Child Care System Reform

FYR Macedonia Country Assessment
COUNTRY REPORT

ASSESSMENT OF THE REFORM OF THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM IN FYR MACEDONIA

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Skopje, May 2007
# Table of Contents

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ........................................................................................................... 4

II. BACKGROUND OF THE ASSESSMENT .................................................................................... 9

1. The purpose and the context of the assessment ........................................................................ 9

2. Assessment objectives................................................................................................................ 10

3. Reform efforts undertaken by UNICEF CO in FYR Macedonia............................................... 10

III. METHODOLOGY ...................................................................................................................... 15

1. Description of methodology .................................................................................................... 15

1.1. Methods, techniques and instruments ............................................................................... 15

1.2. Sampling ............................................................................................................................. 16

1.3. Data sources ....................................................................................................................... 16

1.4. Stakeholder participation in the assessment ....................................................................... 17

1.5. Major limitations ............................................................................................................... 18

IV. FINDINGS .................................................................................................................................... 20

1. TARGET GROUPS OF CHILDREN .......................................................................................... 20

1.1. Children as defined in relevant legislation and relevant reform documents ....................... 20

1.2. Traditional, new and underserved categories of children within the child protection system ... 21

1.3. Child's opinions and participation ...................................................................................... 22

2. GOVERNANCE SYSTEM MAP ............................................................................................... 23

2.1. Description of the governance system at the national level ................................................. 23

2.2. Cross sectoral cooperation on national level ....................................................................... 24

2.3. Devolved national governance bodies and cross-sectoral cooperation on local level .......... 25

3. SERVICE PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING .................................................................. 26

3.1. The (central) role of MoLSP in planning and decision making ........................................... 26

3.2. Strategies and action plans that guide planning and decision making .................................. 27

3.3. Regulatory documents in relation to key reforms – the EU accession framework .................. 30

3.4. The role of the NGO sector in FYR Macedonia in the initiation of the child protection reforms ...................................................................................................................... 31

3.5. Current reforms of the system of social protection ................................................................ 32

3.6. Commissions established within the reform processes ......................................................... 33

3.7. Budgeting, costing and intergovernmental transfers .............................................................. 34

4. REORGANISATION OF STATUTORY SERVICES .................................................................. 35

4.1. Organisation of the CSWs .................................................................................................. 36

4.2. Case work vs. case management ....................................................................................... 37

4.3. Administration within the CSWs ....................................................................................... 39

4.4. Services provided within the CSWs ................................................................................... 39

4.5. Implications of EU Accession – possible future reform trends ............................................ 39

5. DECENTRALISATION ................................................................................................................. 39

5.1. Decentralisation reforms .................................................................................................... 40

5.2. Main obstacles for the reform ............................................................................................. 41

6. PERSONNEL ISSUES .............................................................................................................. 42

6.1. Professional capacity development within the current reform efforts .................................. 42

6.2. Employment status of personnel in child protection ............................................................ 44
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.3. Staff shortages in CSWs</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. GATEKEEPING AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1. Initiation of the inspection process</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2. Licensing of service providers</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3. Standardisation of social services</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4. Appeal system</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. MATERIAL ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1. Social assistance benefits - Law on Social Protection</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2. Assistance to families with children - Law on Child Protection</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1. Family support services</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2. Family substitute services</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. DEINSTITUTIONALISATION</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1. Target groups of children</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2. Service planning and decision making</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3. Reorganisation of statutory services</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.4. Decentralisation</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.5. Personnel issues</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.6. Gatekeeping</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.7. Material assistance for children and families</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.8. Community based services</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.9. Deinstitutionalisation</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. LESSONS LEARNT</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform documents: Action Plans, Strategies, Reports</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory documents:</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. ANNEXES</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 1: List of abbreviations</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 2: Terms of Reference</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 3: List of Steering Group Members</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 4: Data Collection Instruments</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 5: List of Persons Interviewed</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 6: Governance System Map</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 7: Questionnaire for Social Services, Finances and Budgets</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 8: Governance and service map per user groups</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex 9: Good Practice Portfolio</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

In mid 2006, UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS received regional funding from SIDA for a project entitled ‘The Reform of the Child Care System in CEE/CIS – taking stock and accelerating action’. The project takes place from June 2006 to December 2009. The project has threefold objectives:

1. To accelerate the reform of the child care system by facilitating a renewed commitment for the reform through a consultative process and lessons learned;
2. To build synergies between specialized institutions, NGOs, Governmental reform practitioners and financial institutions in their contributions to the reform by facilitating systematic exchange of good practices and lessons learned;
3. To facilitate access to the latest knowledge and know-how for reform practitioners and to expand the mechanisms for regional capacity development.

This Report is a product of the assessment whose purpose is to illustrate key elements for progress and current gaps in the reform processes in the country, in support for the preparation and work of the first sub-regional consultation, one in the SEE (covering Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey).

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSESSMENT

The overall objectives of the assessment include:

- an increase in understanding of the progress and shortcomings of the reform process in SEE, from the view of different stakeholders on county and regional level, which can serve as a ‘baseline’ for further reform support
- provide policy analysis that can serve as an input for further support for the reform process, among both local and regional/international actors.

The specific objectives of the Assessment include:

- identify benchmarks against which to assess and analyse the reform progress
- assess and analyse (individually-per country and jointly – per region) progress of the child care system reform in the selected countries, in order to determine a baseline for further monitoring of the reform process
- identify opportunities to accelerate the reform of the child care system
- enable local ownership of the assessment process
- enable a review and input for further UNICEF support for the reform
- outline a “model planning (monitoring) tool” to be used in subsequent sub-regional consultations (CARK, SC & RUB)

3. DESCRIPTION OF METHODOLOGY

3.1. Methods, techniques and instruments

For the purposes of the assessment a qualitative methodology was utilised. The assessment was based on a participatory, collaborative methodological framework in order to allow the relevant stakeholders to steer different parts of the assessment process through consultation: from decisions on amendments to the assessment questions, over suggestions of the information sources and ways to gather information, sense making (data analysis), discussion as well as recommendations.
Within this methodological framework, which focused on positive elements of the reform and exploration of good practices to date, the following techniques were applied:

- Group consultations with key stakeholders that took part in the reform efforts to date
- A comprehensive desk research (content analysis) of prior relevant documents
- Semi-structured interviews
- A review of tacit and experiential knowledge
- Mapping of governance/administrative structure in FYR Macedonia in relation to child and social protection and mapping of governance and social services per user groups.

### 3.2. Sampling

As typical for a qualitative research, a nonprobability purposive sampling was used to yield the most comprehensive understanding of the subject of the assessment. The interviews were carried out with the 12 identified key stakeholders - members of the Steering group, selected on the basis of their working experience and expertise for the assessment. Additional criteria used for their selection was also the category of children they deal with in their every-day work within the relevant governmental/non-governmental institutions. However, in the course of the assessment, the initial sample was extended in size. Based on the snowballing effect of interviews (interviewees suggesting and referring local researchers to other relevant institutions/persons in order to obtain access to required data) the interviews were carried out with 5 additional representatives from relevant institutions/organisations in FYR Macedonia (17 in total with the Steering Group members).

### 3.3. Data sources

Data sources used for the purposes of this assessment were as follows:
- Relevant documentation (prior assessments, reviews, country/local reform reports, research and evaluation reports)
- Relevant strategic documents (national strategies, programmes, action plans)
- Relevant legislation (laws, rule-books, legal codes)
- Official statistical data, data on financial expenditures, tables and non-official studies, evaluations and analyses.

### 3.4. Major limitations

Although there were no significant problems encountered during the assessment process, several limitations are listed below that should be taken into consideration as they more or less adversely affected the assessment:

- Belated official engagement of the local researchers, which resulted in limited time available for the assessment and reliance on a rapid assessment framework.
- Existing research fatigue among key stakeholders enhanced with the lengthy and thoroughgoing interview.
- The lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the key reform documents (most specifically Strategies and Action Plans) impeded the required analysis of their level of implementation.
• The fixed template for the research report and inability to structure it according to the local researcher's opinions on the most appropriate way to present child protection reforms in FYR Macedonia.

4. MOST IMPORTANT FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The child protection system in FYR Macedonia is currently characterised by fragmentation and no connectedness of policies both in terms of policy development and implementation. The child protection in itself is not unified, rather protection of children is envisaged within the existing social protection services for the population in general. There is neither integrated system, nor unified policies convenient for subsequent straightforward local implementation depending on the local circumstances. There are no specialised departments within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) and the Centres for Social Work (CSWs) that would deal specifically with planning and addressing problems of children at risk solely.

In addition to the lack of integrated child protection system, there is an apparent need for coordinated approach in developing policies and reforms planning involving all relevant stakeholders. Inter-ministerial cooperation is in place, but is not yet formalised with protocols of cooperation. In the recent years, planning of the reforms and development of strategic goals have been based on involvement of different stakeholders, although the lack of evaluation and monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the reform documents entails inability to locate responsibilities for the eventual success or failure of the reform efforts.

A couple of commissions were established within the MoLSP to guide and facilitate the reforms: Commission for adoption and Commission for cooperation with the NGO sector - established after "service purchasing" with the NGO sector was introduced. Service purchasing and contracting with the NGOs in the delivery of social services is a reform achievement in FYR Macedonia that has been manifesting positive practical implications.

Apart from the internal fragmentation of policies, the assessment of the key initiators of the reforms reveal that too often reform initiatives are encouraged and set off not by the governmental institutions themselves (where there is a certain lack of initiatives), but by external stakeholders that have been pressuring the government years back. Most notably, the influence of UNICEF, Women's organisations, as well as NGOs protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, is to be emphasised.

In the domain of the strategic documents, only a few are truly relevant to the child protection reforms in the Country. The process of preparation of strategic reform documents (i.e. Strategy for Deinstitutionalisation, Strategy for Family Violence) is still underway. Action plans that would originate from these Strategies are not developed, meaning subsequently that the actual implementation of the reform objectives is yet to take place.

As for the regulatory documents, there are recurrent changes and amendments of the existing laws (Law on Social Protection, Family Law, Law on Child Protection - as examples of laws being most frequently amended). Yet again, changes in the regulatory documents are often introduced by means of external influences of influential organisations (ex. UNICEF), key reform projects (such as the World Bank SPIL project for restructuring of the social protection system), or as part of the requirements for harmonisation of the Macedonian with the European legislation (ex. EU Directives).

At the local level, within the process of reorganisation of statutory services and related personnel issues, most of the reforms are top-down and create changes
that relate to organisation and work within the CSWs, but no reform focuses on them. Except in Skopje, CSWs are mostly polyvalent institutions operating on territorial principle. At present, they face the problem of continuing transfer of new responsibilities and tasks from the "centre" and serious staff shortages. These problems are enhanced by the fact that CSWs still operate using the traditional case work approach to practice, with little of an outreach work taking place, nor are any of the reforms directed towards case management and adopting new and up-to-date approaches in practice through continuing education.

In addition, CSWs linkages with municipalities are incomplete. The already initiated process of decentralisation in social protection is limited primarily to institutions for elderly and the day care centres (DCCs). Given the lack of obligatory elements in legislation in the part of decentralisation and the transfer of responsibilities for social protection of citizens, and as a result of the weak financial and administrative capacities of municipalities, none of the existing DCCs (which are currently organisational units of the CSWs) is decentralised hitherto, as it was expected after the legislative changes were introduced in 2004.

Gatekeeping mechanisms are still weak and centralised. Gatekeeping at local level is non-existent as regulation of the social inspection, standardisation of services and licensing takes place at the central stage. The social inspection was only recently legally regulated (in 2005), while the Department for Social Inspection started functioning earlier this year. The process of standardisation in social work is delayed as the development of the standards for services for functioning of the CSWs and social institutions is still on the go. Licensing is currently a responsibility of the MoLSP, although the new Law on Social Protection (still in procedure) anticipates establishment of a Chamber for Social Activities that would fully take over licensing of professionals working in social protection institutions from the MoLSP. In addition, a rights-based approach to child protection is not applied.

In the domain of material assistance, the reforms are in general directed towards targeting of the financial allowances (social assistance and child supplements) and updating the system of administration of social assistance benefits.

Most significant achievements however, both in terms of legislative changes and practice, are evidenced in the domains of deinstitutionalisation (although predominantly directed towards disabled children) and the community-based services (day-care centres for children on the streets, for disabled children, shelters for victims of family violence). However, there is still a great deal of services that should be introduced within the system of child protection, such as kinship care, home-based services, small-size group homes, specialised foster care etc.

5. GENERAL AREAS OF RECOMMENDATION

- Integration of child protection accountability for planning and decision making into a single department within the MoLSP
- Preparation of official protocols to regulate and specify collaboration between relevant stakeholders at central and local level
- Development of an integrated Strategy for Child Protection
- Further promotion of the practice of service purchasing with the NGO sector
- Establishment of central data-base for monitoring the status of different vulnerable user-groups
- Separate budget to finance continuing education of staff employed either at the MoLSP, or at the local level within CSWs and social institutions
- Change in the course of the reforms in child protection, which is at present either top-down (from the MoLSP towards the CSWs) or bottom-up - lobbying by interested
NGOs for protection of different user groups, again towards the CSWs (feedback from CSWs to be taken into consideration during reforms planning)

- Reorganisation of CSWs in a way that would enhance existing capacities (because of staff shortages at present) and upgrade approaches in professional social work practice
- Transferring the juridical functions from the CSWs to the courts
- Separating the administration of financial allowances from professional work
- Accelerate the transfer of Day care centres (DCCs) and Short term protective shelters (STPSs) to municipalities and decentralisation of existing day-care centres DCCs and short-term protective shelters (STPSs)
- Improvements in terms of upgrading of the working conditions, introduction of the IT technology, improvements in the system of recording and efficient administration of social benefits.
- Replacing traditional case work with case management.
- Introduction of the individual care plans for service beneficiaries, service contract, client participation and development of self-care capacities
- Establishment of specialised counselling services for different user groups within the CSWs
- Increased reliance on voluntary work in the delivery of social services by CSWs
- Through joint training in fund raising, encouragement of CSWs and municipalities to ensure additional funding for the local development programmes
- Training to staff beyond regulatory documents and by-laws
- Further development of the gatekeeping mechanisms at central level, and introduction of the gatekeeping mechanisms at local level
- Establishment of a body which would be specialised for licensing
- Accelerate the preparation of the norms and standards for regulation of the working conditions and professional services within CSWs and social protection institutions (ISAs mandate)
- Promotion of a rights-based approach to child protection at all levels
- Pursue the ongoing reform towards "targeting" of financial allowances
- Development of the home-based care services, small-size group homes, specialised foster care, introduction of the kinship care
- Promotion of the engagement of individuals - professionals as service providers
- Broadening of the current deinstitutionalisation reforms (at present directed towards disabled children) towards children without parents and parental care and children in conflict with the law, who are also at risk of being institutionalised.
II. BACKGROUND OF THE ASSESSMENT

1. The purpose and the context of the assessment

In mid 2006, UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS received regional funding from SIDA for a project entitled ‘The Reform of the Child Care System in CEE/CIS – taking stock and accelerating action’. The project takes place from June 2006 to December 2009. The project aims to address the following issues regarding the reform of child care in the noted regions:

- availability of a **continuum of services** in different communities and countries, which is able to address diverse vulnerabilities through individual planning, based on an aim of providing quality care for children;
- upgrading of **local capacity for planning and financing** of a continuum of services, since the reform is closely linked to good governance and decentralisation. This issue is also linked to a need for a **clarification of responsibilities and mandates** (inter-sectoral co-operation);
- A need for careful **budgeting for the transition costs during the reform period** and **costing of the new child care services**.
- the situation regarding the **policy environment** in which the reform is taking place,
- the role of the state in the **gate keeping** at national and sub-national level.

The project has **threefold objectives**:
1. To accelerate the reform of the child care system by facilitating a renewed commitment for the reform through a consultative process and lessons learned;
2. To build synergies between specialized institutions, NGOs, Governmental reform practitioners and financial institutions in their contributions to the reform by facilitating systematic exchange of good practices and lessons learned;
3. To facilitate access to the latest knowledge and know-how for reform practitioners and to expand the mechanisms for regional capacity development.

These are to be addressed through **activities** carried out in several phases:

A. Phase 1 – Sub-regional consultations in order to prepare a Ministerial Conference to take place in 2008, potentially in connection with the CoE and its Council of Ministers. The Conference is to be prepared through three sub-regional consultations (2006-2007; in SEE, CAK, concluded by SC and RUB consultation). Each consultation will review the progress and shortcomings of the reform process in the sub-region and identify opportunities for accelerating the reform.

B. Phase 2 – Follow-up to subregional consultations (through, i.e. debriefings and roundtables, the Ministerial Conference and the dissemination of outcomes (through a publication).

C. Phase 3 – Building synergies and facilitating longer term capacity development of Governments and reform practitioners – promotion of importance of prevention by ensuring that the ‘continuum of services’ is included as an integral part of the reform design and co-operation in supporting M&E activities.

**This Report is a product of the assessment** as one of the activities carried out during the Phase 1 of the project. Its purpose is to illustrate key elements for progress and current gaps in the reform processes in the country, in support for the
preparation and work of the first sub-regional consultation, one in the SEE (covering Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey).

2. Assessment objectives

The overall objectives of the assessment include:
- an increase in understanding of the progress and shortcomings of the reform process in SEE, from the view of different stakeholders on county and regional level, which can serve as a ‘baseline’ for further reform support
- provide policy analysis that can serve as an input for further support for the reform process, among both local and regional/international actors.

The specific objectives of the Assessment include:
- identify benchmarks against which to assess and analyse the reform progress
- assess and analyse (individually-per country and jointly – per region) progress of the child care system reform in the selected countries, in order to determine a baseline for further monitoring of the reform process
- identify opportunities to accelerate the reform of the child care system
- enable local ownership of the assessment process
- enable a review and input for further UNICEF support for the reform
- outline a “model planning (monitoring) tool” to be used in subsequent sub-regional consultations (CARK, SC & RUB)

Format-wise, the focus is to be primarily on:
- the lessons learnt from the best practices, as identified by the involved stakeholders,
- relation of the child care reform with the wider social welfare reform efforts, and
- ensuring, as much as possible given the local circumstances and the assessment timeframe, the local ownership of the assessment process.

The assessment is also to feed into the preparation of the Conference. Hence, content-wise, the focus will be on 5 reform issues that are to be explored at the Conference:
1. policy environment for the reform,
2. service planning,
3. provision of a ‘service continuum’,
4. service gatekeeping at different level (national/regional/local),
5. costing, finances and budgeting.

These two focus sets are explored through:
- the assessment against the benchmarks for child care policy reform (content-issue)
- analysis of progress of the reform (format-issue)
- recommendations for next steps (format and content issues).
Reform efforts undertaken by the Government of FYR Macedonia with the support of UNICEF CO ¹

UNICEF office in Skopje has been actively involved and supporting child protection reforms in FYR Macedonia since 1993. It has been working with national and international partners, the civil society, international and local NGOs and children themselves. 2005 seed the start of UNICEF’s new five-year Country Programme of Cooperation for 2005-2009, focusing on Early Childhood Development and Education, Child Protection, HIV/AIDS and Young People’s Health, and Social Policy Monitoring and Evaluation. Within the national context of promoting decentralisation and pursuing integration in the European Union, the Country Programme of Cooperation aims to support the realisation of children’s rights to survival, development, protection and participation, especially among the socially excluded and vulnerable. Signatories to the Country Programme are both UNICEF and the Government of FYR Macedonia. This Programme serves as a basis for development of annual working plans, again signed by both parties.

Since 2000, UNICEF in FYR Macedonia has been working closely with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP), the Institute for Social Activities (ISA) and the Centres for Social Work (CSW) to foster de-institutionalization practices, focusing on children with disabilities. Day care centres (DCCs) were promoted by UNICEF as an alternative for children with moderate and severe disabilities or at risk of being institutionalised. Ever since 2002, UNICEF has been supporting the establishment of DCCs in different cities in the country,. The MoLSP was highly supportive of this deinstitutionalisation initiative and in 2005 opened a DCC for children with disabilities without UNICEF’s support. At present, the total number of DCCs rose to 18 and more than 300 beneficiaries with disabilities benefit from the services provided in these centres. All 18 DCC are fully taken over and maintained by the MoLSP. This shows that de-institutionalisation is becoming an increasingly accepted idea in the country.

In early 2001, a special rehabilitation programme was launched in the Demir Kapija Institute for people with severe disabilities with the aim of preparing children for discharge and placement in alternative family or community-based care services. After six years of project implementation, more than 30 children left the Institute and live with a foster or biological family. In addition, UNICEF worked on improvement of the living conditions for those children remaining in the Institute and the working conditions of the personnel. In 2004 UNICEF has rehabilitated the children’s ward in the Institute. (See also Good Practice Portfolio in Annex 9 for further info).

Furthermore, UNICEF has been investing in systematic multi-disciplinary capacity building of officials, professionals and families, as well as awareness raising campaigns, in order to achieve a change in the mindsets fostering increased understanding of the value of family-based care as opposed to institutional care.

In order to support the MoLSP in the development of evidence-based policies and actions, in 2006, UNICEF provided financial and technical support to ISA for setting up a Resource Centre for Children at Risk. The objective of this activity is to improve data collection on children with disabilities at national and local level, and to advance the existing family and community-based services for children temporarily or permanently deprived of primary care givers. The Resource Centre aims at unified approach in collecting, processing and disseminating data on this category of children (See also Good Practice Portfolio in Annex 9 for further info).

¹ This heading was prepared in co-operation and input from the UNICEF Country Office
Besides the above activities, UNICEF has successfully advocated for endorsing laws and by-laws in the areas of foster care, adoption and education. The following was achieved:

- **Family Law** - The Family Law was amended improving regulation of adoption and fostering in line with international standards (however, the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption still needs to be ratified);
- **Foster Care** - Adoption and implementation of a by-law defining the contract between social services and foster families, and increase of the foster families allowance; Rulebook on foster care with criteria for identification and recruitment of foster families is finalized;
- **Inclusive education** - New by-laws improving access to education for children with disabilities were adopted;
- **Combating child trafficking** – MoLSP was supported on standardization of the procedures for identification, referral and treatment of children victims of trafficking (3 by-laws are drafted).

Juvenile justice reform has been one of the three priority areas of UNICEF support to reform the child protection system. Since 2000, UNICEF has been advocating for juvenile justice reform in FYR Macedonia with the strategic goal of fostering a more child-friendly and restorative justice oriented system, in line with relevant international and EU standards.

In April 2003 the Ministry of Justice established a Juvenile Justice Working Group with the aim of preparing a new legislation for the protection of children in conflict with the law. UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Working Group to review and finalize the draft juvenile justice law and support the organization of public debates. Currently the Juvenile Justice Law is in final procedure before the Parliament;

UNICEF continuously supports the professional development and capacity building of various professionals. For this purpose continuous trainings, workshops and study tours on juvenile justice principles, EU standards and good practices are organized targeting professionals working with children and young people within the criminal justice system, including children-at-risk.

Development and implementation of non-custodial measures is one of the Government’s priorities in the juvenile justice reform process. The MoLSP jointly with ISA is working on preparation of methodological guidelines for CSW on application of alternative measures and establishment of 5 pilot educational centers in 5 pilot CSW for preventive work with parent of juveniles in conflict with the law and/or children at risk.

Since 2006 the Police Academy in cooperation with UNICEF is working on the development of courses programme within the education curriculum focusing on protection of children victims, witnesses and perpetrators of crimes. As a result, a draft programme was developed and finalised in 2007, and awaits submission to the Teaching council for approval.

In regards to combating child trafficking and children victims of violence, UNICEF has supported several important initiatives. One of them is the Open National SOS Line the only helpline in the country that provides information on the available referral and support services for victims of trafficking and consultation services.

It also supported the national system for identification, assistance and protection of children victims of trafficking in accordance with the international standards and human rights, through the National Referral Mechanism. In the course of 2006, three major documents as part of the process of development of standards and procedures
for victims’ referral and instruments for social integration were commissioned: Programme guideline for Re-socialisation and Social Integration of Children Victims of Trafficking (awaiting submission to the Government), Standard inter-agency protocols for referral of cases and Unified checklists for assessment of at-risk children and child victims including follow-up actions. In addition, UNICEF in cooperation with the OSCE, Mission equipped 15 offices for professional work with children victims of violence and other groups at risk, established within the CSWs. It is expected that these initiatives will contribute towards establishment of a unified system of treatment of victimised children to be applied throughout the Country.

Furthermore, in cooperation with the MoLSP and the Institute for Social Policy and Social Work, an Institutional Assessment was completed in 2005. The Assessment provided baseline data on the responsiveness of the child protection system to violence against children in FYR Macedonia and recommendations to strengthen the system. In 2006 a research on child trafficking in FYR Macedonia was conducted. The Research collected data and information related to the scope and characteristics of child trafficking in the country, and to determine the type and quality of existing services for the victims. The final report was prepared and will be available in September 2007.

In the past three years, the MoLSP conducted a series of training of more than 90 multidisciplinary professionals (police officers, social workers, judges) from all over the country in methods and approached of treatment of victims of violence in the local community. Training was provided by professionals from Zagreb, Croatia.

With support from UNICEF, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy opened 6 shelters for victims of domestic violence in Skopje, Ohrid, Kumanovo, Kicevo, Strumica and Bitola.

In the course of 2005 and 2006, two national media campaigns were carried out. The first one was to provide the general public with key information on the services available for victims of domestic violence, including a national SOS help line number. The campaign was planned and designed in close consultation with the MoLSP, and launched jointly by UNICEF and the MoLSP. The second campaign was to raise the public awareness on the problems with human trafficking and encourage registration of cases of trafficking.

