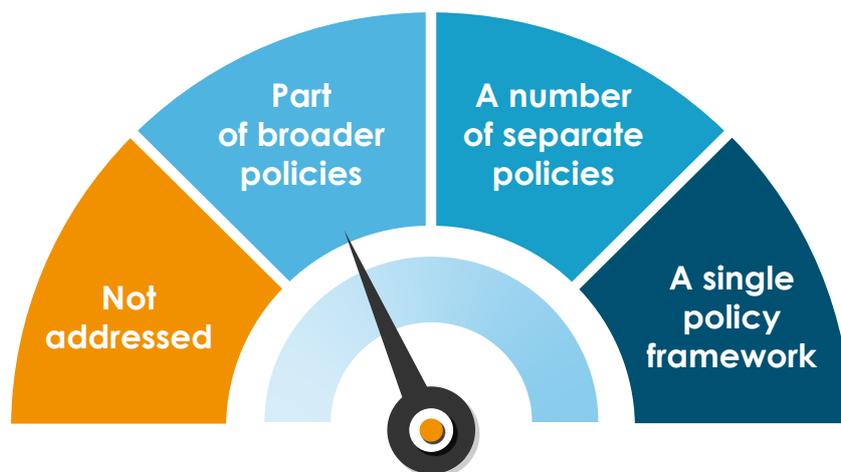# Croatia

The Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Map is a tool used to compare and exchange knowledge on policy making and implementation in EU Member States on the themes and recommendations of the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children (or BIK Strategy) first set out by the European Commission in May 2012. The third BIK Policy Map report (2020) examines the implementation of the BIK Strategy in 30 European countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom.

For each country in the BIK Policy Map study, we outline findings for Policy frameworks, Policy making and Policy implementation, and conclude by providing a selection of good practices.

Download the full BIK Policy Map report from the Better Internet for Kids website.

1. Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks refer to the organising principles and long-term goals for policies, guidelines, decisions and other statements made at the national level in the course of putting into practice the BIK Strategy.

In Croatia, the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children has featured in national policy debates on the subject of children's use of the internet. This topic is covered as part of broader policies which address the four different pillars of the BIK Strategy. Some examples are given below.

Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people

- There is not specific policy in this area. However, creating high-quality content online for children and young people is mentioned in the Strategic framework for digital maturation of schools and the school system in the Republic of Croatia (Strateški okvir za digitalno sazrijevanje škola i školskog sustava u Republici Hrvatskoj: 2030). The Strategic framework is aimed at strengthening ICT skills for educators, and support for

other stakeholders related to education. It aims to support pupils and parents in learning ICT.

Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment

- Education and media literacy form part of broader policies and are part of the digital competences described in the Strategic framework for digital maturation of schools and the school system in the Republic of Croatia.

- Decision on adoption of the curriculum for the cross-curricular topic use of information and communication technology for primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Croatia (2019, Ministry of Science and Education).

Pillar 3: Creating a safer environment for children online.

- Croatia's Electronic Media Law regulates the rights, obligations and responsibilities of legal and natural persons performing the activity of providing audio and audiovisual media services and electronic publication services via electronic communications networks and the interest of the Republic of Croatia in the field of electronic media.

- The Law on the Implementation of the General Regulation on Data Protection (2018) ensures the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).

Pillar 4: Legislation and law enforcement against child sexual abuse and exploitation

- Law or regulation are the primary means for implementing Pillar 4 which includes the Criminal Law and Protocol on dealing with cases of sexual violence.

2. Policy making

Policy making refers to the general process by which policies are developed within each country, including how coordination and oversight is managed, the extent to which the policy agenda is informed by an evidence base, and whether there are arrangements for young people to be involved in the policy process.

2.1 How are policies coordinated?

In Croatia, more than one ministry, agency or body is responsible for coordinating policies addressing the BIK Strategy with one to three ministries involved in the process. These include:

- Ministry of Science and Education which oversees and implements policies for schools and the whole education system in the areas of safer internet, including violence and cyberbullying prevention and awareness raising.

- [Ministry of Interior](#) which works in the area of prevention of child abuse.

There is no formal co-ordinating body for policies relating to children's use of the internet.

