

Barnahus Network Statutes

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§ 1 Organisation

- a. These statutes establish the Barnahus Network as a non-for-profit organisation with a public purpose.¹
- b. The address of the Secretariat shall be that of the legal signatory, which is formally selected via a written decision of the Steering Group.

§ 2 Purpose

- a. The Barnahus Network vision is a world where the human rights of children to protection from violence, to justice, support, and to be heard are fulfilled.
- b. The mission of the network is to promote and support the establishment and operation of evidence-based, comprehensive, child-friendly interventions and rapid access to justice, protection and care, based on the following main principles:
 - Respect for the participatory rights of the child by ensuring that the child is heard and receives adequate information and support to exercise these rights;
 - Multidisciplinary and interagency collaboration during investigations, procedures, diagnostic and needs assessments and service delivery, with the aim of avoiding re-traumatisation and securing outcomes that are in the best interests of the child;
 - Evidence-based, comprehensive and accessible services that meet the individual and complex needs of the child and her/his non-offending family or caregivers;
 - High professional standards, training and adequate resources for staff working with child witnesses and victims of violence.
- c. The *purpose* of the network is to facilitate activities of public interest, that increase the members' positive impact on the lives of child victims and witnesses of violence and their families at national and global level. This includes promoting:
 - A competent and committed workforce by providing access to training, mentorship and practical tools, including University certified training in

¹ Ideell förening med allmännyttigt mål

forensic interviews and therapy;

- Effective, evidence-based, comprehensive and accountable service provision by providing practical tools and guidance, including the Barnahus Quality Standards, a case management and benchmarking system (the Hub), and the Barnahus accreditation system;
 - An enabling environment through joint action to promote evidence-based legislation, policy and procedures by supporting joint advocacy and awareness-raising, research and participation in international consultations and dialogue with key stakeholders including, but not limited to Governments, local authorities, service-providers, NGOs, child and youth led organisations;
 - A vibrant and active movement for Barnahus and similar services, including an international professional network which actively engages members in cross- border and cross-profession exchange, peer support and mutual learning;
 - International outreach through active membership in a broad professional network, visibility in European social media and opportunities to meet other professionals from across Europe and beyond.
- d. The network fully embraces multidisciplinary and interagency collaboration, promoting involvement and exchange from all relevant and interested sectors. The PROMISE Vision, presented in annex 1, forms an integral part of the statutes.

§ 3 Activities

- a. The network may undertake the following activities to further the purpose defined in § 2:
- Training and education;
 - Facilitate exchange, mutual support, peer support and mentorship among members, including organising conferences, meetings, webinars and study visits;
 - Develop, publish and distribute practical tools, guidance, policy and analysis;
 - Undertake, publish and distribute research, data collection, monitoring and evaluation;
 - Facilitate meaningful, ethical and safe child participation;
 - Advocacy and awareness-raising, representing the collective views of the members before the European Union, the Council of Europe, the United Nations and other relevant international organisations. The network may support advocacy and awareness-raising at national level upon request and

consultation with the national network member concerned;

- Organisation of the biannual Barnahus Forum;
 - Develop and manage the accreditation system for Barnahus based on the Barnahus Quality Standards;
 - Explore funding opportunities and offering access to expertise and reliant partnerships.
- b. The network can engage in economic activities to promote its non-profit purpose, such as consultancies and expert interventions, selling publications and other material, fees for training, lectures and similar. The revenue for such activities will be used solely to promote the network's non-profit public interest purpose.

§ 4 Members

- a. The network embraces a broad and diverse international membership from across sectors.
- b. Each member and supporter are expected to add value and ensure broad representation of interests, enrich exchange, build multidisciplinary knowledge and contribute to outreach and dissemination of the network's collective knowledge, activities and outputs.

An overview of the membership categories is included in Annex 1.