Throughout 2007, UNICEF intents to further support the child protection reform processes through:

- **continued support to the de-institutionalization process** including: policy/legislative review and enactment of new laws; development of standards and mechanisms for monitoring quality of service at national and municipal level; strengthening existing networks of community and based-family services; establishing a continuum of alternative services;

- **continued support to capacity development activities within the social protection sector** including implementation of pre-service and in-service training for professionals working within the child care and child protection system covering a wide array of child protection issues ranging from child care services (foster care/adoption, day-care centers, family-group homes etc) to identification, referral and treatment of children victims of any forms of violence, including children victims of trafficking;

- **continued support to juvenile justice sector reform** focusing on adoption of a separate juvenile justice law; adoption of necessary by-laws/regulations/administrative acts to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the new legislative framework.
In overall, as the above data clearly evidence, UNICEF has been the key instigator and advocate in the protection of the rights of children in FYR Macedonia and stirring reform processes to that end.
III. METHODOLOGY

1. Description of methodology

1.1. Methods, techniques and instruments

For the purposes of the assessment a qualitative methodology was utilised. The assessment was based on a participatory, collaborative methodological framework in order to allow the relevant stakeholders to steer different parts of the assessment process through consultation: from decisions on amendments to the assessment questions, over suggestions of the information sources and ways to gather information, sense making (data analysis), discussion as well as recommendations.

Within this methodological framework, which focused on positive elements of the reform and exploration of good practices to date, the following techniques were applied:

- **Group consultations with key stakeholders that took part in the reform efforts to date** were organised. Initially, the UNICEF Country office in FYR Macedonia identified the key stakeholders to steer the assessment process. Members of the Macedonian Steering group include: representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP), representatives of the NGOs involved in the reform efforts (NGOs "Poraka" and "Polio-plus", both active in promoting the rights and interests of people with disabilities), as well as representatives of high-education institutions (Institute for Social Work and Social Policy - ISWSP, Faculty of Philosophy from Skopje) with relevant experience and expertise in the domain of child protection. The initial meeting with the Steering group members was organised at the outset of the assessment, to inform the group with the background, purpose and details adjoining the process of assessment, review the assessment framework, identify potential reform documents (assistance in preparation of the country file), best practices and additional expertise to be involved in data gathering, as well as the roles of the Steering group members in the assessment process. The second meeting was organised following the meeting of the local researchers with the head researcher held in Zagreb in early May 2007. At the second meeting the Steering group members were informed of the outcomes of the Zagreb meeting, the agreed upon methodology for the assessment and the key reform issues around which the assessment will be organised. A third meeting with the members of the Steering group will be organised in mid June 2007 to corroborate findings, recommendations and lessons learnt. (For additional information concerning the composition of the Steering Group see Annex 3).

- **A comprehensive desk research (content analysis) of prior relevant documents** was carried out foregoiing the actual initiation of the assessment process. The desk research encompassed an extensive number of both UNICEF's as well as other international, supranational and local organisations' policy documents, assessments, reviews and studies that informed reform efforts to date. Relevant documents were identified in cooperation with the Steering Group, UNICEF Office, as well as by the local researchers themselves. As a result, a preliminary bibliography was prepared and subsequently amended throughout the assessment process (See Chapter V. Bibliography).

- **Semi-structured interviews.** Interviews with the members of the Steering group were scheduled and organised immediately after the second Steering group consultative meeting. Individual interviews were chosen as an assessment
technique to provide for in-depth data gathering with each individual steering group member. This technique was used, on one hand, based on the initial discussion with the Steering group members about the preferred way of providing their input into the assessment process. On the other hand, as Steering group members were deliberately selected taking into consideration their expertise for a particular target group of children, individual interviews appeared and proved to be the most beneficial way of data gathering, discussion of the analysis and provision of specific country-level recommendations for separate categories of children. Based on the initially developed assessment tool and the matrix for the assessment containing key reform issues and assessment questions to guide the assessment process (which were subsequently revised during the Zagreb meeting of local researchers with the head researcher), a plan of the exhaustive qualitative interview was prepared as an assessment instrument. The detailed instrument - interview guide is given in Annex 4. In addition, wherever applicable and appropriate, the local researchers invested efforts to obtain access to relevant reform knowledge beyond officially published documents, planned reforms not yet shaped in policy documents, as well as on the contents of the relevant legislation and strategic documents still in phase of preparation.

- **Mapping.** Two maps as visual presentations of governance/administrative division and the continuum of social services from national to local level were developed:
  - Governance and service map per user groups (1st map)
  - Decision making/accountability/reporting lines and the sources of funding (2nd map)

### 1.2. Sampling

As typical for a qualitative research, a nonprobability purposive sampling was used to yield the most comprehensive understanding of the subject of the assessment. The interviews were carried out with the 12 identified key stakeholders - members of the Steering group, selected on the basis of their working experience and expertise for the assessment. Additional criteria used for their selection was also the category of children they deal with in their every-day work within the relevant governmental/non-governmental institutions. Nevertheless, throughout the assessment, the initial sample was extended in size. Based on the snowballing effect of the interviews (interviewees suggesting and referring local researchers to other relevant institutions/persons in order to obtain access to required data) the interviews were carried out with 5 additional representatives from relevant institutions/organisations in FYR Macedonia (17 in total with the Steering Group members) (see List of persons interviewed in Annex 5).

### 1.3. Data sources

Data sources used for the purposes of this assessment (identified in cooperation with the Steering group members, UNICEF CO and by researchers themselves) were the following:
- Relevant documentation (prior assessments, reviews, country/local reform reports, research and evaluation reports)
- Relevant strategic documents (national strategies, programmes, action plans)
- Relevant legislation (laws, rule-books, legal codes)
- Official statistical data, data on financial expenditures, tables and non-official studies, evaluations and analyses.
1.4. Stakeholder participation in the assessment

The implementation of the assessment depended on the differentiated roles of the following key stakeholders that participated in the assessment: UNICEF Regional Office (UNICEF RO), Regional head researcher, UNICEF Country Office (UNICEF CO), the Steering group and local researchers.

**UNICEF RO** initiated and had the co-ordination role for the overall assessment process and following duties:

- providing information on the existing knowledge of the reform
- input in the development of the assessment tools
- provision of any other relevant information to the Head Researcher that may be relevant for the assessment content or processes (i.e. UNICEF standards, information on prior similar exercises, etc.)
- co-ordination of all inputs and duties from the UNICEF COs and the Head Researcher (individually and between the UNICEF COs and the Head Researcher, regarding the work of the individual researchers in each of the countries, from the development of the ToRs for the Assessment to the final reporting, as detailed in individual contracts/arrangements)
- commenting on the draft deliverables during the Assessment (both on the local and regional level)

**Head Researcher**'s role was to provide technical and quality assurance guidance and co-ordination during the assessment process. Primary responsibility of the Head Researcher was to the UNICEF RO. The role was particularly evident in suggestions regarding the creation of the assessment framework and content, keeping in mind the available resources and expected outputs. The key tasks for the Head Researcher encompassed:

- preparation of the Assessment framework, in co-operation with the UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office
- preparation of the ToR for the local researchers
- co-ordination of the entire assessment process with the UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional office and UNICEF Country Offices
- reporting on the entire assessment process to the CEE/CIS Regional office
- preparation of the researchers for the country-level assessment (2-day event held in Croatia in early May 2007)
- devising of the additional methods for data gathering for each country, in co-operation with the local researchers
- supervision of the entire country-level assessment
- regional analysis of the reform progress and regional compilation of useful (best) practices in child care reform (to be carried out in June 2007)

**UNICEF CO** in FYR Macedonia had the following roles and responsibilities, in relation to the UNICEF co-ordination of the assessment process on the country-level:

- collation of existing information and knowledge of the reform
- selection and employment of the local researchers, based on the inputs provided by the UNICEF RO and the Head Researcher
- identification of relevant stakeholders that had a role in the steering of the assessment on the local level (Steering group) and the initiation of the Steering group
- organisation of the initial Steering group meeting
- managerial supervision of the work of the local researchers
• comments on the draft deliverables by the local researchers
• liaison with the UNICEF RO and the Head Researcher on all other relevant assessment issues
• co-ordination for the translation for different documents delivered by the local researchers, that will serve quality assurance by the head researcher.

**Steering group.** The stakeholder participation was a key prerequisite for the success of the assessment. Since the assessment had a focus on ensuring local ownership of the process, the country-level stakeholders had a significant routing role throughout the assessment process (from suggestions regarding the assessment content, over data collecting and analysis, to ‘sense-making’). Steering group members were identified by the UNICEF CO in FYR Macedonia, under the guidance of the UNICEF RO and the Head Researcher. Their functions and inputs included:

- inputs in the proposal for the local researchers
- identification of potential documents and practices that need to be included in the desk study in the country
- individual inputs through group consultative meetings/interviews for a more detailed exploration of particular assessment issues
- a review of and comments on the desk review of relevant documents/practices
- inputs in the mapping of governance and the continuum of services
- creation of recommendations facilitated by the local researchers
- a discussion of the data analysis and the overall draft report

**Local Researchers** were responsible for the assessment tasks on the local level. They were employed by the UNICEF CO, but worked under the supervision of the Head Researcher. Their key tasks involved:

- Co-operation with the identified relevant local stakeholders (that acted in a steering/advisory capacity), the Head Researcher and the UNICEF throughout the assessment process
- Organisation of the Steering Group meetings
- A comprehensive desk review of external and internal documents (prior studies, reviews, evaluations, descriptive documents), resulting in a country level overview of child care reform
- Creation of country files, with documentation upon which the country-level review was based
- Carrying out of individual interviews with the Steering Group members
- Creation of maps of governance and continuum of services in the country
- Further desk research and fieldwork data gathering
- Devising of additional data gathering methods, in co-operation with the local stakeholders and the Head Researcher
- Data analysis (under supervision of the Head Researcher)
- A discussion with the local stakeholders and generation of country-level recommendations for further reform efforts
- A write up of a draft Country Assessment Report
- A description of good practices in the country.

**1.5. Major limitations**

Although there were no significant problems encountered during the assessment process, several limitations are listed below that should be taken into consideration as they more or less adversely affected the assessment:
• Belated official engagement of the local researchers, which resulted in limited time available for the assessment and reliance on a rapid assessment framework. Namely, the local researchers were supposed to be engaged in early April 2007 within the phase of the initiation of the assessment on the country level. Instead, their engagement was officialised on 19th of April 2007. This resulted in shortened period for the assessment which should have lasted 2 months (April and May) for data collection and analysis on the country level. In effect, researchers had only a month to finalise the entire process (See Terms of Reference for the Assessment in Annex 2).

• Existing research fatigue among key stakeholders enhanced with the lengthy and thoroughgoing interview.

• The lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the key reform documents (most specifically Strategies and Action Plans) impeded the required analysis of their level of implementation.

• The fixed template for the research report and inability to structure it according to the local researcher's opinions on the most appropriate way to present child protection reforms in FYR Macedonia, was additional constraint. To provide for comparability of the reports in regional context, the local researchers and the head researcher agreed on a template to be followed during preparation of the report. This template was not necessarily suitable for presentation of the child protection reforms in the Country, and would have probably been structured otherwise to avoid overlapping of contents and highlight specificities of the reforms per categories of children in FYR Macedonia.
**IV. FINDINGS**

**1. TARGET GROUPS OF CHILDREN**

**Key conclusions**
In FYR Macedonia, the terminology used to refer to the same categories of children varies in different regulatory documents (Law on Social Protection, Family Law, Criminal Code). And although this is under reform, the very same terminology is still considered to be out-dated.

*Traditional categories* of children recognised within the Law on Social Protection prior to the reform were the children living in poverty, children without parents and parental care, children with educational and behavioural problems and disabled children. However, there are *new groups of at risk children* recognised in relevant legislation following the reform processes: street children, substance abusers, homeless and children victims of violence. As for the children victims of trafficking, they are recognised within the strategies but not yet in the regulatory documents (except for the Criminal Code). Nonetheless, MoLSP informs on the possible inclusion of children victims of trafficking as at risk group within the legislation (envisaging the entitlement to guardianship).

Children *underserved within the child protection system* in FYR Macedonia, according to the members of the Steering Group, are: internally displaced children, children without parents and parental care, neglected and street children, children living in rural areas, children - substance abusers, and children victims of trafficking who are not yet recognised within the relevant legislation.

*Child's opinion/participation* is envisaged only in adoption cases when obligatory presence at the act of adoption and consent of the child is required.

**1.1. Children as defined in relevant legislation and relevant reform documents**
A cross-cutting issue during the assessment of the child protection reforms in FYR Macedonia was the category of children. The classification encompasses 6 categories: children without parents and parental care, children with disabilities, children victims of trafficking, children in conflict with the law and children living in poverty. Further in the report, reform processes for specific categories of children are emphasised where relevant. Herein, we point out the categories of children as defined in relevant legislation and reform documents in FYR Macedonia:

**Children without parents and parental care** are children whose parents had died, are missing, unknown or from any other reason temporarily or permanently do not perform their parental obligations.

**Children with disabilities** are children with physical and mental disabilities of the following type:
- impaired sight (blind and partially sighted)
- impaired hearing (deaf and hard of hearing)
- mentally disabled children
- children with physical disabilities

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2 The terminology used in the report is the one used in official documents and not necessarily politically correct in some cases. Within the reform efforts, however, this is under revision.

Children with impaired speech
- autistic children
- children with combined developmental disabilities.

Children exposed to violence and/or neglect are children exposed to violent behaviour within the family, characterised by the use of force, threat and intimidation, infliction of bodily injuries, emotional and sexual abuse, material, sexual and work exploitation, as well as neglected children.

Children victims of trafficking are children under 18 years of age who are subjected to recruitment, transport, displacement, possession and captivation with a purpose of their exploitation in or outside the country. The consent of the child victim of trafficking is irrelevant, even in the cases when none of the following means are applied: force, compulsion, kidnapping, deception or any other activities undertaken while the child had been in a vulnerable situation or under control by another person.

Children in conflict with the law. In FYR Macedonia, the juvenile justice system is integrated within the criminal legislation for adults, though regulated by separate provisions in the Criminal Code. According to these provisions there are different approaches and measures for criminal acts and offences depending on the juvenile’s age. Accountability for criminal acts begins at 14 years of age. Every person who has not reached the age of 14 is regarded as a child from the point of view of the criminal law. After the age of 14, juveniles are divided into several age groups: 14-15 years are considered as younger juveniles, those aged 16-17 are considered as older juveniles, while persons between 18 and 21 years of age have a status of young adults. Herein, we should note that in the Law on Social Protection - purified text, (2006) "children in conflict with the law" are defined as "children and youth with educational and social problems and children with behavioural problems". There are differences in the terminology within the regulatory documents used to refer to the same category of children (in the relevant Criminal Code these children are referred to as "juvenile offenders").

Children living in poverty are children living in households where parents are capable to work, but are unemployed (the so-called materially insecure, living on income below 25% of the average wage in the Country), families with ill and incapable to work parents, or children whose resources (material, cultural and social) are so limited as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life in the Country. Specific emphasis within the child protection system is placed on Roma children and children coming out of age (predominantly children without parents and parental care and children with disabilities), as they are particularly affected by the risk of living in poverty (See Chapters 3 and 8 on Planning and Material Assistance for further info on these two categories of children).

1.2. Traditional, new and underserved categories of children within the child protection system

Traditional categories of children recognised within the Law on Social Protection (1997) prior to the reform were the children living in poverty, children without parents and parental care, children with educational and behavioural problems and disabled children. However, there are new groups of at risk children recognised in relevant legislation following the reform processes. With the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection in 2004, the right to day care extends to street children, substance abusers, homeless and children victims of violence. For the later two categories of children, in addition to the entitlement to day care, the right to protection in short term shelters was also envisaged. In 2004, the Family Law is
amended with a whole new Chapter devoted to Family Violence. As for the children victims of trafficking, they are recognised within the strategies but not yet in relevant legislation (except for the Criminal Code). Still, MoLSP informs on the possible inclusion of children victims of trafficking as at risk group, within the entitlements to guardianship.

Although currently, the Macedonian child protection system provides for a wide coverage of the at risk children currently, there are categories of children identified by the members of the Steering group during the interviews as those underserved within the child protection system.

Such are the internally displaced children, whose families are being placed by the MoLSP within the existing social protection institutions Public Institution for Protection of Children with Educational and Social Problems (25th of May) or Institute for Protection, Education and Upbringing (Ranka Milanovic), Student's boarding houses, Collective Centre for displaced persons (Dare Bombol - Vodno) and the Collective Centre in Kumanovo. The problem of the internally displaced persons is to be addressed within the activities of the Unit for Socially Excluded Persons - Department for Social Protection in the MoLSP. However, apart from the necessity to provide for temporary solution to their housing problems, no considerable services are in place to assist internally displaced children living in the above institutions.

In general, it seems that more services should be developed for the children without parents and parental care, while for the children victims of trafficking - apart from the activities in place that are project-supported, there is no systematic, institutionalised solution yet.

There is also a need to broaden the existing social services for the neglected children. Although the legislation anticipates the measures of supervision over parents, seizure of parental rights or foster care, they are rarely applied in practice. Although there have been some new services initiated for children on the streets (i.e. a Day Care Centre in Skopje), there is a need to advance and expand child protection mechanisms for this at risk group, especially considering the fact that majority of these children are identified as Roma. In particular risk herein are children who lack identity cards and personal documents and thus are unable to utilise existing services.

Children living in remote rural areas are also highly vulnerable as a result of the social exclusion and reduced access to the basic social, cultural and educational services and opportunities. Therefore, specific services should be developed to meet their needs.

In a situation of constant increase in the number of drug addicts and dropping of the age limit among substance abusers, children identified as substance abusers are in particular risk and one of the categories of children within the Macedonian system that is overlooked.

1.3. Child's opinions and participation

Centres for Social Work (CSWs) claim to take into consideration child's opinions and ensure child's participation during case work, irrespective of the social problem they are facing (i.e. children's statements in cases of sexual abuse that are obtained from them using different techniques). However, the only category of children for which there is a legislative regulation mandating obligatory respect of the child's opinion is the category of children without parents and parental care (in adoption cases). Children have to be physically present at the adoption act and give their statement of consent. The Family Law changed in 2005, and moved the age limit

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4 This statement is not a result of formal research, but rather a tacit knowledge among professionals
for these obligations from 10 to 12. However, the same Law adds that presence, statement and consent of children younger than 12 shall also be considered, pending professional assessment (that s/he may comprehend the meaning of the act and that s/he’s mature enough to give his/her own opinion) (LCA of the Family Law, 2005).

2. GOVERNANCE SYSTEM MAP

2.1. Description of the governance system at the national level

In FYR Macedonia, the State is the basic provider of the social protection and of the conditions necessary for its implementation. The State, through the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP), establishes the system of social protection, facilitates its functioning, provides conditions for implementation of the social protection activities (including child protection) and develops forms of self-help (Law on Social Protection - purified text, 2006). Each year, the MoLSP prepares annual programmes for implementation of the social protection activities and budget planning. Within these programmes, the areas of social protection, the specific population needs in the recognised areas, as well as the ways and modalities for implementation of the social protection, are identified.

The MoLSP until 2004, had regional units in the cities in FYR Macedonia through which citizens could effectuate their rights to financial assistance (child supplements). However, in 2004, the regional units of the MoLSP were dismantled, while staff previously employed within the regional units moved to the Centres for Social Work CSWs. This policy decision affected practice within CSWs, but this will be further elaborated under Chapter on Reorganisation of Statutory Services.

Within the MoLSP there are 10 Departments and 2 Commissions and 1 Specialised office. With the changes in the LCA of the Family Law in 2004, a Commission for Adoption, as an organ with primary jurisdiction for adoption, was established within the MoLSP. With the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection in 2004 toward pluralism and service purchasing, and for the purposes of implementation of the anticipated changes in state financing for NGOs service delivery, a separate Commission for Co-operation with the NGO Sector was established within the MoLSP in 2005. The Office of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking (especially women and children) was established within the MoLSP in September 2005, with the financial support of OSCE. However, this is only a temporary office, project-based, whose operation after the end of 2007 (anticipated termination of the project) will remain questionable if some durable, systematic solution is not instituted by then (For additional info concerning MoLSP based Commissions see Chapter 3 on Planning and Decision Making). In order to monitor and analyze human trafficking and illegal migration and to coordinate the activities of the relevant institutions in FYR Macedonia, a National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration in FYR Macedonia was established in 2001 within the Ministry of Interior.

Within the MoLSP, policy making regarding social protection of children is not subject of a single unit, but fragmented under many. Three of the 10 Departments are involved in different capacities in policy making and planning of the child protection: the Department for Social Protection, the Department for Child Protection and the Department for Equal Opportunities. The Department for Social Protection is in charge for planning and decision-making regarding the measures of prevention,

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5 See Annex 6 for a graphic presentation of the governance system map
non-residential and residential forms of protection and the right to social assistance (for the population in general and children in particular). Under the Department for Social Protection, there are 6 units overall:

1. the Unit for Social and Legal Protection;
2. the Unit for Protection and Placement of Disabled People, Employment of Disabled People and Protection of Persons with Social Problems and Elderly;
3. the Unit for Protection and Placement of People with Development Disabilities, Placement of Refugees and Asylum Seekers;
4. the Unit for Provision of Rights to Social Protection; and
5. the Unit for Public and Private Institutions for Social Protection;
6. the Unit for Protection and Placement of Socially Excluded.

The Unit for Social and Legal Protection covers children without parents and parental care, while the protection of children with disabilities and children in conflict with the law is responsibility of the Unit for Protection and Placement of People with Development Disabilities. The Unit for Protection and Placement of Socially Excluded is accountable for children living in poverty and children victims of family violence.

The Unit for Gender Equality within the Department for Equal Opportunities is in charge of the protection of children victims of trafficking. Within the Department for Child Protection the protection of children and families is effectuated through the rights to child supplement, special supplement and assistance for newborns.

One of the 10 Departments of the MoLSP is the Department for Social Inspection that is in charge of supervising the legitimacy of the work of the Centres for Social Work (CSWs), social institutions and other legal entities and individuals engaged in social service provision.

The Institute for Social Activities (ISA) is a research and development institution of the MoLSP. The ISA is responsible for studying social phenomena and problems and advancement of social activities in the country. Its mandate is to: follow and analyse social phenomena and problems in the domains of social protection and social work, encourage and develop research activities, propose and implement advancement measures, organise and deliver training to professional staff from social protection institutions, provide professional assistance to social protection institutions and employed staff within the institutions, prepare programmes for vocational education and training for persons with moderate and severe development disabilities, give professional opinion during preparation of development programmes, prepare standards and norms for personnel and professional work of social protection institutions, carry out supervision over the professional work in the social protection institutions, conduct statistical procession of data from the evidence kept by the social protection institutions, establish professional and scientific collaboration with individuals and institutions in the country and abroad and engage in publishing (Law on Social Protection - purified text, 2006).

### 2.2 Cross sectoral cooperation on national level

At national level, the MoLSP collaborates with several relevant Ministries in terms of policy making, coordination and implementation of policies: Ministry of Education (ME), Ministry of Justice (MJ), Ministry of Local Self-government (MLSG), Ministry of Interior (MI), Ministry of Health (MH). Several of these Ministries have a number of institutions and services relevant for child protection under their jurisdiction. Data on the type and number of institutions and beneficiaries is available in Table 4, under the Chapter 10 on Deinstitutionalisation.
There are no official inter-ministerial protocols in place to regulate cross-sectoral cooperation at national level. Still, whenever required for the purposes of policy making, working groups representing relevant Ministries are regularly established (See also Chapter 3 on Planning and Decision-making for additional information).

2.3 Devolved national governance bodies and cross-sectoral cooperation on local level

2.3.1. Introduction to the basic social services in FYR Macedonia - CSW

The Centres for Social Work (CSWs) are the basic public social protection institutions. In FYR Macedonia there are 27 intermunicipal CSWs, each covering the social protection needs of the population from the territories of several municipalities. The Intermunicipal Centre for Social Work in Skopje (ICSW) is the only CSW with 6 dispersed units of the Department for social work, in 6 municipalities in Skopje. The ICSW functions based on the categorial principle of team work (combined teams of social workers, pedagogues, psychologists, lawyers and defectologists) within the 7 Departments: Department for analytical and scientific work; Department for General Services; Department for Guardianship of Children without Parental Care and Protection of Adults; Department for Marriage and Family; Department for Protection of Children and Youth; Department for Persons with Physical and Mental Disabilities; Department for Socially Excluded and Victims of Family Violence; and Department for Social Work for the territory of the city of Skopje. The 6 dispersed units of the later Department, which are responsible for addressing the social protection needs of the population in terms of social assistance, function on the territorial principle in multidisciplinary teams composed of social workers and usually only one lawyer. The territorial principle of professional work and polyvalent services are typical for the CSWs in other cities in FYR Macedonia (Bornarova, 2006).

There is no regional level of governance, but devolved national governance bodies on local level. The 27 CSWs and 7 social institutions for residential protection and treatment of children are under the jurisdiction of the Department for Social Protection of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP). The CSW is established as a public institution for social protection with public jurisdiction for implementation of social protection activities. In the domain of the public jurisdiction, CSWs are empowered to:

- act upon the rights of social protection envisaged within the Law on Social Protection and the Family law;
- act upon the rights envisaged within the Law on Child Protection: child supplement, special supplement and assistance for newborns;
- act upon the Criminal Code, and
- perform other activities according to the law (Law on Social Protection - purified text, 2006).

Additionally, the day care centres (DCCs) and the short term protective shelters (STPSs) function as organisational units of the CSWs (For details see Chapter 9 on Community-based services).

In terms of cross-sectoral cooperation on local level, CSWs cooperate with other devolved bodies representing relevant ministries (police stations, local medical centres, special and mainstream schools etc), as well as with relevant NGOs working in the field of child protection. This cooperation is mostly associated with the implementation of relevant laws (the so called “official duty cooperation”). There are
neither official memorandums of collaboration nor protocols in place to regulate their cooperation more efficiently and precisely in terms of exact roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders.

