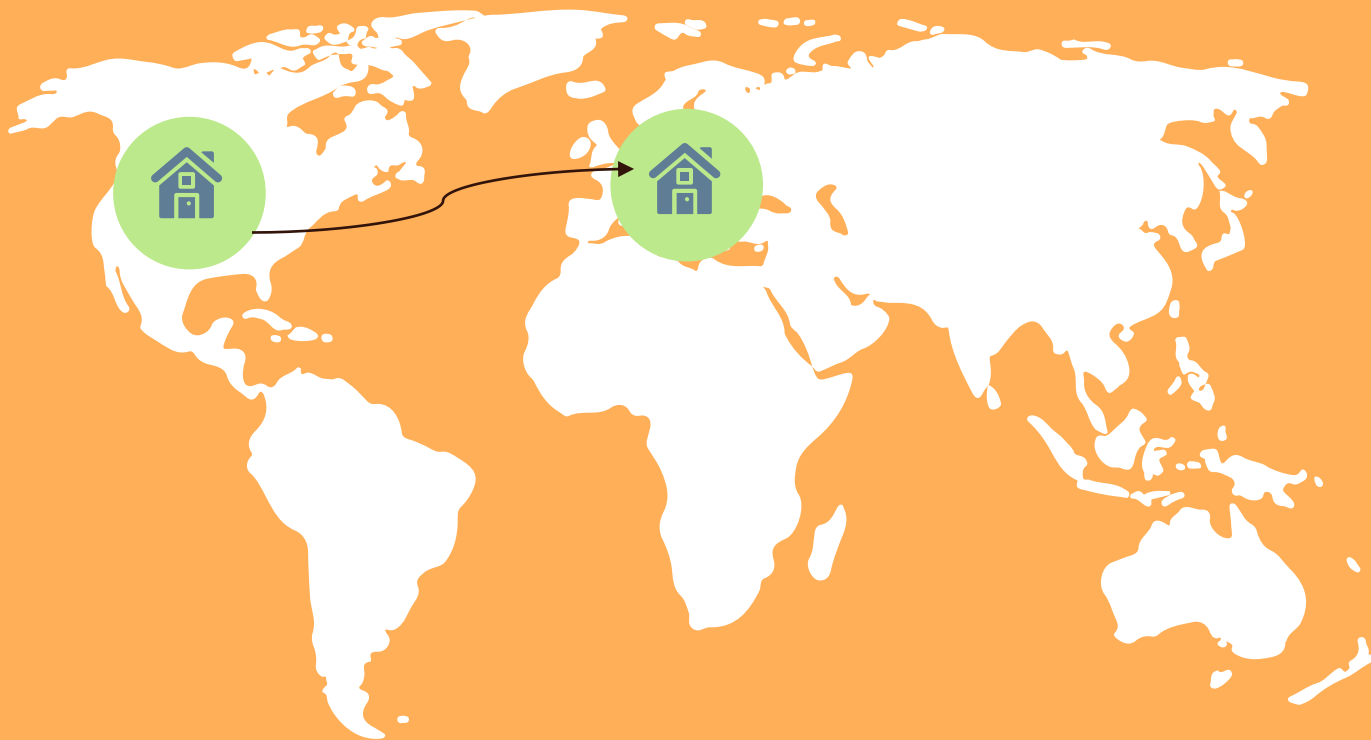


2023 Protocol on  
procedures in  
cases of sexual  
violence



# Comparative Solutions in EU and COE States

## 2023 Barnahus: a European Journey



# 2023 Barnahus: a European Journey - Overview

## **DISTRIBUTION:** QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

22/46 CoE MEMBER STATES WITH PREDOMINANTLY 1 BARNAHUS WITHIN AN EXISTING STRUCTURE.  
A CONTRARIO: 33 IN SWEDEN, 24 IN THE NETHERLANDS; SEPARATE HOUSES IN NORDIC COUNTRIES.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK:** KEY OPERATIVE STEP

19 ANCHORED IN A LEGISLATIVE ACT (SLOVENIA, SPAIN, DENMARK).  
14 IN BY-LAWS (CYPRUS, GERMANY, SLOVAKIA).  
9 ENVISAGE INTERNAL RULES (BULGARIA), AGREEMENT (IRELAND), OPERATIONAL MANUAL (MOLDOVA).

