



NORWEGIAN PRESIDENCY  
2021-2022



**Children  
at Risk**

# Council of the Baltic Sea States Expert Group on Children at Risk

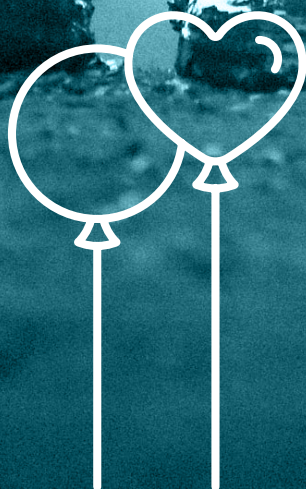
Annual Report  
Norwegian Presidency 2021 – 2022



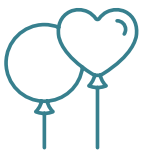
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The **CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk (EGCAR)** consist of senior officials appointed by the ministries responsible for children's issues in the member countries to the Council of the Baltic Sea States; Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, and Sweden.



# Executive summary



**THE NORWEGIAN PRESIDENCY** took place amidst the COVID-19 crisis, the war in Ukraine and the subsequent suspension and withdrawal of Russia from the CBSS.

Under the strong leadership of the Norwegian Presidency, the Expert Group on Children at Risk, with support of the Children at Risk Unit at the Secretariat, reinforced its commitment and work towards our vision of a Baltic Sea Region in which every child enjoys the full range human rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The Norwegian Presidency and the members of the Expert Group on Children at Risk consistently emphasised the high value of continued collaboration and exchange on children's rights, child protection and children at risk in the Baltic Sea Region, including in times of crisis.

The continued commitment and collaboration during the pandemic highlighted common challenges to child protection systems in times of crisis and prompted a deepened collaboration between the members to identify what makes inclusive and resilient child protection systems, including during crisis.

To this end, the Norwegian Presidency of the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk focused on good practices and building trust between child protection systems in the region. A joint project, led by the Norwegian Presidency and funded by the CBSS Project Support Facility, identified good practice concerning the resilience, preparedness, and the operational continuum of child protection services in the Baltic Sea Region, including in the context of the crisis. A conference was held in June 2022 in Oslo, in which stakeholders shared reflections on key elements of resilient and inclusive child protection systems, including in crisis, promoting a common understanding,

collaboration and mutual trust among child protection systems and actors across borders.

The Norwegian Presidency continued the Expert Group's focus on the consequences COVID-19 has had and still has on vulnerable children and families within the region. The Expert Group shared what they have learnt during the crisis, including experiences and knowledge that hopefully will strengthen our child protection and child welfare systems in normal times as well as in similar times of crisis in the future.

The Expert Group had two informal roundtables to exchange information about the war in Ukraine, and how each country is responding to the influx of refugees. The expert group noted the increased importance of sustainable and resilient child protection systems, along with having strong collaboration and trust in the Region, to properly respond to the needs of children and their families during dynamic societal challenges.

Looking to the future, the Children at Risk 5-year strategy and our ongoing projects provide a strong framework to address specific concerns arising for children in our region, including in times of crisis, in the longer term.

The Expert group remains fully committed to continue to play an important role in building stronger ties and mutual trust between the countries in our region, to facilitate a common understanding of the challenges we are confronted with and to continue to take leadership in generating innovative tools and practice to address current and future challenges to children in our region.

— **Unni Nygaard, Senior Adviser at the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs**  
— **Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Head of Children at Risk Unit, CBSS Secretariat**

# Norwegian Presidency & Children at Risk Expert Group at a glance

## Norwegian Chair of the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk

Ms **Unni Nygaard**, Special Adviser at the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir)

## German vice-chair of the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk

Ms **Anna Maria Lemcke**, Policy Advisor, Children's rights, early prevention, protection of children and youths from sexual violence and exploitation, Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

## The CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk

The CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk (CAR) consists of 10 Member States: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, and Norway. Russia was suspended in February 2022 and subsequently resigned in May 2022.

Authorities in the CBSS member states dealing with children's issues, including Ministries and State Agencies designated to children, have appointed representatives to the Expert Group. The European Commission Coordinator for the Rights of the Child has an open invitation to take part in the meetings and in other expert meetings organised by the Expert Group.