As for the relationship between the CSWs and the municipalities, it was regulated within the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection in 2004. Within the process of decentralisation of social protection CSWs and municipalities are expected to deepen and expand their collaboration, although satisfactory level of collaboration is not in place yet (For further details concerning this relationship see Chapter 5 on Decentralisation).

3. SERVICE PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING

See Chapter 5 on Decentralisation regarding planning and decision making on local level.

| Key conclusions: |
| Planning and decision-making regarding child protection is fragmented under the responsibility of several departments within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP). Protocols to guide planning and decision-making at central level and communication lines at local level are absent. At present, there is no Strategy for Child Protection developed to guide further efforts. The existing Strategies are of relevance for the child protection only indirectly and lack effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. |
| The changes in the regulatory documents towards decentralisation, deinstitutionalisation and pluralism in social protection were initiated with the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection in 2004, largely influenced by the EU integration processes. However, NGOs also play a significant role in the initiation of the child protection reforms. |
| Within the general and user-groups leaded reforms 2 Commissions were established within the MoLSP (the Commission for Cooperation with the NGO sector and the Adoption Commission). |
| Reforms also entailed changes in budgeting procedures at central level. With the introduction of the service purchasing, the MoLSP sets aside annual funds for this purpose. In addition, budget circulars (filed in by the Centres for Social Work - CSWs) were introduced to improve the efficiency of budget planning. |

3.1. The (central) role of MoLSP in planning and decision making

The State, through the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) establishes the system of social protection, facilitates its functioning, provides conditions for implementation of the social protection activities (including child protection) and develops forms of self-help (Law on Social Protection - purified text, 2006). The responsibility for child protection lies in the multiple Departments within the MoLSP, which adversely affects planning and decision making. In particular, the Department for Social Protection, the Department for Child Protection and the Department for Equal Opportunities cover social protection of user groups under the responsibility of different Units. Additional evidence for the existing fragmentation is the Department for Child Protection that deals only with the rights to protection of families and children, such as child allowance, special allowance and assistance to newborns. This Department is also accountable for the kindergartens and organisation of measures for rest and recreation of children. This fragmentation of the responsibility for child protection under diverse departments, rather than integrally within one department that would address the social protection of children more
comprehensively, entails equal fragmentation in planning and policy making. There is no connectedness of policies from the aspect of policy development and implementation, characterising the Macedonian system of child protection as a system which is not integrated, and subsequently not based on unified policies convenient for local implementation depending on the local circumstances.

In addition, although related MoLSP, Ministry of Interior (MI), Ministry of Health (MH), Ministry of Justice (MJ), Ministry of Education (ME), for the purposes of policy making, joint programmes or development of legislation, cooperate through the establishment of temporary working groups based on shared membership, protocols to guide planning and decision making in formalised and specified manner, are also missing. This applies to both protocols for arranging roles and responsibilities between the MoLSP and other relevant Ministries, and at the local level (between CSWs and local organisations/institutions). According to the information provided by MoLSP for assessment purposes, within the MoLSP's internal programme, preparation of protocols for collaboration between relevant stakeholders/Ministries, the MoLSP and the CSWs is one of the priorities of the MoLSP for the future. At present, only the Protocol establishing official lines of communication among relevant Ministries for protection of children victims of violence (MoLSP, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior) is under preparation.

As for the cooperation with UNICEF, which is one of the key partners in the social protection of children to the MoLSP, a five-year country programme of cooperation for 2005-2009 was officially signed by UNICEF and the Government of FYR Macedonia. This Programme serves as a basis for development of annual working plans, again subject to official endorsement.

3.2. Strategies and action plans that guide planning and decision making

In FYR Macedonia there is no Strategy for Child Protection developed. A National Action Plan on the Rights of Children in the FYR Macedonia 2005-2015 exists, but this document, as pointed out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) members of the Steering group, is not a result of the joint planning effort of the MoLSP and relevant stakeholders and thus, is not considered as a document that has substantially guided planning and decision making, nor has affected change in child protection.

Several other strategies and action plans are of indirect relevance to child protection in FYR Macedonia: the Poverty Reduction Strategy (2002), National Strategy for Equalisation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in FYR Macedonia (2001), the Strategy for Employment (2006-2010), National Action Plan for Employment for the period 2006-2008, as well as the Strategy for Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal migration in FYR Macedonia (2006), the National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration in the FYR Macedonia (2006), and the Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Children in the FYR Macedonia (2006). However, the lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms impedes the attempts to track down implementation of the envisaged strategic objectives. The development of Strategies that would subsequently serve as a basis for operationalisation of concrete steps to be undertaken for advancement of the child protection in the country in action plans, is yet to take place. The only initiative that is already under implementation by the MoLSP in cooperation with the NGO "ESE - Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women", relates to the preparation of the Strategy on Family Violence, enabled
through a grant of the Institute for Sustainable Communities (independent non-profit organisation based in USA). This Strategy is expected to be of key importance as it will envisage the guidelines for further activities for service planning and protection of this category of children, most specifically through the development of the Action Plan as its operationalisation.

What follows below is a brief elaboration of the contents and objectives of most relevant (general and child-focused) strategies and action plans developed by different stakeholders in FYR Macedonia.

In a situation of rising unemployment and poverty among the population in the Country, the MoLSP brings to light its determination to follow the strategic priorities to combat poverty. The Poverty Reduction Strategy (2002), is a document that generally points out areas for future actions regarding poverty reduction in the Country. The Strategy was prepared in 2002, as a joint effort of a team of representatives from relevant Ministries and High-education institutions that participated in the preparation of the Strategy. The team was leaded by the Ministry of Finance. The Strategy for the most part elaborates the poverty situation in the Country in several domains: macroeconomic indicators, unemployment and the labour market, statistical indicators of poverty, assistance to the poor (social protection) and urban/rural poverty and development. However, no concrete implementation is linked to the objectives of this Strategy, in part as it was not operationalised in an Action Plan and also because of the absence of follow-up mechanisms.

Of particular importance (though indirect for child protection) is the implementation of the Strategy for Employment (2006-2010) and the National Action Plan for Employment for the period 2006-2008, which anticipate implementation of a more active employment policy on the labour market and incentives for moving welfare recipients to work. The Strategy and the National Action Plan were developed as inter-sectoral documents based on the tripartite social partnership between relevant Ministries (Agency for Employment of FYR Macedonia), the Economic Chamber and the Unions. Their level of implementation is yet to be measured in the following years.

The National Strategy for Equalisation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in FYR Macedonia (2001), is a document which does not target children alone and focuses not only on social protection, but also on other spheres, such as education and health. The National Strategy entered into force with the promulgation in the Official Gazette 101/2001. The Strategy outlines the conditions and the roles of all relevant stakeholders within the system of social protection, education and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in several domains, although there is no evidence based on which this Strategy can be related to particular legislation changes (Government of FYR Macedonia, 2001).

In addition to the development of national strategic goals, national action plans are also of relevance to this assessment. The Annual Social Protection Programme of the MoLSP (2007) emphasises that within the implementation of the social protection in 2007, substantial place is dedicated to the International conventions and recommendations, inter alia: the Strategy for Social Cohesion of the European Committee for Social Cohesion, Millennium Development Goals of the UN (the first development goal: reducing poverty) and other recommendations based on which a gradual harmonisation of Macedonian with the EU legislation is taking place. In 2003 FYR Macedonia ratified 4 key Conventions of the Council of Europe: Convention of the Rights of Children, European Convention for Establishing Contacts with Parents to whom the Parent is not granted Custody, European Convention of the Right to

The analysis of the strategic developments per user groups shows that majority are related to children in trafficking. In 2001 A National Plan for Combating Human Trafficking was prepared. In May 2003 UNICEF prepared Guidelines for Protection of the Rights of Children Victims of Trafficking in South Eastern Europe, endorsed by UN internationally in May 2003. These Guidelines served as a basis for preparation of specific by-laws and the Programme for Resocialisation and Reintegration of Children Victims of Trafficking (2006). The Guidelines compare standards of good practices in terms of protection and assistance to children victims of trafficking, from the initial identification to final integration and resocialisation of children. This document was developed based on the relevant international and regional human right instruments in the region, thus giving a clear review of the required measures and practice for implementation and protection of the rights of children victims of trafficking. The purpose of this document was to give the government, the international organisations and non-governmental organisation guidelines for establishment of procedures for specific measures of protection of trafficked children. The implementation of the Programme for Resocialisation and Reintegration of Children Victims of Trafficking that was prepared on the basis of these Guidelines is one of the priority activities of UNICEF for 2007.

An Action Plan for combating Trafficking in Children was adopted by the Government of FYR Macedonia in March 2006. The key objectives set within the Action Plan are quite comprehensive, general and exigent to measure. One of the most relevant measurable objectives relates to setting up minimum standards which will provide protection of the risk groups of children, the labour-exploited and neglected children who are potential victims of trafficking. MoLSP informs that a working group is established for this purpose and expected to develop the standards and subsequently submit them to the National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration within MoLSP by the end of September 2007.

In the last several years, substantial activity is taking place and efforts invested in the development of a separate Law on Juvenile Justice, initiated and supported by UNICEF and the MoLSP and the Ministry of Justice as key partners in the reform course. Herein we highlight three assessments/studies of the juvenile justice system that were conducted between 2003 and 2005: a) a comparative analysis of European juvenile justice legislations; b) an analysis of the effectiveness of measures and sanctions applied to children in conflict with the law; c) and empirical analysis of the problems of children-at-risk and the existing protective factors. The findings of these studies laid the ground for the development of a separate law on juvenile justice.

Considerable developments in policy making are geared towards Roma children, who are particularly vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion. The unofficial data coming from the MoLSP reveal that around 14% of social assistance beneficiaries are Roma. The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015 involving 9 founding participating countries in a regional framework, is a result of the political commitment which already turns into concrete actions of the governments to combat Roma poverty, exclusion, and discrimination in the 4 priority areas: employment, education, health, and housing. In FYR Macedonia concrete activities are in place as an attempt to contribute to the achievement of the Decade of Roma Inclusion goals. FYR Macedonia had prepared a National Action Plan for Roma Inclusion and developed specific goals to be achieved and indicators to monitor the achievement of the set goals in the domain of employment, education, health and housing. The
National Action Plan addresses the problems of the Roma population through establishing objectives in the domains of information, education, employment opportunities, economy (with accent on transformation of grey economy in legal forms of work), housing, urban planning and upgrading the quality of life etc. The implementation of the Action Plan in the envisaged domains, would indirectly contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of Roma children too.

From the beginning of the Decade, efforts have been invested to achieve the goals in the domain of education in particular. Notable improvements have been evidenced in supporting educational inclusion of Roma children. The affirmative action measures (quotas) and scholarships have contributed towards the increased access to secondary and higher education of Roma students, while the mentorship programmes have indeed provided a large number of Roma students with valuable assistance and support during their formal education (Foundation Open Society Institute - FOSIM project in cooperation with the Roma NGO "Romaversitas" is one such example).

Furthermore, aware of the importance of the early childhood development for children in general and children from vulnerable population groups in particular, within the Decade for Roma Inclusion, the MoLSP is an implementing agency for the Project "Inclusion of Roma Children in the Public Pre-school Institutions" (2006-2008). The financing of this project is through the MoLSP and the Roma Education Fund (REF). The UNICEF office in Skopje supports this project through purchasing didactic materials for children and training to staff. The MoLSP participates in the implementation of the project through provision of finances to cover employment costs for 15 nurses for a period of 22 months. According to the information provided by the MoLSP, through this project, 925 Roma children have been included in 15 kindergartens in FYR Macedonia thus far. The project undergoing in 15 municipalities in FYR Macedonia, continues in the course of 2007.

3.3. Regulatory documents in relation to key reforms – the EU accession framework

The entire child protection reform in FYR Macedonia is regulated within the relevant legislation that underwent changes to support reform processes. Herein, we present information regarding initiation of the changes (with emphasis on EU accession issues), key legislative changes and briefly outline the content of the proposed changes in laws which will be frequently referred to further in the text of this Report.

Most of the changes in legislation related to social protection in general and child protection in particular are initiated and follow the course of European Integration. In this process, FYR Macedonia has intensified its efforts with concrete undertakings regarding harmonisation of the national with the European legislation. The initial, most significant changes as a first step towards legislative harmonisation and reforms in child protection, relate to the LCA of the Law on Social Protection (2004), changes and amendments of which were strongly influenced by the PHARE Programme. This Law extended the alternative forms of social protection to the other user groups, in addition to elderly and disabled people, initiated the process of decentralisation in social protection and introduced the principle of pluralism with the legislative recognition of the civil society associations and individuals as service providers and partners to the government in the delivery of social services. The LCA of the Law on Social Protection in 2004 was in fact the regulatory document that most considerably affected planning and decision making and indeed moved forward the
reform process. This was due to the integration of the principles of pluralism (service purchasing and private practice), decentralisation and deinstitutionalisation, which subsequently served as a basis to develop by-laws and encourage the implementation of these reform processes in practice.

Nevertheless, the harmonisation of the national with the European legislation within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) is not limited to social nor child protection only, but rather carried out in several domains: labour, social protection, social insurance, social dialogue and work protection. For all of these domains, there are 180 EU measures which should be incorporated through appropriate laws and by-laws. This is an open and long-lasting process which is expected to be fully finalised by the end of 2010, having most of the EU measures incorporated within the Macedonian legislation in the period between 2006-2008. To be able to accomplish this, the process of harmonisation joins together the MoLSP and all the other relevant Ministries (Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health, Agency for Employment of the FYR Macedonia, Fund for Pension and Disability Insurance and others). Continuous and direct collaboration is in place between the MoLSP and the Secretariat for European Affairs of the Macedonian Government, in terms of implementation of the whole process of harmonisation. For a quality and comprehensive implementation of the activities, working groups with representatives from relevant organs and institutions, guided by the Secretariat, are established. In terms of the obligation for harmonisation of the national legislation with the EU measures, the Department for International Cooperation informs on the completion of the Draft National Programme for Adoption of the EU legislation, for whose implementation the MoLSP is responsible in two of the chapters. In addition, the new Law on Social Protection (still in procedure) redirects financial allowances to target the poorest population groups. Thus, FYR Macedonia will enter the process of open method of coordination in the field of social protection (Programme for Social Protection, 2007).

MoLSP will also be one of the key leaders in the process of preparation of the Joint Inclusion Memorandum (JIM) which represents a basic document for preparation of FYR Macedonia as a country candidate for membership in EU, to participate in the open method of coordination of the social inclusion. The Joint Inclusion Memorandum is an instrument for initiating the translation of the social goals of EU within the national policies. The JIM will outline the basic challenges faced in addressing poverty and social exclusion, and will at the same time identify existing and future policy responses. The purpose of the preparation of the JIM is to serve for building capacities of the governmental institutions, active mobilisation of all participants in combating poverty and social exclusion at national and local level, as well as social partners, non-governmental organisations, social service providers, academic institutions etc (Programme for Social Protection, 2007).

3.4. The role of the NGO sector in FYR Macedonia in the initiation of the child protection reforms

In addition to the reforms initiated by the EU integration processes, the NGO sector in FYR Macedonia was also influential factor for initiation of part of the reforms within the child-protection system (for children victims of violence/neglect for example). With their continuous influence, research, campaigns and lobbying intensified after 2000 (Union of Organisations of Women in FYR Macedonia, NGO "ESE - Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women" and its "Research on Family Violence" in 2000), NGO sector played an important role in emphasising the
need to incorporate the family violence as a form of protection within the social protection system and thus regulate it within the relevant legislation. With the support of the NGO sector, both the Criminal Code and the Family Law in 2004 were amended, defining family violence as a criminal act. Accordingly, the legal power and the responsibilities of institutions providing protection to victims of family violence in terms of intervention, investigation and assistance, was enhanced. However, the fact that the family violence in FYR Macedonia is still in great extend perceived as a "private family matter" – not just by public, but sometimes also by the institutions that have a legal mandate to intervene - contributes to the minimal actual implementation of regulations designed to sanction family violence. Within the changes of the Family Law (LCA of the Family Law 38/2004) a new chapter VI "Dysfunctional relations and violence in marriage and family" was added, and measures for protection of the victims of family violence and temporary measures for perpetrators of the acts of family violence, were incorporated.

3.5. Current reforms of the system of social protection

Current reforms of the system of social protection in FYR Macedonia are related to the Project for Implementation of Social Protection (SPIL) financed through a World Bank loan. The project commenced 2004 and should end in 2008, with a basic objective to improve the effectiveness and efficacy of the system of social protection through improvements of the administration of different social benefits. In the course of 2006, a review of the social protection legislation was carried out by a team of experts engaged for the project, with an objective to define the necessary legislation and by-laws in this domain in the last quarter of 2006. In 2007, within this project, the analysis of the laws and by-laws necessary for the establishment of unified methodology for determination, calculation and payment of social benefits, will continue (Programme for Social Protection, 2007). (See Chapter 8 on Material Assistance for additional info about this Project).

In addition, the Juvenile Justice Law is in final procedure before the Parliament. The three main partners involved in this process supported by UNICEF are the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Police Academy. As a result of the activities of the body representing these 3 key partners, a Final draft of the Juvenile Justice Law was developed by national and international experts and produced by the Working Group led by the Ministry of Justice. The importance of this new Law lies in the changes in the traditional approach toward categorisation and measures for juvenile offenders. The motivation for this new law was the widely accepted position that juvenile justice cannot be achieved if juvenile offenders are not dealt with separately from the formal criminal justice and the penal system for adults. The Law encompasses two aspects: child welfare and juvenile justice system. Pursuant to proposed criminal penalties and measures, there is an opportunity for children at risk and their parents to have measures imposed whereby assistance and protection are implemented by the CSWs. There is also a new particular procedure for mediation which aims towards reconciliation. There are no differences in the educational measures that can be taken, however, differences do exist in the provision for alternative measures. As for the juvenile imprisonment - it can only be imposed for offences punishable of at least 4 years and for a more severe punishment and a higher level of criminal responsibility (State Statistical Office, 2006).

An ongoing activity is also the official endorsement of the Proposal of Law for Protection of the Rights and Dignity of Disabled People submitted by the NGO
"Polio-plus" in 2005. NGO "Polio Plus" and 23 organisations for people with disabilities are initiators of this law. The Law is a product of the 3-years work of the interparty parliamentary lobby group established in 2002. Following the 11 public debates, the Government of FYR Macedonia delegated the responsibility to the MLSP to establish a working group to jointly work with the initiators of the law on the advancement of the rights of the disabled to be stipulated within the proposed Law. At present, modifications and changes are being discussed between the MoLSP and Polio-plus on contentious issues. This is to be the first systemic law for persons with disabilities, as until now their needs were mostly regulated within other regulatory documents. That is to say that the law does not introduce new rights for people with disabilities, but respect for the existing rights and creation of conditions for equal opportunities and dignified life for this category of people.

3.6. Commissions established within the reform processes

See Good Practice Portfolio (Good Practice 2) in Annex 9 for details regarding the establishment of the Technical Working Group within the MoLSP to work on the preparation of the Deinstitutionalisation Strategy

Within the general and user group-led reforms within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) new commissions/offices were introduced to lead or assist in the implementation of the reform processes. Their mission and relevance to service planning is briefly described below.

Commission for Co-operation with the NGO Sector (regarding service provision). With the Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection in 2004 toward pluralism and service purchasing, MoLSP officially recognised its partners in the delivery of social services - NGOs. For the purposes of implementation of the anticipated changes in state financing for NGOs service delivery, a separate Commission for Co-operation with the NGO Sector was established within the MoLSP in 2005. As financing is granted only upon public tenders that specify the social service to be provided, the available budget and the time for implementation of the activity, the Commission for Cooperation with the NGO sector of the MoLSP reviews tender applications and decides upon the NGO which is to be approved funding (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 2004). The Commission is composed of 2 internal MoLSP representatives and 1 NGO representative. The delivery of social services mutually agreed upon, commences after a contract between the NGO and the MoLSP is signed. MoLSP informed that the selection criteria for the tender requirements are based on identification of the alternative forms of protection of socially excluded people who can be most suitably managed by the NGO, to allow for advancement of the quality of services and draw services closer to service beneficiaries.

Adoption Commission. With the changes in the LCA of the Family Law in 2004 in the domains of adoption, regulation of the relationships between parents and children, and partially in the domain of family violence, a Commission for Adoption, as an organ with primary jurisdiction for adoption, was established within the MoLSP. According to the opinions of the representatives from MoLSP involved in the assessment, the rationale for such legislative change to transfer the previously local jurisdiction for adoption to the central level is contributed to separation of the professional work carried out by the CSWs and the adoption process now in jurisdiction of the MoLSP based Commission. The LCA of the Family Law (2005) sets the criteria for the members of the Commission. It should be composed of 5
members (lawyer, pedagogue, psychologist and social worker - a must) assigned by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, for a 5 year mandate. Members should be recognised professionals with a minimum of 15 years of working experience (Family Law, 2005). (For additional info regarding adoption see Chapter on Community-based services).

**Office of the National Referral Mechanism.** In order to monitor and analyze human trafficking and illegal migration and to coordinate the activities of the relevant institutions in FYR Macedonia actively addressing the problems in this field, a National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration in FYR Macedonia was established in 2001 within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was to conduct the administrative work for the National Commission. The National Coordinator and members of the Commission are nominated upon proposal by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Customs under the Ministry of Finance, and Public Prosecutor’s Office. There is a separate subgroup for combating human trafficking in children established within the Commission.

Of key importance to the protection of victims of trafficking in FYR Macedonia was the establishment of the Office of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking (especially women and children) within the MoLSP in September 2005, with the financial support of the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje. The NRM office has a coordinative role in the process of providing and organizing the assistance and protection of trafficked victims through the 24 hours-per-day availability of the responsible persons from the NRM office, as well as the 24 hours-per-day accessibility of 58 social workers from 27 CSWs in FYR Macedonia. Target group are persons that are assumed to be victims of any of the forms of trafficking: sexual exploitation, forced labour or servitude, forced begging, slavery and illicit transplantation of human body parts (NRM, 2005). However, the NRM office is only a temporary, project-based body, employing 3 people as a staff paid by the project. As the project ends in December 2007, apart from the positive results of its implementation to date, sustainability of this body and its institutionalisation within the MoLSP is still under question.

### 3.7. Budgeting, costing and intergovernmental transfers

Reform issues concerning budgeting within the MoLSP relate predominantly to service purchasing, and changes in budget planning, to be discussed further on in this subchapter.

With the Law on Changes and Amendments on the Law on Social Protection (65/2004), the service purchasing based on the principle of pluralism was introduced. This principle refers to the possibilities for citizen's associations (NGOs) and individuals to become service providers. Besides NGOs, individuals and legal entities, as well as the units of local self-government may establish institutions for social protection (except for CSWs or institutions for protection of children and youth with educational, social, and behavioural problems), and day care centres. This was introduced to upgrade the quality of services in the domain of social protection through the introduction of the competitiveness in this domain (Spasovska S., 2005).

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6 Decision for Establishment of a National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration in FYR Macedonia, Official Gazette 18/2001
Unlike the changes related to the legal opportunities for individuals to perform social work practice, the reforms towards service purchasing are evidencing progress. The difficulty encountered in the previous year was linked to the insufficient financial means set aside annually from the MoLSP budget for service purchasing. According to the information provided by the MoLSP, in 2006, the MoLSP set aside 1,000,000 denars (16,129 Euro) and opened 2 tenders: 1) for establishment of National SOS Line for Victims of Family Violence (project implemented by the NGO Union of Women's Organisations) and 2) tender for 1 National SOS Line for Drug Abuse. However, the situation regarding available funding for service purchasing is gradually improving. Already for 2007, from the budget of the MoLSP the amount set aside for service purchasing was tripled to 3,000,000 denars (48,387) and 4 tenders are already opened. The continuation of this tendency of increased annual budgets for service purchasing is to be encouraged.

As for the changes towards budgeting on the basis of programming expenses, CSWs are now obliged to prepare annual programmes (which are mostly formal in character and are necessary for the purpose of budget planning) and monthly programmes for social assistance. This change took place with the introduction of a budget circular which CSWs have to fill in and submit it to the MoLSP. However, the purpose of this change was mainly to facilitate budget planning at the central level, as filling in budget circulars is not based on any actual assessment of needs, but rather based on approximations of the required monthly funds to cover social assistance entitlements envisaged in legislation.

Another characteristic of the budgeting system in FYR Macedonia which impedes more flexible and joint financing of reforms for which considerable changes in budgeting are required, is that the system does not allow for inter-sectoral transfers. Each Ministry, including the MoLSP prepares budget proposal for the following year, which is submitted to the Ministry of Finance. Proposals are then adopted by the Government and enter in Parliament procedures, although most often the budgets in the proposed amounts are not approved. In cases when budget shortages appear as a result of implementation of reform measures, rebalancing of the budget is undertaken, and these re-budgeting requests are usually accepted.

4. REORGANISATION OF STATUTORY SERVICES

See also Chapter 6 on Personnel for relevant info

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<td>Reforms concerning reorganisation of statutory services in FYR Macedonia are predominantly top-down. Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) with the changes in legislation, as well as innovations relevant to practice introduced through different projects financed by international organisation such as the World Bank, imply transfer of new responsibilities and tasks to the Centres for Social Work (CSWs). In addition, some of the reforms as described in the previous chapter are bottom-up results of lobbying by interested NGOs. All these create changes that relate to organisation and work within the CSWs, but no reform focuses on them, and this may have grave consequences in the future. There is a need to reorganise CSWs in a way that would enhance existing capacities (because of staff-shortages at present) and upgrade approaches in professional social work practice. However, some of the current reforms leaded to improvements in terms of upgrading the working conditions (ex. UNICEF/OSCE support for establishment of 15 offices for victims of trafficking, World Bank SPIL project and the planned enhancement of</td>
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the CSWs with IT technology and efficient system of administration of social benefits).
A challenge in terms of reorganisation of the CSW are possible changes of their status as public institutions with public jurisdiction, through transferring the juridical functions to the courts, which is at present only an idea with no concretisation.