2.2 Who is primarily in charge of policy coordination?

Responsibility for coordination of BIK-related policies varies by each respective pillar of the BIK Strategy.

- Pillar 1and Pillar 2 are both primarily overseen by the [Ministry of Science and Education](#).

- The [Ministry of Justice](#) has the primary responsibility for policy coordination of both Pillar 3 and Pillar 4.

There are no inter-departmental communication mechanisms taking place in policy coordination.

2.3 Data collection in the last three years

Data collection to support policy making related to the BIK Strategy includes national and regional surveys with quantitative data specifically focused on children's use of the internet, quantitative data on some topics of children's use of the internet collected as part of a broader survey, and qualitative research specifically focused on children's use of the internet. Examples include:

- A [national survey on child safety on the internet](#) was undertaken in 2017 as part of Croatia's participation in the EU Kids Online network.

- A national research project [Social online experiences and mental health of young people](#) focused on first and third grade high school students (1,772 in total) from Osijek, Zagreb, Rijeka, Split and Dubrovnik.

- The [first national survey on preschool children in front of small screens (results)](#). The Polyclinic for the Protection of Children and Youth of the City of Zagreb and Hrabri telefon conducted the first national research on preschool children in front of small screens. The research was conducted in kindergartens throughout Croatia during 2016 and 2017, and the results are based on a sample of 655 parents of preschool children. The research included a suitable sample of participants from rural and urban areas in different parts of the Republic of Croatia.

2.4 Involvement of young people in policy making

The involvement of young people in policy making is described as one whereby young people's interests are considered indirectly (for example, through analysis of existing surveys and data collections). This is primarily represented through the Children's Council at the office of the [Croatia Ombudsman for children](#).

3. Policy implementation

Policy implementation refers to the involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the delivery of initiatives and the spread of activities as envisaged under each of the four pillars of the BIK Strategy.

Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people

Activities under Pillar 1 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role. For example, high-quality content is part of the learning outcomes in new curricula in Croatia. CARNET and the Agency for Electronic Media are working on creating high-quality content online for children.

Summary of Pillar 1 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Initiatives to stimulate the production and visibility of quality content for children	☐	☐	☑
Initiatives to encourage children's creativity and to promote positive use of the internet	☑	☐	☐
Initiatives to implement standards for quality online content for children	☐	☐	☑
Other relevant activity (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment

Activities under Pillar 2 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role. For example, online safety is part of learning outcomes in new curricula which have been developed and are obligatory for all students. Government ministries and public agencies such as CARNET and the Agency for Electronic Media and NGOs Suradnici u učenju, Djeca medija, and Hrabri telefon have different activities for promotion of digital literacy, eSafety and awareness raising.

The Decision on the adoption of the curriculum for the subject of informatics for primary schools and gymnasiums in the Republic of Croatia was introduced in 2018 when a new curriculum for Computer Science (Informatics) was implemented in all 12 years of education. Among other topics, this curriculum introduced the area of e-Society which covers using the internet responsibly, safely and effectively, personal data and how to protect from fraud, threats and cyberbullying, inappropriate behaviour, respect for others' privacy and where to look for help regarding unwanted contents or contacts. These topics are obligatory for all students.

A new cross-curricular topic use of ICT was implemented in Croatian schools in 2019 and includes online safety, media and digital literacy, critical thinking, assessment of resources,

and hate speech prevention. Some aspects of media literacy are covered in the Croatian language curriculum, the implementation of which commenced in 2019.

Summary of Pillar 2 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
"Teaching online safety in schools"			
Strategies to include teaching online safety in schools	☑	☐	☐
Activities to reinforce informal education about online safety	☐	☑	☐
Activities to provide for online safety policies in schools	☑	☐	☐
Activities to ensure adequate teacher training in online safety	☑	☐	☐
Activities to support public-private partnerships in online safety	☐	☐	☐
"Digital and media literacy activities"			
Activities to support young people's technical skills required to use online media content and services	☑	☐	☐
Activities to encourage critical thinking around media industries and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability	☑	☐	☐
Activities that encourage interaction, engagement and participation in the economic, social, creative, cultural aspects of society through online media	☐	☐	☐
Activities that promote democratic participation and fundamental rights on the internet	☑	☐	☐
Activities that challenge radicalisation and hate speech online	☑	☐	☐
"Scaling up awareness activities and youth participation"			
National support for public awareness-raising campaigns	☐	☑	☐
Involvement of children when developing national campaigns	☐	☑	☐
Involvement of children when developing legislation with an impact on their online activities	☐	☐	☑

