



## **CHILD PARTICIPATION AS VICTIMS OR WITNESSES IN CRIMINAL CASES IN ARMENIA**

**National Report for AIMJF's Comparative and Collaborative Research.**

*La participación de niños como víctimas o testigos en causas penales en Armenia*

*Informe nacional para la investigación comparativa y colaborativa de la AIMJF*

*La participation des enfants en tant que victimes ou témoins dans des affaires pénales en Arménie*

*Rapport national pour la recherche comparative et collaborative de l'AIMJF*

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**Abstract:** The paper is part of a collaborative research organized by the International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates (AIMJF/IAYFJM) on child participation as victims or witnesses in criminal cases. The article explains the legal, institutional and procedural aspects of child participation in the Justice System in Armenia

**Resumen:** El documento es parte de una investigación colaborativa organizada por la Asociación Internacional de Juventud y Familia (AIMJF) sobre la participación de niños, niñas y adolescentes como víctimas o testigos en causas penales. El artículo explica los aspectos legales, institucionales y procesales de la participación infantil en el sistema de justicia en Armenia

**Résumé :** Le document fait partie d'une recherche collaborative organisée par l'Association Internationale des Magistrats de la Jeunesse et de la Famille (AIMJF) sur la participation des enfants en tant que victimes ou témoins dans des affaires pénales. L'article explique des aspects légaux, institutionnels et procéduraux de la participation des enfants dans le système de justice en Arménie

### **Introduction**

The International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates (IAYFJM or AIMJF, in the French and Spanish acronym) represents worldwide efforts to establish links between judges from different countries, promoting transnational

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judicial dialogue, in order to provide better conditions for a qualified attention to children based in a human rights approach.

To do so, AIMJF organizes research on international problems facing the operation of the courts and various laws relating to youth and family and training programs.

The aims of this research are to identify similarities and discrepancies among countries and to develop a cartography of how child participation as victims and witnesses in criminal cases is organized worldwide.

This national report is based on a questionnaire prepared by AIMJF.

## Questionnaire

### 1. Right to be heard

**1.1. Are children presumed to be capable witnesses (or presumed invalid/untrustworthy by reason of their age alone, or similar)?** Yes, a minor can also be considered a witness in the Republic of Armenia. In this case, though, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Civil Procedure Code provide certain features. In particular, according to the Civil Procedure Code, the rights and legal interests of minors, persons recognized as incompetent or with limited capacity, are represented in court by their parents (adoptors), guardians, or trustees. According to the general approach, the rights of the victim who is a minor, incapacitated, or has a mental health problem are exercised by his legal representative instead of him in the manner prescribed by the Criminal Procedure Code.

**1.2. Are there any restrictions to the right to be heard (minimum age, or other criteria)?**

The RA Family Code provides that:

Considering the opinion of a child who has reached the age of ten is mandatory in connection with freedom of conscience, participation in certain activities, refusal to



receive extracurricular education, living with one of the parents, communicating with relatives, and in other cases stipulated by law. In the cases provided by the Code, the guardianship and trusteeship body or the court can decide for a child who has reached the age of ten only with his consent. However, the draft Law on the Child Rights Protection System of the Republic of Armenia plans to amend and remove this age limit. In particular, according to the project, the child participates in discussing issues concerning him with his developing abilities and gradually increasing autonomy.

### **1.3. Are children allowed to refuse to make a statement? If so, in which cases?**

Yes, the RA Civil Procedure Code stipulates that a minor victim or witness is not interrogated on the recommendation of a psychologist if it is necessary for the protection of his legitimate interests, and the defense side had the opportunity to ask questions to the minor during the pre-trial proceedings.

According to the RA Criminal Procedure Code regulation, the victim has the right to testify, to refuse to testify or to provide materials if it is reasonable to assume that they can be used against him or his spouse or a close relative in the future.

## **2. Broad perspective of the legal framework and procedure**

**2.1. Is there a specific legal framework that defines how to treat child victims/witnesses of crime (e.g. special norms in the criminal procedural code, special child code, special victims code, etc.)?** The Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that the legal representative of a minor victim or witness has the right to participate in the interviewing of the victim or witness. The interview of a minor victim or witness is carried out with the participation of a psychologist at the request of the party or the initiative of the court. The court of first instance involves the legal representative of the minor in the questioning of the juvenile witness and in the questioning of the minors under the age of fourteen, also a child psychologist or pedagogue. During the questioning of a witness under the age of fourteen, persons participating in the case are removed from the courtroom if they have a representative and if their participation may affect the testimony of the witness. The representative of the person participating in the removed case participates in the session.