4.1. Organisation of the CSWs

In FYR Macedonia there are 27 intermunicipal Centres for Social Work (CSWs), each covering the social protection needs of the population from several municipalities. CSWs are polyvalent institutions operating on territorial principle. The Intermunicipal Centre for Social Work (ICSW) in Skopje is the only CSW with 6 dispersed units of the Department for social work, in 6 municipalities in Skopje (territorial principle). The Intermunicipal Centre for Social Work in Skopje, functions based on the categorial principle of team work (combined teams of social workers, pedagogues, psychologists, lawyers and defectologists).

As a result of the lack of professional staff within the CSWs and their predominant occupation with the administration of the social assistance benefits, enhanced with the territorial organisation of their work, there is a pressing need to address the problem of overburdening of staff and the unavoidable reliance on crisis intervention. In addition to their traditional focus in professional work, child protection reforms entailed transfer of new responsibilities to CSWs (ex. family violence, victims of trafficking, child related family supplements) which were not accompanied by enhancement of CSWs in terms of staff. The interventions in this domain would not only contribute to the organisational improvements within the CSWs, but would also enable the engagement of staff on other types of professional activities and raising the quality of the services.

Most typical example illustrating the above state of affairs is related to the problems of children exposed to family violence. What is typical for protection of this category of children is that often only crisis intervention is applied, while the problem of family violence is not fully resolved. There are no counselling services within the CSWs, although professionals from CSWs provide the necessary counselling as part of their daily work with clients. This is also due to the fact that with the changes in the Family Law in 2004, a new chapter on family violence was added, transferring the responsibility for protection of this category of families/children to the CSWs, without enhancing CSWs with additional human resources. Moreover, with the LCA of the Criminal Code (2004) CSW is assigned as a social organ to be responsible for carrying out supervision over implementation of alternative measures "probation sentences with protective supervision" (LCA of the Criminal Code, 19/2004).

The administration of the financial supplements for child's rights (child supplement, special supplement and assistance for newborns) which in 2004, with the dismantling of the regional units of the MoLSP, was transferred to the CSWs, is yet another example. The previously employed staff in the local units of the MoLSP was simply transferred to the CSWs. According to the information provided by the MoLSP, this measure was introduced to provide for a higher quality of the professional work with families and the need to join administration of all financial benefits to families in one institution (CSWs), which enables and facilitates the insight into the total family income. However, transferring additional responsibilities related to financial allowances is by nature conflicting with the determination to enhance professional work within CSWs, and this may affect the course of the reorganisation and reforms of the CSWs in the near future.
However, as noted in the introduction to this chapter, changes have been made to improve the working conditions in CSWs. UNICEF and OSCE have financially supported the establishment and equipping of 15 Offices for specialised work with victims of trafficking within the CSWs that have infrastructural conditions (i.e. separate entrance) and that have expressed interest to establish such offices. Offices are not used for this only, but also for casework with other service beneficiaries.

Within the World Bank SPIL project (initiated in 2004), it is expected that by the end of 2008, new IT technology will be provided for every CSW and 3 software applications will be developed to advance the administration of the different social benefits within the CSWs. Within the integrated IT, CSWs will be linked to the MoLSP, Agency for Employment and other organs, partners in implementation of the social assistance. As a result of these reforms, a new Rulebook on evidence and documentation for service beneficiaries and professional work in the CSW will be developed.

In addition, the financial implications (prepared by MoLSP and ISA) pertinent to the adoption of the New Juvenile Justice Law, envisage equipping offices in all CSWs for specialised work with this category of children and purchasing 15 vehicles for the 27 CSWs. Staffing as a separate issue will be addressed after the entry into force of the new Law on Juvenile Justice. MoLSP plans to employ 53 additional staff to be engaged in separate departments within the CSWs on monitoring of the implementation of the passed down alternative measures.

4.2. Case work vs. case management

According to the Law on Social Protection - purified text (2006) in the implementation of the social protection and professional work, the Centres for Social Work (CSWs):
- identify, monitor and study the social phenomena and problems;
- apply and undertake appropriate forms of social protection and directly assist citizens, families and population groups;
- encourage and undertake preventive measures for anticipation and elimination of the root causes underlying social risks;
- develop and implement non-residential forms of social protection;
- administer programmes and other general acts in the domain of social protection, enacted and financed by the municipality, the city of Skopje and the municipalities in the city of Skopje;
- encourage, organise and coordinate voluntary engagement of citizens, citizen's associations, humanitarian organisations, organisations to be involved in implementation of social protection programmes on the territory of the municipality;
- develop plans and programmes for social protection;
- record and keep files on beneficiaries of social and family protection services, and report to the MoLSP;
- engage in other activities according to the law (Law on Social Protection purified text 2006).

In the implementation of the above activities, and most specifically in the direct service provision, CSWs in FYR Macedonia operate based on the traditional casework following the phases: case identification/referral, data gathering, assessment (anamnesis), social diagnosis, therapy/intervention, evaluation, termination/referral and follow-up. Due to staff-shortages and time-consuming administration of the social assistance benefits (as one of the services provided within the CSWs), less attention is
paid to the last 3 phases of case-work: evaluation, termination and follow-up. For the same reasoning, cooperation with the relevant stakeholders at the local level is insufficient, often formalised and limited to cases where contacts with other institutions/organisations are officially required. As a result, families or children with social problems are detected and enter the system of social protection belatedly, when curative measures are the only possible option to problem solving. According to the above outline of the CSWs activities envisaged by the Law on Social Protection - purified text (2006), social prevention is one of the services and measures of social protection CSWs should engage in. However, social prevention is overlooked in practice, while CSW are predominantly engaged in tertiary prevention activities. The underdeveloped social work practice within the educational institutions (kindergartens, primary, secondary schools - the field of school social work), contributes to this and seriously hinders primary prevention and early detection of risks among the children.

As noted above, the traditional casework is the dominant approach used by staff within the Centres for Social Work (CSWs). The case management practice which would turn professional practice of CSWs into more outreach work, has not been introduced yet, although there are many significant factors signalling the need for case management: deinstitutionalisation and movement to community-based care; decentralisation of social services; rise in client populations with significant problems in social functioning who require linking people to formal and informal resources in the community; fragmentation of state and local services and the growing concern with the cost-effectiveness of the existing ones. In particular, development of a client service plan, introduction of the service contract, placing more emphasis on client participation in service planning and enhancing skills and capacities for self-care, case conferencing and alike, are changes which are urgently required to improve practice.

Herein, The Institute for Social Activities (ISA) is the institution that has a role to play for advancement of social work practice within CSWs (See Chapter 2 on Governance System Map for details about ISA’s mandate). It regularly prepares methodological guidelines for professional work per user groups and organises training to CSWs for their implementation. However, the activities regarding staff training and continuing education in up to date working approaches (i.e. case management) are scarce.

Some limited changes in professional practice may be expected within the official adoption of the New Law on Social Protection (which is still in procedure). Representatives of the MoLSP involved in the assessment inform that the Law anticipates the involvement of the individual service plan and service contracting. A team of experts from the MoLSP, Institute for Social Work and Social Policy - Faculty of Philosophy, Institute for Social Activities and NGOs, were engaged on the preparation of the Law, which started at the end of 2006.

In addition, with the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Family Law (2004) and LCA of the Criminal Code (2004), a new set of responsibilities was transferred to CSWs regarding monitoring of the implementation of the passed down measures for protection of the family and the persons victims of family violence. In overall, apart from the difficulties encountered as a result of having to deal with another set of complex tasks within the CSWs, the reforms undertaken contributed to raising the awareness for the problem of family violence and the confidence in statutory institutions. In effect, a growing number of cases of violence have been reported and subsequently more measures of sanctioning passed down. According to the Annual report on family violence for 2006 of the MoLSP, 775 newly-evidenced cases of family violence had been dealt by the CSWs,
of which a total of 115 victims (60 women and 55 children) were protected in the Short Term Protective Shelters (STPSs) (MoLSP, 2006-a). Compared to 2006, in 2007 - 201 new cases of family violence have been registered, which is a substantial increase having in mind that the data are collected in mid 2007 and of 27 CSW even 8 have not submitted the mid-term reports on registered cases of family violence (MoLSP, 2007).

4.3. Administration within the CSWs

The administration within the Centres for Social Work (CSWs), which for years back impedes the quality of services provided by CSWs, is to be addressed within the aforementioned World Bank Spill Project, through its second component. The project envisages support for the policy framework for streamlined, cost-effective and better targeted cash benefits. It is expected that the implementation of this component of the project, which is directly related to the administration within the CSWs, will contribute to solving one of the oldest, long-lasting problems related to lack of recording and data-bases on service users within the CSWs (For further info regarding the SPIL project, see Chapter 8 on Material Assistance).

4.4. Services provided within the CSWs

Of particular concern for the Centres for Social Work (CSWs) is the counselling in which they engage in as one of the functions of the CSWs. There are no separated counselling services as organisational units within the CSWs that would specialise in professional work with different user groups. This additionally burdens the already heavy workload among staff.

As for the day care centres (DCCs) and the short-term protective shelters (STPSs), which are in fact one of the most significant positive achievements within the child protection reforms in the Country, at present they are organisational units within the CSWs. However, if we take into consideration that the CSWs are expected to play a rather different role in child protection, the current status of DCCs and STPSs may entail problems and hinder the reform process (For further details on the DCCs see the Heading 9 on Community-based Services).

4.5. Implications of EU Accession – possible future reform trends

A challenge regarding reorganisation of the Centres for Social Work (CSWs) is the possible change of their current status as public institutions with public jurisdiction. Representatives of the MoLSP informed that within the National Programme for Adoption of the EU legislation (See EU accession issues under Chapter on Planning and Decision Making above), it is expected that the public jurisdiction will be transferred to courts. However, concrete reforms have not been initiated yet in this direction, as their initiation in a certain way also depends and it is linked with the reforms in the justice system in FYR Macedonia.

5. DECENTRALISATION

Key conclusions
Initiated in 2004, the decentralisation in social protection is carried out in parallel with the decentralisation process in FYR Macedonia in general. Decentralisation mainly refers to municipalities' possible role as a funder and service provider of a variety of social protection services (residential and day care services). However, this is still not taking place in practice due to lack of administrative and financial resources at municipal level. In terms of the relationship between CSWs and municipalities, CSWs are obliged to administer municipal social protection programmes, but their role in planning is not envisaged within the legislation, although in practice this may be the case. Both CSWs and municipalities may establish mechanisms to ensure additional funding for these programmes. However, these developments are yet to take place.

5.1. Decentralisation reforms

The reforms regarding decentralisation in social protection were initiated and were carried out in parallel with the process of decentralisation of the local-self government in FYR Macedonia in general. The process was initiated in 2004 and was associated with the requirement to apply International Conventions and Recommendations for harmonisation with the EU legislation.

The Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection (65/04), enacted in package with the other decentralisation laws, substantiate the importance of the linkages and parallel development of the processes of decentralisation, deinstitutionalisation and pluralism. Decentralisation, however, was not wide-ranging in the domain of social protection. Effectively transferred jurisdiction to the municipalities was only in the domain of public social institutions for protection of the elderly and the transfer of the decision making upon the rights to housing of the social protection beneficiaries to the municipal organs, the city of Skopje and the municipalities in the city of Skopje (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 65/04).

5.1.1. The role of the municipalities

In the domain of the possibilities for implementation of the social protection, the LCA of the Law on Social Protection in 2004 envisages that municipalities may establish social protection institutions (residential services) (except for Centres for Social work - CSWs or institutions for residential treatment of children with educational, social and behavioural problems). This means that municipalities might provide funding and become owners and providers of services. At the same time, each local self-government unit may develop forms of non-residential protection of citizens through establishment of centres for daily and temporary protection depending on the local social needs of the citizens. The changes in the Law also anticipate that the municipality, the city of Skopje and the municipalities in the city of Skopje may organise social protection for the citizens through preparation of development programmes and other general social protection acts for persons with disabilities, children without parents, disabled children, children on the streets, children with educational problems, children of single parents, children in social risk, children - substance abusers, elderly. The practical application of this legal regulation means that each municipality should develop its own specific mechanisms for identification of the needs of the vulnerable population groups on their territories. The Development programmes would be used to operationalise the measures of social protection for citizens. (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 65/04). Herein, it should be emphasised that the Law does not envisage any specific obligation for CSWs to
participate in the preparation of these Development programmes, although in practice, CSWs and municipalities may engage in such co-operation.

5.1.2. The relationship between CSWs and municipalities

Within the legislative changes relative to the process of decentralisation in social protection, the relationship between the Centres for Social Work (CSWs) and municipalities is not characterised by imposing strict obligatory elements for co-operation. To enable participation of the local self-government in the functioning of the CSWs, the LCA of the Law on Social Protection (2004) envisages that:

- The Council of the Municipality at whose territory is the CSW may propose one member in the Management Board of the CSW;
- The Council of the Municipality may develop Programmes or any other general acts in the domain of social protection and provide for financial means for their implementation, while the CSWs is obliged to implement and administer these programmes or acts.
- The municipality may independently mobilise their own sources of funding for the programmes for social protection of citizens, above the level provided by the central government.

Likewise, CSW may establish a foundation for raising additional financial resources. The municipality delegates one of its members in the Management Board of the Foundation for joint disposal of the resources and the property of the Foundation used to address social protection needs of citizens (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 65/04).

With the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Child Protection (65/04) the decentralisation also encompassed transfer of the financial and organisational responsibility for kindergartens to municipalities.

5.2. Main obstacles for the reform

Although municipalities were encouraged to invest efforts to obtain own financial means from donations, gifts, legacies etc. for social programmes, to develop a system to inform citizens, to bring the importance of the social protection services closer to citizens and prepare them and invest in social protection of the citizens, due to the lack of the obligatory elements in the legislative regulations, this has not been sufficiently practiced.

The municipalities still haven't taken over the day care centres due to several reasons: in the first place, because there is no legislative obligation that municipalities "must" do so, but "may" do so, when they will be prepared for such undertaking; secondly, because of the lack of financial resources at the local self-government units; and also because the Day Care Centres (DCCs) are currently organisational units of the Centres for Social Work (CSWs) and not independent legal entities to be able to be transferred to municipalities (although this obstacle may be resolved with their re-registration). The belated process of fiscal decentralisation which is to be carried out as of July 2007 is another impediment to the effective decentralisation in social protection. It is expected that the existing DCCs will be decentralised and their financial operation taken over by 10 municipalities that will have a financially capacity to do so with the finalisation of the fiscal decentralisation in FYR Macedonia. Within the current decentralisation, only the kindergartens, homes for elderly and educational institutions have been decentralised. The preparation of the Programme for Decentralisation 2008-2010 is expected to further stimulate this process, although the preparation of this Programme has not commenced yet.
According to the MoLSP, while social assistance benefits will remain on the central level as non-transferable statutory social service, decentralisation of the professional work is likely to be expected. Furthermore, the legislative regulation that the municipalities "may" develop Programmes for Social Protection of Citizens has not resulted into actual encouragement for the municipalities to apply this legislative regulation in practice, as expected, although there was training delivered to municipalities to prepare them for such undertaking. Only a small number of municipalities have already developed Social Protection Programmes, although their actual implementation is still questionable. It seems that most of the municipalities still lack, apart from financial, administrative capacity to face this challenge. In addition, the municipalities where DCCs are established haven't taken over the responsibilities for them (due to the lack of obligatory elements within the law).

6. PERSONNEL ISSUES

Key conclusions
Institute for Social Activities (ISA) is mandated to take an important lead role in all personnel issues (training, regulation etc). However, the training is usually based on the formalised Rulebooks and Methodological Instructions for professional work with particular user groups. In addition to this, a number of training programmes were conducted within particular reform projects carried out by UNICEF and other local and international NGOs (in cooperation with ISA). The main issue, however, refers to severe understaffing in social and child protection, particularly in the Centres for Social Work (CSWs). The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) plans to employ 53 new staff following entry into force of the New Law on Juvenile Justice. In parallel, the status of the staff in the DCCs is to be regulated. As for the staff employed within residential institutions, reform efforts in terms of deinstitutionalisation have been mostly directed towards restructuring of the residential institutions, which is why personnel issues are not identified as problematic in this reform process, or at least - not yet.

6.1. Professional capacity development within the current reform efforts
In principle, the Institute for Social Activities (ISA) is responsible for identification of training needs, organisation and delivery of training to personnel from Centres for Social Work (CSWs) and social institutions. However, the training offered to personnel rarely goes beyond training for actual implementation in practice of the Rulebooks (official regulatory documents regularly prepared by the MoLSP, establishing the rules and criteria for opening and functioning of social institutions, published in the Official Gazette of R.M) and the Methodological Instructions for professional work with different user groups.

Most extensively in the course of 2005, the Community Development Project - Social Investment Fund within the Ministry of Finance and supported by the World Bank - IDA, organised series of training events to prepare municipalities and municipal personnel for the transfer of responsibilities in the domain of social protection (DCCs in the first phase). Training projects related to social protection, preparation of Social Protection Programmes, Action Plans and the process of decentralisation in general.
Otherwise, each of the reforms which entail implementation and changes in the professional work with service beneficiaries within the CSWs and in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders, is usually followed with training delivered to personnel. More intensively after 2000, training in different themes per user groups was delivered to the staff of the CSWs alone, or jointly with stakeholders of relevance for professional work with the specific user groups. Training is most often financially supported by UNICEF or other external organisations. ISA usually participates in the training. In addition, ISA’s personnel are often engaged and participate in a capacity of trainers. Further in the text we highlight most important training events in chronological order and point out training gaps as identified by the MoLSP representatives during the assessment.

Most extensive and frequent training was organised in regards to social protection of children with disabilities. Differentiated training was delivered to professionals from the CSWs and staff from DCCs supported by UNICEF in cooperation with EducAid and ISA. In cooperation with UNICEF, the NGO EducAid implemented a training project to strengthen the capacity of local professionals in social services and enable them to independently develop a methodology for care services in the Country. The approach was based on the Italian experience, which is recognised as one of the most advanced and successful models of de-institutionalisation. Policy makers, university professors and staff from the social services, DCCs and elementary schools participated in study tours to Italy and UK, where they visited community based care projects showing the social and economic benefits of de-institutionalisation. To allow the discharge of children from Demir Kapija Institute, the CSWs identified eligible families interested in fostering children with disabilities, also providing information, training and support to these communities. The ISA, with support of UNICEF, provided training to the CSWs professional teams working on foster care. At the same time, UNICEF supported the National Association of Social Workers to establish self-help groups and to train foster families on improved care practices.

In addition, through UNICEF support, a number of trainings and study visits were organized to strengthen the knowledge and skills of a wide range of professionals working with children in conflict with the law (judges, public prosecutors, police officers, social workers and representatives from the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Police Academy) and to introduce the new system of alternative measures.

The MoLSP through the UNICEF support and utilisation of foreign expertise, delivered specialised training to CSWs, municipalities and police personnel (70 trainees were targeted) for professional work with children victims of trafficking, development of skills for interviewing a child-victim of violence and establishment of co-ordination between existing services.

Irrespective of the fact that there is training in place (most of it initiated and supported by UNICEF), there are some training gaps pointed out by the representatives of the MoLSP, where further training efforts should be directed. With the reforms in the domain of transferring professional work with the victims of family violence to the CSWs, there is an evident need for capacity building of the personnel for professional work with this category of children. Training in advanced professional work with children without parents and parental care is also considered necessary.
6.2. Employment status of personnel in child protection

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) for assessment purposes, the reforms regarding introduction of changes relative to the employment status of personnel are linked to the regulation of the status of the employees within the day care centres (DCCs) and the plans for new staff to be employed within CSWs with the reforms of the system of juvenile justice in FYR Macedonia.

In addition, due to the positive results of the functioning of the DCCs there is an initiative to regulate the employment status of the staff in all 18 DCCs which are currently engaged on a contractual basis with the CSWs. In total, 121 employees are at present engaged in the DCCs (for disabled children, for substance abusers, for children on the streets), plus 5 employees in the DCC in Kriva Palanka who have a regular status of employees and are paid by the MoLSP. MoLSP is already in process of arranging the regulation of the status of these 121 employees from the DCCs as full time employees with the Agency for Employment of FYR Macedonia.

The Institute for Social Activities and the MoLSP have prepared financial implications pertinent to the adoption of the New Law on Juvenile Justice which is still in procedure in the Parliament, wherein employment of 53 professional workers within the CSWs is anticipated. The newly employed would work in separate departments within the CSW assigned the tasks of supervision of passed down alternative measures (See Chapter 4 on Reorganisation of Statutory Services for further details).

As for the staff employed within residential institutions, reform efforts in terms of deinstitutionalisation have not been directed towards closing down of institutions, but rather their restructuring, which is why personnel issues are not identified as problematic in this reform process to a considerable extent. However, the Deinstitutionalisation Strategy (which is currently under preparation by the MoLSP) is expected to also address budgets and staff (re)deployment needs based on plans for gradual transformation of public institutions.

6.3. Staff shortages in CSWs

In FYR Macedonia, a country of a total of 2,022,547 citizens, there are 27 intermunicipal centres for social work (CSWs) covering 84 municipalities, the city of Skopje and the municipalities in the city of Skopje. CSWs are predominantly organised territorially which may come under question in regards to future reform pathways. Even in such a situation, CSWs face serious understaffing. Namely, within the 27 CSWs in FYR Macedonia, 210 social workers are employed. Of them, 54 social workers are employed only in the city of Skopje with 506,926 citizens. Hence, the number of citizens per social worker in FYR Macedonia would be 9,631 citizens, while in the capital city 9,387 citizens per social worker. This is way above the standards in the neighbouring countries on the Balkans (ex. Croatia with 5,352 citizens per social worker in the country and 4,122 in the capital city; Serbia with 8,237 citizens per social worker in the country and 8,198 in the capital city), needless to compare with the international standards (Bornarova S., 2006).

In addition, although the Law on Social Protection - purified text (2006) specifies that a CSW may be established only if it employs the following professionals at minimum: social worker, psychologist, pedagogue or special pedagogue and lawyer, there are CSWs in FYR Macedonia which fail to live up to this minimum requirement concerning personnel. Subsequently, the lack of personnel
adversely affects the professional work and entails inability to provide for the quality of services.

The fact that within the CSWs there is no Counselling Service as separate organisational unit of the CSWs, but counselling is offered as one of the many other functions of the CSWs, adds to the already heavy case load of the professionals.

The preparation of updated standards for services within the CSWs (which is a mandate of ISA and are currently being developed) is expected to contribute to the regulation of the practice in terms of case loads (See Chapter 7 on Gatekeeping for further info on Standardisation of social services).

The administration of the financial benefits for families with children (child supplement, special supplement and assistance for newborns) in 2004, with the dismantling of the regional units of the MoLSP, was transferred to the CSW. The previously employed in the local units of the MoLSP, were also transferred to the CSWs.

However, the only considerable change and enhancement of staff within the CSWs is expected to take place with the employment of the 53 professional staff after the enactment of the Juvenile Justice Law.

7. GATEKEEPING AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL

Key conclusions
The Macedonian system of social protection is still in the initial phase regarding the development of the gate keeping mechanisms. Herein, it should be emphasised that gatekeeping at local level is practically non-existent, as regulation of the local social services follows the top-down approach. Namely, social inspection, standardisation of services and licensing are all positioned at the central level of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP). The social inspection was introduced within the legislation in 2005, while the Social Inspection Department within MoLSP started functioning in the beginning of 2007. In addition, up-dated standards that are of key importance for the management, advancement and raising the quality of the social work practice in CSWs are not developed yet by the Institute for Social Activities that is mandated to prepare them (CSWs currently operate guided by obsolete standards that date back in 1981).

As for the licensing, MoLSP is the institution in charge for issuing licences for establishment of social protection institutions (for all but CSWs and institutions for children in conflict with the law), DCCs, legal entities and individual providers of social services. However, the New Law on Social Protection anticipates establishment of a Chamber for Social Activities that would take over the liability regarding licensing of professionals working within the social protection institutions.

In parallel, a rights-based approach to child protection is not applied. Hence, there are institutions that could potentially support the appeal cases in child protection, but their activities in this respect are not highly visible and systematic.

7.1. Initiation of the inspection process
The reforms regarding gatekeeping at national and local level were mainly initiated by the processes of harmonisation of the Macedonian with the EU legislation. The social inspection was introduced within the Macedonian social legislation with the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social

a) The social inspection was officially introduced with the *LCA of the Law on Social Protection* (62/2005). Social inspection is envisaged for supervision of the legitimacy of work of the CSWs, social institutions, legal entities and individuals - service providers, under the jurisdiction of the MoLSP. The supervision is to encompass: compliance, implementation and obedience to the Law on Social Protection and other laws and by-laws regulating social protection activities. In addition, the social inspection should monitor if CSWs and social institutions meet the prescribed conditions in terms of facilities, equipment and professional staff (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 62/2005).

Based on the above changes and amendments in the LCA of the Law on Social Protection (2005), a Department for Social Inspection was established within the MoLSP, which became operational as of 1st of January 2007. Within the Department, 13 inspectors are engaged (9 from Skopje, 2 from Bitola and 2 from Shtip). The Law stipulates that the inspection may be executed by inspectors, higher inspectors and other public officials from the MoLSP, authorised for inspection purposes. The inspector may only be a person who meets the following conditions: high education, status of a public administrator and passed public administration exam, and at least 3 years of working experience acquired after the exam (5 years of working experience for the higher inspectors) (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 62/2005).

b) Following the introduction of the social inspection within the LCA of the Law on Social Protection in 2005, The *Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Child Protection* (113/2005) also introduces a new chapter for inspection over the execution of the law and other by-laws regulating child protection, over the legitimacy of operation of the institutions for children and other legal entities and individuals performing activities in the domain of care and upbringing of children. MoLSP is the accountable institution for carrying out of the inspection. However, given the existing process of decentralisation in social protection and the specific role of the municipality for the protection of children, the Law appoints inspection responsibilities to municipalities. Namely, the major of the municipality from the municipal or the city administration may designate a person to be engaged as inspector (LCA of the Law on Child Protection, 2005).

