

CROATIAN YOUTH NETWORK

The Code of Zero Tolerance of the Croatian Youth Network on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

WITH ACCOMPANYING OBLIGATIONS, GUIDELINES
AND PROCEDURE PROTOCOLS

Croatian Youth Network
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INTRODUCTION

This is a brief summary of the procedure document “The Code of Zero Tolerance of the Croatian Youth Network on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse” (hereinafter: The Code of Zero Tolerance)¹.

The Croatian Youth Network (hereinafter: CYN) encourages, supports and promotes zero tolerance on sexual exploitation and abuse in the working environment among its workers, associates, practitioners, volunteers and all other persons who come into contact with the work, activities and programs of the CYN.

Sexual exploitation and abuse in any form is contrary to the fundamental values on which the Network is based and must not be tolerated or remain impartial in case of knowing or testimony to sexual violence. The Management Board of the CYN adopted the Code of Zero Tolerance of the Croatian Youth Network for sexual exploitation and abuse with accompanying obligations, guidelines and protocols which condemns all forms of sexual violence and strives to make the CYN a safe place for work.

Continuing to define sexual violence and associated forms of sexual violence, according to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), the Convention on the Rights of the Children, the Criminal Code of the Republic of Croatia, the Anti-discrimination Law and the Code of Conduct in the Cases of Sexual Violence Croatia, CYN defines sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and sexual harassment according to the United Nations, as the main guide in determining these forms of sexual violence for the Code of Zero Tolerance:

Sexual exploitation: any attempt or act of abuse by abusing of a position of vulnerability, power, trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, monetary, social or political gain from the sexual exploitation of another person.

Sexual abuse: any attempt or act of physical assault of a sexual nature, whether committed by the use of force, under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that can be expected or perceived to cause offense or humiliation, when such behaviour interferes with work, is made a condition of employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment can occur in the workplace or in connection with work. Although it usually involves a pattern of behaviour, sexual harassment can take the form of a single incident. When assessing the reasonableness of an expectation or perception, the perspective of the person experiencing the abusive behaviour must be taken into account.

According to Istanbul Convention, CYN defines sexual violence, including rape as:

¹ Source:

https://www.mmh.hr/uploads/document/doc/32/Kodeks_nulte_tolerancije_na_SEA_protokol_prijave_smjerne_podrske_i_istrage.pdf



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a) vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a sexual nature with any part of the body or object into the body of another person without the consent of that person;

b) other acts of a sexual nature with another person without the consent of that person;

c) influencing another person, without their consent, to participate in acts of a sexual nature with a third person. Consent must be voluntary as a result of the person's free will, which is assessed according to the circumstances of the case.

Furthermore, Article 34 of the Convention on the Rights of the Children defines sexual exploitation and abuse and points out that: States parties shall undertake to protect the children from any form of sexual exploitation and abuse. For this purpose, the States Parties shall, in particular, take all national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

a) leading or forcing a child to engage in any illegal sexual activity;

b) exploitative use of a child in prostitution or any other illegal sexual activity;

c) exploitative use of children in pornographic shows and materials.



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ABOUT THE CODE OF ZERO TOLERANCE

The document sets procedures, guidelines and obligations related to:

- Organizational management
- Education and awareness on sexual exploitation and abuse
- Procedure for reporting a suspicion or accusation of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment of a survivor
- Reporting procedure for Croatian Youth Network employee
- Reporting procedure for associates, practitioners and volunteers of the Croatian Youth Network
- Procedure for reporting suspicion or knowledge of the commission of sexual exploitation and abuse or sexual harassment of a child under 18 years of age
- Protocol on the conduct of the Croatian Youth Network in the case of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment
- Guidelines for providing assistance and referral to support for a survivor of sexual exploitation and abuse

All workers, associates, practitioners, volunteers and all other persons who come into contact with the work, activities and programs of the CYN should be respected as persons in accordance with the guaranteed rights to life, protection of personal integrity and dignity, and above all the right to their own autonomy. Any type of intentional physical, verbal or non-verbal harm, harassment, abuse, blackmail, incapacitation, threats, coercion, humiliation, intimidation, taunting, insulting, various lewd acts, rape or attempted rape of another person or persons is a violation of the Code of Zero Tolerance.

