

Safeguarding Policy

Adopted by the European Dialogue

by decision of the Executive Board on 10.06.2024 in Trnava, Slovakia

Glossary

This document aligns with the “**UNHCR Master Glossary of Terms**”, particularly regarding definitions of “**child**,” “**sexual harassment**,” and other safeguarding-related terms. Unless otherwise specified, ED adheres to UNHCR’s international definitions. In cases where national legislation conflicts or is less comprehensive, ED prioritizes the international standards set by UNHCR to ensure the highest level of protection.

- “**Staff**” refers to all individuals employed or engaged by ED, whether on a voluntary or paid basis, and those authorized to represent the organization.
- “**Contractors**” include external individuals or entities providing services to ED, regardless of the nature of their engagement.

Purpose

The primary goal of this **Safeguarding Policy** is to protect all individuals, particularly children, vulnerable adults, and beneficiaries, from any form of harm or discrimination resulting from their engagement with **European Dialogue (ED)**. This includes safeguarding against:

- **Actions of staff and personnel associated with ED**, and
- **Risks arising from the design and execution of ED’s programs and activities.**

This policy defines ED’s commitments and clarifies the responsibilities of staff and associated personnel in ensuring a **safe and respectful environment**.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding entails **proactive measures** to minimize the risk of harm, particularly **sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment**. It focuses on protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm and ensuring **appropriate response mechanisms** when incidents occur.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- **All ED staff**, including employees, volunteers, and representatives.
- **All individuals engaged in ED-related activities**, including consultants, contractors, volunteers, and visitors such as journalists, public figures, and policymakers.

Legal Framework

European Dialogue operates in alignment with:

- **National legal provisions** regarding safeguarding and child protection.
- **Key international and European frameworks**, including:
 - The **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union**
 - The **Convention on the Rights of the Child**
 - The **European Social Charter**
 - The **European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights**
 - The **Convention on the International Protection of Adults**
 - The **UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women**
 - The **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
 - The **EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

Policy Statement

European Dialogue upholds the principle that **every individual, regardless of age, gender, socioeconomic status, disability, or ethnicity, has the right to live free from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation**. The organization **does not tolerate any form of abuse or exploitation** by its staff or associated personnel.

This policy covers three key safeguarding areas:

1. **Child Protection**
2. **Adult Safeguarding**
3. **Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**

European Dialogue commits to embedding safeguarding practices through three core pillars:

- **Prevention:** Proactively reducing risks.
- **Reporting:** Providing clear, accessible reporting mechanisms.
- **Response:** Ensuring appropriate action when concerns arise.

Prevention Measures

To uphold safeguarding commitments, ED will:

- **Conduct background checks** on all staff and contractors working under its name. A **clean criminal record** is required for anyone engaged in activities involving children or vulnerable adults. The extent of background screening depends on available resources.
- **Ensure staff and contractors understand their safeguarding responsibilities**, with the policy **accessible on the ED website** and introduced on the first working day. Any updates will be communicated promptly.

- **Integrate safeguarding measures into all programs and activities**, including data collection and information-sharing practices.
- **Enforce stringent recruitment, management, and oversight protocols** for all staff and associated personnel.
- **Promptly investigate and address safeguarding concerns**, including updates to this policy as needed.
- **Ensure compliance with GDPR regulations**, protecting personal data in line with international standards.

Child Protection

ED staff and personnel must never:

- Engage in **sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment** of children.
- Subject a child to **physical, emotional, or psychological harm**.
- Involve children in **commercially exploitative activities**, including **child labor and trafficking**.

Adult Safeguarding

ED staff and personnel must never:

- Engage in **sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment** of vulnerable adults.
- Subject adults to **physical, emotional, or psychological harm**.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

ED staff and personnel must never:

- Offer **money, employment, goods, or services in exchange for sexual activity**.
- Engage in **sexual relationships with beneficiaries**, as these interactions involve an **imbalance of power**.

Additionally, all ED staff and personnel are expected to:

- **Foster an environment that prevents safeguarding violations** and supports policy implementation.
- **Report concerns regarding safeguarding violations** by ED staff or associated personnel to the designated contact.

Reporting Mechanisms

ED is committed to providing **safe, accessible, and confidential channels** for reporting safeguarding concerns. External complaints from the public, partners, or official bodies will also be accepted.

How to Report a Concern

Any **staff member, contractor, or participant** with a safeguarding concern should report it immediately to their direct superior or the designated safeguarding officer at ED. If an individual **feels uncomfortable reporting** to these contacts (e.g., due to fear of not being taken seriously or if the person involved is implicated), they may escalate the matter to an **alternative senior staff member** or the **legal representative**.

Response & Follow-Up

ED will investigate safeguarding reports in accordance with **internal protocols** and applicable regulations. Actions may include:

- **Appropriate disciplinary measures** against those found in violation of this policy.
- **Support services for individuals who have experienced harm**, irrespective of whether a formal investigation occurs.
- **Decisions regarding survivor support will be survivor-led**, ensuring their needs are prioritized.

Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality is essential throughout the safeguarding process. **Only those directly involved in case management will have access to relevant information**, and all records will be **securely stored**.



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