4.1 Members

- a. Membership in this category is open to multidisciplinary and interagency services (Barnahus or similar services) that fulfil the following criteria:
- Hosts a multidisciplinary team, including representation from at least some of the following disciplines: law enforcement, child protection, medical and mental health services.
 - Fulfils, or are fully committed to progressively achieving a balanced multidisciplinary approach, as described in the Barnahus Vision;
 - Practice according to, or are fully committed to take all possible action to (progressively) practice according to the Barnahus Quality Standards, within the boundaries of the national context;
 - Child friendly facilities and interventions;
 - Services fully compliant with national & European law and requirements for example on different sectors of the multidisciplinary service provision, protection of data and privacy, rights of victims and defendants;

- Non-for profit – service provision is without charge;
- Service provision only carried out by competent, qualified and specialised staff;
- Clear and transparent governance and finance;
- Policy and procedures for safeguarding children from harm are in place.

b. Members enjoy:

- 1 vote in the General Assembly
- Eligible to hold a position on the Steering Group;
- Fully or partly subsidised participation in training, conferences and other activities of the Network
- Full access to network tools
- Members-only access to peer exchange and support, access to Network experts and advocates for special support for national level impact and needs, access to funds via solid partnerships (action grants).

4.2 Associate Members

a. This membership category is open to stakeholders - including organisations and individuals - who play a crucial role in promoting and supporting the establishment, development, competence and dissemination of Barnahus, including for example Governments, national and local authorities, organisations facilitating or acting as national Barnahus networks, Universities, research institutes, centres of expertise, NGOs, regional and international organisations, child rights organisations and champions.

b. In order to join as an associate member, the stakeholder must comply with the following requirements:

- An organisation or individual that fully supports and wants to promote the vision, mission and objectives of the Barnahus network and incremental progress towards the Barnahus Quality standards;
- If the applicant is an organisation, it should be formally constituted as a non- governmental, inter-governmental, governmental, academic, educational, children's rights or child victim support organisation operating at a national, regional or international level.

c. Associate members enjoy:

- Fully or partly subsidised participation in training, conferences and other activities of the Network
- Full access to network tools

- Members-only access to the Network Member Space offering peer exchange and support, access to Network experts and advocates for special support for national level impact and needs, access to funds via solid partnerships (action grants).

4.3 Supporters and sponsors

- a. The Barnahus Network works actively to engage network supporters and sponsors, in line with its fundraising policy.
 - Sponsors may include private foundations, corporate foundations, private benefactors, and other donors. The financial or in-kind contribution from sponsors to the Network is agreed upon in a dialogue with the Secretariat.
 - Supporters have a role as observers. Supporters may include Governments, national and local authorities, Universities, research institutes, centres of expertise, NGOs, regional and international organisations, children's rights organisations and champions that aren't affiliated as associate members. Financial or in-kind contribution of supporters to the Network is encouraged but not required.

4.4 Application, acceptance and termination of membership

- a. Applications for membership should be made on a form approved by the Steering Group and be submitted to the Steering Group.
- b. The Steering Group will take decisions whether to admit a new member. Applicants not admitted may appeal such decision to the Steering Group. Appointments of new members will be submitted to the General Assembly for information. Applications for full, developing and associated membership should be made on a form approved by the Steering Group and be submitted to the Steering Group.
- c. The Steering Group has the right for adequate reason to exclude any member or associate member, provided that the member concerned shall have a right to be heard before a final decision is made.
- d. Membership can be terminated if the member concerned (i) gives written notice of resignation by recorded delivery to the Network secretariat with 12 months' notice; (ii) ceases to exist (iii) acts in conflict with the Network statutes or interests (iv) fails to pay its membership fee.
- e. Membership fees must be paid in full for the termination period (12 months). Membership or other fees that have been paid will not be refunded if membership is terminated.

