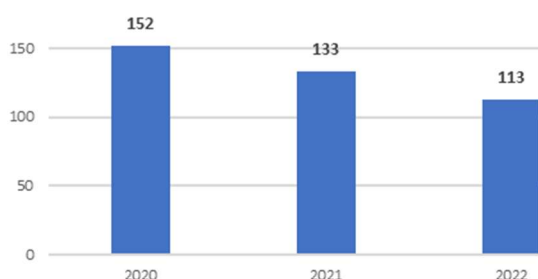




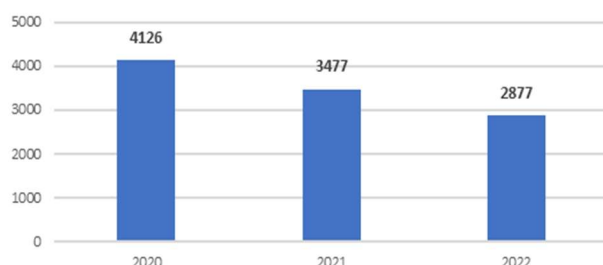
What are the key priorities facing child protection system reform in 2024 in your country?

- **The closure of old-type institutions is now a legal requirement (no. 191 of June 28, 2022).¹ All these institutions need to be closed down or in process of closure and the authorities need to implement the closure plans as soon as possible.**
- **Prevention of family breakdown will be legally regulated, and it is expected to be more effective with the use of the National Child Observatory – an online registry with the vulnerable families and with intervention needed, which will encourage multidisciplinary and at the same time tailored interventions for each family at risk.**

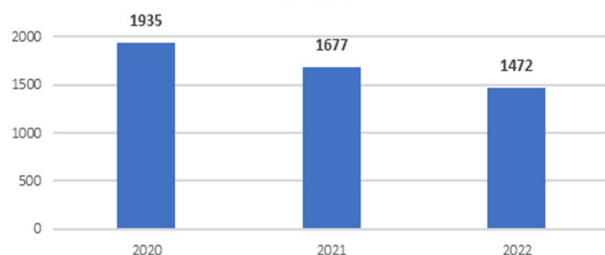
No. of old-type institutions in Romania



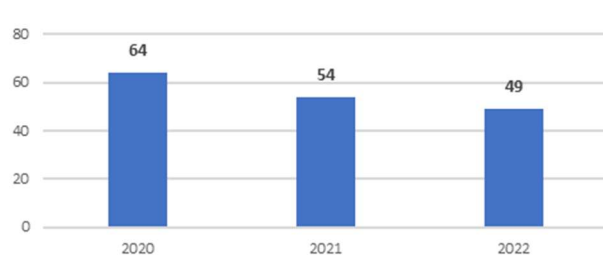
No. of children in old-type institutions in Romania



No. of children with disabilities in old-type institutions in Romania



No. of old-type institutions in Romania for children with disabilities



¹ Law no. 191 of June 28, 2022, for the amendment and completion of Law no. 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of children's rights <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/256905>

Data sources

https://www.mmuncii.ro/j33/images/buletin_statistic/copil_2020.pdf

https://www.mmuncii.ro/j33/images/buletin_statistic/copil_2021.pdf

https://www.mmuncii.ro/j33/images/buletin_statistic/copil_III_2022.pdf



The biggest positive change in the country over the last 12 months

The legal framework has changed, and it is now mentioning specifically the closure of old-type institutions, while prevention of family separation will be better regulated.

The biggest negative change in the country over the last 12 months.

While the fact that the closure of institutions is now regulated by law is a positive aspect, the way in which the process will be carried out causes some concern. The legal framework gave too little time for the closures to happen and for closure programmes to be put in place. This is especially valid for institutions for children with disabilities, where the process of closure is more complex, and the planning process takes longer.

What are the other headlines or issues that Hope and Homes for Children is working on in terms of child protection system reform?

1. Prevention of family breakdown.
2. Support for young people leaving care to transition into independent living.



What is the main thing Hope and Homes for Children Romania wants the government or international donors to know about in 2023?

While prevention of family separation is legally regulated¹, there needs also to be a focus on preventing family breakdown and on supporting young adults in their transition into independent living. The prevention will have an improved legal framework, but there is still the need to closely monitor how this legal framework will be put into practice (methodology for the application of the law).

There are still EU-funded projects from the 2014-2020 MFF for closing down institutions that were not finished, with the deadline being December 2023. In some cases, the projects were/are delayed due to bureaucracy and there is a risk that they are rushed and not implemented in a proper manner, with a negative impact on the children. Therefore, attention must be paid to the way the closures are implemented and the process needs to be closely monitored so that all due diligences are completed.