7.2. Licensing of service providers

The process of licensing in social protection in FYR Macedonia is lagging behind. At present, licences for establishment and functioning of the social protection institutions (for all except for the CSW and institutions for children in conflict with the law) and of the DCCs are issued by the MoLSP. The only reform initiative that was identified during the assessment concerns the advancement of the licensing mechanisms. Namely, the New Law on Social Protection (which is still under preparation, expected to enter the first phase in Governmental procedure in June 2007) anticipates establishment of a Chamber for Social Activities that would take over the liability regarding licensing of professionals working within the social protection institutions, currently managed by the MoLSP. In 2007 MoLSP issued a licence for establishment of the first private DCC for children with disabilities "Dzundzule". The establishment of this private DCC was approved by the Government of FYR Macedonia, and it is an evidence of the gradual privatisation of social services in the Country.
Licensing is also linked to the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection (65/2004), which allows both citizen's associations and individuals to engage in social service delivery. The individual would have to obtain a license from the MoLSP to be able to engage in social service provision. This was instituted to stimulate self-employment among the interested individuals. However, the actual implementation of this legislative regulation has not come to pass in practice yet. As for the citizen's associations, the reforms anticipate government funding for NGOs to perform social protection activities through service purchasing and contracting with the MoLSP, on the basis of predetermined procedures and criteria. Entitled to funding from the MoLSP for implementation of social protection programmes are only those NGOs registered within the Registry of Citizen's Association at the MoLSP (a total of 28 NGOs had registered in the period from 2005-2007). To be allowed to register, the NGO must meet the following criteria prescribed by law: activity in the domain of social protection in a period of at least 3 years from the day of the establishment of the NGO; at least 3 implemented projects in the domain of social protection; appropriate infrastructural facilities and cadres; a proof of the economic and financial flows of the NGO; a proof on payment of taxes issued by the Department of Public Incomes (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 65/2004).

7.3. Standardisation of social services

Currently, CSWs and the social protection institutions operate on the basis of norms and standards enacted back in 1981. The process of preparation of updated norms and standard is an ongoing responsibility of the Institute for Social Activities (ISA). ISA informs that the new standards concerning required staff, technical and infrastructural conditions within the CSWs and social institutions, are currently being developed. These standards are of key importance for the regulation, advancement and raising the quality of the social services in the Country.

Additionally, Rule-books establishing norms and standards for establishment and operation of social institutions (which are subsequently announced in the Official Gazette of FYR Macedonia), are already developed by the MoLSP. Rule-books are available for the day care centres (DCCs) for children with disabilities, children on the streets and children - substance abusers, as well as for the short term protective shelters (STPSs) for victims of family violence.

7.4. Appeal system

As already pointed out, the CSWs are institutions with public jurisdiction. CSWs have primary jurisdiction to act and decide upon the rights of social protection envisaged within the law. The MoLSP is a secondary organ which acts upon citizen's complaints. The third level within the appeal system is the judicial court protection. Charges in jurisdictional disputes are lodged before the Executive Court of FYR Macedonia, which is currently under establishment.

Herein, we should emphasise that throughout the assessment, key stakeholders noted that children’s rights in FYR Macedonia are frequently breached (in media in particular). In parallel, a rights-based approach to child protection is not applied. Hence, there are institutions that support the appeal cases in child protection (i.e. Ombudsman Office, Free Legal Aid, Citizen’s Associations Protecting the rights of different user groups), but their activities in this respect are not highly visible and systematic.
8. MATERIAL ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Key conclusions
In FYR Macedonia the material assistance for children and families is regulated within two key laws: the Law on Social Protection and the Law on Child Protection. The key reforms within the Law on Social Protection in the part of social assistance concern children coming of age (18). In 2005, this category of children was introduced as a separate category entitled to social assistance, in addition to their previous entitlement to temporary financial allowance. At the same time, the right to assistance in housing (assistance in covering rental and maintenance expenses) was also envisaged for this category of children, up to 26 years of age. For the families looking after a disabled person, the right to one-off financial allowance (in amount to 1 average monthly salary) was introduced to encourage families to continue to care for the disabled family member and thus avoid institutionalisation.

Reforms towards "means-testing" regarding social assistance benefits and improvements in administration of these benefits are currently taking place within the World Bank SPIL project.

As for the child supplements regulated within the Law on Child Protection, key reforms relate to the introduction of the upper limit for the amount of the child supplement and introduction of the system of calculation of the financial assistance for the newborn depending on the average monthly income of the applicant (meaning that not every family will be eligible to receive this assistance). In addition, the new Law on Child Protection anticipates reforms in the system geared towards more equitable distribution of the rights (especially of the right to child supplement and participation) towards the poorest families and children with the highest risk of social exclusion.

In FYR Macedonia the material assistance for children and families is regulated within two key laws: the Law on Social Protection and the Law on Child Protection. There are reforms in both Laws, and they are to be elaborated separately below. In overall, the reforms regarding the administration of the social assistance benefits (regulated within the Law on Social Protection) were largely initiated by the SPIL project supported by the World Bank loan. However, there are reforms regarding the entitlement to social assistance allowances (Law on Social Protection) and reforms in the rights to child supplements (Law on Child Protection) which are separate initiatives from the SPIL project. These reforms originate from the practice and the need to advance the protection of specific vulnerable categories of children (i.e. social assistance for children coming out of age) or to make child supplement benefits available to the most needy families (targeting of child supplements).

8.1. Social assistance benefits - Law on Social Protection
See Also Chapters 3 and 4 on Planning and Reorganisation of Statutory Services

8.1.1. Current rights and reform efforts

8 See Annex 7 for information regarding social services, finances and budgets
The Law on Social Protection - purified text (2006) anticipates the rights to: social prevention, non-residential care, residential care and social assistance. The right to social assistance encompasses:
- permanent financial allowance for persons incapable to work and in social risk
- social financial allowance for persons capable to work and in social risk
- right to personal assistance allowance
- right to health protection
- wage supplement for shortened working hours due to care for physically and mentally disabled child
- one-off financial allowance or assistance in kind
- right to housing and
- financial allowance for persons who had had a status of children without parents and parental care up to 18 years of age (Law on Social Protection-purified text, 2006).

The Table 1 below contains data on the actual rights, average monthly amounts and number of beneficiaries of social assistance benefits in 2006.

**Table 1. Social assistance benefits, average monthly amounts and number of beneficiaries in 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social assistance benefits</th>
<th>Average monthly number of beneficiaries</th>
<th>Average monthly amount per beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social financial assistance</td>
<td>64.749</td>
<td>2.154 den. (35 €)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal assistance allowance</td>
<td>21.499</td>
<td>3.390 den. (55 €)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent financial allowance</td>
<td>4.988</td>
<td>3.046 den. (49 €)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage allowance for shortened working hours due to care for disabled child</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6.590 den. (107 €)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-off financial allowance</td>
<td>1.139</td>
<td>2.080 den. (34 €)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial assistance for children coming out of age (18-26)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>3.567 den. (58 €)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: MoLSP, 2006-b, Review of data on social assistance benefits*

The most significant reforms in terms of the social assistance benefits relate to the categories of children coming of age (18) and disabled children, to be elaborated in more detail below:

With the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection (2005) the **persons over 18 years of age** who had had a status of children without parents and parental care, are introduced as a separate category of social assistance beneficiaries, in addition to their previous entitlement to temporary financial allowance. They are entitled to this right up to 26 years of age, given that they do not obtain income on any basis. The amount of the financial allowance for children coming out of age is 25% of the average monthly net salary per worker in FYR Macedonia effectuated in the previous year. The amount of the financial allowance for those children in regular schooling is 35% of the same basis (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 2005).

In addition, the LCA of the Law on Social Protection (2005) envisages the right to housing for this category of children. The conditions for effectuation of this right were subsequently prescribed within the Rule-book for the Criteria and Procedures for Effectuation of the Right to Housing for Persons Without Parents and Parental Care (58/06), prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.
(MoLSP). The assistance in housing anticipates the possibility for the CSWs to rent apartments and pay for the rental expenses (up to 3,000 denars or 50 Euro) and maintenance expenses (electricity, water-supply, heating) for children up to 26 years of age, fully or partially, depending on their employment status. However, this regulatory change which was introduced to assist in solving the housing problems typical for this category of children, is nevertheless only a passive measure, as after 26 years of age children are again left on their own. Because of the financial allowance they are entitled to from 18-26 years of age, some of them are de-motivated to work, while the others are compelled to hide income obtained at the black market.

Changes were also introduced regarding the **physically and intellectually disabled children** within the LCA of the Law on Social Protection in 2005. The right to one-off financial allowance in amount to 1 average monthly salary (meaning that this may be approved each month) was introduced for parents who look after persons with moderate and severe disabilities. However, this legislative reform whose aim was to motivate families to continue to look after the disabled family members, has not revealed any significant results yet, as many of the families are not even informed about the existing entitlement.

### 8.1.2 Social assistance benefits - reforms towards "means-testing"

The Social Protection Implementation Project (SPIL), supported by a World Bank loan, which commenced in 2004 with anticipated duration until the end of 2008, initiated the most significant changes in the domain of improved administration and targeting of the social financial assistance. Reform processes concerning social assistance are also largely associated with the synchronization of the Macedonian with the EU legislation, and through the method of coordination, with the other systems as well.

In summary, the objectives of the SPIL for FYR Macedonia are to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of social protection system through improved administration and long-term sustainability of the pension system and improved targeting and administration of cash benefits. Of relevance to this assessment is the Component 2 of this project that comprises support for the policy framework for streamlined, cost effective and better targeted cash benefits, implementation of local social planning and deinstitutionalization of social work services, establishment of inspection, supervision and quality assurance functions, information management systems and IT capacity strengthening.

MoLSP informs that the New Law on Social Protection (whose preparation is partially influenced by the SPIL project) anticipates reforms of the system of financial allowance in the direction of "means-testing". Social assistance would target families (not households, as presently), anticipating lower amounts of the assistance in cases when several families live in one household, and introduction of supplements to the amount of social assistance depending on the number of children in the families. However, making the family and not the household entitled to social assistance is expected to result in an increase of the social assistance beneficiaries, rather than a reduce in their number, which is inconsistent with the overall objective to introduce the principle of targeting in social assistance benefits.

### 8.2. Assistance to families with children - Law on Child Protection

The Law on Child Protection, envisages the following rights: 1) child supplement; 2) special supplement; 3) assistance for newborns and 4) participation in
covering expenses for protection, education, rest and recreation of children in public institutions for children or seasonal resorts (Law on Child Protection, 98/2000). Reforms are in place concerning all of the entitlements. With the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Child Protection (17/03) an upper limit for the amount of the child supplement was introduced (16% of the average salary). A ceiling of 32% of the average salary was also introduced for single parents. The total monthly amount of the child supplement reimbursed to the parent must not exceed 1,800 denars (30 Euro). As regards the right to special supplement, with the Changes and Amendments of the LCA of the Law on Child Protection (17/03) another regulation was added stipulating that for the child who remains incapable to work, permanently and fully, or for a period longer than a year, the parent is entitled to special supplement during the persistence of the disability, at maximum until the child is 18 years of age. The assistance for newborns was initially provided to parents for the first born child in a form of a baby-package (Law on Child Protection, 98/2000). With the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Child Protection (65/2004) the baby-package was replaced with a financial assistance for the first born child as one-off payment to the family in the same amount as previously (25% of the average salary in FYR Macedonia paid in the first half of the previous year). Again, the Law on changes and amendments of the Law on Child Protection (113/2005) envisage that the amount of the financial assistance for the newborn will be calculated and determined depending on the average monthly income of the applicant (meaning that all families are no longer eligible to receive this assistance).

Considerable change relates to the right to participation for protection, education, rest and recreation of children. Namely, with the Decision to Sell Immovable Property of Seasonal Resorts (Official Gazette, 85/05) and in accordance with the Law on Utilisation and Possession of Real Estate of Governmental Organs, the children’s resorts are currently for sale under procedures determined with the positive legal regulations. According to the MoLSP, to some extent this is a result of the insufficient cooperation between the MoLSP and the Ministry of Education in terms of organisation of scientific excursions for school children, for which the resorts were predominantly used in the past.

The Programme for Child Protection for 2007, which is an annual programme prepared on regular basis, also informs on the future pathways in child protection in FYR Macedonia. The latest changes of the Law on Protection of Children (still under preparation) anticipate reforms in the system of child supplement geared towards more equitable distribution of the rights (especially of the right to child supplement and participation) towards the poorest families and children with the highest risk of social exclusion. This reform which aims to improve targeting of financial assistance, is in line with the Programme of the Government of FYR Macedonia for the period 2006-2010 and linked to the National Poverty Reduction Strategy. Also, in accordance with the process of harmonisation with the EU legislation and compliance to the Conventions protecting the Rights of Children, the new Law on Child Protection foresees regulations for protection of children against any type of violence, as well as integration of the regulations in line with the EU Council Directive 2000/43/EU in terms of implementation of the principle of equal treatment of people regardless of their race or ethnical origin. The Programme for Child Protection also envisages continuation of the support to the World Bank SPIL project which is expected to improve administration and facilitate the data procession in the part of child supplement rights (MoLSP, 2007).
## Key conclusions

The reform process geared towards the development of community based services is linked to the processes of decentralisation and deinstitutionalisation. Of the family support services, apart from the widely accessible legal aid and psycho-social support within the Centres for Social Work (CSWs), Day Care Centres (DCCs) and other relevant institutions, home-based care is not present at all, while day-care protection evidenced a rapid development after 2004. At present, in FYR Macedonia there are 18 DCCs for children with special needs, 4 DCCs for children - substance abusers, 1 DCC for children on the streets (additional one is in phase of establishment).

As regards the family substitute services, it still seems that there is a strong reliance on residential protection of children. Since the Law on Changes and Amendments of the Law on Social Protection in 2004 (when the categories of street children, substance abusers, homeless and victims of family violence were recognised as user groups entitled to non-residential protection), 6 Short Term Protective Shelters (STPSs) for victims of family violence and 1 STPS for homeless persons were established as organisational units of the CSW. However, children are only secondary beneficiaries of these short-term protective services. The MoLSP through service purchasing with the NGO sector have contracted 6 DCC for Disabled Persons and 1 DCC for Children on the Streets. During the same period, the foster care has been used more frequently than before. On the contrary, kinship care is non-existent while guardianship is not paid for. In effect, simply to be able to financially assist kinship families who are guardians to children, foster families are sometimes kinship families. There are also reforms in the domain of adoption related to the subsequent establishment of the Adoption Commission within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP). The future reforms in community-based services are linked to the intention of the MoLSP, in cooperation with UNICEF, to introduce a new type of family substitute service: group homes for children.

Development of the community-based services is one of the most significant reform achievements in child protection in FYR Macedonia. The reforms towards community-based services were predominantly initiated by UNICEF after 2000, and effectively supported by the MoLSP. An evidence of the MoLSP determination to facilitate the process of providing community-based care is the Law on Changes and Amendments on the Law on Social Protection (65/2004), which allows both NGOs and individuals to become service providers (See chapters 3 and 7 on Service Planning and Gatekeeping). For NGOs this legislative change introduced the possibility to provide the following social services: home-based care; day care; education, counselling and vocational training to persons in social risk; counselling and training to volunteers; social prevention activities; research of social phenomena and other social activities. For individuals, the changes introduced the possibility to deliver the following professional activities: counselling services (if the individual has a minimum high education in one of the following educational profiles: social worker, psychologist, pedagogue or lawyer and at least 5 years working experience on

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9 See Governance and service map per user groups in Annex 8
relevant social protection activities), home care and assistance to individuals and families, as well as foster care (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 2004).

Within the same LCA of the Law on Social Protection (2004), in addition to the right to non-residential protection in day care, the right to temporary care was introduced, which also pushed forwards the reforms. The user groups entitled to day care within the Law on Social Protection from 1997 (only elderly and disabled adults and children), were supplemented with the following user groups: street children, drug abusers, alcohol abusers. For the homeless and the victims of family violence, also appearing for the first time as a user group within the Law, day care and temporary non-residential protection were envisaged (LCA of the Law on Social Protection 2004).

9.1. Family support services  

In the recent years (from 2000 to date) FYR Macedonia has invested in the development of community-based services for different categories of children. Of the family support services, legal aid and psycho-social support are either directly, or as a service provided to the families, available to all categories of children within the Centres for Social Work (CSWs), Day Care Centres (DCCs), Short Term Protective Shelters (STPSs), Mental Health Institutes etc.

Quite the opposite of the previous services, home-based care services for children are non-existent. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) informs that through the support of the German Association for Technical Assistance (GTZ), there are plans for establishment of mobile teams (patronage services) in close cooperation with the health sector, to serve families of children with disabilities. However, it is uncertain and under question if and when exactly this might take place.

Most significant achievement is the development of the day care, which was initially intended only for children with disabilities and elderly (Law on Social Protection, 1997). With the Law on changes and amendments of the Law on Social Protection in 2004, the entitlement to day-care (as a form of non-residential protection) was also extended to: street children, drug abusers, alcohol abusers, homeless and the victims of family violence (LCA of the Law on Social Protection, 2004). Since 2002 to date, day care centres are established as organisational units of the CSWs for several categories of children with disabilities, children exposed to violence and/or neglect, and substance abusers.

Table 2. Type and number of family support services and beneficiaries in 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of services</th>
<th>Number of family support services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Care Centre for Children with Moderate and Severe Disabilities</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Care Centre for Substance Abusers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Care Centre for Children on the Streets</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MoLSP, 2006-c, Data on type and number of family support services and beneficiaries in 2006

The 18 Day Care Centres (DCCs) for disabled children functioning under the responsibility of the MoLSP are in line with this approach to child care. Starting in

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10 See Table 2 below for type and number of existing family support services in FYR Macedonia
2002, 17 DCCs for children with moderate and severe disability and 1 DCC for children with cerebral palsy were established throughout FYR Macedonia: in Kriva Palanka, Tetovo, Prilep, Veles, v. Manastirec, Delcevo, Bitola, Skopje-3, Kichevo, Shtip, Kavadarci, Gostivar, Kumanovo, Probištip, Berovo and Gevgelija (Kunovska E., 2007). The DCCs were initially intended to target children with disabilities (5-18 years of age). However, in practice, even persons above 26 years of age are accepted as beneficiaries of the services. This was further enhanced with the enactment of the Rulebook for this type of DCCs (2006) wherein no age limit is specified. The Rulebook also regulates the envisaged number of service users per day centre, which is 25 at maximum. According to the information provided by the MoLSP, by the end of 2007, 3 additional DCCs will be established (in Vinica, Resen and Krushevo). The DCCs are functioning as organisational units of the CSW, are thus managed by professionals, and are considered as an integral part of community-based care services offered within the Macedonian social welfare system.

In addition, apart from the existing DCC for children on the streets in the municipality in K. Voda (established in 2005), a DCC in the municipality of G. Petrov is to be opened. The municipality of G. Petrov will participate with provision of infrastructural facilities and equipping. Within these DCCs, children are primary beneficiaries of services. Services are also directed towards professional work with parents, although the results of such efforts to involve parents are insignificant.

In FYR Macedonia there are also 7 DCCs for substance abusers. Two of these are established by the MoLSP (in Ohrid in 2004 and in Kumanovo in 2005). The third DCC is established in Strumica in 2005 and it's a joint project of the MoLSP and the Ministry of Health (MH). After 2005, 4 additional DCCs have been established by the MH.

Children in conflict with the law are predominantly placed in residential institutions when such a measure is passed down. Within the Criminal Code, in the part devoted to Educational Measures, one of them anticipates referral to Resocialisation Centre for Juveniles. Although the legislative measure is in place and the Institute for Social Activities (ISA) prepared Guidelines with Norms regarding the functioning of such a centre, in FYR Macedonia Resocialisation Centres for Juveniles are not established yet.

As for the non-statutory initiatives in the protection of children, it is important to note the Centre for Children's Artistic Expression, Musical therapy and Psycho-physical Relaxation "Dzundzule", which is a citizens association established in 2001 in Skopje. This Association, after obtaining a licence by the MoLSP, opened the first private DCC for children with disabilities in 2007, whose establishment was approved by the Government of FYR Macedonia.

Additional evidence of the increased co-operation between the MoLSP and the NGO sector, is the DCC for children in the streets in the municipality of Shuto Orizari established in January 2006 in Skopje by the NGO "Association for Protection of the Rights of Children". This DCC was opened through project support by the World Bank, but after the project ended (in September 2006), in order to provide for the sustainability of its functioning, the MoLSP and the municipality of Shuto Orizari supported the continuation of its activities through provision of short-term financial assistance.

Furthermore, the 2 public kitchens established within the Orthodox Church in Skopje for the poor population in general, are resources of assistance and support in kind for children too. The MoLSP informs on its plan to establish 14 public kitchens throughout FYR Macedonia in cooperation with CSWs and the local self-government units.
9.2. Family substitute services

Except for the kinship care, most of the family substitute services are used for protection of children in FYR Macedonia. However, the absence of the kinship care entails problems in social service delivery. As guardianship is not remunerated, and usually relatives are those who are assigned the responsibility to look after children, it happens that they are registered as foster parents, all in order to financially assist them. This is in contrary to the law which stipulates that the foster family should not be a kinship family.

Foster care exists within the Macedonian social legislation in the Law on Social Protection (1997) for the following categories: children without parents; educationally neglected, abused, socially insecure children and children with behavioural problems, disabled persons and elderly. Thus, foster care has been regularly practiced as a form of protection of children, although after 2000, with the initiation of the deinstitutionalisation reforms, foster care has been promoted and used for protection of disabled children more than it used to be. However, segregated data for this category of children within the category of children in foster care in general, is not available in the past and present data-bases, to be able to compare and support this tendency recognized in practice. For the foster parents, irrespective of whether they are accommodating a disabled or a healthy child, the Centres for Social Work (CSWs) organise regular group training events. The purpose of these events is mainly to prepare and introduce them with the tasks and obligations originating from their future status of foster parents. However, there is a difference in the monthly allowance paid to foster families depending on the category of children entitled to foster care. The allowance is reimbursed on 2 bases: the allowance to cover accommodation expenses and the allowance for care. Whilst for the allowance to cover accommodation expenses there is no significant difference among categories of children, the allowance for care is lowest for the children without parents and parental care in pre-school age (10% of the average monthly salary in RM) and highest for the persons with disabilities: 14.15% for persons with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities; 16% for persons with profound intellectual disabilities; and 16% for persons with permanent physical disability (Rulebook on the Criteria for Selection of Foster Families, 2006). It is important to note that foster care is rarely if never used as a form of protection of children in conflict with the law, as it requires special training to foster families due to the fact that they will have to deal with a specific category of children, often with multiple problems (drug or alcohol addiction, antisocial behavior, aggression, mental disabilities). In addition, specialised foster care (with foster parents as experienced professionals) is non-existent.

The Rulebook on the Criteria for Selection of Foster Families (2006), apart from the minimum age of 18, introduces the upper age limit for a foster parent, which is 65 years of age. As the existing legislation does not regulate conditions relative to the health status of children, in practice it happens that both disabled and healthy children are placed in a single foster family. As emphasised above in the discussion regarding kinship care, to be able to provide the best possible care for the children, guided by the principle of what is in the best interest of the child, there are cases evidenced when the foster care family is a kinship family, given the status foster-

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11 See Table 3 below for information about the type and number of family substitute services and beneficiaries in 2006 in FYR Macedonia

12 Categories of children are defined using the official terminology of the Law on Social Protection, 1997.
family simply to financially assist them in looking after the child. What is positive however, is the increase in the number of foster care placements, compared to the previous years.

Protection of children in social risk in residential institutions is part of the traditional system of social protection in FYR Macedonia (See Table 3 under the Chapter 10 of Deinstitutionalisation for the type and number of beneficiaries in residential institutions in FYR Macedonia). Unfortunately, residential placement is often used for children without parents, disabled children and children in conflict with the law, even in cases when such a placement could have been avoided by exploring and utilisation of alternative forms of protection. In addition, some of the existing residential institutions (the Home for Children without Parents and Parental Care "11 Oktomvri" or the SOS Children's Village from Skopje) are even used for temporary placement of children with a different type of problem under the supervision of the CSWs (i.e. victims of family violence). Herein, it is important to emphasise that except for the Special Institute "Demir Kapija", the reforms have passed by all the other residential institutions in FYR Macedonia, not only in terms of deinstitutionalisation, but also in terms of upgrading of the quality of services and humanisation of the living conditions within these institutions (See chapter 10 on Deinstitutionalisation for further info).

However, there are some reform processes in place regarding the family substitute services. These reforms relate mostly to the adoption services and the introduction of the short term protective care within the Macedonian system of child protection. The key reforms regarding these two categories of family substitute services will be in more details elaborated separately further in the text.

Adoption. Within the LCA of the Family Law (2004), changes were introduced concerning the age difference between the adoptive parents and the adoptee, which should not exceed 45 years. A compulsory adaptation period of 2-3 months was also introduced. The changes also give priority to citizens of FYR Macedonia as potential adoptive parents. Namely, children can be adopted by foreign citizens only if they are also citizens of FYR Macedonia and in cases where there are no interested Macedonian citizens for adoption.

In the domain of regulation of the relationships between parents and children, the LCA of the Family Law (2004) anticipates changes. The emphasis is given to the consideration of the child's opinion regarding maintaining regular contacts with the parent who is not granted custody over the child and other rights. The regulation of the contacts is now being conditioned with the payment of the alimony, which in practice has shown improved results in terms of more regular payment of the alimony. In this respect, the CSW may limit the right to maintain personal relationship and immediate contacts with the child to the parent who had not been paying alimony for the child's upbringing for more than 3 months. Furthermore, the CSW may entrust the custody to the other parent, to other person or to an appropriate institution, in cases when it will determine that the parents, or the parent to whom the child is entrusted in custody, had neglected the child and there is a serious jeopardy for his/her appropriate development (LCA of the Family Law, 2004).