## **CENTRAL AUTHORITY:** CONSISTENCY ASSURANCE

COMPETENT MINISTRY: 42%  
LOCAL AUTHORITY: 12 %  
NGOs IN CO-OPERATION WITH STATE: 8%  
MEDICAL FACILITIES: 6%  
COURTS: 4 %

## **BENEFICIARIES:** HOLISTIC APPROACH

CHILDREN VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE: 96%  
ANY TYPE OF VIOLENCE TOWARDS CHILDREN: 71%  
NON-OFFENDING PARENTS: 68% + OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS: 54%  
CHILDREN VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING: 68%  
CHILDREN SUSPECTS IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS: 9 %



# 2023 Barnahus: a European Journey - Overview

## **SERVICES:** UNDER ONE ROOF

KEY FEATURE: FORENSIC INTERVIEW  
MDIA CASE CONFERENCE  
CRISIS INTERVENTION TO CHILDREN VICTIMS AND NON-OFFENDING FAMILY MEMBERS  
SHORT/LONG – TERM HEALTHCARE SERVICES

## **CHILD INTERVIEWERS:** UP-TO-DATE EXPERTISE

CHILD PSYCHOLOGISTS  
PROFESSIONALS EXCLUSIVELY EMPLOYED FOR CODUCTING INTERVIEWS  
SOCIAL WORKERS  
POLICE OFFICERS

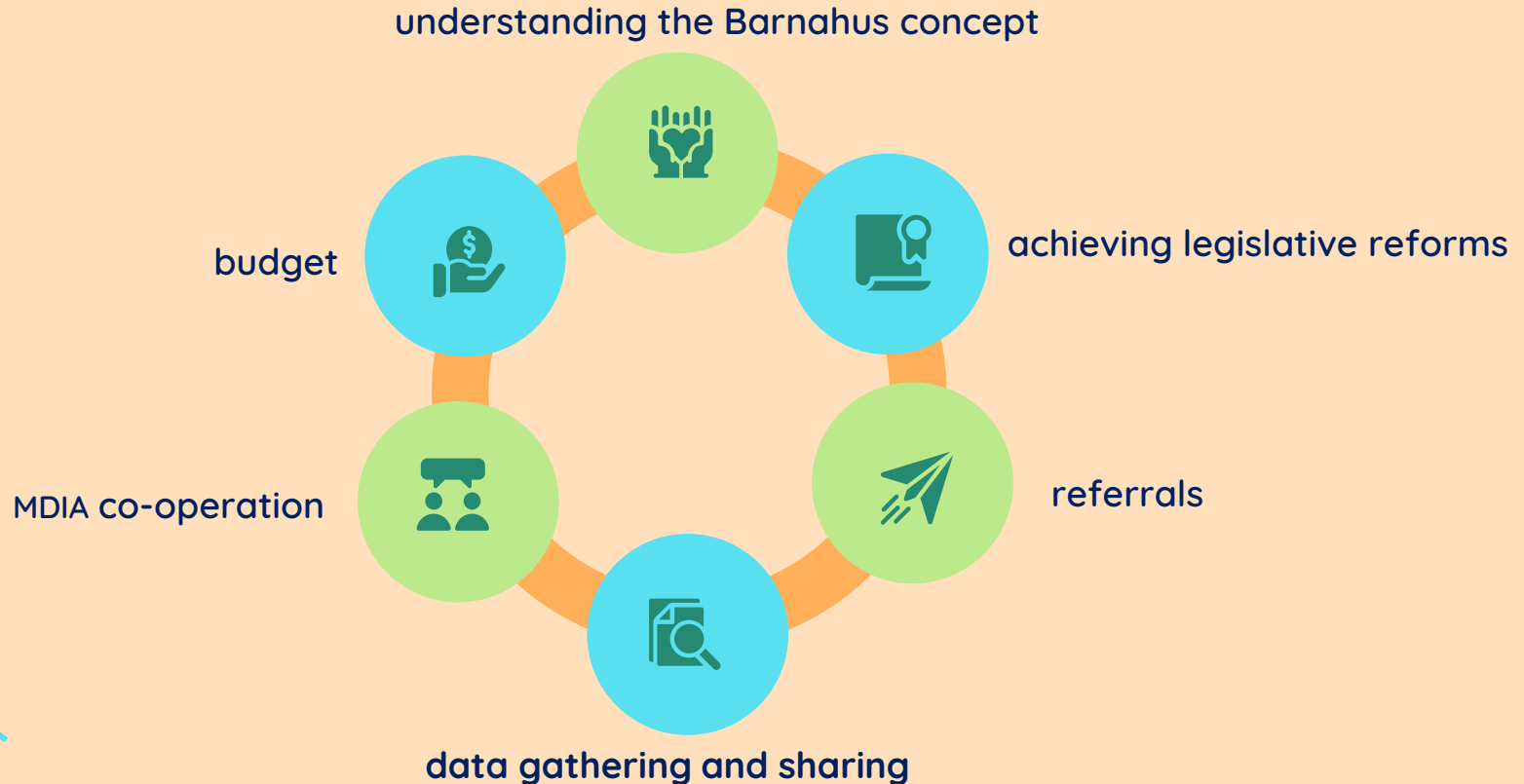
## **VIDEO-RECORDING:** RETRAUMATISATION PREVENTION

USED IN ALL CHILD ABUSE CASES  
DEPENDS ON CASE AND IF IT IS CONDUCTED AS A PART OF CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS  
