



OPENING DOORS FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES. ENDING INSTITUTIONAL CARE.

ROMANIA

ROMANIA HAS GONE THROUGH A SIGNIFICANT TRANSFORMATION OF ITS CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS. IN 2000 THERE WERE 100 000 CHILDREN IN CARE, PREDOMINANTLY IN LARGE-SCALE INSTITUTIONS. AT THE END OF 2014, THERE WERE 58 178 CHILDREN OFFICIALLY IN STATE CARE, OF WHICH 8892 ARE IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE. THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM IS NOW MORE DIVERSIFIED, OFFERING A RANGE OF FAMILY-BASED SERVICES TO CHILDREN UNABLE TO LIVE WITH THEIR PARENTS AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VULNERABLE FAMILIES.

In September 2014, an amendment to the law governing child protection in Romania was adopted, forbidding the institutionalisation of children aged under 3. Thus, almost 700 children in institutions aged between 2 and 3 will be able to grow up within a family. Children under 3 with severe special needs are an exception to the current provisions of the law. Continuous efforts are needed in order to increase the capacity of the authorities to make decisions that would allow children with special needs to benefit from the same rights and for their protection to be supported by service development within the community, thus making their placement into families or family type environments possible.

In January 2015, the Romanian Government published the National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights which includes several of the concepts, suggestions and observations gathered during a year-and-a-half long consultation process with all relevant stakeholders, led by HHC in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly.

The new Strategy addresses some very important aspects regarding the child protection system reform in Romania:

a. Prevention work – as in Romania, poverty and family breakdown contribute to the separation of children from their families, there is still a lot to be done in terms of setting up prevention services

for children and families on the one hand and on making them available and accessible on the other hand. The prevention services must match the needs of the families and children and the services must be provided in an integrated and inclusive manner, to ensure their sustainability.

b. DI – the completion of the deinstitutionalisation process is still far, but the trend is obviously in the good direction and the provisions of the Strategy encourage DI, by being in accordance with EU recommendations in the field and with other national strategies and programmes.

c. Monitoring and sustainability are very important aspects as proper monitoring will ensure the sustainability of family type services. The local authorities are responsible for implementing, monitoring and follow-up activities.

d. Support for young adults leaving the child protection system – the support is paramount in order for them to have a proper transition into independent living. There is a lack of services in this respect and the local and county authorities need to set up such services at the level of the communities, where young adults are supported to transition into independent living (being provided with counselling, orientation and proper psychological support).



Hope & Homes
for Children



Eurochild
Putting children at
the heart of Europe

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR



HOPE AND HOMES FOR CHILDREN ROMANIA FOCUSES ON TRANSFORMING A CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM BASED ON INSTITUTIONAL CARE, BY PREVENTING CHILD SEPARATION FROM FAMILIES, AND DEVELOPING FAMILY-BASED ALTERNATIVES. THEY BELIEVE THAT ATTACHMENT, LOVE, INDIVIDUAL CARE AND STIMULATION ARE ESSENTIAL FOR EVERY CHILD.

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NATIONAL PARTNERS

ASSOC, FONPC – Federation of NGOs in child protection, Fundatia FARA Romania, SERA Romania, Terre des Hommes

FACTS & FIGURES

- **58 178 CHILDREN ARE LIVING IN STATE CARE**
- **8892 CHILDREN LIVE IN LARGE INSTITUTIONS, MORE THAN HALF OF WHICH (4684) HAVE DISABILITIES**
- **THERE ARE 202 INSTITUTIONS, ALMOST HALF OF WHICH (98) ARE INSTITUTIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

- **BENEFICIARIES OF PREVENTION SERVICES INCREASED FROM 48 130 IN 2013 TO 55 833 IN 2014**
- **THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN STATE CARE HAS DECREASED FROM 63 447 IN 2012 TO 58 178 IN 2014**
- **ALMOST 1000 FEWER CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE (9843 IN 2013 VS 8892 IN 2014)**
- **MORE THAN 500 FEWER CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN INSTITUTIONS (5107 IN 2013 VS 4684 IN 2014)**
- **A STATE BAN ON INSTITUTIONALISING CHILDREN UNDER 3 WAS INTRODUCED IN SEPTEMBER 2014**

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.