The website of the Expert Group on Children at Risk is: [childrenatrisk.cbss.org](https://childrenatrisk.cbss.org)

## The Children at Risk Unit at the CBSS Secretariat

Since 2002, the implementation of the strategy and annual activity plans, as approved by the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk, are implemented with the support of the Children at Risk Unit in the Permanent International Secretariat of the Council of the Baltic Sea States. The Children at Risk Unit provides secretarial and professional support to the Expert Group, interfaces with strategic partners, drafts relevant documents and reports, and develops and executes projects. Its members are:

- **Olivia Lind Haldorsson**: Senior Advisor and Head of Unit
- **Shawna von Blixen**: Advisor and Promise Network Coordinator
- **Linda Jonsson** (term ended April 2022): Promise Competence Centre Coordinator
- **Anastasia Edwardson** (term ended August 2022): Project and Team Assistant

The work is actively supported by CBSS staff specially assigned to support the Children at Risk Unit:

- Silviya Marcinkeviciute (term ended February 2022): Media and Communications Assistant
- Ewa Strozniak: Media and Communication Officer
- Dominik Littfass: Team Leader & Advisor for Communications
- Mia Skyten: Financial Controller

**Some of the members of the EGCAR, from left to right:** Shawna von Blixen (Children at Risk Unit, CBSS Secretariat); Andrea Hormazabal, National Board of Health and Welfare (Sweden); Kadi Lauri, Estonian Social Insurance Board (Estonia); Marjo Malja, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Finland); Anna Maria Lemcke, Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Germany); Olöf Astra Farestveit, Government Agency for Child Protection (Iceland); Maria Pärja, National Board of Social Services (Denmark); Olivia Lind Haldorsson (Children at Risk Unit, CBSS Secretariat); Atieno Odenyo (visiting external expert); Daina Urbonaitienė, Ministry of Social Security and Labour (Lithuania); Lauris Neikens, Family and Social Affairs (Latvia); Anne Kristine, Bufdir (Norway); Unni Nygaard, EGCAR Chair and Bufdir (Norway).



## Finance

The Children at Risk Unit operates on a budget which is financed by the member states' contributions. In 2021–22, all Member States contributed to the Children at Risk Unit, and the Children at Risk Unit operating budget was in balance. During the Norwegian Presidency, the Children at Risk Unit has been successful in securing funds for specific actions through the European Commission, the Swedish Institute, the EEA Norway Grants and the Oak Foundation. Co-financing, a regular feature of external funding for projects, has been covered by the employment costs of the Children at Risk Unit staff.

## Mandate and Regional Strategy

The Norwegian Presidency took the leadership in implementing the Children at Risk Expert group [mandate](#) and [strategy](#), which run until 2025. The mandate sets out the Expert Group's vision, mission, organisational structure, finance, and evaluation mechanisms.

Our vision for the Baltic Sea region (BSR) is that of a region where children enjoy the full range of human rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Our vision is an integral part of the CBSS overall vision for the Baltic Sea region and forms an important contribution to the achievement of the CBSS long-term priorities.

In our vision, effective national child protection systems offer comprehensive prevention, protection and support, thereby providing equal opportunities for all children to grow, develop and thrive free from all forms of violence as defined in UNCRC article 19. Each child has equal opportunities and is offered meaningful opportunities for participation and active involvement in building a prosperous, safe and secure region for all.

Our mission is to promote children's rights and to bolster national child protection systems, including legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect children from all forms of violence, through regional dialogue and practical cooperation. The role of the Children at Risk Expert group embraces the two fundamental pillars of CBSS – political dialogue and practical cooperation based on tangible projects.

The strategy, which complements the mandate, sets out three strategic priority areas for the Expert group in the coming five years, including 1) Prevention and Early intervention – Strengthening Child Protection Systems, 2) Protection, Support and Justice – Promoting multidisciplinary and interagency services, and 3) Partnerships for children's rights and child protection – Promoting Law, policy and joint strategies.

To implement the strategy, the expert group acts as a convener, pathfinder, driver, initiator, coordinator and facilitator in close collaboration with national authorities, civil society, international and regional organisations, professionals, academia and other units at the CBSS Secretariat.

The strategy draws on and contributes to global and regional legal and policy frameworks, ethical and safe data collection and the voices of children and youth. In implementing the strategy, the expert group takes note of relevant global and regional agendas, goals, and strategies, to ensure strategic direction, complementarity and added value in achieving global and regional commitments to children.

Child participation is a cross-cutting priority. The expert group will explore concrete methodologies for ethical and meaningful child participation in the context of our work, promoting the inclusion of children from a diversity of backgrounds and situations. The expert group supports awareness-raising to promote positive attitudes, norms and values to safeguard the rights of children, and promotes **integrated strategies**, including sustainable measures that have been demonstrated to contribute to real positive change in the lives of children at risk:

- Prevention, Early Intervention, and rapid response at first signs of harm
- Tailor-made Multidisciplinary Response and Support Services
- Encouraging a positive justice, law and policy setting
- Safe environments
- Parent and caregiver support
- Education and life skills, including investment in early childhood education

The Expert Group and the CAR Unit at the CBSS Secretariat is fully committed to the mission of keeping children protected and safeguarded from actions that place them at risk of violence, abuse, exploitation, injury and any other harm.

To monitor progress, the expert group adopts annual activity plans, which form the basis for progress reports.

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1 For example the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals; the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region; the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child; the Nordic Council of Ministers cross-sectoral strategy on children and young people and; relevant Council of Europe documents adopted by all CBSS Member States.