ADMITTED AS EVIDENCE IN COURT: 23 MEMBER STATES

## **INTERVIEW PROTOCOL:** EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

PREDOMINANTLY: NICHD/NCAC INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (50% STATES IN EVERY CASE)  
SPECIALLY DESIGNED NATIONAL PROTOCOLS

# 2023 Barnahus: a European Journey - Challenges

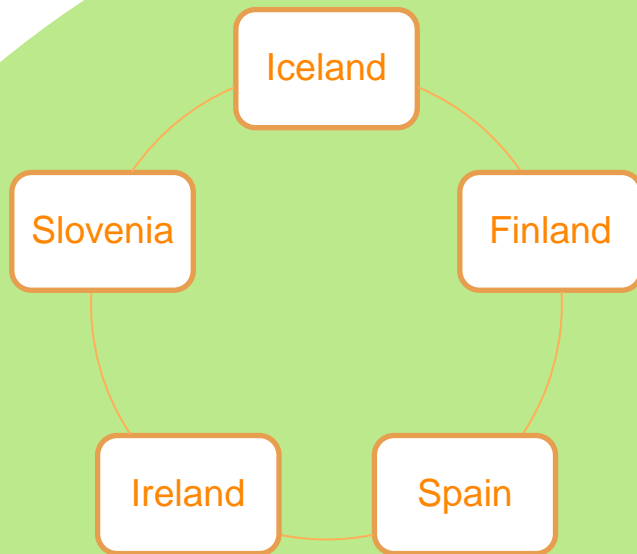


# Contributions from national stakeholders

- 📌 high-level statement of commitment of national authorities to establish the Barnahus model in Croatia
- 📌 legal basis for establishing the Barnahus model in Croatia of a general nature, leaving specificities to be regulated by a dedicated piece of legislation
- 📌 ensuring national and regional coverage of Barnahus facilities
- 📌 appointment of a Barnahus focal point



# Contributions from professionals working in Barnahus facilities in Europe



# Legal Basis

## Iceland

Government Agreement + various legislation

## Finland

approx. 37 different laws + dedicated legal framework for data sharing and co-operation (update underway)

## Spain

Government Decree + Parliament Resolution + organic Law + Barnahus Strategy + I-A Protocol (underway)

## Ireland

National Intradepartmental Group + I-A Agreement (underway)