§ 5 Statutory and other Bodies

5.1 General Assembly

- a. The General Assembly (GA) is composed of all members and associated members that have paid all money due to the Network. Each member has one single vote in the GA.
- b. Associate members and network supporters may observe the GA but have no vote.
- c. Members shall be represented in the GA by an individual appointed by them.
- d. The GA is chaired by the President of the Steering Group. In the absence of the President, another Steering Group member elected at the meeting shall chair the meeting. If no Steering Group members is able or willing to chair, a member of the GA may be elected to chair the GA.
- e. The GA is held annually. A written invitation to the General Assembly shall be distributed no later than 30 days before the date of the General Assembly, and 5 days before an extraordinary General Assembly.
- f. An extraordinary General Assembly can be held if the Steering Group or auditors find it necessary, or if at least 1/10 of the Network members ask for it via written communication. The invitation to an extraordinary General Assembly shall be distributed no later than 5 days before the date of the General Assembly.
- g. The GA holds the full power to realise the objectives and activities of the Network. The GA considers the operational and financial reports approved by the Steering Group, amendments to the statutes of the Network, appeals from organisations which have not been admitted membership and potential resolutions and recommendations that have been proposed to the membership. The GA approves the annual membership fees, the annual workplans, the budget and the financial report. The GA further discharges the board of legal and financial liability.
- h. Decisions at the GA can only be taken if there is a quorum of voting members present at the time when the meeting takes place. One-third of the membership, each member represented by a delegate entitled to vote, shall be a quorum. GA members may present a proxy to enable a vote in absence, using the proxy form provided by the Steering Group.

5.2 Steering Group

- a. The total number of members in the Steering Group shall be at a minimum five and at a maximum nine. The Steering Group appoints positions of the Steering Group including President, Treasurer and other positions as it sees fit. The Network Secretary-Generals (legal representatives) acts as the President of the Steering group during their tenure.
- b. The Steering Group is elected from the membership by the General Assembly.

Each network member may only have one member in the Steering group at the same time.

- c. Steering Group membership is limited to two terms of three years, with the exception of the Network Secretary-General, who remains President of the Steering committee during their tenure.
- d. Each member may nominate one candidate to the Steering group using the nomination process provided by the Steering Group. The candidate must be a member of the organisation making the nomination. Nominations of candidates for election must be given in writing according to the published schedule when the election process is launched.
- e. The General Assembly elects up to three deputy members from among the eligible members. Deputy members may attend Steering Group meetings, participate in discussions, and carry out delegated responsibilities. They do not have voting rights. However, when a regular Steering Group member is absent, a deputy member may temporarily have voting rights for the purpose of achieving quorum and participating in decisions. The responsibilities for deputy members and how they are engaged shall be determined by the Steering Group and documented in the internal rules. As with regular members, deputy membership is limited to two terms of three years.
- f. The Steering Group decides over the management and administration of the Network. The Steering Group develops and proposes internal rules for the proper conduct and management of the Network and staff involved, including a child safeguarding policy. The Steering Group produces annual financial and operational reports, the annual work programmes and annual budgets in collaboration with the Network Secretariat. The Steering group further provides strategic direction, leadership and guidance to the Secretariat and supports activities promoting the work of the Network, including developing and approving project proposals. The Steering Group approves or delays application for membership of the network. The Steering group appoints special advisers and technical advisers to the Steering Group.
- g. The Steering Group appoints the Secretary-General as the legal representative and authorised signatory of the Network.
- h. The Steering Group shall meet at least two times per year. The meetings may take place online. The Steering group regulates its meeting as it sees fit. Questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of votes. In the case of a tie, the Treasurer shall have a second or casting vote. The quorum necessary for decisions of the Steering Group shall be two thirds.

5.3 Secretariat

- a. The Secretariat is led by the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General is

accountable to the Steering Group and the General Assembly.

- b. The Secretariat facilitates and manages the Network activities and the daily running of the Network, with the support of staff. Staff are appointed and line managed by the Secretary-General and are accountable to the Secretary-General.

5.4 Special Advisors and Technical Experts

- a. The network wishes to capitalise on the strong leadership and commitment from key experts relevant to the Network's work. The Special advisers will be invited to hold Steering Group membership until resignation or majority decision of the Steering Group.
- b. The Network wishes to involve actors with specific technical expertise to join Steering Group meetings as relevant. This may involve actors with specific technical experts, researchers and practitioners.

§ 6 Financial year and Audit

- a. The financial year of the Network shall be the calendar year.
- b. The organisation shall be audited by one or more external auditors, appointed by the General Assembly. Auditors are subject to review by the Steering Group every three years. The Steering group report and statement of accounts shall be made available to the auditors in a timely manner. The deadline for submission of the audit report shall be decided by the Steering Group.

§ 7 Changes to Statutes

- a. Proposals for changes to the Statutes must come from the Steering Group or at least 5 active network members.
- b. Proposed changes are adopted by decision of the General Assembly by two thirds majority.

Tallinn, 11 June 2025