# Norwegian Presidency July 2021–June 2022

The role of the CBSS Expert Group on Children at Risk embraces the two fundamental pillars of CBSS – political dialogue between States and practical cooperation based on tangible projects. This provides the Member States opportunities to move forward positions in our three priority areas: Strengthening child protection systems, Justice and Recovery for child victims and witnesses of violence and, building partnerships for children's rights, child protection and non-violent childhoods.

## Norwegian Presidency highlights

### Resilient and protective child protection systems – building mutual trust and collaboration

On 8 June 2022, the Norwegian Presidency of the CBSS organised a conference in Oslo (hybrid) to introduce the results of a comprehensive [mapping of national child protection systems and promising practices in the Baltic Sea Region](#).

Looking at child protection systems in seven countries in the Baltic Sea Region, the mapping identified good practice and core elements of inclusive, sustainable, and resilient national child protection systems, that provide a continuum of protection, including in times of crisis. The mapping also made note of cross-border practice that contributes to mutual trust and cross-border collaboration between national child protection systems.

The conference gathered speakers from Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Poland etc.

The conference provided opportunities for reflections on key elements of resilient and inclusive child protection systems, including in crisis, promoting a common understanding, collaboration and mutual trust among child protection systems and actors across borders.

### COVID-19s impact on children at risk

The Norwegian Presidency continued to place the impact of COVID-19 on children high on the expert group agenda. In November, the Presidency facilitated a round table on the impact of COVID-19.

The expert group acknowledged that the COVID-19 pandemic has had an adverse impact on many children in our region, especially on children in already vulnerable situations, and concluded that a key concern is that many challenges presented by COVID-19 for children risked going undetected, as everyday activities closed down. The expert group emphasised the need to systemise efforts to support vulnerable children, through strong collaboration and partnerships between Government and local authorities, NGOs and private foundations and service providers. Social services are a critical function

of societies during times of crisis. The expert group further highlighted effective measures to ensure children's participation and involvement. The expert group took note of the need to consider studying the long-term effects on children and youth of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Member states quickly developed innovative measures to counteract the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, including by integrating child participation into the design and implementation of measures. Noteworthy practices include for example online information campaigns, access to helplines and FAQ for children and caregivers, national coordination mechanisms, mobile child protection teams, and online reporting mechanisms.

### Child and youth advisory board

The Norwegian Presidency displayed its leadership in implementing the commitment of the expert group to promote child participation by supporting a proposal to set up a Children at Risk Child and Youth Advisory board to the expert group. The proposal is a response to the expert group priority on child participation in the 5-year strategy to “explore concrete methodologies for ethical and meaningful child participation in the context our work, promoting the inclusion of children from a diversity of backgrounds and situations.” The proposal also draws on the Baltic Youth Vision Statement Beyond 2030 Children at Risk, which promotes “Meaningful youth participation demands a structured entry point for young people to take part in the decision-making”. The Children at Risk Expert group supports the creation of a Children at Risk Child and Youth Group and have tasked the Secretariat to proceed with a training on child participation, which will take place during the German Presidency, and the development of Terms of Reference of the group in late 2022.

### War in Ukraine

The Norwegian Presidency hosted two informal roundtables to exchange information about the situation on the ground in the respective Member States, and how each country is responding to the influx of refugees. The expert group noted the increased importance of sustainable and resilient child protection systems, along with having strong collaboration and trust in the region, in order to properly respond to the needs of children and their families during dynamic societal challenges.

As Ukraine is an observer state to the CBSS, Child Welfare authorities from Ukraine were invited to one of the roundtables to exchange information about the situation in Ukraine and the CBSS Member States.

## Prevention and Early Intervention: Strengthening National Child Protection Systems

The core strategic area and priority of the CAR Expert Group is to promote and facilitate regional exchange on key issues of concern to the CAR Expert Group Members with the purpose of identifying and promoting actions to strengthen national child protection systems, in particular measures for prevention and early interventions to protect children at risk.

To implement our role, we act as convenors, facilitating dialogue and exchange with the aim of identifying promising and good practice, building mutual trust and promoting a regional approach and culture on children's rights and child protection.

### Priority 1. Regional exchange on children at risk

The Norwegian Presidency hosted two expert group meetings during its presidency. One of the meetings were held online due to COVID-19 restrictions and the second one was held in Oslo, Norway.

Beyond adopting the annual activity plans, reports from the Secretariat, including financial reports, and the budget for 2022, the experts engaged in dialogue and exchange of good practice, including systematic collection of information from the respective Member States about their country situation and measures to address challenges in two Presidency priority areas: the impact of COVID-19 on children, and building inclusive and resilient national child protection systems and trust and collaboration in our region.

At the 4 November 2021 meeting, the regional exchange focussed on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the consequences the pandemic has had, and still has, on vulnerable children and families within the region. More specifically, the Norwegian presidency focussed on what we have learnt during the crisis and on sharing experiences and knowledge that can strengthen our child protection and child welfare systems in normal times as well as in similar crisis in the future. The present CAR Experts held short presentations based on the COVID-19 Questionnaire with focus on the current national situation and the strategies and action in their respective countries. The key conclusions of the exchange are presented above in the section "Norwegian Presidency highlights".

