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

Building a Europe
for and with children



Launch event of the HELP course on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

Agenda and list of participants

8 October 2025

**Venue: Ministry of Justice, Room Galerija,
ground floor, Ulica grada Vukovara 49, 10000 Zagreb**

and online: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84278227465>

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 and recently extended to 30 June 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

Following the inception phase from September to December 2023 and the [launch conference](#) on 30 January 2024, the project entered into a more analytical phase with the preparation and presentation of two assessment reports at a first [Roundtable](#) on 8 October 2024 :

- An 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 (in [Croatian](#) and in [English](#)) with a Mapping and desk research review of the international standards and principles as well as the existing Croatian legislation relevant for professionals handling cases of children victims of sexual violence and abuse ([Full version in Croatian](#) / [Summary in English](#))
- a training gap analysis for professionals working with and for child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation (in [Croatian](#) and in [English](#)).

In addition, a [study visit](#) was organised on 5 and 6 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 Advisory Group. 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 strategic documents were developed by national and international experts and presented at a second [Roundtable](#) on 27 May 2025 :

- 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-agency 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 second component of the project on capacity building and training of trainers has started in summer 2025 with the translation into Croatian of the new HELP course on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse that was unveiled during the 44th [plenary meeting](#) of the **Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse** (Lanzarote Committee). The course aims to enhance the knowledge of legal, justice and other professionals about this phenomenon and the ways to effectively address it. It covers applicable international standards through the lens of the requirements of the [Lanzarote Convention](#), highlighting the promising practices in its implementation by State Parties.

The joint EC/CoE project on implementing the Barnahus model in Croatia supported the translation but also the adaptation of the HELP course to the national context for different legal professionals working for and with children particularly to judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court experts and police officers.

During the meeting:

- **All microphones should be turned off during the event.** The microphone could be turned on only when you want to address a question/comment. Please remember to mute your microphone when you have finished speaking.
- **Simultaneous interpretation in Croatian and English will be provided** during the event.
- **Technical problems:** In case of any technical issues during the event, participants should inform the organisers through the chat option and the project staff will try to fix them.

Agenda	
9:45-10:00	Registration of participants
10:00-10:15	Welcoming remarks
	• Ana Kordej, Acting Director, Directorate for Criminal Law, Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation of Croatia • Tomislav Briški, General Secretary of the Croatian Judicial Academy • Zaruhi Gasparyan, Head of Cooperation and Capacity Building Unit, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe (online)
10:15-10:45	Keynote speech on the Lanzarote convention
	• Marlena Jukić, Croatian representative to the Lanzarote Committee and Acting Head of Sector for Criminal Law Regulations, Directorate for criminal law, Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation of Croatia Q&A session
10:45-11:00	Introduction to the EU/CoE project on “Implementing the Barnahus model in Croatia”
	• Frederique Privat de Fortunie, Senior Project Officer, Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe • 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 Q&A session
11:00-11:15	Group photo and coffee break (7th Floor)

11:15-11:30	HELP Course Platform presentation
	• <i>Oana Gîrlescu, EU-CoE HELP in the EU IV Project Manager, Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Programme, Justice and Human Rights Training Division, Directorate General of Human Rights & Rule of Law, Council of Europe (online)</i>
11:30-12:30	HELP Course on the protection of Children against sexual exploitation and abuse
	<i>Group Tutor session.</i> <i>Introduction by:</i> - <i>Lara Barberic, lawyer and main tutor of the HELP course</i> - <i>Lana Peto Kujundžić, Judge at the High criminal court of Croatia</i> - <i>Dijana Rizvić, Judge at the Municipal Criminal Court of Zagreb</i> <i>Presentation of the participants.</i> <i>Presentation of the tutor's role, learning objectives, assessment criteria, practical aspects and discussion.</i> Q&A session
12:30-13:30	<i>Lunch (7th floor)</i>

List of Participants			
No	Name	Institution	Participation
1	Bilušić Ivana	Judge, County Court of VELIKA GORICA	online
2	Delić Janković Jasna	Judge, Municipal Court of VIROVITICA	
3	Grancarić Dijana	Judge, County Court of ZADAR	
4	Kallay Blažeković Kornelija	Court President, County Court of VELIKA GORICA	
5	Knok Čanić Sandra	Prosecutor, County Prosecutors Office of BJELOVAR	
6	Kocijan-Putarek Sunčica	Prosecutor, County Prosecutors Office of VARAŽDIN	
7	Košćec Ivana	Prosecutor, Municipal Prosecutors Office of RIJEKA	online
8	Lalić Petar	Judge, Municipal Court of VUKOVAR	online
9	Lechner Saša	Advisor, Municipal Criminal Court of ZAGREB	online
10	Makarun Nataša	Advisor, Municipal Court of RIJEKA	online
11	Markanović Sanja	Prosecutor, County Prosecutors Office of ZAGREB	
12	Miočić Antonia	Judge, Municipal Court of ZADAR	
13	Peranović Ika	Judge, Municipal Criminal Court of ZAGREB	
14	Primc Petra	Judge, Municipal Court of RIJEKA	
15	Ronko Damir	Judge, County Court of SLAVONSKI BROD	
16	Saračević Alida	Prosecutor, Municipal Prosecutors Office of VIROVITICA	
17	Sekovanić Ana	Prosecutor, Municipal Criminal Prosecutors Office of ZAGREB	
18	Šipek Saulić Dragana	Prosecutor, Municipal Criminal Prosecutors Office of ZAGREB	
19	Vugić-Sakal Matija	Judge, Municipal Court of VELIKA GORICA	online
20	Walaszek Stanislav	Judge, Municipal Criminal Court of ZAGREB	