Short term protective shelters. Within the LCA of the Law on Social Protection (2004) the homeless and the victims of family violence that appear as user groups for the first time in this law, the right to temporary non-residential protection is envisaged, in addition to the day care. For families and children victims of violence there are 6 Short Term Protective Shelters (STPSs) established in FYR Macedonia on the basis of rental of apartments by the CSWs. Within these STPSs managed by the CSWs, children are only secondary beneficiaries of the services. Such STPSs for
victims of family violence exist in Bitola, Kochani, Kumanovo, Ohrid, Skopje, Strumica and Veles. In Skopje, there is a Shelter for Homeless persons managed by the Intermunicipal Centre for Social Work (ICSW) in Skopje, but again, children are beneficiaries of its services jointly with the adults. Children victims of trafficking at present do not appear as a recognised category within the relevant social legislation. According to the information provided by the MoLSP for assessment purposes, this is to be changed with the introduction of the right to guardianship for children victims of trafficking. Thus far, these children are not recognised as at risk group within the child protection legislation.

Apart from the reforms in the domain of development of short term protective care for children at risk, MoLSP informs on its plans to extend statutory, family substitute services for children. At present there are no group homes as a form of social protection of children. In cooperation with UNICEF, the MoLSP is planning to establish two group homes (in Berovo and Bitola) by the end of 2008. It is expected that with the development of the norms and standards for social services, the procedure for establishment and functioning of such group homes will be regulated and precised.

**Non-statutory initiatives.** The NGO "Union of Women's Organisation of FYR Macedonia" established a day care centre for victims of family violence in Skopje, in 2001. The Shelter is used for crisis interventions and temporary protection of the victims of family violence who are subsequently dealt with by the CSWs. In 2005, a temporary shelter NGO "Open Gate", for both children over 13 years of age and adults victims of trafficking, was established in Skopje with USAID support in cooperation with OSCE. Within this STPS, the placement is on voluntary basis. As the NGO "Open Gate" is the only STPS for victims of trafficking in FYR Macedonia, a Memorandum of cooperation was signed between the MoLSP and the NGO "Open Gate". Based on this Memorandum, the existing National Referral Mechanism (NRM) within the MoLSP refers identified victims of trafficking to this shelter. However, this shelter provides assistance and psycho-social support to Macedonian citizens - victims of trafficking, only. Foreign citizens - victims of trafficking are placed in the Transit Centre for Foreigners, where there is a separate department. The Transit Centre then informs the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry subsequently takes over the cases.

The table below contains data on the number of family substitute services discussed previously in the text and the number of service beneficiaries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of family substitute services</th>
<th>Number of family substitute services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Kinship care</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Guardianship</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Short term protected shelters</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Foster care</td>
<td></td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Foster care for children</td>
<td>134 (foster families)</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>without parents and parental care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Adoption</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Residential institutions</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. DEINSTITUTIONALISATION

Key conclusions
The reforms towards deinstitutionalisation in FYR Macedonia are primarily related to the deinstitutionalisation of the disabled children from the Special Institute "Demir Kapija", a reform initiated and supported by UNICEF. The importance of the "Demir Kapija" case is not linked solely to the deinstitutionalisation. This process is considered relevant for child protection reforms in the Country in general, as it also promoted the foster-care in the protection of this category of children, and initiated the development of the day-care services. However, the "Demir Kapija" case, irrespective of its success, shadowed the need for deinstitutionalisation of other categories of children in risk, also placed in residential institutions. In this direction, in cooperation with UNICEF, a Strategy for Deinstitutionalisation is currently being developed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) staff and other relevant stakeholders. It is expected that the Strategy will promote and extend the deinstitutionalisation process over other categories of children, such as children without parents and parental care and children in conflict with the law.

The reforms regarding deinstitutionalisation of children in FYR Macedonia were for the most part initiated by UNICEF in 2000. UNICEF in cooperation with EducAid was also active in the further promotion of the foster care in the country (most specifically for the disabled children), although foster care as a form of protection of children at risk exists within the Law on Social Protection enacted back in 1997.

Table 4 below contains information on the key institutions for protection of children under the jurisdiction of the relevant Ministries of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP), Ministry of Health (MH), Ministry of Education (ME) and Ministry of Justice (MJ). The table also contains data on the first private non-profit institution for children without parents and parental care SOS Children's Village in Skopje (although they do not consider SOS Village as an institution). Data are available both on the number of services and service beneficiaries.

Of the institutions for residential protection of children presented in the Table 4 (points 2, 3 and 4), only the Special Institute "Demir Kapija" is undergoing the process of deinstitutionalisation. No reforms towards deinstitutionalisation are in place for the other institutions. For this reason, both this chapter and one of the case-studies in the Good Practice Portfolio in Annex 9, will be devoted to the success of the "Demir Kapija" reform process of deinstitutionalisation.

The process of deinstitutionalisation of children with disabilities from the Special Institute "Demir Kapija", was initiated in 2000 through the UNICEF support to the project "Educational and Social Activities with Children from the Special Institute Demir Kapija aimed at Deinstitutionalisation". The project was welcomed by the MoLSP and implemented by a professional team from the Institute for Defectology, within the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje. The Project commenced in February 2001, dealing at first with 20 children up to the age of 10. For each of these children an assessment of individual needs was carried out (using the traditional, though functional approach in assessment), and educational and upbringing programme was realised. The assessment of the individual needs of children was carried out by a team of 7 professionals (2 defectologists, 1 speech therapist, 1 physiotherapist, 1 neuropsychiatrist, 1 social worker and 1 care-giver). The team also worked on the preparation of children for discharge from the Institute. Until 2006, UNICEF had been covering expenses for their salaries.
The programme activities within this project were aimed at stimulation and development of the children's potential and enabling their self-reliance in meeting daily needs. Already in May 2003, 23 children exited Demir Kapija. At the moment of this assessment, according to the MoLSP data, 30 children have been deinstitutionalised. 29 children with moderate and severe disabilities are still residing in D. Kapija, 3 of them already prepared to exit and be placed in the either biological family of in foster care. According to the information from the MoLSP, 330 disabled persons are still in residential care in Demir Kapija. The experiences to date of the implementation of the process of deinstitutionalisation, and the associated positive results of the functioning of the DCCs as preconditions for successful deinstitutionalisation, as well as the evidenced success of the collaboration with the parents and the media, encourage the continuation of this practice in FYR Macedonia. Most significant achievements regarding deinstitutionalisation are obviously related to the category of disabled children. However, the deinstitutionalisation of disabled children was such a success in the country that shadowed other categories of children for whose protection residential institutions are also often used.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) Special schools</th>
<th>Ministry in Charge</th>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools*</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes within primary schools (24)**</td>
<td></td>
<td>76</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary schools***</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2) Institutions for Children with educational, social and behavioural problems ****</th>
<th>Ministry in Charge</th>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Institution for Protection of Children with Educational and Social Problems &quot;25th of May&quot; (up to 14 years of age) - Skopje</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute for Protection, Education and Upbringing &quot;Ranka Milanovic&quot; (14-18 years of age)- Skopje</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Prison - Ohrid (14-25 years of age)</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctional facility - Tetovo (relocated in the Shuto Orizari Prison in Skopje for male offenders)</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctional facility - Tetovo (relocated in the Idrizovo Prison in Skopje for female offender)</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3) Institutions for protection of children without parents and parental care *****</th>
<th>Ministry in Charge</th>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home for Infants and Small Children (0-3 years of age)- Bitola</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Home &quot;11th of October&quot; (3-18 years of age) - Skopje</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOS Children's Village</td>
<td>Private non-profit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Around 80</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4) Institutions for children with disabilities******</th>
<th>Ministry in Charge</th>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institute for Rehabilitation of Children and Youth &quot;Topansko Pole&quot; - Skopje</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute for Protection and Rehabilitation &quot;Banja Bansko&quot; - Strumica</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Institute - Demir Kapija</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30 adults/29 children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5) Hospitals for children with disabilities</th>
<th>Ministry in Charge</th>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutes for rehabilitation of children and youth</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6) Development Counselling Services</th>
<th>Ministry in Charge</th>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Monitoring the Development of Children Born with a Risk Factor - Skopje</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute for Mental Health - Skopje</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling service for mothers and children within the Medical Centre in Bitola</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8) Commissions for Disabled (diagnosis, professional opinion about the type and the level of disability, and assessment of specific needs of disabled)</th>
<th>Ministry in Charge</th>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Commission for Persons with impaired sight</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>2 (Skopje, Bitola)</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Commission for Persons with Impaired Hearing and Persons with Voice, Speech and Language Impediments</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>2 (Skopje, Bitola)</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Commission for Physically Disabled People</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>2 (Skopje, Bitola)</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Commission for Autistic Persons</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>2 (Skopje, Bitola)</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Commission for Intellectually Disabled Persons (Skopje, Bitola, Prilep, Kavadarci, Veles, Strumica, Shtip, Kochani, Kumanovo, Tetovo, Ohrid, Struga)</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
* Ministry of Education, 2006,
** Ministry of Education, 2006-a
*** State Statistical Office, 2006
**** State Statistical Office, 2006; UNICEF, 2006
***** MoLSP, 2006-d
****** MoLSP, 2006-e
In this direction, in cooperation with UNICEF, a Strategy for Deinstitutionalisation is currently being developed. It is expected that the Strategy (which is to be finalised by the end of June 2007 - according to the information provided by the MoLSP) will promote and extend the deinstitutionalisation process over other categories of children, such as children without parents and parental care and children in conflict with the law. The NGO "Poraka" (which is a contracting party to the MoLSP and has developed network of social services for disabled) and the NGO "Polio-plus", active in the domain of legislative changes, are involved in the development of the Strategy as important stakeholders in addition to the professionals from the MoLSP. Through the support of UNICEF and the Foundation Open Society Institute-Macedonia (FOSIM) a foreign expertise from Croatia is involved in the preparation of the Strategy. MoLSP informs that in the second half of June 2007 there will be a public debate upon the Strategy with MoLSP, MH, ME, Union of Local Self-government Units (ZELS) as well as Faculties invited as participants. The National Action Plan 2008-2010 is expected to delineate the concrete steps for implementation of the Strategy for Deinstitutionalisation.
V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the assessment was based on local ownership, the identified stakeholders had a significant role in the assessment process in general, and in the creation of recommendations in particular. During the interviews with the members of the Steering Group several discussion questions solicited their recommendations for advancement and identification of opportunities for acceleration of the child protection reforms in the Country. The recommendations presented per reform issues below are predominantly those proposed by the Steering Group members.

11.1. Target groups of children

11.1.1. At the policy-making level, through inter-ministerial coordination, terminology used to refer to same categories of children should be equalised within the relevant regulatory documents (Law on Social Protection, Family Law, Criminal Code).

11.1.2. Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) should develop policies to extend social services to the following groups of children underserved within the child protection system: internally displaced children, substance abusers, children from remote rural areas, children without parents and parental care, neglected and street children. As for the children victims of trafficking, they should be recognised as a separate at risk group within the relevant social legislation.

11.1.3. MoLSP should segregate services offered to both children and adults in a same institutional setting. This in principle refers to the institutions Special Institute "Demir Kapija" and the Rehabilitation Institute "Banja Bansko", where children are beneficiaries of services together with adults.

11.2. Service planning and decision making

11.2.1. The current fragmentation in planning and decision-making under the responsibility of several departments within the MoLSP, imposes the need for unified policy making. This can be achieved through integration of child protection accountability into a single department within the MoLSP.

11.2.2. Although inter-ministerial cooperation is in place, it should be enhanced through official protocols to be developed by the relevant Ministries: MoLSP, Ministry of Health (MH), Ministry of Justice (MJ), Ministry of Education (ME), Ministry of Local Self-Government (MLSG), Ministry of Interior (MI).

11.2.3. Capacities for development of strategic objectives and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for follow-up of their implementation within the MoLSP, need to be enhanced through staff training. Although the process of development of Strategies in cooperation with relevant stakeholders is in place for some reform areas (i.e. deinstitutionalisation, family violence), there is a need to develop an integrated Strategy for Child Protection as a joint effort of all relevant Ministries, NGOs and high-education institutions. Subsequent Action Plan would then specify concrete steps to be taken for upgrading of the child protection system in the country.

11.2.4. The working methodology applied by the Commission for Cooperation with the NGO sector in the domain of announcing specific tenders, should be updated. The identification of areas where NGOs services could best fit within the system of child protection should neither be arbitrary, nor driven by the general areas of protection.
covered by the already registered NGOs, but based on needs assessment of the actual gaps in services.

11.2.5. Related to the above recommendation, the annual budget set aside from the MoLSP for service purchasing with the NGO sector should continue to follow the rising tendency.

11.2.6. Central data-base for monitoring the status of different vulnerable user-groups should be established within the MoLSP. A unified methodology with detailed indicators should be developed to be able to monitor and identify specific tendencies in terms of changes in numbers and types of services and beneficiaries over time.

11.2.7. To be able to provide for the necessary conditions for social prevention (early identification, recognition and intervention) to take place in practice, MoLSP should engage efforts to promote (through lobbying for legislative changes) the development of the fields of social work practice: social work in educational and health institutions, in cooperation with the ME and MH.

11.2.8. Currently, the MoLSP does not set aside a separate budget to finance continuing education of staff employed either at the MoLSP, or at the local level within CSWs and social institutions (training is mainly financed by external organisations, UNICEF most notably). Hence, this practice should be changed if the MoLSP is to invest in the quality of staff and upgrading of professional work and decrease the continuing reliance on donor support for training purposes.

11.2.9. Changes in the course of the reforms in child protection, which is at present either top-down (from the MoLSP towards the CSWs) or bottom-up - lobbying by interested NGOs for protection of different user groups, again towards the CSWs, is also required. A system of consultation with the CSWs and social institutions operating on the local level should be established and utilised during reforms planning, so that the voice of the local CSWs and social institutions can also be heard. At present, there is a degree of dissatisfaction expressed by the CSWs and social institutions with the reforms that entail transfer of additional responsibilities to CSWs (ex. family violence) without upgrading working conditions and enhancing CSWs with staff, in parallel, to be able to live up to their new assignments. This may be easily linked to the absence of top-down consultation and feed-back from those dealing with the problems (for which policy is developed) at the front-line.

11.2.10. Relative to specific user-groups of children, systematic solution to dealing with the problems of children victims of trafficking is required. This can be achieved through institutionalisation of the existing National Referral Mechanism, which has proven to be an effective mechanism of coordination of existing services to address the needs of the victims of trafficking.

11.2.11. Family violence - related transfer of responsibilities to CSWs is yet another issue. It seems that the rationalisation of this decision, to which stakeholders attach both pros and cons, and its success or failure in the phase of practical implementation, are yet to be evidenced. So far, there are serious obstacles at the CSWs level to be able to fully live up to this assignment, and this may entail subsequent changes. The Strategy for Family Violence which is under preparation is expected to contribute to get to the bottom of these obstacles.

11.3. Reorganisation of statutory services

11.3.1. There is a need to reorganise CSWs in a way that would enhance existing capacities (because of staff-shortages at present) and upgrade approaches in professional social work practice. This should be done by the MoLSP and the Institute for Social Activities (ISA), using relevant expertise from the other institutions in the
Country. An analysis of the situation in CSWs after the reforms should be carried out and the results used to develop a programme for reorganisation of the CSWs as primary service providers at local level.

11.3.2. A challenge in terms of reorganisation of the CSWs are possible changes of their status as public institutions with public jurisdiction, through transferring the juridical functions to the courts, which seems to be a widely accepted idea at both central and local level, and hence should be pursued.

11.3.3. Professional work with service beneficiaries also requires serious restructuring. Professionals currently deal with all categories of user groups within the CSWs. Herein, reforms towards specialisation are required. Separate departments (units) for child and adult services would be one step forward in this direction.

11.3.4. Administration of financial allowances should be separated from professional work. Relative to this, the transfer of administration of child supplements from the dismantled local units of the MoLSP to the CSWs in 2004, was a decision contradictory to the reform intentions for professional social work to be dominant activity within the CSWs. Within the process of further decentralisation in social protection, the possibility to transfer administration of allowances for social assistance and child supplements to a separate department within the municipalities, should be considered.

11.3.5. Day care centres (DCCs) and short term protective shelters (STPSs) will impede future reform efforts should they remain organisational units of the CSWs. Within the decentralisation reforms, MoLSP should accelerate their transfer to municipalities.

11.3.6. Improvements in terms of upgrading of the working conditions, introduction of the IT technology, improvements in the system of recording and efficient administration of social benefits, are imperative.

11.3.7. Traditional case work should be gradually replaced with case management. MoLSP and the ISA could organise training to staff from CSWs in case management practice, case conferencing and outreach work (modalities of intensified collaboration with other relevant local institutions schools, health institutions, NGOs). To this end, protocols for regulation of the cooperation and the communication lines at local level should also be prepared by CSWs, educational and health institutions, NGOs, municipalities and other grassroots organisations. Evaluation, termination and follow up (as phases in case work) as well as the post-penal protection should be enhanced in social work practice within the CSWs (additional training could be organised by ISA for this purpose).

11.3.9. Individual care plan for service beneficiaries and the service contract should be introduced, while client participation and development of self-care capacities should be encouraged (again, training by ISA is here indispensable).

11.3.10. There is a need to establish specialised counselling services within the CSWs, as they are non-existent at the moment. Since CSWs staff engages in counselling as one of the many functions they perform, counselling services would be of benefit both for the service users and the staff.

11.3.11. CSWs should be encouraged to rely on voluntary work in the delivery of social services.

11.3.12. In overall, continuing education in up to date professional work with different categories of children should be promoted. The MoLSP and the ISA (in cooperation with domestic and international expertise, organisations and foundations) have a key role to play in this respect.
11.4. Decentralisation
11.4.1. Given the current lack of obligatory legislative measures for municipal commitment to social protection of citizens, there is a need to encourage municipalities to enter the social protection arena. This process could be supported through activation of the local NGOs, promotion of the engagement of individual professionals in the social service provision, utilisation of the existing infrastructural objects in the municipalities (for non-residential forms of protection in particular), as well as provision of concrete assistance in the development of the Local Social Protection Programmes to municipal personnel.
11.4.2. Furthermore, efforts should be invested for decentralisation of existing day-care centres DCCs and short-term protective shelters (STPSs) through selection of pilot municipalities. The process of fiscal decentralisation should be used for identification of municipalities that seem to have financial and administrative capacity to manage them.
11.4.3. Apart from the obligation of the CSWs to administer municipal social protection programmes and general acts, additional binding elements should be in place to regulate the relationship between CSWs and municipalities at the local level (i.e. the role of the CSWs in planning and development of development programmes).
11.4.4. Through joint training in fund raising, CSWs and municipalities should be encouraged to ensure additional funding for the local development programmes.
11.4.5. Within the development of the role of the municipal organs for addressing social protection needs of citizens, MoLSP, Ministry of Local Self-government (MLSG) and municipalities, could analyse the possibilities and practicalities around the eventual transfer of the administration of all financial allowances from the CSWs to separate department within the municipalities.

11.5. Personnel issues
11.5.1. Since the current state of affairs within the CSWs is characterised by serious understaffing and incomplete teams, the primary reform intervention regarding personnel issues relates to enhancing human capacities within the CSWs.
11.5.2. Training to staff is usually based on the formalised Rulebooks and Methodological Instructions for professional work with particular user groups (ISAs mandate). However, training should go beyond regulatory documents and by-laws, if the social provision within CSWs is truly to be advanced. To be able to do so, MoLSP should financially support the delivery of training. During the interviews, the members of the Steering Group pointed out several such training gaps:

- Training to personnel for foster care of victims of family violence
- Training in case management and outreach work
- Training and specialisation in contemporary approaches in social work practice with specific categories of service beneficiaries

11.6. Gatekeeping
11.6.1. The development of the gatekeeping mechanisms (which are only recently introduced in the Macedonian social protection system) needs to be enhanced at central level.
11.6.2. Gatekeeping mechanisms should also be in place at the local level, as gatekeeping is at present only centralised function of the MoLSP.
11.6.3. As for the licensing mechanisms, reforms should be geared towards establishment of a body which would take over this function from the MoLSP, or a
body within the MoLSP that would be specialised for licensing. The planned establishment of Chamber for Social Activities within the new Law on Social Protection is promising step forward in this respect. However, this process should also go along with the development of relevant legislation for registration, certification, and accreditation, to be able to ensure the quality of the social services provided by both statutory and non-statutory (private) organisations and individuals.

11.6.4. It is currently of crucial importance to accelerate the preparation of the norms and standards for regulation of the working conditions and professional services within CSWs and social protection institutions (ISAs mandate)

11.6.5. MoLSP should also bring to an end the preparation of the Rule books for DCCs and STPSs

11.6.6. Last but not least within this part of recommendations, a rights-based approach to child protection should be promoted at all levels. There are institutions that support appeal cases in child protection (Ombudsman Office, Free Legal Aid, Citizen's Association), but their activities in this respect should be made more visible, organised and systematic.

11.7. Material assistance for children and families

11.7.1. In cooperation between MoLSP, CSWs and municipalities, separation of the professional work from the social assistance administration, is one of the priorities we already emphasised.

11.7.2. In terms of the user-specific allowances, the financial assistance introduced for children after 18 and up to 26 years of age and the right to housing for children coming out of age limited to covering rental and maintenance expenses, have not yielded desired effects in practice and proved to be only passive measures. In this respect, more active measures and direct assistance in finding employment for this category of children should be introduced instead. MoLSP and the Agency for Employment of FYR Macedonia have a role to play in making this achievable.

11.7.3. The reforms within the Law on Social Protection regarding the entitlement to one-off allowance for parents of disabled children (introduced as a measure to avoid institutionalisation) are yet to be fully applied in practice. It seems that the CSWs at local level will have to engage in more far-reaching extension of information to parents about the existing entitlement, as many of eligible parents do not use this assistance simply because they are not aware of it.

11.7.3. Hitherto solutions for "targeting" of financial allowances have not shown high level of effectiveness. The number of beneficiaries rises year by year instead. However, these reforms are ongoing, different modalities have been tested, and the MoLSP should continue to follow that path until an effective modality is yielded.

11.8. Community based services

11.8.1. Although the development of the community based services is one of the most successful reform domains in FYR Macedonia, it has been focused mostly to day-care and short-term protective care. Thus, home-based care, which is practically non-existent, as well as small-size group homes, are yet to be developed. For this purpose, MoLSP has the legislative regulation in place to engage further the NGO sector to fill in these gaps in statutory services.

11.8.2. MoLSP and the Ministry of Justice (MJ) should jointly invest efforts for establishment of resocialisation centres for children in conflict with the law (there is
legislative regulation for referral to resocialisation centres, but such centres have not been opened yet).

11.8.3. The engagement of individuals - professionals as service providers (envisaged within the Law on Social Protection back in 2004) has not enlivened yet. Both at central and at the local level, MoLSP should engage in extending information to the wider public for the benefits of this legislative provision, herein emphasising the specialised foster care and possibilities for establishment of professional counselling services.

11.8.4. Kinship care should be introduced. With this measure, the practice of assigning kinship families as foster families, will be avoided.

11.8.5. Specialised foster care for children in conflict with the law should be promoted. For this to take place, specialised training to prospective foster parents for children in conflict with the law should be organised as well as campaigns for foster families to raise the conciseness among interested citizens.

11.8.6. For children without parents and parental care, guardianship on distance should be introduced.

11.8.7. Since the Macedonian system of child protection is predominantly focused on children up to 18 years of age, it is obvious that NGOs capacities should be maximally used for those children coming out of age through day care centres, small group homes, home-based care and other services.

11.9. Deinstitutionalisation

11.9.1. Extend the current deinstitutionalisation reforms (at present directed towards disabled children) towards children without parents and parental care and children in conflict with the law who are already or at risk of being institutionalised.

11.9.2. Home-based services as alternative to institutional care and support to non-formal family care should be developed, while the current network of alternative services extended (NGOs, private sector, other non-statutory organisations could be involved as service providers).