At the 9 June 2022 meeting, the group focussed on national child protection systems considering the Presidency conference "Resilient and protective child protection systems – building mutual trust and collaboration". The expert group members shared their perspectives on the mapping of child protection systems in the region, and the findings introduced in the conference.

The Presidency also hosted two roundtables in relation to the war in Ukraine, which provided opportunities for the expert group members to share information about the situation on the ground in the respective Member States and to engage in an exchange with

Ukrainian officials on specific needs and challenges.

In May 2022, a roundtable was held online on the review of the addendum to the CBSS guidance and practical tool on cross-border collaboration in transnational child protection cases, which will be published in early Autumn 2022.

### Priority 2. Mapping of national child protection systems and practice for prevention and early intervention in the Baltic Sea Region

Under the leadership of the Norwegian Presidency, the Expert Group embarked on a joint PSF-funded project, involving a mapping of child protection systems in seven CBSS Member States to identify key elements and good practices in well-functioning, inclusive and resilient child protection systems.

The conceptual framework of the research was based on internationally recognised elements of child protection systems, including the INSPIRE framework. The research looked at the policy and legal framework, governance, coordination mechanisms, roles and responsibilities, different service delivery models, prevention and response services, the social service workforce, resources, accountability mechanisms, learning and data management systems and child participation.

The research was carried out through desk research and interviews with key informants. The findings displayed the diversity across countries, in particular child population and the setup of systems, and pointed to general findings and trends, including:

- All countries have ratified the CRC and are characterised by strong child protection systems with all elements of the system in place. The findings showed that CPS have expanded considerably in a relatively short time span and offers a wide and varied range of services.
- All countries differed in terms of how CRC is reflected and domesticated in national policy and legislative frameworks.
- All countries are consistently interrogating the robustness of their child protection systems and are making concerted efforts to:
  - Ensure that interventions are undertaken with the best interest of the child as the central consideration.
  - Ensure to strengthen prevention and early intervention.
  - Shifting from institutional responses towards family programmes that aim to decrease the need for institutional care in the long term.
  - Provide relevant services at decentralized level that ultimately improve the outcomes and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable children and families.
  - Some countries are also strengthening the professional workforce for greater efficiency and effectiveness of services delivery.
  - The process of policy and legislative reforms is tending to always focus on participation.

The mapping culminated in the Norwegian Presidency conference “Resilient and protective child protection systems – building mutual trust and collaboration”, described under “Norwegian Presidency highlights” above.

## Protection, Support and Justice: Promoting multidisciplinary and interagency services for child victims and witnesses of violence (Barnahus)

### Priority 1. Promoting multidisciplinary and interagency services for child victims and witnesses of violence through path-finding initiatives, coordination of broad partnerships

Children at Risk plays a central role in leading and overseeing development of the Promise Barnahus Network, which promotes the Barnahus model. The CBSS chairs the network steering group, providing opportunities to promote the Baltic Sea Region approach to multidisciplinary and interagency (MDIA) models for child victims and witnesses of violence in the region and beyond. In doing so, the expert group drives and promotes a regional good practice model and benefits from broader regional exchange that informs national practice.

Children at Risk furthermore convened the first coordination meeting between CoE, EU, WHO, UNICEF, EEA, and other actors that promote the Barnahus model in Europe. This provided an opportunity ensure synergies, avoiding unhelpful overlaps, building mutual trust and promoting a harmonised regional approach and culture on children’s rights and child protection.

Children at Risk also contributed to several initiatives to promote Barnahus by conducting legal analysis, supporting country analysis and roadmaps and facilitating professional dialogue. For example, Children at Risk carried out a mapping for the Council of Europe on the impact of Ukraine’s legal framework, procedural safeguards and pathways to recovery for child victims of violence.

### Priority 2. Implementation of flagship projects (Promise) to promote sustainable exchange, competence building training, peer support, networking, practical tools, and interventions.

[Promise is a CBSS and EU Flagship Project](#), which has promoted the Barnahus model, which has its origin in the Baltic Sea Region, since 2015.

Building on the success of the EU funded PROMISE project (2015-2017), PROMISE II (2017-2019), the PROMISE 3 (2020-2022) project commenced in April 2020.

