



CHILDREN AND YOUTH SAFEGUARDING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

HERMES is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and youth taking part in our training workshops, seminars and conferences. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years. Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them.

HERMES is committed to:

- Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in different non-formal educational activities safely.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its staff, members, trainers and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- Require staff, trainers, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Safeguarding Policy and its accompanying documents.
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these procedures. These documents will be checked and revised annually.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH SAFEGUARDING POLICY (continued)

TRAINING AND AWARENESS

HERMES will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its staff, trainers, members and volunteers. For all HERMES team members who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children.
- Recognise a child potentially in need of safeguarding and take action.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children.
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Policy and supporting documents.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

HERMES expects all employees, trainers, members and volunteers to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.

However, information will be shared with the Local Authorities if a child is deemed to be at risk of harm and the police will be contacted if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed. HERMES will always refer the case to national child protection systems outside of the organization when the need arises.

RECORDING AND RECORD KEEPING

A written record must be kept about any concern regarding safeguarding needs and incidents. This must include details of the persons involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decision made and why they were made.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

SAFE RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

HERMES is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to children from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them. All team members working with children and youth will undergo due diligence review as a part of their recruitment process which includes a criminal background check.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH SAFEGUARDING POLICY (continued)

SOCIAL MEDIA

All employees, members and volunteers are required to maintain professional and ethical conduct standards in their social media accounts. Protracted interaction with children and youth on social media channels is discouraged, unless it takes place within the context of the youth workshop, training, seminar or conference.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

All employees, trainers, members and volunteers should be aware of HERMES policy and procedures regarding the use of mobile phones and any digital technology and understand that it is unlawful to photograph children and young people without the explicit consent of their parent or guardian. Even with that consent secured, the photos and videos should only be taken with the purpose of documenting project activities.

WHISTLEBLOWING

It is important that people within HERMES have the confidence to come forward to speak or report any safeguarding concerns. This includes concerns about another employee, trainer or volunteer. HERMES commits to protecting whistleblowers as part of this Safeguarding Policy.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

This Safeguarding Policy is accompanied by several documents, all of which should be enforced and taken into account when approaching children and youth protection in a comprehensive way.:

- Staff and Trainers Code of Conduct
- Participant Code of Conduct
- Parental Release Form
- Accompanying Adults' Duty of Care Directive
- HERMES GDPR Form



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REPORTING PROTOCOL

At all HERMES youth workshops, events and activities, the safeguarding policy will be explicitly mentioned to participants, along with all relevant Codes of Conduct. The reporting procedure and contact information of the Safeguarding Officer should be made available to all participants. All the safeguarding policy documents are also available on the HERMES website at all times. In case of a safeguarding concern the Safeguarding Officer should be contacted by email or phone (found below).

After receiving a complaint, the Safeguarding Officer will investigate and communicate with all persons involved, including the coordinator of the activity or workshop where the incident took place. Following the investigation, the Safeguarding Officer should make a report, including a recommendation for how to address the complaint. The Safeguarding Officer will provide a report within 14 days. Afterwards, there is a 14 day window to lodge a complaint regarding the decision. Any and all action required to prevent further harm will be taken immediately, prior to the finalization of the report.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

HERMES Safeguarding Officer

Name: MORENA MITAK
Email address: mitakmorena2@gmail.com
Telephone number: +385 95 722 5619

HERMES Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Name: JANET PONJEVIĆ
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This Safeguarding Policy was last updated and voted into force during the HERMES General Assembly held on December 30, 2022.

This Safeguarding Policy was last revised and updated June 30, 2025.

Approved and signed by:

Tvrtko Pater, president
June 30, 2025

