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## **Child Protection Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

The Secretariat of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania was established in 1998 with the aim to raise awareness of the full dimensions and tragic consequences of the Second World War, mainly among the younger generations in Lithuania. The task of the Secretariat of the International Commission is to enhance respect for human rights, democracy and to strengthen the civil society in Lithuania, by:

- conducting objective research and filling in the existing gaps in the modern history of Lithuania;
- stimulating the process of historical justice and understanding of the origins of the crimes of the Nazi and the Soviet occupations;
- educating the society by publishing and disseminating the generated information, to inform citizens, teachers and students of all age groups about the Holocaust as well as the crimes committed by the Soviet regime;
- consulting national decision makers regarding issues relevant to the Commission's agenda;

For implementation these tasks the Secretariat of the International Commission organizes seminars, conferences (local, national and international). The Secretariat implements projects for schools, universities and NGO.

The present document (CPP) will cover The Secretariat of the International Commission's projects in which there are direct or indirect activities with children and youth. Such projects may involve educational programmes aimed at adults, but also direct activities with children: phone or online discussions, questionnaires, focus groups, consultation on a training and documents, pilot testing of a training or other activity, workshops, visits at schools, participation in meetings/conferences, etc.

The present Child protection policy represents The Secretariat of the International Commission's statement and set of measures aimed at protecting children from harm and creating a safe organizational culture that embeds democratic values.

According to the World Health Organisation, child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

## **2. Definitions of abuse**

Abuse can take many forms. Here are definitions of the four main categories of abuse:

Physical Abuse is the actual or potential physical harm caused by an action or lack of action, which is reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. Physical abuse may involve hitting, spanking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning and suffocating. It can also mean causing physical harm to a child by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child. The incidents may be single or repeated.

Sexual Abuse is evidenced by an activity between a child and an adult or another child who, by age or development, is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power; the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. Child sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact and penetrative or non-penetrative acts. This may also include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect and Negligent Treatment is the inattention or omission on the part of the caregiver to provide for the development of the child in: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and which causes, or has a high probability of causing, harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that adversely affects his or her self-perception and development. It may involve conveying to the child that he or she is worthless, unloved, and inadequate, or there only to meet the needs of another person; or imposing inappropriate expectations upon him/her. Acts include restricting movement, threatening, scaring, discriminating, scapegoating, corrupting, ridiculing, degrading, bullying, humiliating (e.g. asking potentially embarrassing questions, demanding potentially embarrassing action) or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

### 3. Scope of application

The Secretariat of the International Commission `s Child Protection policy applies to:

- All Staff, Board Members, Trainees and volunteers
- All those acting on behalf of The Secretariat of the International Commission, such as consultants, experts, trainers, editors etc.
- All those who participate in The Secretariat of the International Commission `s events and meetings involving children.

The child protection policy will be introduced progressively.

### 4. Legal framework

The present policy is informed by the principles of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** and respects the rights of children that are guaranteed in the **Law on the Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child** (issued in 1996 and revised in 2017). Data protection for children: As provided for in the GDPR, children may consent to data processing in accordance with member state legislation. The legal rules in Lithuania are mainly set in the **Law on Legal Protection of Personal Data**.

### 5. Domains of application and procedures

#### 5.1 Recruitment and staff procedures

The Secretariat of the International Commission includes questions about risk of harm to children and safeguarding child and youth during interview processes. All The Secretariat of the International Commission staff is required to accept the Child Protection Policy as part of their employment contracts.

#### 5.2 Risk assessment

Before the beginning of direct activities with children (up to 18 years old), the team of The Secretariat of the International Commission staff and/or representatives assesses the possible risks associated with the respective activities. The risks can be related (but not limited) to: geographical scope of the activity, background of the children is prone to abuse or not, size and levels of competence of the team, difficulty of obtaining feedback and/or complaints from the children, levels of competence of partners, ICT infrastructure, etc. Each risk identified is be scored as high / medium / low probability of manifesting. Corresponding actions are identified in order to mitigate the respective risks, and communicated to all adults and children involved in the respective activities.

### **5.3. Data protection procedures**

All employees, trainees and volunteers of The Secretariat of the International Commission must respect the procedures regarding **data protection** before the start of the activities, therefore ensuring participants **information, approval and consent**. In the case of children and youth under 18 years old, the Consent form will be signed by one of the parents/ legal guardians.

Information is managed as confidential and is communicated to others without the consent of the persons concerned only if the duty of protecting the children against any prejudice is above the individual right to intimacy/ private life.

In situations of indirect activities with children (up to 18 years old), e.g. in projects in which The Secretariat of the International Commission works with teachers and teachers subsequently work with their students, the teachers or other educators who are in direct contact with the children have the responsibility of ensuring that children's data protection is respected. In this regard, The Secretariat of the International Commission provides information, guidance and templates of consent forms to the educators, if needed.

Personal data is collected, stored and processed as confidential and is never communicated to third parties without the consent of the persons concerned, unless the duty of protecting the children against any prejudice is above the individual right to intimacy/private life.

### **5.4. Development of trainings, education programmes and educational resources**

The Secretariat of the International Commission is committed to safeguarding all children, irrespective of ability, ethnicity, faith, gender, sexuality and culture. In all the projects, educational programmes and other activities The Secretariat of the International Commission will promote and respect the Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture.