Promise 3 aims to, among other things, deliver university level training in forensic interviewing and relevant therapy necessary for Barnahus in Europe and a case management tool including a child participation tool. A series of training opportunities were implemented in the period, including on child investigative interviews and therapeutic interventions:

- **Forensic Interview training with Avatar practice (FI)** – Forensic Interviewing of children is a very delicate task as children’s ability to account vary with age and maturity. In addition, it may be necessary to take into account other difficulties such as cultural aspects and that the child may have both language difficulties and functional disorders. The Forensic Interviewing of Children course (FIC) are based on the current knowledge of professionals from several major forensic interview training programs on best practice for interviewing children in cases of alleged abuse. This programme has developed over years and is among others being run by the National Children’s Advocacy Center in Huntsville, the U.S. Knowledge and training is necessary in order to achieve of the highest level of professionalism and law-abiding interviews. By offering basic training in combination with continued training in one’s own professional environment through avatar training, the training offers the condition to achieve these goals.
- **Base- Child Abuse and Neglect (BASE-CAN)** aims to gain actual and evidence-based knowledge within child abuse and neglect. The starting point of the course is a multi-disciplinary approach that is essential to prevent child abuse and neglect as well as to help those who are victims. The Barnahus model, including the four rooms: crime investigation (police), protection (social services), physical health (pediatrics/gynecology), mental health (child and adolescent psychiatry), is central in this work and represents, together with intensive collaboration, the core of the multi-disciplinary approach.
- **The Child and Family Traumatic Stress Intervention (CFTSI)** is a brief early intervention model for children and adolescents (from age 7-18 years) that is implemented soon after exposure to a potentially traumatic event, or in the wake of disclosure of physical and sexual abuse. It fills a gap between acute responses/crisis intervention and evidence-based, longer-term treatments designed to address traumatic stress symptoms and disorders that have become established. The goal of this family-strengthening model is to improve the caregiver’s ability to respond to, and support, a child who has endorsed at least one posttraumatic symptom. By raising awareness of the child’s symptoms, increasing communication, and providing skills to help master trauma reactions, CFTSI aims to reduce symptoms and prevent onset of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- **The Combined Parent – Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CPC-CBT)** was developed at the Cares- Institute in New Jersey. It is an accredited course which builds competence in staff to offer strength-based therapy programme for children and their parents (or caregivers) in families where parents engage in a continuum of coercive parenting strategies. Since 2006 the CPC- CPT has been used around the world and lately an evaluation was made in Sweden showing promising results when it comes to less trauma



symptoms among the children and improved psychological health among both children and parents.

- **Trauma-Focused, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (TF-CBT)** is a conjoint child and parent psychotherapy model for children who are experiencing significant emotional and behavioural difficulties related to traumatic life events. It is a components-based hybrid treatment model that incorporates trauma-sensitive interventions with cognitive behavioural, family, and humanistic principles.

Furthermore, PROMISE is also developing case management tools, thereby laying the groundwork for an accreditation system for Barnahus. Meaningful and safe child participation is central to the work, and will, among other things, inform a review of the Barnahus Quality Standards.

In 2023, the very first Barnahus Forum will be held in Stockholm, Sweden, by gathering of 200+ Barnahus professionals and stakeholders who will take the inspirational and energy-giving effect that PROMISE has come to be known for, and supercharge it with concrete working sessions and trainings, practical demonstrations, celebrations of progress, study visits and exchanges.

## Partnerships for children’s rights and child protection: Promoting law, policy and joint strategies

This priority area focusses on promoting international legal and policy instruments, concepts and guidance adopted by all CBSS Member States for children’s rights and child protection through broad international and regional partnerships and alliances.

During the Norwegian Presidency, the Expert Group enjoyed strong global partnerships and acted as an ally, observer, and adviser in several regional and international fora. We shared experiences, recommendations, and practical tools from our region to a broader audience and engaged in an exchange information on emerging, developing and ongoing initiatives.

### Priority 1. Contributing to regional and global strategic events, consultations, workshops and training opportunities to disseminate practical tools and share learning from the BSR region.

The Expert Group is a member or observer in several international and regional fora, including the Global Partnership to End Violence against children, and the EU Victim Rights Platform, in its capacity as coordinators of the Promise Barnahus Network. The Expert Group furthermore has an observer status to the Lanzarote Committee, which monitors the implementation of the Council of Europe Lanzarote Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, and the Council of Europe Committee for the Rights of the Child (“CDENF”).

Children at Risk contributed to regional and international exchange of good practice in a series of events, including the EUSBSR Annual Forum (moderation of a workshop on child participation in building resilient societies), the EU Fundamental Rights Forum (participation in a panel on the future of justice for children), the World Congress on Justice for Children (hosting a workshop on child participation), the Council of Europe Final Conference on “Combating Violence against Children in Ukraine” (introducing the results of a legal analysis conducted by the CBSS Children at Risk Unit), a OSCE Alliance on Trafficking in Persons meeting (presentation of the report “In need of targeted support), OECD workshop “Towards Child-Friendly Justice in Egypt: Understanding justice needs and child-centred pathways” (presenting the Barnahus model and potential adaptation to Egyptian context), an international conference hosted by Childhood Germany on the Barnahus model (presentations on the Barnahus network and Barnahus in Europe).

Other contributions include interventions in webinars and organising training sessions for a wide range of stakeholders in the Baltic Sea Region and broader Europe.

### Priority 2. Developing and nurturing relations and joint initiatives with allies and partners in a broad range of areas to explore emerging, developing and ongoing trends and risks to children.