It is important to mention that According to the Code of Criminal Procedure, a qualified psychologist is involved in the execution of an investigative operation with the

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participation of a minor under the procedure established by the Government. In other words, any investigative action is carried out with the mandatory involvement of a psychologist, and these forensic interviewer psychologists are trained and certified by the Ministry of Justice, after which they are involved by the Investigative Committee to participate in the proceedings.

On the recommendation of a psychologist and to protect the legitimate interests of a minor, the investigative action is carried out under such conditions (place, duration, number of participants, etc.) that will guarantee his best interests to the maximum extent. Upon the psychologist's recommendation and to protect the legal interests of the minor victim or witness, before starting the investigative action related to testifying, the investigator formulates and agrees with the psychologist the questions to be asked to the minor. On the recommendation of a psychologist and to protect the legitimate interests of a minor victim or a witness, the questions of the arrested person, the accused, or his defense counsel are asked to the minor after coordination with the psychologist, without direct communication with the minor.

The draft RA Law "On Child Rights and Child Protection System" also requires the mandatory participation of a qualified psychologist, excluding the participation of the child in any actions that harm the child's mental health.

**2.2. Is there any coordination between different role players (such as the police, education, social services, health system) to initiate legal proceedings and coordinate response (evidence collection and intervention), including avoiding multiple interviews of the child? Is there any flowchart in your country to coordinate these interventions? If so, could you please share it?**

There is no clear division of roles under the current legislation. Such coordination is envisaged by the draft of amendments to the Criminal Code.

**2.3. Can you briefly explain what are the major steps of the legal procedure in criminal cases (felonies) with child victims or witnesses involved?**

See above in the response to 2.1.

**2.4. In which moment(s) can a child be heard in this procedure?**

In this case, the main stage is the stage of interview by the investigator.



**2.5. Does the child have the power to initiate, suspend or terminate the criminal procedure (such as giving consent for the complaint or the possibility to refuse consent or revoke consent)? If so in which cases?**

There is no restriction on filing a crime report so a minor can file a police report.

According to the general approach, the rights of the child victim are exercised by his legal representative instead of him in the manner prescribed by the Criminal Procedure Code. However, the code also provides that in the cases provided by law, minors can independently represent their interests in court. They have the right to be heard on issues related to their interests during the investigation of the case in cases provided by law. Therefore, the wishes and opinions of the minor will be taken into account in any case.

### **3. Preparation for the child participation**

**3.1. Is there in your country specific child-friendly information material for children as victims or witnesses (e.g. brochure, video etc)? If so can you please share them?**

No

**3.2. How do children have access to these materials? (e.g. brochure available at police station/court; brochure sent to the child together with summon; witness preparation conducted in court with support of a video, or with support of a special professional; investigator/judge orally explaining in child-friendly language before interview/hearing, or any other?) How long before the interview/hearing does this happen?**

Since participation of the psychologist is mandatory in case of all investigative actions, including interview, involving children, the psychologist explains the process to the child before the interview in a child-friendly language.

**3.3. Is there any assessment of the child conducted before a child is interviewed/heard? If so, what is assessed / for what purpose (e.g. background and circumstances of child; whether the child would be able to speak freely; capacity of child to express him/herself; capacity to participate, if uncertain; capacity to handle interview and possible effects; potential vulnerabilities and special needs, etc)? If so, what is the legal background of their professional conducting this assessment? To**



**which institution does this professional belong? Is there any kind of report produced?**

Psychologist participating in the interview assesses the capacity of the child during the interview and reflects the observations in the report, submitted to the investigator and attached to the case.

**3.4. Is there any kind of contact or evaluation with the parents or legal guardians?**

No

**3.5. Is the child allowed/invited to visit the facilities where he or she will be heard prior to the interview/hearing?**

In cases where victims of sexual violence are interviewed in one of the two Barnahus facilities, they can visit, since the facilities are attached to the crisis centres where children usually get services. In other cases, when the interview is conducted in the premises of Investigative Committee – no.