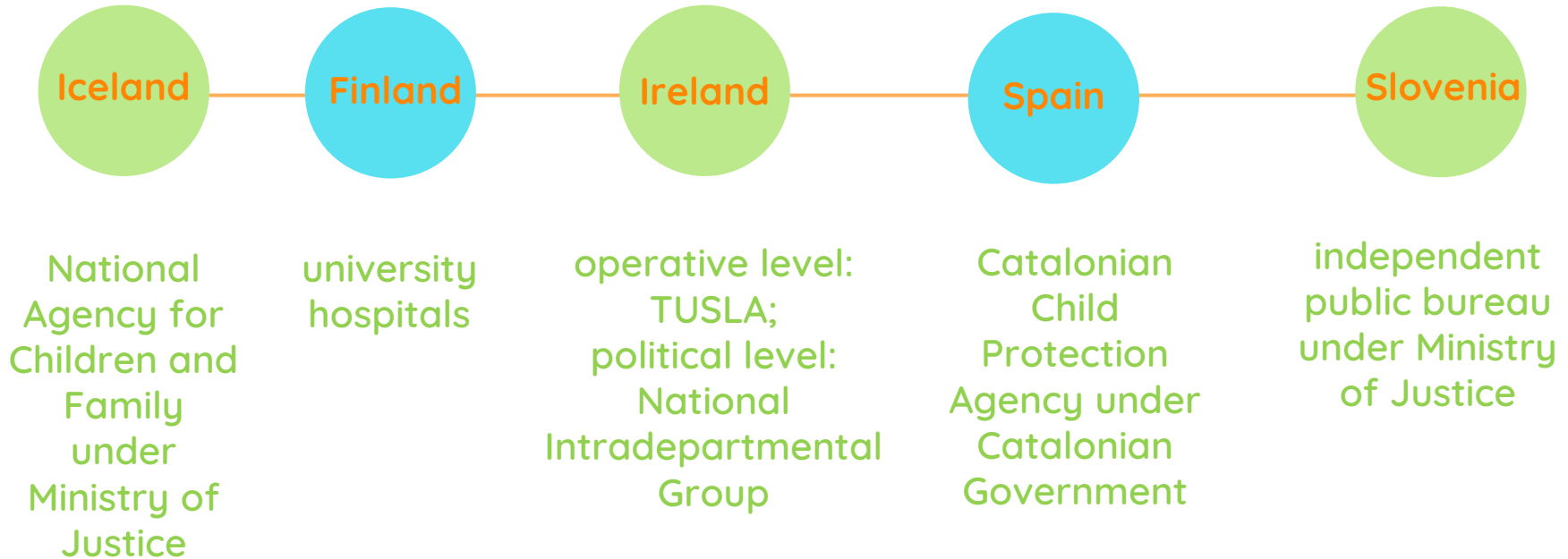
## Slovenia

Declaration + dedicated Law + Government Decrees on I-A cooperation and trainings





