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## **Council of Europe: export the Barnahus model (“children’s house”) to ensure “kind and coordinated care” to abused or exploited children**

Tomorrow, November 18<sup>th</sup>, will be the European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, rythmed by the motto “Getting it right: ensuring child-friendly justice through Barnahus structures in Europe”. The Barnahus (“children’s house”), born in Iceland in 1998, is a child-friendly place where children can find under one roof all the services that they and their families are provided with by several institutions (legal, social, and healthcare). These Barnhaus structures have become “the European child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model to child sexual abuse”, the European Council explains in a notice. It is a “kind, coordinated” caring method that helps the young ones not to be scared, intimidated or victims again, the secretary general of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić, explained at a high-profile event in Strasbourg yesterday about replicating the Barnahus model. This model, Burić goes on, “will still take priority” even in the Rome Strategy for the rights of the child 2022-2027, launched last April. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Þórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, spoke of it as “a source of pride for Iceland”, now that Iceland is chairing the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe: “Every child has the right to grow into adulthood in good health, safety, peace and dignity, and it is imperative for all Countries to protect their rights. That’s why Iceland has made the rights of children and young people one of the priorities of its Presidency”.

Valentina Bombelli