**3.6. Does the child receive any kind of support prior to the interview/hearing (psychological, social, medical, legal)?**

Criminal legislation does not address this issue, but legislative changes have been initiated for the development of the Barnahus model introduced in RA and currently piloted. The interviewing of the child should be carried out in Barnahus or another similar facility, where the child will be met by a social worker, and the preparation will be carried out by a qualified psychologist. The amendments provide that a multidisciplinary discussion should be convened at the initiative of the social worker to determine the child's needs and take appropriate steps. After the investigative actions, an interdisciplinary discussion is organized again about the situation and needs of the minor for assessment, and if necessary, medical, psychological, and other support may be provided to the minor after investigative actions. The investigator and the psychologist, and if required, other specialists can be invited, including a forensic doctor.

#### **4. Protection and Support**

**4.1. Is there any risk assessment conducted for the child victim/witness after a crime has been reported? If so, who conducts it? Is there any specific tool? If so, can you share it please?**



**4.2. In case of identification of risks, what kind of protective measures are available in your country?**

**4.3. What kind of support measures are available for child victims / witnesses of crime (psychosocial, medical, legal) before, during, after the judicial process)**

**4.4. In case of intrafamilial violence, which measures can be / are usually adopted to grant the child's security? Is there any/which kind of support offered to the remaining members of the family? Are there any specific measures in case of child abduction or child kidnapping?**

The draft RA Law "On Child Rights and Child Protection System" is planned to provide the guardianship and trusteeship body with clear powers that are related assessment of child needs and addressing assessed needs in child protection, in particular: The guardianship and trusteeship body takes steps aimed at detecting and preventing violence or the risk of violence against children and responds to reports of violence, assesses a case of violence against a child: to determine the necessary intervention, transport the child together with the police from family to carer or guardian, foster family, 24/7 care provider institution, in case of an immediate threat to the child's life and health, with the Police of the Republic of Armenia jointly immediately implements the organization of emergency alternative care for the child.

## **5. Environment**

**5.1. In which institution/what kind of environment is the child interviewed/heard in pre-trial/trial phase?** The current legislation of the Republic of Armenia only stipulates that, on the recommendation of a psychologist and to protect the legitimate interests of a minor, the investigative action is carried out under such conditions (place, duration, number of participants) that will allow guaranteeing his best interests as much as possible. However, it is not definite where and under what conditions the investigative operation should be carried out. To develop the Barnahus model in Armenia, certain adjustments and guidelines have been introduced and capacity building conducted for investigators, forensic psychologists and social workers of the crisis centres within the partnership between Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Investigative



Committee and UNICEF to clarify the process of carrying out investigative activities in Barnahus centers.

**5.2 Is there any specificity in this environment to adapt it for children? (e.g. separate ‘building’ specifically for children; non child- specific building, but separate entrance for children; separate interview/hearing room for children)**

Currently, we have two Barnahus centers operating in the RA. Barnahus Safe Corner in Yerevan and the Kapan center are modeled following and adapting the international “Barnahus” approach to child-friendly justice that unites under one roof law enforcement, criminal justice, child protection services, and medical and mental health workers to cooperate around the case of the child victim. These two centers cover child victims of sexual violence, and other child victims and witnesses are interviewed in child-friendly rooms that were installed at territorial subdivisions of the Investigative Committee.

**5.3. Are there guidelines for the environment where the child is interviewed/heard? (architecture, setting)? If so can you please share it? Can you share a photo of this space?**

**5.4. Is there a specific waiting area for the child?**

**5.5. Are there protection measures to avoid direct contact (including visual) between the child and the alleged offender? if so what kind? ( e.g. separate entrance, separate waiting area, separate interview/hearing rooms, use of video link, voice or image distortion etc)**

**5.6. In case identification of the offender is needed, how is this conducted, and where?** All such arrangements under the Barnahus guidelines are designed to protect the best interests of the child. In case of regular interview at the investigative committee the waiting process is organised so that there is no contact between the offender and the child, however, there are no specific guidelines for this.

**5.7. If the child lives in a different city in relation to the city where the proceeding is tried, what are the specificities at stake?** There are no clear legal regulations in this regard. In practice, there have been cases when a child was transferred from one region to another for interrogation at the Barnahus center.