# Central Authority



# Budget

## Iceland

Ministry of Finance

## Finland

national allocation

## Ireland

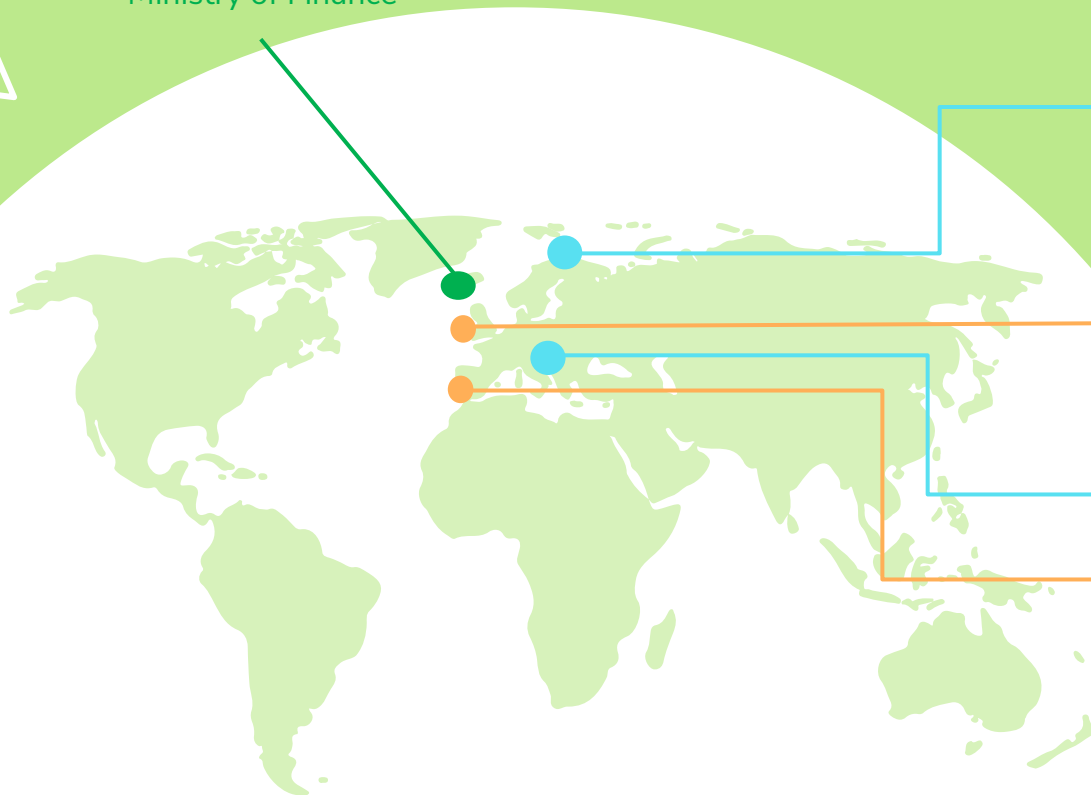
TUSLA: management;  
Each stakeholder:  
professionals

## Slovenia

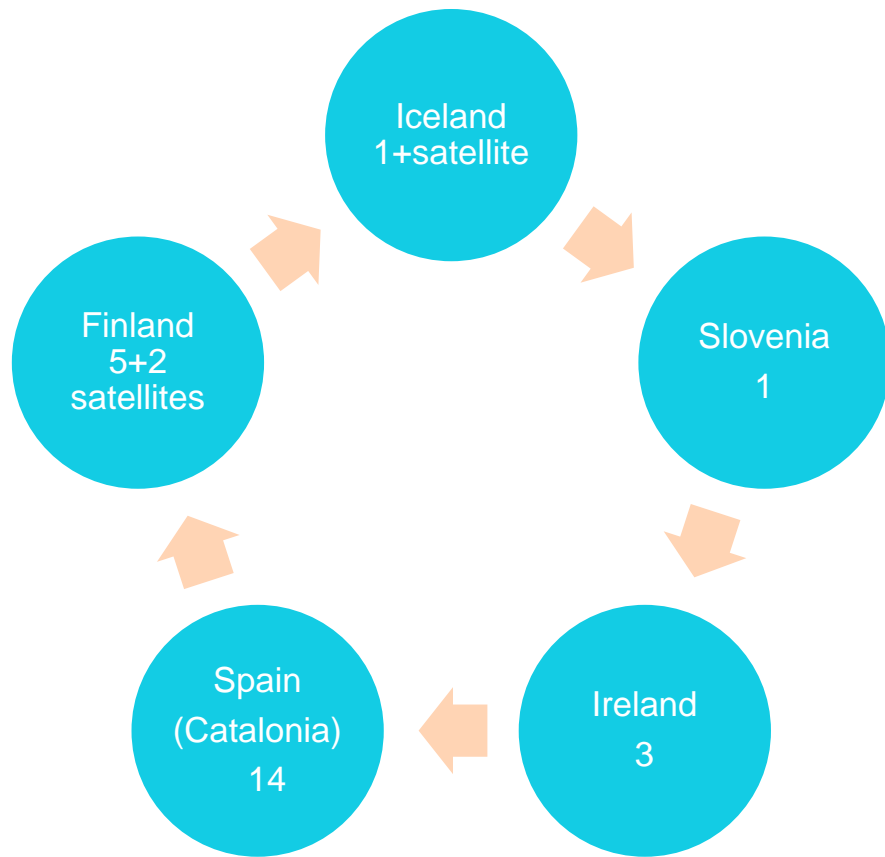
Ministry of Justice

## Spain

Catalonian Government  
(national funding for  
violence against women)



