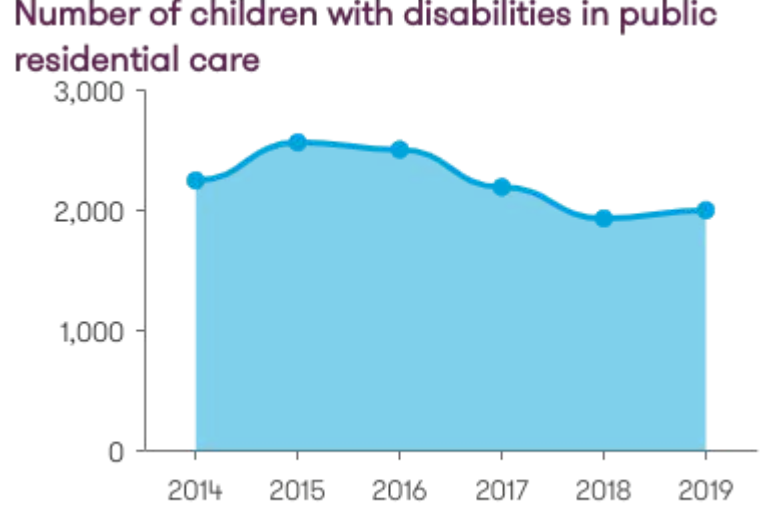
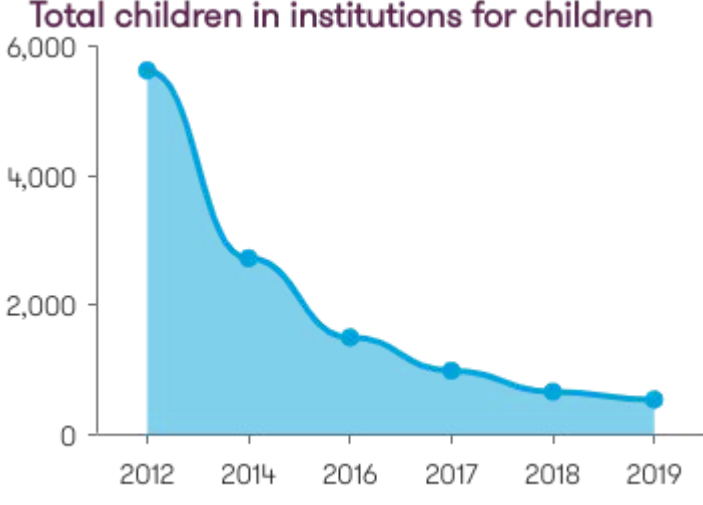


Country Fact sheet 2021

Bulgaria



The National Strategy “Vision for Deinstitutionalisation of Children in Bulgaria” that was adopted in 2010 with the aim of achieving full deinstitutionalisation of children by 2025

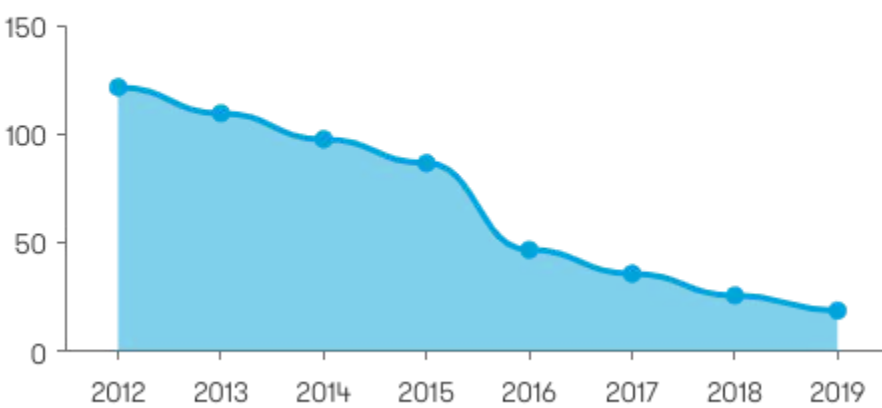


An additional impetus for the transition to a childcare system, based on the rights of the child, was implied into the philosophy of the new Social Services Act, which was adopted by the Bulgarian Parliament in 2020. The new law envisages improving the mechanisms for planning, accessibility, financing, control and monitoring of services, as well as improving their quality, efficiency and sustainability. It stipulates that all existing specialized institutions for children should be closed.

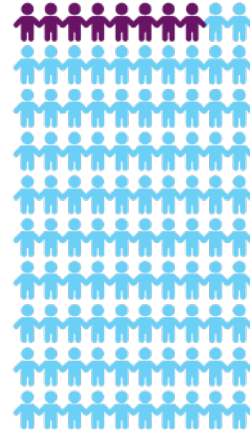


The comparative analysis of data for recent years is showing that the children in residential care are 50% less than the children in formal care in a family setting – for 2019 the total number of the children in residential care was 4152, and the number of children in family-settings was 7860 children (according to the definition of alternative care in the “Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, A UN framework”).

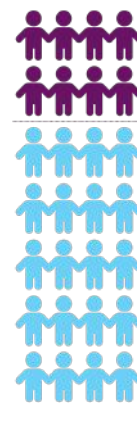
Number of institutions for children



According to the current deinstitutionalisation strategy all institutions will be closed by 2025.



In 2012, only 8% of all children in care were in foster care in Bulgaria.



By the end of 2017, almost 20% of all children in care were in foster care, with only 8% left in institutions.

We call on the government:



Ensure continuity of the deinstitutionalisation process. The National Strategy "Vision for deinstitutionalization for children in the Republic of Bulgaria" should continue to be implemented and to follow the measures set out in the Action Plan 2016 – 2020. At the same time, it is essential that Bulgaria does not view the closure of old-type institutions as the end goal of the reform. The conditions for enabling all children – including children with disabilities – to live within their families and communities should be ensured. Family-type placement centres should only provide short-term accommodation and should never function as mini-institutions

We call on the European Union to:



Decreasing reliance on institutional and residential care with a complementary increase in family and community-based care and services, including foster care;



Preventing separation of children from their parents by providing adequate support to children, families and communities;



Involvement of the civil society in support to the social inclusion of children, leaving institutions;



Elaborate and invest into recovery plans and activities to overcome the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hope and Homes for Children Bulgaria

България, София, ул.
„Проф.Милко Бичев“ 1, ет.1, ап.2



office.hhc.bg@gmail.com



<https://www.facebook.com/hopeandhomesbg>



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Data disclaimer

The data sets on children in care, presented in this publication is provided by Hope and Homes for Children. The data is primarily sourced from official state sources. The situation with children in alternative care is dynamic, and changes may not necessarily be captured in present data set. All reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the data presented herein compiled. However, Hope and Homes for Children provides this data as the guidance only and cannot guarantee its accuracy, timeliness or completeness. Nor can we be held responsible for its use.

Hope and Homes for Children – Head Office East Clyffe, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 4LZ, UK
Tel: +40 262 227 419 office@hopeandhomes.org www.hopeandhomes.org
Hope and Homes for Children – EU liaison office: Mundo-j, Rue de l'Industrie 10, Brussels, 1000, Belgium
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