**5.8. Is it possible in your country that the interview is conducted virtually (the child and the interviewer are in different places)? In which circumstances? Are any / which special security measures (are) adopted?**





**5.9. Must a child appear in court to be interviewed or are recorded investigative interviews admitted as evidence in court? If the child has to appear in court, which circumstances are determinant?** According to the current regulation: In exceptional cases, when the person's presence during the investigative operation is impossible due to the health condition or being in another place, or when there is a need to ensure the safety of the person or to protect the legal interests of a minor victim or witness, and this is required by the interest of justice, investigative action can be performed using technical means of video communication (via video). Under current regulations, the child must appear in the courtroom. Amendments under discussion suggest that to avoid direct contact with the alleged offender, it is also necessary to conduct the interrogation of the child online during the court session.

## **6. Specific legal guarantees for the child**

**6.1. Does the child have the right to legal assistance? for free? Is this assistance specialized? At what moment does this assistance come in (e.g. already advising whether or not to report a case / during the first interview / only in court / other)** According to the RA Law on Advocacy, free legal advice is provided to children left without parental care, as well as to persons belonging to the number of children left without parental care, and also to victims if they are children under 16 years of age.

**6.1.1 What is the role of the legal assistant (representing views of child or best interests of child; advising the child; talking on behalf of the child; ...)?** According to the Law of the Republic of Armenia on Advocacy, Legal activity is a type of legal protection activity carried out by a lawyer and aimed at the implementation and protection of the rights, freedoms, and interests of a person receiving legal aid by all means and methods not prohibited by law. These are the same for children, as there are no other exceptions.

**6.2 Does the child have the right to be accompanied by a support person? If so, what is the role of this person? What is this person entitled to do in support of the child?**

**6.3. What is the role of parents/legal representative?**

According to the general approach, the rights of the victim who is a minor are exercised by his legal representative instead of him in the manner prescribed by the Criminal



Procedure Code. The Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that the legal representative of a minor victim or witness has the right to participate in the interview of the victim or witness. The interview of a minor victim or witness is carried out with the participation of a psychologist at the request of the party or the initiative of the court. The court of first instance involves the legal representative of the minor in the interview of the child witness and the interview of the minors under the age of fourteen, also a child psychologist or pedagogue. During the interview of a witness under the age of fourteen, persons participating in the case are removed from the courtroom if they have a representative and if their participation may affect the testimony of the witness.

On the other hand, as we mentioned above, any investigative action is carried out with the mandatory involvement of a certified psychologist, and the minor's legal representative also has the right to participate in the investigation operation with the minor's participation.

**6.3.1 When are parents/legal representative excluded (e.g. perpetrator, exploitative, intimidating/influencing, non-supportive, conflict of interests...)?**

A parent or adoptive parent of a minor accused, victim, or witness may not participate in the proceedings if 1. his behavior harms the interests of the person being presented, by his behavior, he hindered the implementation of the rights of the person being represented, or led to their violation, 2. cannot be a legal representative by law or judicial act, 3. there are facts about him that indicate the commission of an alleged crime against the interests of the person being presented.

**6.3.2. If excluded, is there another legal representative appointed/ if so by whom?**

To represent the legal interests of the minor victim left without care, respective employee of the competent guardianship and trusteeship body is involved as a legal representative.

**6.4. What kind of measures are adopted to grant the right to privacy / confidentiality (public excluded / in all cases / in which cases? press statements so that child can not be identified?)**

According to the current regulation, to protect the private lives of the participants of the proceedings, minors, or the interests of justice, as well as state security, public order, or morals, the court, at the request of a party or on its initiative, has the right to decide to hold the court session or a part of it behind closed doors in the cases provided for in the Criminal Procedure Code. Decisions issued by the court during the court proceedings are announced publicly. Based on the reasons for holding a closed court



session, certain parts of the court decision may not be publicly announced by the court's decision.

**6.5. Is the child allowed to plea for cautionary measures?** According to the current regulation, a person subjected to or allegedly subjected to family and domestic violence or, with his consent, the support center can apply to the court for a Protective Order. If the victim of family and domestic violence is a minor or a person recognized as incompetent or with limited capacity by court order, his close relatives, legal representative, and the guardianship and trusteeship body can apply to the court for a protective decision.

**6.6. Does the child have the right to appeal any decision?** On behalf of the child, protection of his interests must be carried out by legal representatives or guardianship and trusteeship body.