# Number of Barnahus units





# Beneficiaries

children  
victims/witnesses of  
sexual abuse

- Finland
- Spain
- Ireland

children  
victims/witnesses of  
criminal offences  
and minor offenders

- Iceland
- Slovenia



# Services

ICELAND  
FINLAND  
SPAIN  
IRELAND  
SLOVENIA

- forensic interview

SLOVENIA

- police informative interview

IRELAND

- temporary accomodation



# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING 2ND DRAFT



# AIM

SHARED VISION

SUSTAINED  
DEDICATION

UNWAVERING  
SUPPORT

**PARTIES' HIGH LEVEL COMMITMENT  
TO IMPLEMENT BARNAHUS MODEL IN CROATIA**

UPHOLDING HIGHEST  
STANDARDS IN  
SAFEGUARDING  
CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

ADVANCING  
CHILD-FRIENDLY  
JUSTICE

FOSTERING A SOCIETY  
HEARING AND PROTECTING  
EVERY CHILD WITH DIGNITY  
AND CARE

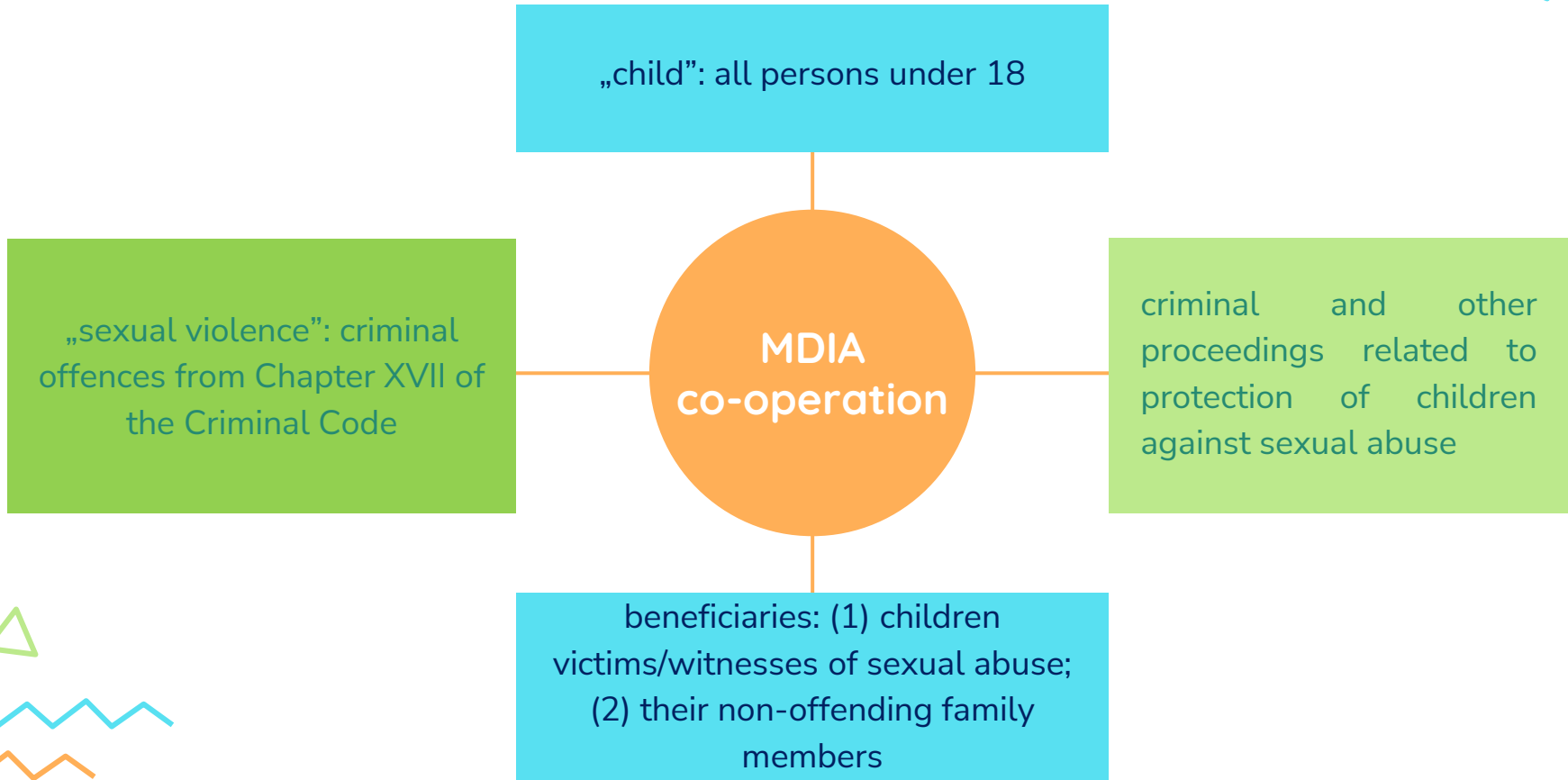
# Preamble

- **UN:** Convention on the Rights of the Child
- **CoE:** Lanzarote Convention, Guidelines on child-friendly justice, Strategy for the Rights of the Child
- **EU:** directives on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography; and on establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime; European Commission Recommendation on developing and strengthening integrated child protection systems in the best interests of the child
- **Key common criteria for Barnahus and European Barnahus quality standards**



- ✓ best interests of the child
- ✓ inclusive child-centred protection system
- ✓ equal treatment
- ✓ family oriented approach
- ✓ child participation
- ✓ prevention, early identification and timely protection

# Scope of application



# Parties to MoU

POLICE AUTHORITY  
MINISTRY OF THE  
INTERIOR  
AND CHIEF POLICE  
DIRECTORATE

JUDICIARY  
SUPREME COURT  
AND  
HIGH CRIMINAL  
COURT

OMBUDSPERSON FOR  
CHILDREN

CO-ORDINATING  
AUTHORITY  
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE,  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION  
AND DIGITAL  
TRANSFORMATION