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Activities or initiatives to match the Commission's support for the national Youth Panels	☐	☐	☐
Industry funding and technical support for NGOs and education providers	☑	☐	☐
Industry dissemination of awareness material either online or at the point of sale	☐	☑	☐
"Simple and robust reporting tools for users"			
Mechanisms for reporting content and contacts that may be harmful for children such as cyberbullying or grooming	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to facilitate cooperation between helplines and law enforcement	☐	☐	☑
Initiatives to monitor the effective functioning of reporting mechanisms at a national level	☐	☐	☑

Pillar 3: Creating a safe environment for children online

Activities under Pillar 3 are led by government ministries.

Summary of Pillar 3 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
"Age-appropriate privacy settings"			
Activities to ensure the implementation of EU legislation	☐	☑	☐
Self-regulatory measures by industry about age-appropriate privacy settings	☐	☐	☑
Awareness-raising activities regarding age-appropriate privacy settings	☐	☑	☐
Wider availability and use of parental controls			
Activities to promote the availability of parental control tools	☐	☑	☐
Tests and certification for parental control tools	☐	☐	☐
Efforts to support industry implementation of parental control tools	☐	☐	☐
"Wider use of age rating and content classification"			

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Activities to promote the adoption of age rating and content classification among relevant stakeholders	☐	☐	☑
A complaints process for the effective functioning of such systems	☐	☐	☑
"Online advertising and overspending"			
Activities at the national level to ensure that legislation regarding online profiling and behavioural advertising is observed	☐	☐	☐
Support industry in developing codes of conduct regarding inappropriate advertising	☐	☐	☑
Monitor implementation of codes of conduct at the national level	☐	☐	☑

Pillar 4: Fighting against child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation

Activities under Pillar 4 are led by government ministries. NGOs/civil society organisations have a complementary role.

Summary of Pillar 4 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Increased resources for law enforcement bodies that fight against child abuse material online	☐	☑	☐
Effective safeguards in place to ensure democratic accountability in the use of investigative tools to combat child sexual abuse	☐	☐	☐
Activities to support the functioning and visibility of hotlines at the national level	☐	☐	☐
Activities to support the improvement of cooperation between hotlines and industry for taking down child abuse material	☐	☐	☐

4. Good practices

The following are three selected examples of good practices in supporting children's use of the internet in Croatia:

Curriculum for Computer Science (Informatics)

The introduction of the Curriculum for Computer Science (informatics) in 2018 provided for the adoption of the curriculum for the subject of informatics for primary schools and gymnasiums

in the Republic of Croatia. Topics include broad coverage of internet use, creativity in content creation, eSafety, critical evaluation of resources, data protection and promotion of positive behaviour and digital footprints online. The curriculum has also been translated into English here.

Curriculum for students aged 7-15
The curriculum for students aged 7-15 for safer, appropriate and purposeful use of the internet, critical thinking, prevention of hate speech and cyberbullying.

Agency for Electronic Media and UNICEF web portal for promotion of media literacy
The portal www.medijskapismenost.hr was developed by the Agency for Electronic Media and UNICEF. It provides a host of resources on media literacy as one of the key competencies for living and working in a digitally-mediated world that is constantly evolving and changing, and for active citizenship and participation in social, economic, cultural and democratic processes. New media and communication platforms and the technological revolution have led to the complication of the media, communication and social environment and the need for analytical and critical reading of numerous simultaneous sources of information. It is therefore important to empower citizens with skills and knowledge that will help them understand how the media works, to know how to check the accuracy of information, and to know how to use, create and share media content and information. It is especially important to teach children and young people media literacy skills, because it is the best way to protect themselves from potentially harmful media content, misinformation and propaganda.