

Terms of Reference

Researcher on the needs of child suspects and defendants in Romania in the digitalizing justice administration

PPRO Child Project

1. Background - About Tdh & PPRO Child project

Terre des hommes (Tdh), founded in 1960, is an independent, neutral and impartial Swiss organisation committed to bringing meaningful and lasting change to the lives of children and youth, especially to those most **exposed to risks**. We strive to improve their well-being and ensure the effective application of their rights as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other relevant human rights instruments. PPRO Child – **“Protecting the procedural rights of children in the digital age”** is a project funded by the Justice Programme of the European Union. This 24-months project, runs from October 2024 to September 2026, is being coordinated by Penal Reform International. It is implemented in partnership with Terre des hommes Regional Hub in Hungary, Terre des hommes Romania and Terre des Hommes Spain. The project’s main aim is to protect procedural safeguards of children in the context of digital justice across the EU and Ukraine. In Europe, the fast-paced adoption of digital technologies in criminal justice proceedings aims to support effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of justice for all. Yet, concerns have been raised about the impact of uncritical adoption of technological solutions, including virtual hearings, on the safeguarding of children’s procedural rights and their access to fair trials. Taking four varied contexts in Ireland, Romania, Spain and Ukraine as a starting point, the project will bring to light the rights and needs of justice-involved children in all their diversity and facilitate mutual learning and joint development and piloting of practical tools and working methods for the better protection of children’s procedural rights in partnership with local justice actors and children with lived experience of justice proceedings.

2. Objectives of the consultancy

The main task of the researcher is conducting a rapid needs assessment (RNA) in Romania. The RNA will assess the state of development of digital justice and the needs of child suspects and defendants. The methodology for the research will be provided by the project consortium, however the Consultant is invited to apply minor changes to the methodology in light of the realities in Romania (upon approval of Tdh RO and PRI). The consultant is responsible for the collection and analysis of data through interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions with key stakeholders, including justice professionals and children with lived experience. Tdh RO will facilitate the contact with the relevant key stakeholders, however the consultant is encouraged to also suggest stakeholders to involve in the research process. By collecting and analysing primary data (e.g. questionnaires, focus groups) from key stakeholders, the RNA should identify problems that children face in accessing justice through a factual lens informed by the different stakeholders. In coordination with the project team, the consultant is also responsible for drafting the national research report. Following RNAs, feasible and practical solutions will be developed and tailored to address the problem(s) children are facing in the digitalising practices of the Irish child justice system, especially through remote hearings. The researcher will support the implementation of the relevant activities and provide research-based input as needed.

3. Ethical considerations

External consultants must sign the our Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and be willing to adhere to its principles and expected practices. If a breach of the policy or code of conduct takes place the consultancy will be terminated immediately without any financial burden on Tdh or PRI.

4. Deliverables & timeline

All deliverables should be produced in **English however interviews with stakeholders are to be conducted in Romanian**. The timeline and efforts estimated for the assignment in the bellow table are indicative and will be finalized though mutual agreement between Tdh and the Consultant. The duration of the consultancy is January 2025 until May 2025.

Activity	Estimated efforts	
Concept note and research plan – outlining the timeline & research method based on the methodology provided	10 days	early February 2025
Lead on the RNA in Ukraine, gathering and analysing quantitative and qualitative data		February – April 2025
Mid - term report on the progress made and key take-aways		Mid-March 2025
Draft RNA report – 5 to 10 pages – comprehensive review & analysis of the state of digital justice development & the needs of children in contact with the law in Ukraine		Early April 2025
Finalized RNA report – 5 -10 pages – incorporating the feedback of Tdh HU & PRI		Mid – to end April 2025

The definite deadlines for each activity will be mutually agreed with the selected consultant.

5. External expert's profile

- Advanced degree in the field of law or criminology, or equivalent with strong research and analysis component;
- At least 3 years of experience in field and desk research, gathering and analysing qualitative data, conducting interviews;
- Solid knowledge of Romania's child/juvenile justice system and criminal proceedings;
- Proven experience in conducting national and international-level research in the field of children's rights;
- Experience in interviewing or undertaking participators research involving children, preferably those with marginalized backgrounds;
- Excellent writing and communication skills in Romanian and English;

- Demonstrated ability to synthesise and critically analyse a wide range of material from primary and secondary data sources and to present information in a concise yet thorough form;
- Knowledge of child justice projects and networks in Romania is an asset.
- Residence **in Romania is desirable** for field data gathering

How to apply

The deadline for application is the **7th February 2025 23.59 CET**.

Interested candidates should send the following documents to **cristiana.bulgariu@tdh.org** :

- **A brief technical proposal**, specifying your daily rate (financial offer in EUR, indicating gross amount of daily fees) (max 3 pgs),
- **Draft workplan**
- **Updated CV/Resume** in English,
- **A Sample** of similar work to demonstrate the required skills.

Commit to respect PRI's Child Safeguarding Policy, Safety and Security Policy and Anti-Fraud/Corruption Policy, Whistle Blowing Policy. Commit to respect Tdh Gender & Diversity Policy.