Children at Risk engaged in a series of activities, research, and collaboration to address ongoing and developing trends that put children at risk, with the aim of developing and promoting common, practical solutions to protect and empower children in the Baltic Sea Region and beyond. A selection of the activities are introduced below.

#### Trafficking & Exploitation

As a result of the paper “**In Need of Targeted Support**”, commissioned by the expert group during the Lithuanian Presidency, the Children at Risk developed and embarked on a project, together with the CBSS Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, to address the specific needs of child victims of trafficking and exploitation, including where facilitated by online technology.

The project aims to significantly strengthen the opportunities and means for coordination between (i) authorities and actors specifically involved in responding to trafficking cases and (ii) authorities and actors involved in responding to violence against children and ensuring child centred justice processes more generally.

To this end, the project will develop standards and guiding principles for national and transnational referral mechanisms incorporating a specific focus on child victims, including a specialised and child-centred multi-disciplinary response for child victims of trafficking, drawing inspiration from Barnahus. The project will also develop a handbook and an investigative protocol to facilitate investigation in Barnahus in presumed

cases of child trafficking. A focus on online trafficking due to the emerging increase in risks and prevalence (in terms of both online and offline recruitment and exploitation) as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic will be mainstreamed into the project work packages.

### **Safe and Secure**

Children at Risk is a flagship for the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR). The Children at Risk continued its close collaboration with CBSS Secretariat's Civil Security team (which also coordinates the EUSBSR Policy Area Secure) to explore and strengthen the role of children and youth in promoting a common societal security culture in the BSR and as contributors [to building resilient societies](#).

The objective of the project is to identify and explore critical factors that enable or hinder children to play an active role in building resilient societies. To this end, the project seeks to identify initiatives and good practices that enable children and youth to play an active role in their safety and security, and to contribute to the stability and resilience of society.

### **Online Safety**

Children at Risk continued its involvement in the regional project "[Road Safety Online](#)" to promote safe online behaviour, including awareness-raising and contributions to a [campaign to increase children and adults awareness about risks and safe practice online](#). The objective of is to improve children's capability to protect themselves and their safety in dangerous situations as well as to teach them what is right, what is wrong, what should be avoided and what is acceptable.

### **Child Safeguarding**

The Children at Risk published its annual update of the [CBSS Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure](#). The CBSS furthermore published [Guidance on the use of photos of children](#) to clarify both its own internal policies, and also to guide other actors away from potentially unethical usage of images in traditional and social media of children fleeing the war in Ukraine.

# Selection of events and meetings under the Norwegian Presidency

## June 2021

**1 June, online:** Lithuanian conference of Criminal Courts Administration, intervention on child friendly proceedings (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

**1 June, online:** PROMISE Lecture: Child Sexual Abuse and Child Physical Abuse in families CPC-CBT (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen, Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

**3 June, online:** Promoting Barnahus in Europe–Informal Tour de Table with EU, CoE, EEA Norway Grants, UNICEF (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen)

**4 June, online:** Children at Risk Hosts Second high-level event on corporal punishment in the context of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against children (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**10 June, online:** Uncovering CSE using interviews of children—a multidisciplinary approach, Europol/CEPOL webinar (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen)

**11 June, online:** Indico production meeting for the recording child interviews course. (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen)

**15 June, online:** PROMISE Lecture: Child Sexual Abuse and Child Physical Abuse in families CPC-CBT (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen, Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

**22 June, online:** PROMISE Network child participation working group, for the final drafts of the mapping and report.

## July 2021

**5 July, online:** Call with the Norwegian Police exploring opportunities for framework partnership and streamlining Barnahus project to be funded by EEA. (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

## August 2021

**16 August, online:** PROMISE Lecture: Child Sexual Abuse and Child Physical Abuse in families CPC-CBT (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen, Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

## September 2021

**8 September, online:** Child house learning event, presenting new tools and reports from The Lighthouse (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen)

**9 September, online:** Kick off of Children at Risk Expert Group PSF project on building resilient and inclusive child protection systems and fostering trust between Member State child protection systems (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Project Assistant for CAR Anastasia Edwardson)

**14 September, online:** Scottish Barnahus online webinar (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen)

**14 September, online:** Child participation working group meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen)

**14–16 September, offline:** PROMISE Training Course: Combined Parent- Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CPC-CBT) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

**15 September, online:** Coordination call with Children at Risk initiative under the Finnish Presidency of the Barents Arctic-Euro Council (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**16–17 September, online:** Council of Europe CDENF meeting with specific focus on children in migration (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**17 September, online:** Courtesy call with OECD and their new Barnahus work, introducing PROMISE. (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen)

**22 September, online:** A Journey Through Barnahus Day 1, Promise Training on Barnahus Quality Standards (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawwna von Blixen)

**27 September, online:** CBSS co-hosts European Barnahus Coordination meeting together with the CoE and the EU (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**29 September, online:** A Journey Through Barnahus Day 2, Promise Training on Barnahus Quality Standards (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**29 September, online:** EUSBSR Forum, Webinar on the Role of Youth in building resilient societies (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