When arranging formal and informal activities on Holocaust education, crimes against humanity for the schools' and local communities, The Secretariat of the International Commission will use a trauma-informed lens and will adapt the information to the age of the students.

As part of digital citizenship education, The Secretariat of the International Commission will address:

- privacy concerns, regarding the protection of one's own information and that of others, identity management and being in control of our online profile, by informing the children (up to 18 years old) about relevant risks
- online security and a person's awareness of how online actions and behaviour can create risks.

The privacy and security domain covers competences such as effectively managing information shared online and using tools (navigation filters, passwords, anti-virus and firewall software) to avoid dangerous or unpleasant situations or to retain some sense of anonymity. The Secretariat of the International Commission

will act on educating children to be responsible stakeholders in the digital society and economy, so that the internet becomes an environment of trust, where fundamental human rights and civic mindedness prevail.

### **5.5.Children direct participation to the Secretariat of the International Commission`s activities**

The principles of the procedures regarding children direct participation to activities are:

- 5.5.1. Protecting children's rights and their best interests.
- 5.5.2. Placing the child as the first priority when dealing with all identified or suspected cases of child abuse.
- 5.5.3. Empowering and educating children on their rights, personal safety and steps they can take, if there is a problem.

In organising the activities that will involve children participation, The Secretariat of the International Commission will:

- 5.5.4. Ensure the equal opportunity to participate in programs regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity or religion.
- 5.5.5. Offer equal opportunities for children to participate in programs regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity or religion.
- 5.5.6. Inform children (up to 18 years old) and their parents or legal guardians about their legal rights regarding personal data protection, as well as their legal rights regarding protection from harm.
- 5.5.7. Educate the staff and partners directly involved in activities with children about the children's legal rights regarding personal data protection, as well as their legal rights regarding protection from harm.
- 5.5.8. Ensure appropriate adults supervision in situations of face-to-face interaction. At least two adults are present in activities involving children (up to 18 years old).
- 5.5.9. Respect all data protection procedures regarding the children, youth and individuals featured in public materials prior to publication.
- 5.5.10. Reduce the risk of harm, by ensuring appropriate adult supervision in situations of face-to-face interaction.

The Secretariat of the International Commission`s staff and representatives will:

- 5.5.11.avoid any action or behaviour that may be inappropriate or potentially offensive to minors.
- Secretariat of the International Commission advises to have at least two adults present

with children.

5.5.12.report any concern, suspicion or awareness of possible abuse or mistreatment of minors.

5.5.13.respect the rights of children and treat them with respect, honesty and dignity.

5.5.14.encourage children to participate in order to develop their ability to protect themselves.

The Secretariat of the International Commission`s staff and representatives are strictly prohibited to:

5.5.15.hit, physically attack, physically or mentally abuse a minor.

5.5.16.participate in sexual activity or have sexual relations with persons under the age of 18, regardless of the definition of adulthood or legally recognized consensus in different countries. Article 200 § 1 of the Criminal Code of 6 June 1997 (1997 Official Journal, No. 88, Item 553) states as follows: "Whoever subjects a minor under 15 years of age to sexual intercourse or makes him/her submit to another sexual act or to perform such an act shall be subject to the penalty of the deprivation of liberty for a term of between 1 and 10 years."

5.5.17.have relations with minors that can in any way be considered exploitation, harassment or abuse;

5.5.18.use inappropriate language or give inappropriate and offensive suggestions and advice.

5.5.19.act to embarrass, humiliate, belittle or despise a minor or commit any other form of emotional abuse.

5.5.20.discriminate against minors or treat some of them separately, while excluding others.

## **6. Reporting incidents**

Definition: concerns or allegations referring to harm-related incidents that directly involve participants to the Secretariat of the International Commission's activities.

Who can report: any child, parent, caregiver, person, or partner organisation working for or with the Secretariat of the International Commission.

How to report:

In person

Via phone, at the number indicated on the web page <https://www.komisija.lt/kontaktai/>

Via email, at the email address indicated on the web page <https://www.komisija.lt/kontaktai/>

For all reported child-abuse incidents, The Secretariat of the International Commission requires that the child's best interest be the first priority. In addition, all incidents must be dealt with promptly, and they must be handled in a confidential manner that does not harm the victim or the person reporting the abuse.

It is mandatory for The Secretariat of the International Commission professionals to report all forms of violence against children that were and to collaborate with local and national Child Protection Authorities in any situation where a child abuse is reported.

## **7. Response protocol and responsibility**

7.1. The Director of the Secretariat of the International Commission is primarily responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the Child Protection Policy and its procedures.

7.2. The Director of the Secretariat of the International Commission designates a Child Protection Responsible Person who is responsible for:

7.2.1. Documenting and archiving all incidents, inquiries, complaints and responses regarding harm against children.

7.2.2. Ensuring prompt referrals to relevant authorities, with respect for the protection of the victims.

7.2.3. Monitoring and evaluating the Child Protection Policy and its procedures, and reporting the results to the Secretariat of the International Commission Board.

7.2.4. Coordinating consultations with children (up to 18 years old) for updating the present Child Protection Policy.

7.2.5. Ensuring the policy is reviewed at least during each of the strategic planning meetings of the organisation.

## **8. Review**

This Child Protection Policy is published on the website of the Secretariat of the International Commission, at this link: <https://www.komisija.lt/en/child-protection-policy/>

This CPC and will be regularly reviewed, in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children, following any changes within The Secretariat of the International Commission.

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