11.9.3. MoLSP should explore the modalities for redirecting the investments in covering rental and maintenance expenses for children coming out of age (assistance in housing), towards more sustainable investments in provision of housing that would be in the ownership of children, and where they could live independently after the age of 26.
VI. LESSONS LEARNT

- Every reform process heavily depends on the provision of the financial means for its implementation. In this regard, reforms for which a detailed financial plan is neither developed nor adequate financial means provided are those that are committed to failure and usually referred to as "paper-based" reforms.
- Enter the process of deinstitutionalisation only after alternative home and community-based services are provided at the local level.
- The lack of allocation of clear responsibilities for implementation of the reforms to each of the key stakeholders (instead of shared responsibility) leads towards inability to track down and locate accountability for reform failures.
- The lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the reform processes entails difficulties in measuring the level of actual implementation of the projected reforms.
- The practice has shown that placing new responsibilities (i.e. family violence) to CSWs using a one-way process and without capacity building and enhancement of the CSWs with additional personnel, not only impedes the implementation and effectiveness of the reform processes, but may also put reforms into question.
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-- 2006-d, Data on Institutions for protection of children without parents and parental care, MoLSP, Skopje, FYR Macedonia

-- 2006-e, Data on Institutions for children with disabilities, MoLSP, Skopje, FYR Macedonia

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4. Child Protection Law, Official Gazette 98/00, 17/03, 65/04, 113/05
5. Criminal Code, Official Gazette 37/96, 80/99, 4/02, 43/03, 19/04, 81/05, 60/06, 73/06
7. Decision to sell immovable property of seasonal resorts, (Official Gazette, 85/05)
8. Law for Criminal Preceding, Official Gazette 15/97, 44/02, 74/04, 15/05
9. Law for Execution of Sanctions, Official Gazette 2/06
10. Law for Executive Procedure, Official Gazette 53/97, 59/00, 64/03
11. Local Self-Government Law, Official Gazette 5/02
16. Rule book for criteria and procedures for effectuation of the right to housing for persons without parents and parental care until 18 years of age, and after expiring of the guardianship, and at maximum 26 years of age, socially vulnerable - housing unsecured (Official Gazette 58/06).
17. Rule book for changes and amendments to the Rule book for determination of amount regarding the entitlement to one-off financial allowance (Official Gazette 78/06).
18. Rule book on the norms and standards for establishment and operation of the social welfare institutions - DCCs for persons with intellectual and physical disabilities, (Official Gazette 110, 2006),
20. Rule book on the norms and standards for establishment and operation of the social welfare institutions - Centre for victims of family violence (Official Gazette 33/07).
22. Rule book on the norms and standards for establishment and operation of the social welfare institutions - DCCs for substance abusers (Official Gazette 33/07)
Decision for Establishment of a National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration in FYR Macedonia, (Official Gazette 18/2001)
VIII. ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of abbreviations

CSWs - Centres for Social Work
DCCs – Day Care Centres
GTZ - German association for technical assistance
EU - European Union
FOSIM - Foundation Open Society Institute
ICSW - Intermunicipal Centre for Social Work
ISA – Institute for Social Activities
ISWSP - Institute for Social Work and Social Policy
LCA -Law on Changes and Amendments
JIM - Joint Inclusion Memorandum
ME - Ministry of Education
MH - Ministry of Health
MI - Ministry of Interior
MJ - Ministry of Justice
MLSG - Ministry of Local Self-government
MoLSP – Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
NGO – Non-governmental organisation
NRM - Office of the National Referral Mechanism
REF - Roma Education Fund
SPIL - Project for Implementation of Social Protection
STPSs - Short term protective shelters
ToRs - Terms of reference
UNICEF CO - UNICEF Country Office
Annex 2: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference
Assessment of the child welfare system in the SEE region
(March–July 2007)

1. BACKGROUND

In mid 2006, UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS received regional funding from SIDA for a project entitled ‘The Reform of the Child Care System in CEE/CIS – taking stock and accelerating action’. The project takes place from June 2006 to December 2009. The project aims to address the following issues regarding the reform of child care in the noted regions:

- availability of a continuum of services in different communities and countries, which is able to address diverse vulnerabilities through individual planning, based on an aim of providing quality care for children;
- upgrading of local capacity for planning and financing of a continuum of services, since the reform is closely linked to good governance and decentralisation. This issue is also linked to a need for a clarification of responsibilities and mandates (inter-sectoral co-operation);
- A need for careful budgeting for the transition costs during the reform period and costing of the new child care services.
- the situation regarding the policy environment in which the reform is taking place,
- the role of the state in the gatekeeping at national and sub-national level.

The project builds on previous UNICEF efforts to support the reform of child care services in the region. Such experiences to date indicate that the political champions to lead the systematic reform process have not yet emerged and that the political incentives for the reform have varied from country to country. This indicates that the political interest in welfare issues and the welfare of children continues to be rather limited (in comparison, for example, to the economic reforms, nation building or threats to political stability). External interests such as support to poverty reduction strategies, and EU-accession negotiations have proven to be useful catalysts for highlighting the importance of social protection issues. However, civil servants and government officials at local level continue to stress the need for mobilization of political will and leadership for the reform at the highest level.

These experiences also indicate that one of the major shortcomings, identified across the region, is the absence of comprehensive operational reform plans with clear targets, as well as operational and financial mechanisms to manage the period of transition between old and new service systems. There is also a noted need for technical ‘know-how’ and learning from the experiences of other countries in the region – particularly those with similar historic and social protection system backgrounds.

The project has threefold objectives:

4. To accelerate the reform of the child care system by facilitating a renewed commitment for the reform through a consultative process and lessons learned;

13 The background of UNICEF involvement in child care system reform in CEE/CIS goes back to 1991 with the publication of the Innocenti report “Children in Institutions in Central and Eastern Europe”. The Romania office was first with follow-up on the issue. In 1995 child institutionalization was again treated in the publication “Child Institutionalization and Child Protection in Central and Eastern Europe” by the UNICEF Innocenti Research Center and this is also the start of a more systematic reporting on data on child institutionalization through the MONEE project and Social Monitors. The UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS was established in 1996 and attention to the issue in UNICEF programmes started at a regional level with the joint UNICEF-World Bank regional conference “Children Deprived of Parental Care: Rights and Realities” in Budapest between 22–25 October 2000. Since then UNICEF country offices have started engaging in dialogue with governments on alternatives to institutionalization and reforms of the child care system. An important contribution to developing the know-how was the regional joint UNICEF-World Bank project “Changing Minds, Policies and Lives”. The project also builds on the UNICEF and World Bank Conference ‘Children deprived of parental care – rights and realities in the CEE/CIS Region’, held in 2000. At the Conference, guiding principles for the reform were agreed among the participating governments and NGOs.
5. To build synergies between specialized institutions, NGOs, Governmental reform practitioners and financial institutions in their contributions to the reform by facilitating systematic exchange of good practices and lessons learned;

6. To facilitate access to the latest knowledge and know-how for reform practitioners and to expand the mechanisms for regional capacity development.

These are to be addressed through activities carried out in several phases:

D. Phase 1 – Sub-regional consultations in order to prepare a Ministerial Conference to take place in 2008, potentially in connection with the CoE and its Council of Ministers. The Conference is to be prepared through three sub-regional consultations (2007-2008; in SEE, Central Asia, concluded by SC and RUB consultation). Each consultation will review the progress and shortcomings of the reform process in the sub-region and identify opportunities for accelerating the reform.

E. Phase 2 – Follow-up to subregional consultations (through, i.e. debriefings and roundtables, the Ministerial Conference and the dissemination of outcomes (through a publication).

F. Phase 3 – Building synergies and facilitating longer term capacity development of Governments and reform practitioners – promotion of importance of prevention by ensuring that the ‘continuum of services’ is included as an integral part of the reform design and co-operation in supporting M&E activities.

The Assessment that is subject of this ToR is one of the activities to be carried out during the Phase 1 of the project. It will be used to illustrate key elements for progress and current gaps in the reform processes in the target countries, in support for the preparation and work of the first sub-regional consultation, one in the SEE (covering Albania, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey).

2. SCOPE AND FOCUS OF THE ASSESSMENT

The overall objectives of the Assessment include:

- an increase in understanding of the progress and shortcomings of the reform process in SEE, from the view of different stakeholders on county and regional level, which can serve as a ‘baseline’ for further reform support
- provide policy analysis that can serve as an input for further support for the reform process, among both local and regional/international actors

The specific objectives of the Assessment include:

2.1. identify benchmarks against which to assess and analyse the reform progress
2.2. assess and analyse (individually-per country and jointly – per region) progress of the child care system reform in the selected countries, in order to determine a baseline for further monitoring of the reform process
2.3. identify opportunities to accelerate the reform of the child care system
2.4. enable local ownership of the assessment process
2.5. enable a review and input for further UNICEF support for the reform
2.6. outline a “model planning (monitoring?) tool” to be used in subsequent sub-regional consultations (CARK, SC & RUB)

Format-wise, the focus is to be primarily on:

- the lessons learnt from the best practices, as identified by the involved stakeholders,
- relation of the child care reform with the wider social welfare reform efforts, and
- ensuring, as much as possible given the local circumstances and the assessment timeframe, the local ownership of the assessment process.

The assessment is also to feed into the preparation of the Conference. Hence, content-wise, the focus will be on 5 reform issues that are to be explored at the Conference:
6. policy environment for the reform,
7. service planning,
8. provision of a ‘service continuum’,
9. service gatekeeping at different level (national/regional/local),
10. costing, finances and budgeting.

This two focus sets shall be explored through:
- the assessment against the benchmarks for child care policy reform (content-issue)
- analysis of progress of the reform (format-issue)
- recommendations for next steps (format and content issues).

Each of these processes requires detailed tools that shall be developed in the early phases of the assessment process and presented to the local researchers during their preparatory meeting in Croatia.

3. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Due to a fairly limited time frame (less than four months), the objectives are to be achieved through an assessment in a selection of SEE countries, considering:
- different policy backgrounds (i.e. ex-Yu countries vs. social policy in Albania)
- differences in the level of co-operation among different actors in each of the countries and identified sense of ownership among local actors regarding the reform process (i.e. the type and level of co-operation with the local representatives of the governmental institutions)
- differences in reform experiences to date (i.e. countries that had periods of successful reform impetus vs. countries that solely have ‘paper based reform’)
- the relationship between the individual countries and the EC (accession vs. membership)

Based on these issues, the assessment is to be carried out in the following countries:
- Bulgaria (EU member, host for the conference, but with some difficulties in the reform process)
- Albania (specific policy development, ambiguous reform impetus)
- FYR Macedonia (potential for local ownership and a high interest in intersectoral co-operation)
- Serbia (potential for local ownership and good reform experiences for the assessment)

The UNICEF Country-led evaluation (CLE) of social protection in BiH is to run in parallel to the assessment. Efforts should be made to co-ordinate the CLE with the assessment, to include the BiH experiences in both the assessment process and report.

During the assessment, information is to be provided by the:
3.1. UNICEF CEE/CIS regional office
3.2. UNICEF country offices
3.3. other relevant international actors relevant for the reform efforts (ie. WB, EC, other)
3.4. Representatives of relevant governmental institutions – from local/regional/national level and from different sectors
3.5. Representatives of relevant non-governmental institutions – from local/regional/national level
3.6. Other locally identified stakeholders that are identified on the country-level as relevant for the identified assessment objectives.

Information collected from the identified stakeholders will be twofold:
1. relevant documentation (prior assessments, reviews, country/regional/local reform reports, research)
2. new input (if not evidenced in documentation and in regards to steering, i.e. for snowballing the gathering of relevant documentation, other relevant contacts, etc.)
4. ASSESSMENT METHODS

The following issues have been taken into account when devising the assessment methodology:

- a limited (four month) time frame to carry out the assessment, which indicates a need for a ‘rapid assessment’ format;
- a need to ensure, to the extent possible, the local ownership of the process, which indicates a need for the participatory methodological framework (in order to allow various stakeholders to steer different parts of the assessment process through consultation);
- a need to build upon earlier assessments, reviews and M&E exercises in the region;
- the possibility of research fatigue among the likely involved stakeholders on country level (from children and youth to adult stakeholders) due to numerous similar exercises (assessments, monitoring exercises, evaluations, reviews) that accompany reform efforts – particularly if these stakeholders don’t see benefits or follow-up based on their involvement and input

The proposed methods are to be framed within a participatory, collaborative, research framework, allowing the relevant stakeholders to take part in all parts of the research process: from decisions on amendments to the assessment questions, over suggestions of the information sources and ways to gather information, sense making (data analysis), discussion as well as recommendations. The practical preparation of researchers will also rely on the elements of appreciative inquiry and The Most Significant Change (MSC) technique, in order to allow the focus on positive elements of the reform and exploration of good practices to date. This will allow for UNICEF to rely on the same process and individuals for further promotion of the results and the subsequent activities to be carried out later on in the project.

Within this framework, the following methods shall be applied:

- Semi-structured group and/or individual consultations with key stakeholders that took part in the reform efforts to date

Each of the UNICEF Country offices will need to identify such key stakeholders that will steer the entire assessment process. These may include representatives of relevant Ministries, representatives of innovative bodies/projects that support reform efforts (i.e. the SIF in Serbia), representatives of (I)NGOs involved in reform efforts, representatives of local authorities that pioneered particular reform efforts, etc.

In each of the countries, it is expected that 5-10 such stakeholders can be identified (including UNICEF Country Office representatives). Also depending on suggestions by the UNICEF Country offices – as well as by key stakeholders themselves – their role is to be exercised either through semi-structured individual or group consultations (depending on their interest in the assessment process, time available for meaningful involvement, etc.). Individual consultations can include meetings, e-mail or telephone exchanges (again, aimed at avoiding ‘participation/research fatigue’). Group consultations will involve occasional meetings of the key stakeholders. Their input will require at least 3 encounters:

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1. initiation of the assessment on the country-level (review of the assessment framework, identification of a researcher, identification of potential documents/practices/individuals to be involved in the data gathering)
2. overview of the desk study of relevant documents and the initial assessment findings; identification of further data gathering
3. discussion of the analysis and agreements regarding country-level recommendations and results.

- A comprehensive desk research of prior relevant documents
  In each of the countries, both UNICEF as well as other international, supranational and local organisations generated a number of policy documents, assessments, reviews and studies that informed reform efforts to date. This method, albeit a common part of similar assessments, is crucial in order to:
  - avoid research fatigue among the participants,
  - focus any further data gathering on issues that weren’t covered by prior similar exercises.

- A review of tacit and experiential knowledge\(^{18}\)
  Some, highly relevant, reform knowledge usually resides beyond and apart from documents, that shall be included in the desk research. In order to obtain such knowledge, different techniques may be used to review tacit and experiential knowledge, from versions of highly simple tables to quickly access some basic information (i.e. see tables in Appendix I, under 1st phase) to the use of reflection techniques such as the after action reviews\(^{19}\).

- Qualitative and participatory individual and group techniques for data gathering
  Due to the time frame and the legitimate wariness about possible ‘research fatigue’ among the local stakeholders, the assessment shall rely on additional data gathering only once other, above noted methods don’t result in evidenced answers to the assessment questions. Use of individual/group interviews, focus groups or participatory exercises won’t be extensive. Their use (in terms of methods, participants and extent) shall be agreed in consultation with the Head Researcher and, primarily, with the local stakeholders that shall steer the process.

- Mapping
  Maps will be used to create visual presentations of governance and the continuum of services in each of the countries.
  The maps will illustrate the administrative division and services available for children, from local to national level (municipalities, regions and/or national level governance). The rationale for such maps is to better understand:
  - type and number of child care services at different levels (1st map)
  - decision making/accountability/reporting lines and the sources of funding (2nd map)

The use of these methods shall be organised around the following phases:

1. **1st phase – information gathering within UNICEF and development of assessment tools (March 2007)**

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UNICEF Geneva office and the country offices already have an extensive experiential and practical knowledge about the five reform areas that will provide the focus for the assessment. In order to harvest on such knowledge, a simple framework is devised (see Appendix 1 in order to gather information about such knowledge. It will be used for:
- identification of key stakeholders that will steer the assessment process
- preparation of the desk research of the relevant documents.

In order to address the selected assessment focus (both in terms of content and format), there is also a need to develop a set of tools in order to allow a unified approach for the assessment. This step is required in order to allow quality assurance and the overall regional analysis, based on the analysis in each of the selected countries. The tools will include:
1. a set of semi-structured ‘benchmarks’ for child care policy reform
2. a semi-structured guide for the collation of evidence on best practices in the region (case studies)
3. a semi structured guide for interviews/focus groups for the analysis of the progress of the reform and recommendations for next steps.

II. 2nd phase – initiation of the assessment on the country level (march – early april 2007)

Although each of the UNICEF country offices is to be involved throughout the assessment process, this phase will be the most labour intensive for the members of these offices. It will involve contacts with the individuals that will help steer the assessment. The first steering effort shall focus on the following issues:
- presentation and discussion of the assessment framework,
- identification of a researcher (to carry out the assessment)
- identification of potential documents and practices that need to be included in the desk study.

Based on the proposal of the steering body members, each UNICEF country office will need to employ a local researcher for the assessment.

Head Researcher will be in charge of preparing the researchers for the assessment. This will take place through a two-day meeting of the Head Researcher with the Local Researchers, to be held in the UNICEF office in Croatia.

III. 3rd phase - Data collection and analysis on the country level (april, may 2007)

This phase is to be carried out by the country-level researchers, supervised by the Head Researcher. The activities include:
3.1. a desk study of relevant documents, collected during phases 1 and 2.
3.2. mapping of governance and the continuum of services
3.3. Co-ordination with the steering body/contacts
   3.3.1. To discuss the document review
   3.3.2. Identify uncovered assessment questions, per 5 reform issues
   3.3.3. Identify other documents/contacts to be included in data gathering for the uncovered assessment questions.

3.4. Additional data gathering based on 3.2.
   These activities won’t be extensive, but are likely to be required. Approximately 5 days of additional fieldwork may be expected, to draw other relevant information. Such activities may include the methods outlined above (i.e. individual interviews on local/regional/national level, focus group discussions on local/regional/national level, participatory exercises in selected municipalities, for example, to elaborate less evidenced examples of good practice and lessons to be learnt from them). Methods will depend on ‘data gathering saturation’ in the identified locations and a review of the most effective strategies to date. These will be decided by the local researcher in consultation with the Head Researcher.

3.5. Data analysis and a write up of country-level report
3.6. Discussion of the analysis with the steering group/individuals and agreements re. country-level recommendations based on the results.

IV. 4th phase – regional level analysis (June 2007)
Based on the country-level report, a regional analysis is to be carried out and compiled in a report that shall serve as one of the documents for the sub-regional consultation in the SEE. This task is to be carried out by the Head Researcher.

V. 5th phase – a review of the regional analysis after the sub-regional consultation (July 2007)
The sub regional consultation is to be carried out in early July 2007. Due to the nature of the consultation (with participation from all the countries in the SEE, resulting in a regional review and proposals for further reform efforts) it is necessary to treat it as one additional ‘data gathering instance’. The information compiled during the consultation will be used to review the regional analysis and make amendments to it, if these are required in light of the consultation agreements and recommendations.

5. FUNCTIONS AND INPUTS FROM DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

The assessment will require input from a variety of stakeholders:
1. input from the UNICEF Regional Office in Geneva,
2. country-level input (in Albania, Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia and Serbia):
   a. UNICEF Country offices,
   b. Local Researchers,
   c. Representatives of relevant statutory agencies (i.e. relevant Ministries)
   d. Representatives of relevant international and local voluntary agencies,
   e. Country-level representatives of other international, supranational and bilateral bodies (i.e. WB, EC, DFID, etc.)
3. input from the Head Researcher.

UNICEF RO initiated and has the co-ordination role for the overall assessment process and following duties:
1. providing information on the existing knowledge of the reform based on the proposed format (phase 1)
2. input in the development of the assessment tools (phase 1)
3. provision of any other relevant information to the Head Researcher that may be relevant for the assessment content or processes (i.e. UNICEF standards, information on prior similar exercises, etc.)
4. co-ordination of all inputs and duties from the UNICEF COs and the Head Researcher (individually and between the UNICEF COs and the Head Researcher, regarding the work of the individual researchers in each of the countries, from the development of the ToRs for the Assessment to the final reporting, as detailed in individual contracts/arrangements)
5. commenting on the draft deliverables during the Assessment (both on the local and regional level)

UNICEF COs have the following roles and responsibilities, in relation to the UNICEF co-ordination of the Assessment process on the country-level:
1. collation of existing information and knowledge of the reform, based on the proposed format (phase 1)
2. selection and employment of a local researcher, based on the inputs provided by the UNICEF RO and the Head Researcher
3. Identification of relevant stakeholders that will have a role in the steering of the Assessment on the local level (Steering group) and the initiation of the Steering group
4. organisation of the initial Steering group meeting (phase 2 of the assessment)
5. managerial supervision of the work of the Local Researcher (in order to ensure their work is carried out in accordance to their contracts and the agreed deadlines)
6. comments on the draft deliverables by the Local Researcher
7. liaison with the UNICEF RO and the Head Researcher on all other relevant assessment issues
8. Co-ordination for the translation for different documents delivered by the local researchers, that will serve quality assurance by the Head Researcher

Head Researcher’s role is to provide technical and quality assurance guidance and co-ordination during the Assessment process. Primary responsibility of the Head Researcher is to the UNICEF RO. The role is particularly evident in suggestions regarding the creation of the Assessment framework and content, keeping in mind the available resources and expected outputs. A more detailed list of key tasks for the Head Researcher can be found under the next heading.

Local Researchers are responsible for the assessment tasks on the local level. They are employed by the UNICEF COs, but work under the supervision of the Head Researcher. A detailed list of key tasks can be found under the next heading.

Steering group - Since the Assessment has a focus on ensuring local ownership of it’s process, the country-level stakeholders will have a significant steering role throughout the process (from suggestions regarding the assessment content, over data collecting and analysis, to ‘sense-making’). Steering group members should be identified by the UNICEF COs, under the guidance of the UNICEF RO and the Head Researcher. Their role shouldn’t be commissioned, but may require a more detailed ToR. Their functions and inputs include:
1. inputs in the proposal for the local researcher
2. identification of potential documents and practices that need to be included in the desk study in ech of the countries
3. individual inputs through focus groups/interviews for a more detailed exploration of particular assessment issues (if required)
4. a review of and comments on the desk review of relevant documents/practices
5. inputs in the mapping of governance and the continuum of services
6. a discussion of the data analysis and the overall draft report
7. creation of recommendations based on the draft report (facilitated by the local researcher)

The Graph on the following page presents the proposed relation between the noted stakeholders.

Due to the limited time available for the assessment, and the diverse experiences in the countries included in the assessment, involvement of children and youth in the assessment may not be possible. However, opportunities for such (meaningful and ethical) input should be explored during the country-level assessment. At minimum, documents that were prepared in co-operation with or by children (and which concern child care issues) are to be included in the Assessment.
6. **PROFILE OF THE ASSESSMENT TEAM**

6.1. **Head Researcher**
A Head Researcher is to be commissioned with expertise in social welfare in the SEE region (with emphasis on knowledge and expertise of child care services and child care/social welfare reform). Knowledge of at least one of the languages spoken in the region is highly required. Key tasks for the Head Researcher include:

- preparation of the Assessment framework, in co-operation with the UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office,
- preparation of the ToR for the local researchers
- co-ordination of the entire Assessment process with the UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional office and UNICEF Country Offices
- reporting on the entire Assessment process to the CEE/CIS Regional office
- preparation of the researchers for the country-level assessment (2-day event to be held in Croatia in late March/early April 2007)
- devising of the additional methods for data gathering for each country, in co-operation with the local researchers,
- supervision of the entire country-level assessment
- Regional analysis of the reform progress,
- Regional compilation of useful (best) practices in child care reform.

*Essential Requirements, Qualifications and Experience* for the local researcher include:

- A post-graduate university degree in social sciences with sound knowledge and experience in social research (preferably, at PhD level)
- Expertise of the child welfare and/or social welfare in the SEE region,
- Extensive experience in applied social research and policy research (preferably including experience of regional research projects),
- Excellent analytical and conceptual thinking skills,
- Teamwork and communication skills,
- Excellent written and spoken English.
6.2. 4 Local Researchers (one per each country – Albania, Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, Serbia)

The commissioning of a skilled local researcher is essential to the process. Key tasks are to include:

- Co-operation with the identified relevant local stakeholders (that would act in a steering/advisory capacity), the Head Researcher and the UNICEF throughout the Assessment process,
- Organisation of the Steering Group meetings
- A comprehensive desk review of external and internal documents (prior studies, reviews, evaluations, descriptive documents), resulting in a country level overview of child care reform, per 5 reform issues (policy environment; planning; existing and reform-oriented services; gatekeeping; costing, finances and budgeting),
- Creation of country files, with documentation upon which each of the country-level reviews is based
- Creation of maps of governance and continuum of services in their country,
- Further desk research and fieldwork data gathering,
- Devising of additional data gathering methods, in co-operation with the local stakeholders and the Head Researcher,
- Data analysis (under supervision of the Head Researcher),
- A discussion of the draft assessment report with the local stakeholders (leading to the generation of country-level recommendations for further reform efforts),
- A write up of a draft Country Assessment report,
- A description of good practices in the country (case studies of good practices).

Essential Requirements, Qualifications and Experience for the local researcher include:

- A post-graduate university degree in social sciences with sound knowledge and experience in social research,
- Knowledge of the child welfare and/or social welfare in their country,
- Experience in applied social research and policy research (preferably, in the use of qualitative and participatory research approaches),
- Excellent analytical and conceptual thinking skills,
- Teamwork and communication skills,
- Excellent written and spoken English.