SUPPORTING AUTHORITIES  
JUDICIAL ACADEMY,  
SOCIAL WELFARE ACADEMY,  
CROATIAN BAR  
ASSOCIATION, CROATIAN  
CHAMBER OF PSYCHOLOGY,  
ZAGREB LAW FACULTY

SOCIAL WELFARE  
MINISTRY OF LABOUR,  
PENSION SYSTEM, FAMILY  
AND SOCIAL POLICY AND  
CROATIAN BUREAU FOR  
SOCIAL WORK

HEALTHCARE  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE,  
EDUCATION AND  
YOUTH



*...hereby agree to support the implementation of the Barnahus model in Croatia as an inter-agency and a multidisciplinary approach in criminal proceedings and all actions related to the protection of children against sexual violence embedded in the protection of the child's best interests and providing a safe environment to the child by bringing all relevant stakeholders under one roof to timely secure valid child's testimony and provide psychosocial and medical support in a child-adapted manner and thereby contribute to the prevention of*



# Key co-operation objectives

- ✓ MDIA co-operation under one roof
- ✓ preventing retraumatisation
- ✓ securing evidentiary material
- ✓ providing psychosocial support from first disclosure of violence, during and after criminal proceedings



# Gradual approach

## PILOT BARNAHUS IN ZAGREB


- ✓ legal basis for establishment and functioning
- ✓ budget
- ✓ administrative capacities
- ✓ scope of services
- ✓ premises
- ✓ duration and evaluation

PILOT PHASE

FINALIZATION

- ✓ Barnahus Central Hub
- ✓ regional units



A background image showing children playing with toys on a wooden floor. A large orange circle is centered over the image, containing text. There are also several white geometric shapes (triangles, circles, and zig-zags) scattered around the circle.

*...a shared vision, a  
common purpose, and  
steadfast hearts - that is  
the power of working  
hand in hand...*



# Thank you!

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts.

[iceliocega@gmail.com](mailto:iceliocega@gmail.com)

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