There are 6163 children in Small Group Homes in Romania, of which 1778 have *special needs*. There are also Family Type Apartments, that house 1666 children, of which 214 have *special needs*.²

Note on terminology, according to law, *special needs* (called handicap in the Romanian legal frame) is governed by law no. 448/2006, chapter 6; <https://lege5.ro/gratuit/geytinrsgi/incadrarea-in-grad-de-handicap-lege-448-2006?dp=gmytkobvgeydg>

¹ Law no. 156 of May 30, 2023, <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/270909> LEGE nr. 156 din 30 mai 2023 privind organizarea activității de prevenire a separării copilului de familie, Publicat în Monitorul Oficial nr. 484 din 31 mai 2023.

² <https://copii.gov.ro/1/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Buletin-statistic-trim-IV-2023.pdf>



Hope and Homes for Children calls on the government to:

1. Provide real mechanisms of monitoring the way the old-type institutions are being closed following the changes in the legal frame in 2022.
2. Analyse the funding sources for the implementation of the reform of the care system for children and to reallocate funds to avoid the heavy reliance on EU funds (Child Guarantee, Operational programmes, National Recovery and Resilience Plan).

Hope and Homes for Children calls on the European Union/ international donor community to:

1. Ensure that EU funds are not used for institutional settings in line with the enabling condition 4.3.³
2. Ensure that the Child Guarantee National Action Plan is completed and implemented in a way that serves the needs of the most vulnerable children, including children in institutions and their safe transition to family and community-based care.



"Child participation has become increasingly relevant in our programmes and activities, involving children and youngsters with and without special needs from our programmes, who are encouraged to express their opinions and concerns both as part of Our Voices Matter groups and as part of other participation activities."

**Mihaela K. Safeguarding and
Participation Focal Person, HHC
Romania**

³ European Union common provisions 2021-2027 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021R1060>

¹ Law no. 191 of June 28, 2022, for the amendment and completion of Law no. 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of children's rights <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/256905>



Latest developments, e.g., Laws, policy, and moratoria

Positive

1. The legal framework on young people leaving care has been updated, including the National Strategy on Social ⁴Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2022-2027 and the National Housing Strategy 2022-2050 which identify care leavers as a vulnerable group in need of targeted support.
2. Law no. 191 was passed in June 2022 which states that all old-type institutions in Romania should either be closed or be in the process of closure (have a strategy of closure with indicators and with targets).
3. The legal framework on the prevention of family separation has been updated with law no. 156/2023, assigning responsibilities and funding to keep children in families.

Negative

1. The legal framework on young care-leavers encourages young adults to leave the system with financial incentives. However, with the lack of a consistent monitoring process and financial education, the young adults are likely to find themselves quickly running out of money and requiring the support of social services.
2. The changes in the legal framework brought about an increased reliance on the ESF+ funds (including the Child Guarantee) and on the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. While these sources can be used as additional funding sources, the government should not rely on them in implementing reforms at the national level and measures that aim to reform the care system for children.

⁴ <https://mmuncii.ro/j33/index.php/ro/minister-2019/strategii-politici-programe/6562-sn-incluziune-sociala-2022-2027>

¹ Law no. 191 of June 28, 2022, for the amendment and completion of Law no. 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of children's rights <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/256905>



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About our country factsheet

This country factsheet provides an overview of the work of Hope and Homes for Children in Ukraine. It is intended to inform policymakers, donors, and the wider public about the scope of child protection system reform in each country, highlighting efforts to transition from institutions (orphanages) to family- and community-based alternatives.

Each country snapshot outlines both the strengths and weaknesses of current policies and actions within the child protection system. It provides a summary of publicly available data that we have been able to source, alongside our expert analysis of this information as it pertains to overall child protection reform. We also offer key recommendations for future interventions to drive continued improvement. These insights are based on over 30 years of experience from Hope and Homes for Children. While significant progress in child protection reform is possible, challenges remain, especially in gathering comprehensive data and aligning definitions. Where applicable, definitions and programmes discussed are based on local legal and policy frameworks. For this reason, they are not readily comparable to country factsheets, produced by us for another country or jurisdiction.

Data disclaimer

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.

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Hope and Homes for Children is on the Transparency Register of the European Union,
Identification number in the register: 035163533684-92

Organisation in special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 2019.

An NGO in participatory status with the Council of Europe as of 2021.

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