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

Building a Europe  
for and with children



Joint EU-Council of Europe project

“Implementing the Barnahus Model in Croatia”

## SUMMARY OF THE

# MAPPING AND DESK RESEARCH REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES, AS WELL AS THE EXISTING CROATIAN LEGISLATION, SUB-LEGISLATION, PROTOCOLS AND ANY NATIONAL POLICY DOCUMENTS AND GUIDELINES RELEVANT FOR PROFESSIONALS AND ACTORS HANDLING CASES OF CHILDREN VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

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### Disclaimer

This study was produced with the financial support of the European Union and the Council of Europe. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of either the European Union or the Council of Europe.

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## SUMMARY

Within the framework of the project - *“Implementing the Barnahus Model in Croatia”* (project ID 3534) the second deliverable under the framework contract number FC.DGII.232.2024 is hereby submitted within the envisaged deadline (5 June 2024). The second deliverable relates to the *“Mapping and desk research review of the international standards and principles, as well as the existing Croatian legislation, sub-legislation, protocols and any national policy documents and guidelines relevant for professionals and actors handling cases of children victims of sexual violence and abuse”*.

The Mapping and desk research was done with a view to researching the applicable international standards and principles, the existing Croatian legislation, sub-legislation, protocols and any national policy documents and guidelines relevant for professionals and actors handling cases of children victims of sexual violence and abuse for the purposes of preparing the 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.

It consists of the following six chapters prepared through an in-depth research of publicly available sources of information relevant for the Analysis: (1) Introduction, (2) International standards (relevant UN, CoE and EU documents and the ECtHR’s case-law), (3) National policy framework (National plan for combating sexual violence, National plan for the rights of children, Strategic framework for the development of mental health, Action plan for the prevention of violence in schools), (4) Legislative framework (primary legislation: Criminal Act, Criminal Proceedings Act, Youth Courts’ Act, Protection Against Domestic Violence Act, Family Act, Social Welfare Act, Health Protection Act, Police Powers Act; secondary legislation: Protocol on Procedures in Sexual Violence Cases, Protocol on Procedures in Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect, Protocol on Procedures in Domestic Violence Cases, Protocol on Procedures in Cases of Violence Among Children and Youth, dedicated Rules on expert assistants providing support to children victims in criminal proceedings, Rules on Conducting an Individual Victim Assessment), (5) Institutional framework identifying competencies and functioning of different bodies (committees, support services and networks, child participation modalities) initiated by national authorities to keep track on the prevalence of sexual abuse of children, detect challenges, improve the national framework and provide support to victims, (6) main stakeholders in ensuring protection to children against sexual abuse.

The mapping and desk research was carried out bearing in mind the findings (current state of play, gaps) identified in the Inception Report already prepared by the CoE in this project with a view to preparing relevant information for analysing: (i) the level and the scope of harmonization of the Croatian legal/policy/institutional framework with the applicable international legal standards set out by the UN, CoE and EU, (ii) the readiness of the national system to establish the Barnahus, (iii) the specific country needs, (iv) the examples of good practices to be used as inspiration and (v) challenges that should be overcome by implementing adequate measures.

The information gathered by this mapping and desk research exercise will be used for the preparation of the above-mentioned Analysis along with the findings gathered through planned questionnaires and interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The full version of the Mapping and Desk Research is only available in Croatian.