## **7. Interviewing structure and procedure**

**7.1 Who hears the child victim/witness in the pre-trial phase / who in the trial phase? How often is a child usually heard in total (pre-trial and trial)? Does the law limit the total number of interviews/hearings conducted?** While there is no limitation other than reference to the best interests of the child, the overall idea of legislative amendments currently developed in relation to Barnahus model and beyond is to ensure that in practice, minor victims or witnesses may not be questioned more than twice during the criminal proceedings. The second interrogation is carried out if the parties failed to exercise their rights during the first interrogation or if it is necessary to protect the minor's rights and legal interests. The second interrogation must be conducted by the person who conducted the first interrogation. According to this model, before the interrogation, the child should not communicate with any other person, especially the alleged abuser.

**7.2. Is it mandatory that this professional has specific training for child interviews?** The current criminal code does not present such a requirement to the investigator. It is only provided that the interviewing of a minor victim or witness is carried out with the participation of a psychologist at the request of the party or the initiative of the court. According to the draft of legislative amendments presented by UNICEF, the interview must be carried out by a trained investigator and with the mandatory participation of a psychologist.



7.3. Is any kind of interview protocol adopted in your country (pre-trial and/or trial stage)?

If so, which one? If so, could you please share it?

No. However, adaptation of simplified version of NICHD protocol is in the process.

**7.4. Who is allowed to participate in the interview/hearing? Who is sitting in the same room as the child / who is sitting in another room, if any?**

**7.5. Who is addressing the child victim/witness: only the interviewer? cross examination allowed? if only the interviewer, how can other participants ask questions? How is the communication between those who follow the interview and the interviewer? What kind of communication tool is used?**

The Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates that the legal representative of a minor victim or witness has the right to participate in interviewing the victim or witness. The interview of a minor victim or witness is carried out with the participation of a psychologist at the request of the party or the initiative of the court.

On the other hand, as we mentioned above, any investigative action is carried out with the mandatory involvement of a certified psychologist. Forensic interview is also considered an investigative action, therefore, a qualified psychologist necessarily participates in the investigative action related to the interview. Upon the psychologist's recommendation and to protect the legal interests of the minor victim or witness, before starting the investigative action related to testifying, the investigator formulates and agrees with the psychologist the questions to be asked to the minor. During the investigation, the psychologist has the right to ask questions and make suggestions. However, the investigator has the right to remove the questions or not to accept the proposals presented, but they must be included in the record.

According to the draft of legislative amendments, the legal representative of the minor victim or witness has the right to participate in interviewing the victim or witness but separated from the observation room or through a screen. A social worker may also be present in the observation room. The parties may ask the minor victim or the witness questions through a pre-determined person conducting the interview.

**7.6. Is the interviewer allowed not to ask the questions raised by others? Is the interviewer allowed to rephrase the questions raised by others?** Before starting the investigative operation, the rights to participate in the investigative operation and make comments are explained to the psychologist and the legal representative. The psychologist



and the legal representative participating in the investigative operation related to testifying are also explained their right to ask questions, and the psychologist has also interpreted the right to present professional suggestions regarding the investigative operation being performed. The investigator has the right to remove the questions asked or not to accept the proposals presented, but they must be included in the record. On the recommendation of the psychologist and to protect the legal interests of the minor victim or witness, before starting the investigative action related to testifying, the investigator formulates and agrees with the psychologist the questions to be asked the minor. Upon the psychologist's recommendation and to protect the legitimate interests of the minor victim or witness, the questions of the arrested person, the accused, or his defense counsel are asked to the minor after coordination with the psychologist, without direct communication with the minor.

**7.7. Is the interviews audio and video recorded, if so for what purpose (accuracy of statement, use as evidence in court, use in other courts, other)?**

According to the current regulation: In exceptional cases, when the person's presence during the investigative operation is impossible due to the health condition or being in another place, or when there is a need to ensure the safety of the person or to protect the legal interests of a minor victim or witness, and this is required by the interest of justice, investigative action can be performed using technical means of video communication (via video).

**7.7.1. In case the recording is admitted as evidence in court: what protection measures can be applied (e.g. image and voice distortion, child heard in a separate room etc)?**

There is a problem with this part, because said recordings may not be accepted as evidence by the court.

**7.8. How is the quality of the recording? In case of failure in the recording, what are the measures adopted?** The video recording must be carried out from the start of the investigation operation until its completion, without interruption, except for unforeseen technical malfunction or other cases of objective impossibility. In case of obstruction of the video recording, the execution of the investigative action is interrupted, the reasons for which are indicated in a separate protocol drawn up for that purpose. The execution of the investigative operation continues from the moment of resuming the video recording.



