



OPENING DOORS FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES. ENDING INSTITUTIONAL CARE.

MOLDOVA



2016 COUNTRY FACT SHEET

Moldova has gone through a significant reform of its child protection system since 2007 reducing the number of children in institutional care from 12,000 to 2,214 and the number of institutional care settings from 67 to 35 by the end of 2015. Importantly, the Action Plan of the 2014-2020 Child Protection Strategy was approved in July 2016. However, challenges still remain, in particular for children with disabilities and young children, including infants. Lack of access to appropriate day care facilities, to specialized services or to respite services for their parents and the insufficient level of social allowances available are among the main reasons for abandonment and institutionalization of children with disabilities and children under age of three.

Moldova remains the poorest country in Europe and children are separated from their parents mainly due to poverty combined with a child's disability, single parenting and or discrimination - Roma children are particularly overrepresented in institutional care. In Moldova, disadvantaged families have limited access to community based services or inclusive education which often leads families to choose their children's institutionalisation. Worrying, In Moldova there is still the persistent belief of parents, professionals and decision makers that the state will take better care of vulnerable children rather than children's families.

In 2015, there were 2,214 children in 35 institutions in Moldova, which significant drop on 2014 when 3,005 children were growing up in 40 institutions. This year, this number decreased well under 2,000 (there are no official data available yet, but figures were sourced from various official meetings). The majority of children that left institutional care in 2015 were re-integrated with their families. However this re-integration has not always been followed up and children rarely benefit from the much needed support of social workers when they return to their families. The families who have been reunited with their children from institutions have access to social benefits, but not the full range of services aiming to strengthen the family.



**THE ACTION PLAN FOR 2014-2020
CHILD PROTECTION STRATEGY
WAS APPROVED IN JULY 2016**



Despite the positive developments of the child protection system in Moldova, anecdotal evidence reveals that some children are now being diverted to medical facilities for social reasons. However, these facilities function as de facto institutions, but the children grow up in these facilities are not counted towards the number of children in institutions. While the Ministries of Education and Social Protection have accepted their role in the deinstitutionalization process, the Ministry of Health has not yet, while being responsible for three baby institutions and the above mentioned medical facilities (one is based in Tiraspol, Transnistria which is not under the Government's control).

In comparison to residential care settings that are being funded mostly by the State budget, family based care and community based services are mainly funded by the local authorities a situation which blocks the DI reforms at the local level. Underdeveloped regions in Moldova do not have the capacity to invest in community based services or to support disadvantaged families making local authorities resistant to DI reforms.

FAST FACTS & LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- **IN 2015, THERE WERE 2,214 CHILDREN LIVING IN 35 INSTITUTIONS IN MOLDOVA. THE MAJORITY OF THESE INSTITUTIONS ARE RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTIONS, AUXILIARY SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS UNDER THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.**
- **THERE ARE 200 CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES LIVING IN 2 INSTITUTIONS IN MOLDOVA.**
- **THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FORMAL CARE PER 100,000 CHILD POPULATION REMAINS ONE OF THE HIGHEST IN THE CEE/CIS REGION: 1,826/100,000 IN 2014.**
- **THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN GROWING UP IN FOSTER CARE FAMILIES IS INCREASING CONSTANTLY IN MOLDOVA, FROM 282 CHILDREN IN 2007 TO 981 CHILDREN IN 2015.**
- **IN 2015, THERE WERE 91 CHILDREN IN 12 SMALL GROUP HOMES. SMALL GROUP HOMES IN MOLDOVA OPERATE BY NGOS AND THEY ARE ADEQUATELY EQUIPPED AND TRAINED TO MEET CHILDREN'S INDIVIDUALIZED NEEDS.**
- **THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE 2014-2020 CHILD PROTECTION STRATEGY WAS WIDELY CONSULTED AND APPROVED IN JULY 2016.**
- **CCF/HHC IS IMPLEMENTING A PROJECT FUNDED BY UNICEF AIMING TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE MODEL FOR THE PREVENTION OF FAMILY SEPARATION AND DI OF CHILDREN UNDER 3 AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.**



OPENING DOORS NATIONAL COORDINATOR IN MOLDOVA

CCF Moldova – children, communities, families was founded in 2004 and has represented HHC UK in Moldova since 2005. During this time, they succeeded in closing six residential institutions and returned 940 children back to their families. CCF Moldova also managed to prevent the separation of 1 350 children from their families. They have not entered into residential institutions anymore thanks to their prevention programmes. Family support, day care, nurseries, foster care – are other types of services developed or supported by CCF/HHC in Moldova to advance the reform. To find out more visit www.ccfmoldova.org

NATIONAL PARTNERS

In Moldova the campaign is supported by: Amici Dei Bambini (Moldova Office), APSCF – The Alliance of active NGOs in the field of child and family social protection, The Association for Child and Family Empowerment “AVE COPIII”, Keystone Human Services International Moldova, Partnerships for Every Child, Speranta Resource Centre

The Opening Doors for Europe's Children campaign supports national efforts to develop child protection systems that strengthen families and ensure high-quality family and community-based alternative care for children, by leveraging EU funding and policy and building capacity in civil society.

It is a partnership between 5 international organisations and civil society across 16 European countries. For more information go to www.openingdoors.eu