Every worker, associate, practitioners, volunteer or other person/persons who come into contact with the work, activities and programs of the Network should behave in accordance with the principles of equality, fairness and respect so that all forms of violence, discrimination, abuse, harassment or exploitation are excluded.

The CYN encourages and intends to maintain a climate of safe working environment for all persons involved in the CYN's work and activities, and is obliged to inform every employee, associate, practitioners, volunteer and other persons related to the work and scope of the CYN of the existence of the Code of Zero Tolerance.

The CYN includes a **CLAUSE OF THE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE** in **ALL FORMS OF CONTRACTS** that regulates workers contracts, volunteers' contracts, practitioners' contracts and contracts of part-time workers. In this way, CYN follows and respects the UNICEF Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment, as well as the legal frameworks of the Republic of Croatia that regulate and punish various forms of sexual violence.

Croatian Youth Network (CYN) is an alliance of over 70 non-governmental youth organizations acting as the National Youth Council in the Republic of Croatia and is a member of the European Youth Forum. CYN is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-partisan association founded in December 2002. It advocates and promotes interests and positions of young people following the principles of tolerance and understanding, and by respecting young peoples' rights and needs.



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The clause on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse for regulating working relationships in the organization states:

- Every person engaged for work or through the work of the Croatian Youth Network organization is obliged to adhere to the " The Code of Zero Tolerance of the Croatian Youth Network on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse ", which explicitly prohibits all forms of sexual violence against children, youth and adults. Otherwise, the organization is obliged to act without delay or hesitation in the direction of suppressing and reporting sexual exploitation and abuse according to the valid legislative framework of the Republic of Croatia and the mechanisms and protocols of the Croatian Youth Network.

The clause for partnership agreements and similar cooperation documents between the Croatian Youth Network and other party(s) states:

- The other party obliges to zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse and respect for the Code of Zero Tolerance and will take all measures aimed at preventing and reacting to sexual exploitation and abuse in accordance with the current legislative framework of the Republic of Croatia and the mechanisms and protocols of the Croatian Youth Network.

During each new employment, CYN will carry out a procedure for all candidates that includes an oral or written check of the candidate's references, an internet search and, if necessary, request a certificate of non-punishment if an employed person will be in direct contact and work with children and young people under the age of 18.

All employees of CYN, as well as every newly employed person, must participate in and undergo two (2) **MANDATORY EDUCATION** within 30 working days from the beginning of the employment relationship – one online created by UNICEF Croatia and education on gender-based violence with an emphasis on sexual violence conducted by an authorized person in front of the CYN.

REPORTING PROCEDURES, guided by the legal framework of the Republic of Croatia that regulates and punishes all forms of sexual violence, in the Code of Zero Tolerance are:

1. CYN sets up the **mechanism** for workers, associates, practitioners, volunteers and beneficiaries (including children) who come into contact with the work, activities and programs of the CYN **to safely report** suspicions and/or accusations of sexual exploitation and abuse that they have experienced personally or have witnessed.
2. CYN sets up the procedure for reporting **suspicions** or **accusations** of sexual exploitation and abuse of, or by associates, practitioners and volunteers.
3. CYN sets up the procedure for reporting suspected or known acts of sexual exploitation and abuse or sexual harassment of **a child under the age of 18** as reporting the perpetrator of violence urgently and without delay to the competent state institutions for the prosecution of sexual violence (police, State Attorney's Office).



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The Code of Zero Tolerance provides **GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING ASSISTANCE AND REFERRAL TO SUPPORT FOR A SURVIVOR** of sexual exploitation and abuse. The decision to report sexual exploitation, abuse or sexual harassment must be made solely by the person who experienced it. This decision can affect a person's life and ways of coping with the traumatic experience. The Code of Zero Tolerance provides useful advice and facts for all workers, associates, practitioners, volunteers and other persons involved in the work and activities of the CYN (such as various groups of beneficiaries) to be familiar with them, all in the manner of caring about survival emotions. All that can and should be done is to provide support and useful information and ensure a strong social network of close persons who will support the person who survived sexual violence in her decision. Children (under the age of 18) are excluded and obliges reporting without delay.

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