

Terms of Reference - Legal Expert in Child Rights to Shape EU Guidance on Pre-Recorded Interviews and Remote Hearings with Children

We seek an expert who will specifically develop a legal summary on pre-recorded interviews and remote hearings with children.

Background

Barnahus (translates to “children house” in English) is a child-friendly, interdisciplinary, and multi-agency centre for children for whom there is suspicion or evidence that they have been victims of violence or abuse. These centres aim to provide coordinated child-appropriate assessments and responses by child protection, social services, criminal justice, and medical and mental health professionals. Inspired by Child Advocacy Centres in the US, the first Barnahus centres were implemented in Iceland in 1998 and have since been implemented in many European countries, with model variations and local adaptations. Despite the rapid expansion, there is little evidence about the effectiveness and impact of the approach on child wellbeing or their contribution to securing justice for child victims.

The Barnahus Network is supporting Europe to adopt [Barnahus](#) as a standard practice for providing child victims and witnesses of violence rapid access to justice and care. We undertake this work to fulfil our [vision](#): a Europe where all children enjoy their right to be protected from violence. Read more about our work and results [here](#).

Project

The “E-vivi” project is an EU-funded initiative which includes a focus on enhancing practices for interviewing and engaging with children in judicial settings—both as victims/witnesses and suspects. With this particular work package led by the Barnahus Network (BN), in collaboration with HEUNI and other partners, the work aims to develop best-practice materials, legal summaries, protocols, and guidance documents that improve procedural fairness, protect children’s rights, and avoid (re)traumatisation during legal processes. Read more about the project [here](#).

Purpose of the Assignment

Deliverable D3.2: A legal summary detailing international and national legal obligations regarding videorecording of interviews with child victims, witnesses, and suspects, focusing on procedural safeguards.

Scope of Work

(a) Legal Summary (D3.2)

- Review international and regional legal frameworks (e.g., UNCRC, Council of Europe Child-Friendly Justice Guidelines, EU Directives such as 2012/29/EU and 2016/800) relevant to videorecording child interviews.
- Identify key national legal obligations and standards in selected European jurisdictions (provided by BN and partners) that govern children's rights and procedural safeguards when conducting videorecorded testimonies.
- Synthesize findings into a concise, 3+ page summary that highlights core legal obligations, focusing on practical implications for justice professionals.
- Days foreseen: 5 +/- depending on level of experience

Context

The two deliverables assigned to the contractor are part of a wider piece of work, shortly presented below. Please note that there are additional deliverables that rely on these two being completed by a certain time.

| TASK | DESCRIPTION | READY BY |
|---|---|-----------------|
| T3.1 Desk Research | Conduct desk research to summarize best practices in videorecorded child interviews, focusing on child victims, witnesses, and suspects. 3+ pages. | Jun-2025 |
| T3.2 Legal Summary | Create a summary of international and national legal obligations related to videorecording child interviews, emphasizing procedural safeguards. 3+ pages. | Jun-2025 |
| T3.3 Protocol for Child Suspects | Develop protocol and guidance for interviewing child suspects, focusing on fair trial and due process safeguards. To be translated into partner languages. 15+ pages. | Oct-2025 |

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|---|---|-----------------|
| T3.4 Lawyer Guidance | Provide structured guidance for lawyers on procedural safeguards to protect child victims and suspects. 10+ pages. | Feb-2026 |
| T3.5 Remote Hearing Ground Rules | Develop best practice recommendations for remote court hearings involving children, focusing on safeguarding and trauma prevention. 2+ pages. | Dec-2025 |

Methodology

- Conduct desk research of international conventions, EU directives, case law, national legislation, and existing professional guidelines.
- Engage with project partners and the Knowledge Hub for contextual insights as directed by BN.
- Prepare outline(s) for approval before producing the first drafts.
- Integrate feedback from internal peer review and consultations into final versions.

See the annexed project planning document for further details of what we have in mind at this stage.

Deliverables

1. Legal summary D3.2

- **Outline** Format: Word document (1-2 pages). Due ± 1 weeks of contract start
- **Draft** Format: Word document (minimum 3 pages). Due 4-6 weeks of contract start
- **Final** Incorporating feedback from BN, HEUNI, and other partners. Due early June 2025 (with potential for flexibility)

Timeline

- Contract Start: [Date to be agreed]
- D3.2 Final Delivery: Approximately June 2025 (tentative, subject to project revisions)

Note: The specific deadlines will be confirmed upon contract signing and may be subject to minor adjustments to align with the project's evolving schedule.

Child safeguarding

The contractor is required to adhere to the Barnahus Network's child safeguarding policy and code of conduct, and any relevant project level policies.

Required Qualifications

- Advanced degree in law (master's level or equivalent), with specialisation in child law, criminal justice, or human rights.
- Proven experience in drafting legal summaries, guidance documents, or policy briefs for EU-funded or international child-rights related projects.
- Familiarity with international and European legal frameworks relevant to children in judicial settings.
- Excellent English writing skills, with the ability to present complex legal information in an accessible and clear manner.
- Strong organisational and communication skills, with the ability to incorporate feedback from multiple stakeholders.

Management and Reporting

- The subcontractor will report directly to the Barnahus Network's designated project manager.
- Regular check-ins (e.g., monthly calls) will be scheduled to review progress, discuss any challenges, and ensure alignment with the project's objectives.
- Drafts and final outputs will be submitted electronically in Word format, with comments and revisions tracked.

Payment and Invoicing

- Payment terms will be agreed upon in the subcontract, typically linked to the satisfactory completion of deliverables and acceptance by BN.

Intellectual Property Rights

- All intellectual property arising from the subcontracted work will be owned by the Barnahus Network, with full rights to reproduce and distribute the deliverables.
- The subcontractor will not use the materials for any external purpose without the prior written consent of BN.

Confidentiality

- The subcontractor will maintain the confidentiality of any non-public information obtained during the assignment and will not disclose it to third parties without BN's prior written approval.

Application Procedure

- Interested candidates should submit their CV, a brief proposal (including daily rate and availability), and examples of previous relevant work by 27 April 2025.
- Selection will be based on qualifications, experience, and value for money.

Supporting documents for the selected candidate include

- The Network's Child safeguarding policy and code of conduct
- The current project plan for the eViVi workpackage related to children
- A background document linking some key provisions to relevant findings from Barnahus Network publications