



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

Documenta – Centre for Dealing with the Past is a documentation center and human rights organization established in 2004 in Zagreb, Croatia, with the goal of participating in the social process and dialogue on dealing with the past through various social structures, including work with youth. Young people are one of the main target groups of *Documenta*'s activities, and minors are involved in the following:

- Developing educational policies for involving young people in social processes and dialogue on the past;
- Developing non-formal and informal methods for engaging youth in civic education and historical learning;
- Nurturing a culture of remembrance among young people across Europe.

Documenta also supports students involved in initiatives related to the culture of remembrance, policy research, and dialogue. Furthermore, it collaborates with scholars, teachers, cultural workers, museums, memorial sites, universities, cultural associations, galleries, and theaters across Europe to exchange experiences and develop educational programs.

2. Definition of Abuse

Documenta, its employees, and other affiliated individuals believe that all children have an equal right to protection from harm that could be caused during or outside of activities and programs.

Unacceptable incidents during implementation of our programs and activities include:

- Neglect by staff, volunteers, interns, or adults (including parents) participating in activities;
- Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse during youth-related activities;
- Peer bullying, whether physical or online;
- Racist incidents by staff or participants;
- Discrimination based on ethnicity, race, religion, gender, etc.;

- Abuse related to disability;
- Ignoring or neglecting specific needs of participants (disabilities, dietary, medical, social, etc.);
- Gender-based violence and violence based on sexual orientation;
- Radicalization or extremist behavior by staff or participants;
- Sexual exploitation;
- Drug and substance abuse;
- Neglect or abuse of children within their families or communities;
- Locally specific issues such as gang violence;
- Other risks to the child's well-being.

3. Unacceptable Behavior in Working with Youth

Unacceptable and sanctionable behaviors include:

- Ignoring the special needs of youth;
- Insulting youth based on any criterion;
- Physical assault or hitting;
- Any physical, psychological, or emotional abuse;
- Gender-based violence;
- Engaging in sexual activity with persons under 18 years old;
- Any exploitative, abusive, or harassing relationships with minors;
- Using inappropriate or offensive language or suggestions;
- Shaming, humiliating, or emotionally abusing minors;
- Using drugs or harmful substances with minors;
- Discriminating against or favoring specific minors to the exclusion of others;
- Failing to report observed abuse or neglect by family, peers, or community.

Also considered unacceptable during programs:

- Insults or discrimination by other participants;
- Abuse by peers or other involved individuals;
- Sexual violence or radicalized behavior by any involved party.

This list is not exhaustive and includes any behavior that might be inappropriate or offensive to minors.

4. Hiring and Selection Practices

Documenta commits to:

- Minimizing risk by applying strict vetting and high standards;

- Rejecting unsuitable candidates during application or interview stages;
- Preventing child abuse through comprehensive policy development and safety procedures;
- Providing clear job descriptions for anyone working with youth.

All new individuals expected to work with youth must read and familiarize themselves with child protection policies **before signing contracts**. They will also undergo training and supervision to ensure proper implementation.

5. Organizational Duties in Working with Children

Under Croatian law, a minor is anyone under 18.

Documenta staff, volunteers, and associates are all responsible for the safety and protection of children involved in our work. We ensure a safe space where minors are protected from harm and actively engaged.

Staff must always uphold the highest behavioral standards, ensuring:

- Awareness of children's rights issues;
- Safe environments free of abuse risk;
- Proper knowledge and pedagogical skills;
- Appropriate responses to abuse, with support and care;
- Reporting to authorities when abuse is suspected outside our programs;
- Partner organizations are also aware and compliant with child protection policies;
- Everyone involved is familiar with the policy.

Care for youth also includes:

- Health, well-being, and safety;
- Recognition of individual needs, including medical and learning difficulties;
- First aid provision;
- Emotional well-being;
- Online safety;
- Planning for outings and excursions.

6. Policy Implementation

Implementation criteria:

- Policy is shared with staff and publicly available online;
- Recruitment reflects commitment to protection;
- Activities involving minors must be risk-evaluated;

- Communication technology use (internet, social media, digital photography) must ensure minor protection;
- Youth, parents, and guardians will be informed about expected behavior and unacceptable actions.

7. Organizational Responsibilities

Documenta staff and representatives are responsible for promoting and implementing this policy in their workplaces. Those working with children must protect them from all mentioned risks.

They commit to:

- Recognizing and managing risk situations;
- Reporting any suspicion or knowledge of abuse;
- Minimizing risks through structured activities;
- Treating youth with respect and dignity;
- Encouraging youth participation and self-protection;
- Protecting whistleblowers who report misconduct;
- Reporting abuse by families, peers, or communities.

8. Reporting and Procedures in Case of Misconduct

If abuse or misconduct by any staff, volunteer, or associate is suspected, the child or associated adult must report it to the Director of *Documenta*. If the Director is the subject of suspicion, the report goes to the Board.

The Director is obligated to:

- Ensure the child is safe and away from the suspected individual;
- Contact the child's parents or guardians;
- Review the employment contract of the accused and suspend if necessary;
- Conduct disciplinary investigation only after child safety review is complete.

9. Data Protection

Documenta staff will protect children's personal data. Only activity organizers will have access to registration data. Sign-in sheets (for reporting) will only be used by project coordinators.

Children will not be photographed or recorded without parental consent. If necessary for reporting, photos will not be published or shared publicly. Faces will be blurred when recording activities.

10. Document Review

The policy is available at: <https://Documenta.hr/zastita-osobnih-podataka>

This child protection policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently if needed, depending on the nature of activities involving minors.

Reviewed and approved by:

Vesna Teršelič, Director of Documenta
Zagreb, August 2, 2024