## October 2021

**5 October, online:** Webinar launching the Barnahus-Trafficking report (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Programme Coordinator for CAR Shawna von Blixen, Project Assistant for CAR Anastasia Edwardson, Adviser TF-THB Edi Mujaj)

**6 October, online:** Children and Youth Role in building resilient societies, Joint SI funded project, Partner meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Project Assistant for CAR Anastasia Edwardson)

**7 October, online:** A Journey Through Barnahus Day 3, Promise Training on Barnahus Quality Standards (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**11 October, online:** CBSS hosts coordination meeting between NCM, BEAC and CBSS Children's Rights Units (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**12 October, online:** EU Fundamental Rights Forum, Session on The Future of Child Justice in Europe (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**12 October, online:** CAR and National Police in Norway discuss about EEA funded project concept and next steps including a potential cooperation agreement between the CBSS and the Norwegian Police (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**13 October, online:** International Forum on Child Sexual Abuse, (Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen, Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**14 October, online:** PROMISE presents at international conference in Albania (Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**13–15 October, online:** PROMISE Training. Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen, Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

**19 October, online:** A Journey Through Barnahus Day 4, Promise Training on Barnahus Quality Standards (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**21 October, online:** High-Level International

Conference organised in the framework of the EU and Council of Europe joint project "CP4Europe – Strengthening National Child Participation Frameworks and Action in Europe" (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**21–22 October, online:** CFTSI webinars with Carrie Epstein Shawna von Blixen, Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

**26 October, online:** Mapping of Child Protection Systems in the Baltic Sea Region, PSF Project, Partner meeting to discuss methodology and next steps (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**26–28 October, Höör, Sweden:** PROMISE Training Course: Combined Parent- Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CPC-CBT) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

## November 2021

**2 November, online:** PROMISE 4 first meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**4 November, online:** CAR Expert Group meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Programme Coordinator for CAR Shawna von Blixen, Project Assistant for CAR Anastasia Edwardson)

**8–10 November, online:** CFTSI Training with Carrie Epstein (Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

**9 November, online:** PROMISE presents at a Netherlands national conference on what Barnahus is and what has happened to the NL approach. (Programme Coordinator for CAR Shawna von Blixen)

**10 November, online:** Participating in a Swedish breakfast conference about the child's best interest in crisis. (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Programme Coordinator for CAR Shawna von Blixen)

**11 November, online:** A Journey Through Barnahus Day 5, Promise Training on Barnahus Quality Standards (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**15–20 November, online:** World Congress on Justice with Children, including Promise panel discussion on child participation in Barnahus (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Programme Coordinator for CAR Shawna von Blixen)

**17 November, online:** PROMISE Presents at the World Congress on Justice with Children, about child participation in Barnahus (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Programme Coordinator for CAR Shawna von Blixen)

**17–18 November, Vilnius:** Nordic- Baltic conference "Inclusive Society from a child's perspective" (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Programme Coordinator for CAR Shawna von Blixen, Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**23–25 November, Trelleborg, Sweden:** Combined Parent – Child Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CPC-CBT) with Bengt Söderström (Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson)

**30 November, Kyiv, Ukraine/online:** Final Conference of the Council of Europe, Project “COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN UKRAINE” (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

## December 2021

**2 December, online:** A Journey Through Barnahus Day 5, Promise Training on Barnahus Quality Standards (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**8 December, online:** Interviews with Moldova and Finland for the PROMISE drafted WHO report presenting case studies of success factors for Barnahus (Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**9 December, online:** PROMISE co-organized European Commission interservice consultation meeting presenting what Barnahus is and key aspects of the work (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**10 December, online:** Interview with Denmark for the PROMISE drafted WHO report presenting case studies of success factors for Barnahus (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**16 December, online:** Joining the OSCE AECT meeting virtually, to present in the TdT about our recent report. (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, OR Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**21 December, online:** First meeting with Mary Jo Volmer, medical expert in Norway to discuss international exchange opportunities (Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

## January 2022

**12 January, online:** A Journey Through Barnahus Day 6, Promise Training on Barnahus Quality Standards (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**12–21 January, online:** PROMISE presents at an international conference about Family Justice Centers. (TBD, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

**18 January, online:** Children at Risk Unit hosts coordination meeting with counterparts in NCM and BEAC (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**21–28 January, online:** A series of expert meetings concerning the review of the Barnahus Quality Standards (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**24–25 January, online:** PROMISE Lecture: Base- Child Abuse and Neglect (BASE-CAN) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson and Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**27 January, online:** Welcome meeting for the PROMISE 4 forensic interview course (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**27 January, online:** Forensic Interview training, PROMISE 3 (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson and Children at Risk Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**31 January–4 February, Albania:** Delivering a training contracted by UNICEF and Terre des Hommes about Barnahus in connection with a model and standard operating procedure, guided by the Barnahus Quality Standards. (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Programme Coordinator Shawna von Blixen)

