

**Project name:** Development of a network of psychosocial counseling centers for users at risk

**Project promotor:** Psychological Assistance Society

**Partners:**

- Association Children First
- Institute for Labor Market Development
- City of Zagreb – City Office for Social Protection and Persons with Disabilities
- Center for Social Welfare Zagreb
- New School, Norway

**Project implementation period:** 1.1.2021. – 31.12.2023.

**Total project value:** € 149,999.40, of which € 149,999.40 was provided through financial support from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway within the European Economic Area and Norwegian grants

**Contact person for more information:** Barbara Klen, [barbara@dpp.hr](mailto:barbara@dpp.hr)

**Links to relevant websites:** [www.dpp.hr](http://www.dpp.hr), [www.facebook.com/ModusDpp](https://www.facebook.com/ModusDpp)

**Project summary:**

Annually, in Zagreb, about 3,000 children, youth, adults and families exposed to psychosocial risks such as poverty, marital breakdown and traumatic experiences are included in counseling centers conducted by civil society organizations (hereinafter: associations). Psychosocial counseling contributes to the prevention of social exclusion through empowerment to actively face challenges, protect mental health and resilience in coping with crisis situations. Although institutions send beneficiaries to NGO counseling centers, these counseling centers depend on donor funding, which jeopardizes the continuity of counseling. Also, due to high service needs, associations do not focus enough on solutions to ensure sustainability. They do not have enough capacity to develop the organization and quality of services, they do not network and act in isolation, they are heterogeneous in the way they work, in the development of cooperation with decision makers and advocacy competencies. Poor cooperation with decision makers and public institutions reduces the impact on the creation of public policies that could address issues of availability and quality of service. Society for Psychological Assistance, Association Children First, Institute for Labor Market Development, City of Zagreb - City Office for Social Protection and Persons with Disabilities, Center for Social Welfare Zagreb and NewSchool from Norway launched the project "Development of a network of psychosocial counseling centers for users at risk" through which a group of associations conducting counseling centers for vulnerable groups of citizens will work on strengthening cooperation between associations and institutions with the aim of finding a better model of financing the work of counseling centers and improving the quality of counseling services. This will ensure that people who are in life crises and need support in the form of psychosocial counseling, can get quality service and have the opportunity to join counseling associations at a time when they need it (without waiting in line). There are three stages through which the described outcomes will be achieved:

1. A Network of associations conducting counseling centers in the area of the City of Zagreb will be formed;
2. A program for the development of support for associations in accordance with the needs of citizens at risk and advocating for the sustainability of psychosocial counseling in local communities will be implemented;
3. The reach of the Network and psychosocial counseling will be extended to deprived areas and to particularly vulnerable groups.