

ACCESS Project

Access to Justice for Children Accused and Suspect in Criminal Proceedings

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Between September 2024 and August 2026, the ICJ-EI together with partners implements the two-year-long ACCESS project (Access to Justice for Children Accused and Suspect in Criminal Proceedings). The project seeks to foster EU-wide effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for children in criminal proceedings, and respect for children's procedural rights amongst legal and other justice professionals. By identifying gaps in children's access to procedural rights through peer-exchange among justice professionals, the consortium of partners will foster effective application of the [Directive 2016/800](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on procedural safeguards for children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings.

The project partners are:

- [Forum for Human Rights \(FORUM\)](#) – the Czech Republic and Slovakia
- [Bulgarian Helsinki Committee Association \(BHC\)](#) – Bulgaria
- [Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights \(HFHR\)](#) – Poland
- [Défense des Enfants International \(DEI Belgique\)](#) – Belgium
- [Nederlands Juristen Comite Voor Demensenrechten \(NJCM\)](#) – the Netherlands

The project's main objective is **to facilitate effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for children suspect and accused in criminal proceedings in the target countries by:**

1. exchanging good practices and increasing knowledge and practical expertise of Directive 2016/800, in light of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child principles, among **lawyers, judges, prosecutors, law enforcement personnel, experts from civil society organisations, social workers, and probation officers** from the **Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Poland, Belgium, and the Netherlands;**
2. enhancing mutual learning and trans-professional cooperation among competent national authorities, NHRIs, equality bodies and legal and other professionals in the six target EU countries.

The project's final beneficiaries are children in conflict with the law, including potentially vulnerable or marginalized groups, such as children with disabilities, children belonging to minority groups, such as Roma children or children in migration, children facing poverty, and transgender children.

The main activities include:

- an in-person exchange roundtable among lawyers, judges, prosecutors, social workers, probation officers, law enforcement personnel, and practitioners from civil society organisations;
- four online exchange workshops for 1) lawyers, 2) judges, 3) prosecutors, and 4) social workers and probation officers from the six EU Member States covered by the project;
- national seminars organized in each of the project countries;
- the publication of a Compendium of good practices for practitioners;
- the publication of a FAQ for children, youth and parents on procedural rights of children in conflict with the law.

See the [ICJ Child Protection Policy](#).



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