Until then, the investigator takes measures to ensure the course and efficiency of the investigative operation. In the case of video recording, the integrity, visibility (coverage, lighting, etc), and audibility of the investigation operation are ensured. The video recording may not be edited or otherwise modified.

**7.9. If no audio/video recording: is the child allowed to review his or her statements and to correct them? Is the child/legal representative allowed to get a copy of written statement / recording?** Before starting the questioning of a victim or a witness under the age of sixteen, the presiding officer shall explain to them the importance of giving truthful testimony for the fair implementation of the proceedings but shall not warn them of the liability established for refusing to testify or giving false testimony. According to the general regulation, the victim has the right to testify, to refuse to testify or to provide materials if it is reasonable to assume that they can be used against him or his spouse or a close relative in the future, at his request, to receive free of charge the record of the evidentiary and other procedural action performed with his participation, including its appendix, as well as copies of the decision on appointing an expert and the expert's conclusion.

**7.10. If there is a special procedure for hearing child victims and witnesses, is it mandatory for the child to participate in such a way or has he/she the right to choose to be heard as any other victim or witness? Are there still adaptations in this case?** Following the regulations discussed above, certain features are provided for minors, such as the participation of a psychologist, but now it is not mandatory. According to the presented proposal, the social worker, the legal representative, and the representative of the accused can also participate in the interview from the observation room. The implementation of investigative action in a particular order is conditioned by the protection of the best interest of the child; therefore, if, after listening to the opinion of the child, the body conducting the proceedings decides that it is in the best interest of the child, then the relevant features will be applied.



## **8. Offender's right during or after the interview**

**8.1. Is the alleged offender allowed to participate in the interview of the child witness? Is his/her defence attorney allowed to participate? Is participation of either of the two mandatory?**

**8.2. If the offender is not present during the interview, how can he or she make additional questions to the child? How can he or she contradict the child's statements?**

The accused exercises his rights through a representative. According to the current regulation, on the recommendation of a psychologist and to protect the legitimate interests of a minor victim or a witness, the questions of the arrested person, the accused, or his defense counsel are asked to the minor after coordination with the psychologist, without direct communication with the minor.

## **9. Parallel proceedings – coordination**

**9.1. In case of parallel proceedings (such as in family or child protection procedures) based on the same facts, is it clear who has the priority to conduct the interview?**

**9.2. Is there any coordination procedure between different courts/authorities? How is the coordination procedure?**

**9.3. If another court/authority has not participated in the interview and needs additional information, is this court/authority allowed to interview the child again? And/or can interviews be shared (who can share with whom)?**

If there is a report of a crime, the interview is carried out by an investigator. According to the current Code, there is no limit on the number of interrogations of a child, but as we have already mentioned, according to the draft of the amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure, it is recommended that the interrogation of a minor be carried out once, and in exceptional cases - twice.

## **10. Training**

**10.1. Are judges and magistrates trained to deal with child victims?**

**10.2. Is the content of the training interdisciplinary? Do other professionals also participate in the same training?**



Initial training for judges, prosecutors and investigators covers rights of children in criminal procedure. Continuous legal education programme for these professionals includes optional courses on the protection of children in criminal procedure and principles of working with child victims of violence. Distance learning courses are offered by the Justice Academy of RA on annual basis. Ad hoc interdisciplinary trainings have been provided mainly in partnership with international organisations.

## **11. Reforms in progress**

### **11.1. Are there reforms in progress in your country regarding child's victim rights, the procedure among others? What is the aim and the main subject of it?**

Yes, a draft of amendments to Criminal Procedure Code is being developed, which was presented within answers to different questions above.

In addition, the child protection legislation is in the process of complete revision, with the aim of clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different state bodies in a child protection case and inter-sectorial cooperation between justice, social services, health, education and other sectors. Several important concepts have been defined in this draft package in the field of protection of children's rights: bullying, prohibition of corporal punishment, exploitation, including sexual exploitation, and other concepts. A duty to report about violence or the risk of violence has been established. Several regulations are planned related to the procedure of child adoption, expression of opinion, protection of the child's rights during criminal proceedings, and many other essential issues.

Some picture samples:

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