



# OPENING DOORS FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES. ENDING INSTITUTIONAL CARE.

## MOLDOVA



## 2018 COUNTRY FACT SHEET

Thanks to the joint efforts of the Government, civil society and international organisations, the number of children living in institutions in Moldova has decreased by 90%: from 11,500 in 2006 to less than 1,100 in 2017. The number of children in family-based care increased two-fold between 2006 and 2017; the number of professional foster care families increased 9 times, and the number of children placed in a protective family environment increased 15 times (from 47 children in 2006 to 1,017 in 2017). This significant progress in the reduction of number of children living in institutions was achieved through efficient monitoring, providing access to services and appropriate family support to ensure adequate social inclusion and development of children. During 2017, more than 800 children<sup>1</sup> were successfully reintegrated in their birth or extended families.

In 2016, there were 32 institutions for children in Moldova. This, according to the Regulations and Standards approved by the Government of Moldova, is a residential institution that has a capacity of up to 250 places. In 2017, the number of institutions for children has dropped to 27, with total cohort of children in these facilities reducing from 1,324 to 815<sup>2</sup>. We note that the number of institutions for children with disabilities has remained the same, with a minor decrease in the number of children housed there from 120 in 2016 to about 100 at the end of 2017<sup>3</sup>. Similar situation applies to children under the age of three; however, their number increased from 104 children living in institutions in 2015 to 127 children in 2017<sup>4</sup>. This is due to the fact that there is still no moratorium on institutionalisation of children between 0-3 years of age as well as the lack of specialized foster care services to ensure their direct placement in family-based care.

<sup>1</sup> Data provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection as of 31 December 2017

<sup>2</sup> Data provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Culture, Education and Research as of 31 December 2017

<sup>3</sup> Data provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection as of 31 December 2017

<sup>4</sup> As of 01 January 2018, there were 17 children aged 0-3 in Balti Baby Home and 110 in Chisinau Baby Home, according to data from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection

## KEY RECOMMENDATION TO THE EU



### THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTRUMENT & THE FUTURE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

**INSTRUMENT SHOULD BE USED TO COVER THE TRANSIT COSTS FROM INSTITUTIONAL TO COMMUNITY-BASED CARE. NEITHER OF THESE FUNDS SHOULD BE USED TO FUND ACTIONS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE SEGREGATION OF CHILDREN, INCLUDING BUILDING, SUPPORTING OR RENOVATING INSTITUTIONS FOR CHILDREN**

In 2017, there were 1,390 children in 27 residential institutions, baby homes and institutions for children with disabilities in Moldova, out of whom only 815 have residential placement; the remaining number access the day care services but stay in their families or alternatives<sup>5</sup>. There are also 1,071 children in 45 Centres for Temporary Placement, a vast reduction since 2016 when 2,025 children were living in such facilities<sup>6</sup>.

During 2017, there were 4,918 children at risk of separation from their parents registered and examined by the local gate-keeping committees. Out of them, 376 children have been placed in residential institutions; the remaining 4,542 children received prevention and family strengthening interventions or alternative care services.

Work of the small group homes (SGHs) have been regulated by the legislation on community homes and the minimum standards of quality in Moldova. They are housing mainly people with disabilities and young

people. Currently, there are 54 children at risk and children with disabilities placed in 6 small group homes for children across Moldova. The number of children in kinship care and foster care remains largely unchanged in 2017: 4,027 and 1,017 respectively.

As a result of the advocacy efforts of the Opening Doors national partners, in August 2018, the Government approved a minimum package of social services that will be funded from the central budget and provided at local level. However, only three services have been approved for central funding ('Personal assistant', 'Family support for families with children' and 'Financial support for vulnerable families'). The package excluded the provision of foster care which was a particular focus of the Opening Doors campaigning to promote deinstitutionalisation reform at national level.

Programmes to support care-leavers are run by several non-governmental organisations. The 2014-2020 Child Protection Strategy and the Action Plan consist clear provisions on state support programmes to ensure smooth transition of young care-leavers from institutional care to independent living, however the financial gaps make implementation of these programmes difficult.

No EU funding is spent specifically for deinstitutionalisation reform. The transition towards family- and community-based care for children is rather implemented through regional development, public reform, capacity building of civil society and cooperation with local and central authorities. Being the EU's main instrument to support political and economic reforms in its neighbourhood region during the 2014–2020 financial period, the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) has not contributed to deinstitutionalisation reform in Moldova. However, similar instruments successfully supported deinstitutionalisation reform in the past. At the end October 2018, USAID has launched a 10 million USD call for proposal with specific focus on deinstitutionalisation of children aged 0-3 and children with disabilities.

## KEY RECOMMENDATION TO THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT



**TAKE ACTION TO ENSURE THAT THE BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES PACKAGE IN THE CENTRAL BUDGET INCLUDES FOSTER CARE PROVISION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. EFFORTS TO DIVERSIFY FOSTER CARE SERVICES MUST BE CONTINUED BY INCREASING AND VARYING MONTHLY SALARIES FOR FOSTER CARERS AND CHILD ALLOWANCES FOR CHILDREN AGED 0-3 AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

<sup>5</sup> Data provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Culture, Education and Research as of 31 December 2017

<sup>6</sup> Social Report 2016, Data provided by Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection



## 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 10 residential institutions and returned 1,311 children back to their families. CCF Moldova also managed to prevent the separation of 1,963 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](http://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 and CERI International

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](http://www.openingdoors.eu)