

OPENING DOORS FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES. ENDING INSTITUTIONAL CARE.

HUNGARY



OFFICIAL STATISTICS FROM 2011 INDICATE THAT 8254 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (0-24) ARE LIVING IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE IN HUNGARY. CIVIL SOCIETY REPORTS THAT AN INCREASING NUMBER OF CHILDREN ARE ENTERING PUBLIC CARE DESPITE EVIDENCE SHOWING THAT INSTITUTIONS ARE STRUGGLING TO PROVIDE EVEN THE MOST BASIC CARE. IN ADDITION, CHILD POVERTY IN HUNGARY IS GROWING. MATERIAL DEPRIVATION AND POVERTY ARE AMONG THE MOST COMMON CAUSES OF CHILDREN ENTERING PUBLIC CARE, DESPITE A LAW PROHIBITING THE REMOVAL OF CHILDREN FROM THEIR FAMILIES ON THE BASIS OF LOW FAMILY INCOME, HOUSING PROBLEMS AND OTHER FINANCIAL PROBLEMS.

Despite a strong legislation obliging the state to provide assistance to vulnerable families to prevent institutionalisation of children, the lack of resources, lack of training and deep-rooted prejudices in the system mean that many children are still being institutionalised. Local social and child welfare services that could support families, foster carers and children are severely under-resourced, and local authorities are not investing in community-based services. This also reflects broad public opinion which favours placing children, particularly Roma children and those with disabilities and mental health problems, away from the community.

No comprehensive national strategy for deinstitutionalisation (DI) of children currently exists, and investments into DI are only undertaken in respect of infrastructure. In January 2014, legislation came into force prohibiting the placement of children under the age of three into infant homes. Whilst this is in principle welcome, the law is not being properly implemented, as it is not accompanied by any investment in services to prevent family separation or to allow reunification. Evidence shows that newborns are being taken into care straight from maternity wards,

often with no documentation showing why and how such a decision was taken.

Although foster care is in place – 60.4% of children in alternative care were living in foster families in 2011 – there is a shortage of suitable foster families. Only 5.8% of foster carers are formally employed and therefore professionally recruited, trained and supported to provide a high standard of care for children. Furthermore, the support and services provided to foster families is very limited, supervision inadequate, and there is no clear accountability even in cases of severe breakdown or suspected abuse and neglect.

Effective system reform requires a comprehensive framework of planning, monitoring and evaluation. Professionals working in the social, health and education sectors need to be better trained and better paid. A comprehensive DI strategy for children would also require a widespread public awareness raising campaign.

More recent figures from Hungary are expected to become available later this year and an updated factsheet will be produced.

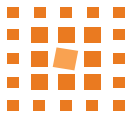


Hope & Homes
for Children



Eurochild
Putting children at
the heart of Europe

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR



CSALÁD, GYERMEK, IFJÚSÁG
KIEMELKEDŐEN KÖZHASZNÚ EGYESÜLET
FAMILY CHILD YOUTH ASSOCIATION

THE ASSOCIATION SINCE ITS FOUNDATION IN 1993 HAS BEEN SUPPORTING THE RIGHTS, WELFARE, AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY STRENGTHENING, HELPING PROFESSIONALS, RAISING AWARENESS, CONDUCTING RESEARCH AND PUBLISHING MATERIALS ACCORDINGLY. PARTICIPATING IN SEVERAL EU AND DOMESTIC PROJECTS, PROVIDING TRAINING, ADAPTING GOOD PRACTICES, TRANSLATING AND PUBLISHING MATERIALS IN DIFFERENT RELATED AREAS.

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NATIONAL PARTNERS

In Hungary the campaign is supported by: Ágota Foundation, Children's Media Association, Diótörés Foundation, Foster Parents' Association Advocacy, Hand in Hand Foundation, Methodological National Association of Child Welfare Services, Office of the Commissioner for fundamental rights, SOS Children's Villages Hungary, UNICEF Hungary, Union of the Social Professional Organisations

FACTS & FIGURES

- **8254 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (0-24) LIVE IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE**
- **474 CHILDREN AGED 0-3 ARE IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE**
- **ONLY 5.8% OF FOSTER FAMILIES ARE PROFESSIONALLY EMPLOYED**

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- **LOCAL NGO'S REPORT THAT THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENTERING PUBLIC CARE IS INCREASING**
- **CHILD POVERTY IS ON THE RISE IN HUNGARY AND IS A LARGE CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO FAMILY BREAKDOWN**

The Opening Doors campaign operates at EU level and in 12 countries across Europe.

Working with a network of national partners in each participating country, we are building civil society capacity to advocate at national level.

We are calling on the EU and national governments to prioritise the transition from institutional to family-based care and deliver quality care for children across Member States, pre-accession countries and within the EU neighbourhood.

We believe that the end of institutional care for children in Europe is possible and within our reach – putting the best interests of children back at the heart of Europe's child protection systems.



Bosnia & Herzegovina
Hope & Homes for Children



National Network for Children



IGALÉ LAPSELE PERE



Károlyi Egyszemélyi Pénz



CSALÁD, GYERMEK, IFJÚSÁG
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FAMILY CHILD YOUTH ASSOCIATION



SOS CHILDREN'S
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Gelbėkit vaikus
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HHC
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O casă și o familie
pentru fiecare copil



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