

Minister of the Interior Marija Golubeva: A child-centered justice system is a necessity, not a luxury

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On 25 November, the Minister of the Interior Marija Golubeva together with the Minister of Welfare Gatis Eglītis gave an opening speech at a seminar dedicated to opening of Barnahus project in Latvia. Seminar was organised by Ministry of Welfare together with Iceland's State Agency for Children's Rights, OECD, Children's Clinical University Hospital (Latvia) and Latvian Inspection for Protection of Children's Rights.

Barnahus is a world-renowned cross-government cooperation model. Barnahus works as a child-friendly office, under one roof, where law enforcement, criminal justice, child protective services, and medical and mental health workers cooperate and assess together the situation of the child and decide upon the follow-up. Latvia will introduce Barnahus model with funding from the EEA and Norway Grants funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Total funding of the project is 2,07 million euros and the project will be finished in 2024.

☞ With Barnahus model we can see that to reach the aim, both ministry of the Interior and ministry of Welfare as well as other institutions, hospitals and non-governmental sector has to cooperate to achieve the aim – to avoid secondary victimization of children. This model proves we have to think outside the box, learn from the experience of other countries and create a justice system that puts child's interests at the centre, as it had to be since the beginning. A child-centered justice system is a necessity, not a luxury," highlighted minister Golubeva at her opening speech of the event.

Minister also stressed that sometimes society expects that punishing the perpetrator will be a perfect solution to solving all problems that exist in the context of violence, but in reality violence can only be stopped when whole society joins in and institutions cooperate.

Seminar will take place online from 25-26 November and will be streamed on the webpages on both Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Welfare.

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