## February 2022

**7 February, online:** Day 1 of the PROMISE 4 forensic interview training (Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**7–8 February, online:** PROMISE Lecture: Base- Child Abuse and Neglect (BASE-CAN) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Johnson and Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**15 February, online:** OECD Workshop, CBSS presents at “Towards Child-Friendly Justice in Egypt: Understanding justice needs and child-centred pathways (Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**15 February, online:** PROMISE 3 Lecture: Base- Child Abuse and Neglect (BASE-CAN) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Johnson and Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**16 February, online:** Day 2 of the PROMISE 4 forensic interview training (Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**17 February, online:** Transnational Seminar E-PROTECT II with DCI Italy proposes presenting about the PROMISE Barnahus Network. (Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**18 February, online:** Promise Steering Group Meeting (Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**22 February, online:** Day 1 of Estonian Base-Can course (Competence Centre Linda Jonsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**24 February, online:** Transnational Seminar E-PROTECT II (Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawna von Blixen)

**25 February, online:** PROMISE 3 Lecture: Base- Child Abuse and Neglect (BASE-CAN) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Johnson and Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

## March 2022

**1 March, online:** CAR Expert Group PSF Project Partner Meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**3 March, online:** Day 3 of the PROMISE 4 forensic interview training (Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**3 March, online:** CAR Troika Meeting (Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**8 March, online:** Day 2 of Estonian Base-Can course (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**9 March, online:** Day 4 of the PROMISE 4 forensic interview training (Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**9–10 March:** PROMISE 3 Lecture: Base- Child Abuse and Neglect (BASE-CAN) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Johnson and Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**10 March, online:** Expert Group on Children at Risk Roundtable (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**14 March, online:** Day 5 and case 1 checking for the PROMISE 4 forensic interview training (Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**15 March, online:** Day 3 of the Estonian Base-Can course (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson and Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**17 March, online:** PROMISE Lecture: Base- Child Abuse and Neglect (BASE-CAN) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Johnson and Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**20–24 March, online:** NCAC 38th International Symposium on Child Abuse (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen, Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson and Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**24–25 March, online:** CBSS/PROMISE presents at a German national conference on Barnahus (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, OR Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**28–30 March, Höör, Sweden:** PROMISE Training Course: Combined Parent- Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CPC-CBT) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson & Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**29 March, online:** Case 2 meeting for the PROMISE 4 forensic interview training (Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**29 March, online:** Train the Trainers event with Lithuanian Court Administration on interagency collaboration for child victims of violence (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, OR Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

## April 2022

**4 April, online:** CP4Europe–Webinar on child-friendly communication in crisis situations (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**4 April, online:** Day 4 of the Estonian Basecan course (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**5 April, online:** Meeting with Justice Rapid Response (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**5–7 April, Trelleborg, Sweden:** PROMISE Training Course: Combined Parent- Child Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CPC-CBT) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsson & Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**6 April, Linköping, Sweden:** CBSS presents at the Annual Conference of the Swedish Barnahusnätverk (Swedish Barnahus Network) (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson)

**6–9 April, Rome, Italy:** CBSS presents at the Council of Europe launch of their Children's Rights Strategy (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**14 April, online:** TRM partner kickoff meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**26 April, online:** Victim rights platform meeting (Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

## May 2022

**5 May, online:** Expert Group Tour de Table – Ukraine (Children at Risk Head of Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen and Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**5 May, online:** Standard 8 Review Meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**18–20 May, Trelleborg, Sweden:** PROMISE Training Course: Combined Parent- Child Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CPC-CBT) (Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**18 May, Stockholm:** Czech delegation to the CBSS for a presentation on conducting a feasibility study and preparing a roadmap for Barnahus, based on their study visit in Stockholm/Linköping the previous 2 days. (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**19 May, online:** Training for Lithuanian prosecutors on multidisciplinary teams and Barnahus (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**23–25 May, online:** Training for Albanian on Barnahus, their model, and supporting strong multidisciplinary teams (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

**30 May, online:** Final meeting of the PROMISE 4 forensic interview training (Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen)

## June 2022

**1 June, online:** PROMISE TRM Partner meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen & Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**8 June, Oslo, Norway:** Children at Risk Expert Group meeting (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen & Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**9 June, Oslo, Norway:** Norwegian Presidency Conference: Building Trust among national child protection systems in the Baltic Sea Region (Head of Children at Risk Unit Olivia Lind Haldorsson, Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen & Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**13–14 June, Oslo, Norway:** Study visit to Barnahus Oslo with a Latvian delegation (Children at Risk Adviser Shawwna von Blixen & Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**13–16 June, Tallinn, Estonia:** ISPCAN Conference, CBSS presents results of child protection system mapping (Unni Nygaard, Norwegian Presidency)

**16–17 June, Höör, Sweden:** PROMISE Training Course: Combined Parent- Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CPC-CBT) (Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**16–17 June, Höör, Sweden:** PROMISE Training Course: Combined Parent- Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CPC-CBT) (Competence Centre Coordinator Linda Jonsen & Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)

**28–29 June, Trelleborg, Sweden:** PROMISE Training Course: Combined Parent- Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CPC-CBT) (Project Assistant Anastasia Edwardson)