Due to the limited time frame for the assessment and a need for on-going quality assurance, additional translation may be required (besides outputs that need to be written in English). This refers to individual transcripts (i.e. agendas for the Steering group meeting, notes from the meetings, transcripts from individual interviews, draft analysis, etc.). This may require commissioning of a translator in all countries apart from Serbia.
7. **TIMEFRAME FOR THE MAJOR TASKS**

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8. **DELIVERABLES**

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<tr>
<td>2. A template that includes a set of benchmarks against which to assess and analyse the reform progress (to be used in subsequent sub-regional consultations)</td>
<td>Head Researcher</td>
<td>1st of April 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Complete country files (a file with documents upon which each of the country-level reviews is based)</td>
<td>Local Researchers</td>
<td>15th of May 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Graphic presentations (maps) of governance and continuum of services for each of the countries</td>
<td>Local Researchers</td>
<td>15th of May 2007.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 1 – A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE ASSESSMENT METHODS DURING PHASE 1

1st phase - information gathering – a. UNICEF Geneva office and country offices (march 07)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Albania</th>
<th>Bulgaria</th>
<th>Serbia</th>
<th>FYR Macedonia</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF office strength</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF office weaknesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reform strength</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reform weaknesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant documents</td>
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</table>

1st phase - information gathering – b. UNICEF country offices (march 07)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description (rationale)</th>
<th>Relevant documents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contacts strength (5 reform issues)</td>
<td>Governmental sector</td>
<td>Local - list</td>
<td>National- list</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Local- list</td>
<td>National- list</td>
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<td></td>
<td>International actors</td>
<td>list</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other relevant actors</td>
<td>list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacts weakness (5 reform issues)</td>
<td>Governmental sector</td>
<td>Local list</td>
<td>National- list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Local- list</td>
<td>National- list</td>
<td></td>
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<td>International actors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other relevant actors</td>
<td>list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples of good practices (5 reform issues)</td>
<td>Governmental sector</td>
<td>Local - list</td>
<td>National- list</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Local- list</td>
<td>National- list</td>
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<td></td>
<td>International actors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other relevant actors</td>
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</table>
## Annex 3: List of Steering Group Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution/ NGO</th>
<th>Department/ unit</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>e-mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Suzana Velkovska</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
<td>Unit for social inclusion</td>
<td>Head of unit</td>
<td>070/306-028</td>
<td><a href="mailto:suzanavelkovska@mtsp.gov.mk">suzanavelkovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Sofija Spasovska</td>
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<td>Department for social protection</td>
<td>Deputy</td>
<td>070/306-027</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ssapasovska@mtsp.gov.mk">ssapasovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Navsika Perovska</td>
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<td>Department of child protection</td>
<td>Head of department</td>
<td>070/351-043</td>
<td><a href="mailto:npetrovska@mtsp.gov.mk">npetrovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
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<td>Unit for gender equality</td>
<td>Head of unit</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:elenagrozdanovska@mtsp.gov.mk">elenagrozdanovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Svetlana Cvetkovska</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
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<td>Project coordinator</td>
<td>070/498-113</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rnuoficemk@yahoo.com">rnuoficemk@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Elena Lazovska</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
<td>Unit for Social and Legal Protection of Children and Family</td>
<td>Head of unit</td>
<td>3106-657</td>
<td><a href="mailto:elazovska@mtsp.gov.mk">elazovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Elka Todorovska</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
<td>Unit for Social and Legal Protection of Children and Family</td>
<td>Adviser</td>
<td>3106-657</td>
<td><a href="mailto:elkatodorova@mtsp.gov.mk">elkatodorova@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Slobodanka Lazova</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
<td>Unit for Protection, Care and Employment of Disabled People</td>
<td>Head of unit</td>
<td>070/235-695</td>
<td><a href="mailto:slobodankazdravkovska@mtsp.gov.mk">slobodankazdravkovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mladica Kotevska</td>
<td>Institute for Social Activities</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>070/355-165</td>
<td><a href="mailto:riasa@on.net.mk">riasa@on.net.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Elena Kocovska</td>
<td>NGO Polio Plus</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>070/346-496</td>
<td><a href="mailto:elena@polioplus.org.mk">elena@polioplus.org.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Violeta Dimoska</td>
<td>NGO Poraka</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Secretary general</td>
<td>3296-961</td>
<td><a href="mailto:poraka@mol.com.mk">poraka@mol.com.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Marija Donevska PhD</td>
<td>University St. Cyril and Methodious</td>
<td>Institut for Social Work and Social Policy, Faculty of Philosophy</td>
<td>Head of the Institute for Social Work and Social Policy</td>
<td>070/369-203</td>
<td><a href="mailto:donevska@freemail.com">donevska@freemail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 4: Data Collection Instruments

1. Category of children

2. Name of the interviewee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reform issues</th>
<th>Key reforms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Service planning and decision making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reorganisation of statutory services (CSW) - service purchasing and gatekeeping on local level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Decentralisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Personnel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gatekeeping at national level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Material assistance for children and families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Community based services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Deinstitutionalisation</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Which documents INITIATED the reforms?

1.1. Which documents supported the initiation of the reform (i.e. the situation analysis, key research)?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

1.2. Who commissioned these documents and why?

_____________________________________________________________________

1.3. Who wrote them and why? (an “insider” or an “outsider”)

_____________________________________________________________________
1.4. What were the following steps/practices/documents after the reform was initiated (i.e. information guided the development of the key reform documents or the changes in legislation)? Do they make references to the documents that supported the initiation of the reform? If yes, how?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

1.5. How does this information influence (future) key changes?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2. **What are the KEY REFORM STRATEGY DOCUMENTS addressing this issue?**
   2.1. Which key reform documents exist?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2.2. Who developed these documents?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2.3. If there are more than one key document – do these overlap and, if yes, in what respect?

_____________________________________________________________________

2.4. Who is responsible for the implementation of these documents?

_____________________________________________________________________

2.5. Who is responsible for monitoring of these documents? Was monitoring already conducted? If yes, what do these monitoring documents state regarding child protection?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2.6. What kind of M&E indicators are stated in the key reform documents and/or utilised for monitoring?

_____________________________________________________________________

2.7. What is their level of implementation (to be established through the analysis of their action plans)?

_____________________________________________________________________

2.8. What are the achievements of these documents?

_____________________________________________________________________

2.9. What were the obstacles in the implementation of these documents?

_____________________________________________________________________

3. **LEGISLATION, STANDARDS, INTERSECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS?**
   3.1. Which regulatory documents were changed/introduced, based on the key reform documents?

_____________________________________________________________________

3.2. Which changes were introduced this way and why?

_____________________________________________________________________

3.3. On which level were these introduced (national/regional/local)?

_____________________________________________________________________

3.4. Who are the key stakeholders for these regulatory documents?
3.5. Is there evidence available on the implementation of these documents (‘paper-based reform’ or ‘practice-based reform’)?

3.6. Were any of the legislative and strategic reform documents prepared in cooperation with or by children?

4. COSTING, FINANCES, BUDGETS?
4.1. Was additional funding required for the reform services to be costed in a different way?

4.2. Were budgets reorganised (jointly merged from social, health care or education sectors)?

4.3. Who initiated the reorganisation of the financing?

4.4. Which body is eligible for the changes in the costing, funding or budgeting?

5. GOOD PRACTICES?

REFORM ISSUES SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

SERVICE PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING
1. WHICH METHODOLOGIES ARE DEPLOYED FOR SERVICE PLANNING?

2. IS THERE A BODY THAT WAS GIVEN A MANDATE TO LEAD THE REFORM AND SERVICE PLANNING?
   If yes, which body and why?

REORGANISATION OF STATUTORY SERVICES - "SERVICE PURCHASING" AND GATEKEEPING ON LOCAL LEVEL
1. IS CASE MANAGEMENT ORGANISED AS OUTREACH WORK OR IS IT CARRIED OUT SOLELY WITHIN SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES?

7. ARE THERE ANY OTHER INNOVATIONS IN HOW CASE MANAGEMENT IS IMPLEMENTED?

8. HOW IS THE TOTAL DEMAND FOR SERVICES IN A GEOGRAPHICAL AREA (LOCAL, REGIONAL) ESTABLISHED?
9. HOW IS INDIVIDUAL DEMAND FOR SERVICES ESTABLISHED (INDIVIDUAL CASE MANAGEMENT)?

10. HOW IS CARE MANAGEMENT ORGANISED IN TERMS OF INSTITUTIONAL SET UP (ROLE DESCRIPTION, CASE LOADS, ETC.)?

11. WORK REGARDING ASSESSMENTS, CARE PLANS, REVIEWS, MONITORING, TERMINATION?

12. NUMBER OF SERVICE USERS PER PROFESSIONAL?

13. POSITIONALITY OF BUDGETS (DEVOLVED, DECENTRALISED)?

14. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS (ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL OF CARE MANAGEMENT)

15. ARE THESE PROFESSIONALS ALSO PROVIDING SERVICES (I.E. COUNSELLING, MEDIATION) OR ACTING SOLELY AS PURCHASERS?

16. DESCRIBE BRIEFLY WHAT IS THEIR LEGAL MANDATE + THE CHANGES (IF ANY?)

17. DO THEY COVER ALL THE RISKS (ADULTS + CHILDREN, PARTICULAR GROUPS OF CHILDREN/ADULTS)?

18. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR THE REFORM?

19. WHAT ARE THE MAIN SUCCESSES FOR THE REFORM?
DECENTRALISATION

1. WHAT TYPE OF DECENTRALISATION IS TAKING PLACE (FINANCIALLY, ORGANISATIONALLY)?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2. ARE THE STATUTORY SERVICES AT LOCAL LEVEL ENTIRELY/PARTLY IN THE DOMAIN OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNANCE OR ARE THESE SERVICES DECONCENTRATED ORGANS OF NATIONAL/REGIONAL GOVERNMENT BODIES?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

3. ARE ANY OF THESE SERVICES FUNCTIONING AS PART OF REGIONAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES AND SINCE WHEN (I.E. REGIONAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN THIS CATEGORY OF CHILDREN)?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. WHICH STATUTORY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ARE PROVIDED ON THE LOCAL AUTHORITY LEVEL?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

5. IS THERE EVIDENCE OF PLANNING ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER SECTORS (CROSS-SECTORAL CO-OPERATION)?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

6. DID CHANGES IN THE ‘POSITIONALITY’ OF FUNDING/ORGANIZATION LEAD TO LACK OF FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPING COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES (INTERGOVERNMENTAL TRANSFERS)?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

7. ARE THERE REGIONAL DIFFERENCES THAT HAPPENED/WHICH WERE REINFORCED DUE TO DECENTRALISATION?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

8. INCLUDE MENTION OF OUTSOURCING TO NON-STATUTORY PROVIDERS – HOW IT’S ORGANISED/COMMISSIONING?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
PERSONNEL ISSUES
1. DO SITUATIONAL ANALYSES, KEY REFORM DOCUMENTS OR REGULATORY DOCUMENTS ADDRESS THE PERSONNEL ISSUES?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2. IF YES, HOW AND WHAT PERSONNEL ISSUES ARE ADDRESSED (DEPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION PAYMENTS, RE-TRAINING)?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

GATEKEEPING AT NATIONAL LEVEL
1. WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE OF THE INITIATION OF THE FOLLOWING PRACTICES:
   a) Initiation/reorganisation of the inspection processes
   b) Licensing of service providers
   c) Establishment of guidelines for new accountabilities within the system
   d) Establishment of an appeal system
   e) What evidence there is that such practices exist or are initiated?

MATERIAL ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
1. TYPE OF CASH AND IN-KIND ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR THIS CATEGORY OF CHILDREN?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2. ARE THE AMOUNTS PAID ADEQUATE?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

3. IS ADMINISTRATION OF THE MATERIAL ASSISTANCE EFFICIENT?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. IS IT EQUALLY GUARANTEED EVERYWHERE?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
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5. OTHER CASH BENEFITS, TARGETED TOWARDS THE POOR AND AT RISK?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
6. ARE FURTHER REFINEMENTS REGARDING MEANS TESTING REQUIRED?

7. IS THERE A NEED TO INCREASE THE AMOUNTS AVAILABLE THROUGH CASH ASSISTANCE?

8. IS THERE A NEED TO REFORM THE ACCESS FOR PEOPLE THAT ARE NOT IN RECEIPT OF BENEFITS BUT SHOULD BE?

9. UNIVERSAL BENEFITS – REGARDLESS IF THEY BELONG TO SOCIAL INSURANCE OR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE? ARE THERE ANY CORRECTIVES IN FAVOR OF AT RISK GROUPS

**COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES**

1. FAMILY SUBSTITUTE SERVICES?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of benefic.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Kinship care</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Guardianship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Short term protected shelter</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d) Foster care</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Residential institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Legal aid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Psycho-social support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Home-based care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Day care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. IS THERE OUTSOURCING TO NON-STATUTORY PROVIDERS?

4. EXISTING NON-STATUTORY SERVICES (DONOR-FUNDED, RELIGIOUS, PRIVATE) AND LINKAGES (IN TERMS OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/CONTROL) BETWEEN THEM AND THE STATUTORY PURCHASING SERVICES?
DEINSTITUTIONALISATION

1. NOTES ON HEALTH OR EDUCATION FUNDED INSTITUTIONS OR OTHERS THAT ARE FUNDED FROM SOURCES OTHER THAN CHILD/SOCIAL PROTECTION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Number of beneficiaries</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile delinquency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>placements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals for children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with disabilities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. OUTSOURCING TO NON-STATUTORY PROVIDERS?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

9) GENERAL/RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Are there children at risk in FYR Macedonia currently not perceived as service users nor targeted with assistance and should be?
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

2. Identify the key elements for progress and accomplishment in the reform process?
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

3. Identify the current gaps and difficulties in the reform process?
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

4. What are the lessons learnt from the reform process?
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

5. Recommendations for:
   a) Accelerating the reform process?
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
b) Making the reform process more effective (from paper to practice-based reform)?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

c) What is the potential that will help aid further reform efforts?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

d) What should be the next issues that should support the reform process at the country level?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

e) Why are these issues relevant for the reform?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

f) How should these issues be addressed?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

6. Explain the governance/accountability flows from central to local level of the MoLSP relative to the protection of this category of children? (Mapping)

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

7. Explain the governance/accountability flows from central to local level of other relevant Ministries involved in the protection of this category of children? (Mapping)

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

8. Note if particular age groups are more emphasised so than others (i.e. more focus on younger vs. older children)?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

9. Note if and which of the reforms targets not just children, but also other, adult service users?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

10. Are and in what way are child's opinions included in their needs assessment and/or care plan?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
## Annex 5: List of Persons Interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution/ NGO</th>
<th>Department/ unit</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>e-mail</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Slobodanka Lazova</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
<td>Unit for Protection, Care and Employment of Disabled People</td>
<td>Head of unit</td>
<td>070/235-695</td>
<td><a href="mailto:slobodankazdravkovska@mtsp.gov.mk">slobodankazdravkovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mladica Kotevska</td>
<td>Institute for Social Activities</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>070/355-165</td>
<td><a href="mailto:riasa@on.net.mk">riasa@on.net.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marija Donevska PhD</td>
<td>University St. Cyril and Methodious</td>
<td>Institute for Social Work and Social Policy</td>
<td>Head of the Institute for Social Work and Social Policy</td>
<td>070/369-203</td>
<td><a href="mailto:donevska@freemail.com">donevska@freemail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanja Cvetkovik - Daneva</td>
<td>Institute for Social Activities</td>
<td>Juvenile justice</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>075/491-724</td>
<td><a href="mailto:riasa@on.net.mk">riasa@on.net.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lidija Sterjov</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
<td>Unit for social inclusion</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>3106-238</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lidijasterjov@mtsp.gov.mk">lidijasterjov@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snezana Kostovska - Frckovska</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
<td>Department for finance</td>
<td>Head of department</td>
<td>3106-235</td>
<td><a href="mailto:snezanakostovska@mtsp.gov.mk">snezanakostovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Violeta Dimoska</td>
<td>NGO Poraka</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Secretary general</td>
<td>3296-961</td>
<td><a href="mailto:poraka@mol.com.mk">poraka@mol.com.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katerina Petrova</td>
<td>MoLSP</td>
<td>Unit for gender equality</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>3 106-662</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kpetrova@mtsp.gov.mk">kpetrova@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusanka Petova</td>
<td>Institute for Social Activities</td>
<td>Unit for family violence</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>075/438-238</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dukip@yahoo.com">dukip@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena Kocovska</td>
<td>NGO Polio Plus</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>070/346-496</td>
<td><a href="mailto:elena@polioplus.org.mk">elena@polioplus.org.mk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 6: Governance System Map

Map 2. Decision Making/Accountability/Reporting in Republic of Macedonia
### Annex 7: Questionnaire for Social Services, Finances and Budgets

1. Which child social protection services exist and which level are they financed from? For each service indicate the level from which it is financed: N (national level), R (regional level), M (municipal level), D (donor funded). For services that are financed from multiple sources, indicate all the sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statutory services</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family substitute services</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential institutions</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster care</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term protected shelter</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship care</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family care services</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day care</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day care</td>
<td>DF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home based care</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho-social support</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal aid</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. What is the cost per child in an average institution, a typical day-care center for children with disability and remuneration for foster families?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>The number of children</th>
<th>Cost per child (€)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential home for children without parents and parental care</td>
<td>Majcin Dom 86 children</td>
<td>4442,02 per year; 370,16 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential home for children with disability</td>
<td>11 Oktomvri 90 children</td>
<td>4165,3 per year; 348,03 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential home for children with disability, street children, drug abusers (including adults)</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>3330,94 per year; 277,58 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day-care center for children with disability, street children, drug abusers (including adults)</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>1852,05 per year; 154,34 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day-care center for victims of violence (children as secondary beneficiaries)</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>924,65 per year; 77,06 per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster care</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>97,56 per month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: if some of the mentioned services do not exist, provide data for some other corresponding service from the same group (family substitute or family care).

3. How are costs of services calculated (mark with an X)

   A. Running costs + staff    B. Per beneficiary (child)    C. Other (specify)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential home for children without parental care</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential home for children with disability</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daycare center for children with disability</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Do beneficiaries participate in service costs (cost sharing) and for which services?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Statutory services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family substitute services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential institutions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster care</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term protected shelter</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship care</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family care services</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day care</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home based care</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho-social support</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal aid</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Is there some specific mechanism for financing alternative child protection services. If yes, describe in a few sentences how this works and indicate the total amount of funds spent in 2006.

No specific mechanism for financing alternative child protection services exists. Total amount of funds spent for the rights of child protection in 2006 is **7,699,187 Euros**.
Annex 8: Governance and service map per user groups

MAP 1. Type and number of Child Care Services in Republic of Macedonia
**Annex 9: Good Practice Portfolio**

*Reform of the Child Care System  
Taking stock and Accelerating action*

South-East Europe Consultation  
Sofia, Bulgaria, 3-6 July 2007 July

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**TEMPLATE FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES IN CHILD CARE REFORM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNICEF COUNTRY OFFICE: FYR Macedonia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESPONDANT: Biljana Lubarovska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-MAIL ADDRESS: <a href="mailto:blubarovska@unicef.org">blubarovska@unicef.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEL: + 389 2 32 31 150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Good practice 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/description of the good initiative:</th>
<th><strong>Day Care Center for Street Children (DCCSC)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency/Service/NGO responsible:</td>
<td>- Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MoSLP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Center for Social Welfare in Skopje</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td>- Ms. Suzana Velkovska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ms. Ana Panceva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title/Function:</td>
<td>- Head, Department for Social Care and Sheltering of Socially Excluded Persons (MoLSP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Coordinator, DCCSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:SuzanaVelkovska@mtsp.gov.mk">SuzanaVelkovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a> <a href="mailto:apanceva@yahoo.com">apanceva@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implementation level**

- National
- Regional (county)
- Local (city, municipality, district)

Name: Kisela Voda and Suto Orizari in Skopje

**Type of reform effort**

- Consultative process
- Planning and financing
- Re-organization/creation of services

**Area of application**

- Cash benefits
- Statutory services
- Family substitute services
- Family and child support services
- Gate-keeping
- Outreach
- Targeting and forecasting
- Costing and financial flows
Internet link where further information can be found: www.mtsp.gov.mk
Attached document:
The following documents are available in Macedonian only
2. The Program for Social Protection 2006
3. The Rule book for establishment and functioning of the day care centers for street children

Why this is a good practice:

There are over 1000 street children in Skopje that live on the edge of bare existence, spend their daytime in the streets, begging or cleaning windshields, left with no possibility for education and normal child development, and exposed to risk of violence, abuse and/or exploitation. Most of them have family but live in an improvised “houses” with no access to water, electricity etc; receive social allowance from the Government; do not go to school; do not have health insurance and no access to free of charge and regular medical services; lack of basic thing i.e. food, cloths, shoes etc.

The previous care practice for these children was not systematic and organized but sporadic without major results. Their immediate needs but without further planning for their inclusion in the society.

The first day care center in the municipality Kisela Voda in Skopje was opened by the Government in 2004 and up to date estimated 400 children attended that center. Second center in the municipality of Suto Orizaru in Skopje was opened in 2006 and it is managed by an NGO but with financial support by the Government. There are estimated 30 children visiting this center. A third one is planned to be opened by the end of the year, in municipality Gjorce Petrov in Skopje.

In the two centers there is a team of professionals that works on daily basis with the children and provides psycho-social support to the children; they developed educational and extracurricular activities that support the mental and physical development of the children; they work with the parents; they provide regular systematic health check and vaccination; they help children to enroll in the state educational system; make need assessment of the children and their families, helps raise the awareness on the importance of education. As a result, this year 33 children were in enrolled in the regular schools.

Through this process the Ministry develops partnership with the civil society and creates an NGO support network; collects and utilizes data on children which will inform evidence-based policies; helps their inclusion in the child protection system; develops a strategic approach that will lead to their social inclusion and inclusion in regular live stream.
**Good practice 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/description of the good initiative:</th>
<th>Creation of a De-Institutionalization Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency/Service/NGO responsible:</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MoLSP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td>Ms. Slobodanka Zdravkovska Lazova</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title/Function:</td>
<td>Head, Department for Persons with Disabilities, MoLSP</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>☐ Regional (county)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>☐ Local (city, municipality, district)</td>
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<td>Name:…………………………………………….</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of reform effort</td>
<td>☐ Consultative process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>x Planning and financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>x Re-organization/creation of services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of application</td>
<td>x Cash benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>x Statutory services</td>
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<tr>
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<td>x Gate-keeping</td>
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<td>x Outreach</td>
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<td></td>
<td>x Targeting and forecasting</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Attached document: /</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Why this is a good practice:**

Since early 2000, some important steps have been taken in the process of de-institutionalization and child care sector reform and significant results achieved, including: legislative changes were introduced in the Social Protection Law and the Family Law, continuum of services was created e.g. 18 day-care centers were established, discharge of children with mild and severe disabilities from Demir Kapija Institute, the network of foster families countrywide was strengthened, standards for community and family based services were set-up (Rule Book on foster families and day care centers enacted) etc.

However, the interventions in this sector have been conceptualized and operationalized thus far outside of an overall sector reform strategy. This significantly hindered the sustainability (both financial and operational) of some of the interventions.

Thanks to the commitment of the MoLSP and the pledge of UNICEF in supporting interventions to promote child care system reform, in 2006, the Government established a Technical Working Group within the MoLSP that will lead the process of creating a comprehensive national DI strategy. This document will include more systematic analysis of the relevant public policies; budgets and staff (re)deployment needs based on plans for gradual transformation of public institutions; in-depth
assessments of professional training needs; standardization of new professional child care practices, protocols and procedures.

The successful development of a strategy is expected to lead to a comprehensive reform of the child care system in FYR Macedonia, including the closing/transformation of all exiting residential institutions for children with special needs; the development of alternative forms of care such as family reunification, foster care and adoption, and small group homes; improved protection services for children.

### Good practice 3

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Title/description of the good initiative:</th>
<th>Rehabilitation and Social Inclusion of Children with disabilities from the Special Institute in Demir Kapija</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency/Service/NGO responsible:</td>
<td>Special Institute in Demir Kapija</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td>Mr. Petar Nikolov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title/Function:</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address:</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation level</td>
<td>❑ National</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Regional (county)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Local (city, municipality, district)</td>
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<td>Name: Demir Kapija City</td>
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<td>Type of reform effort</td>
<td>❑ Consultative process</td>
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<td>❑ Planning and financing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Re-organization/creation of services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area of application</td>
<td>❑ Cash benefits</td>
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<td>❑ Statutory services</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Family substitute services</td>
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<td>❑ Family and child support services</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>❑ Gate-keeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Targeting and forecasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Costing and financial flows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Other: /</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Internet link where further information can be found: /
- Attached document: /

Why this is a good practice:

As part of the continued support to the de-institutionalization process, a special rehabilitation programme was launched in early 2001 in the Institute for people with severe disabilities with the aim of preparing children for discharge and placement in alternative family or community-based care services.

UNICEF, in close cooperation with the MoLSP, engaged a team of professionals to assist children with severe disabilities living in the Institute in developing new skills through educational, social and rehabilitation activities in order to prepare them for life outside of the Institute. The team of professionals (two defectologists, speech therapist, physiotherapist, social worker, caregiver, neuro-psychiatrist) prepared an individual development plan and a complete medical examination was done. The children were divided into groups depending on the level of their development and progress and a team of professionals was working with the children 8 hours per day.
As a result, up-to-date 32 children left the Institute and were placed in their biological or foster family. The state support to these families is usually material (the monthly social allowance). There is a lack of continues assistance trough education and training activities, there are no local support networks developed, and due to the weak capacities of the Centers for Social Welfare they do not receive prompt and effective supervision and help.

Despite the identified weakness and the fact that the number of direct beneficiaries of this project is rather limited, this activity is seen as an important entry point for UNICEF to continue advocating and pushing for de-institutionalization and, more broadly, for child care sector reform in the country. Institutionalized children with severe disabilities are among the most vulnerable ones and this was from the beginning the main rationale for starting de-institutionalization activities in Demir Kapija Institute. The project shows that alternatives to institutionalization are possible, even for children with severe disabilities.

Good practice 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/description of the good initiative:</th>
<th>Day Care Center for Children who need Special Care (DCC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency/Service/NGO responsible:</td>
<td>Ministry for Labor and Social Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td>Ms. Slobodanka Zdravkovska Lazova</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title/Function:</td>
<td>Head, Department for Persons with Disabilities (MoLSP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:SlobodankaZdravkovska@mtsp.gov.mk">SlobodankaZdravkovska@mtsp.gov.mk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation level</td>
<td>x National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Regional (county)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>x Local (city, municipality, district)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name: City of - Berovo (1) Bitola (1) Veles (1) Skopje (2) Tetovo (1) Stip (1) Gvegelija (1) Kriva Palanka (1) Kumanovo (1) Probistip (1) Delcevo (1) Gostivar (1) Kicevo (1) Kavadarci (1) Prilep (1) Manastirec (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of reform effort</td>
<td>❑ Consultative process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Planning and financing</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>x Re-organization/creation of services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area of application</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Family substitute services</td>
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<td>x Family and child support services</td>
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<td>x Gate-keeping</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Outreach</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>x Targeting and forecasting</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>❑ Costing and financial flows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>❑ Other:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Internet link where further information can be found: /
Why this is a good practice:

Since the de-institutionalization process started in the early 2000 with UNICEF support, opened 17 DCCs countrywide (there was none at the beginning of the process) and three more are planned to be opened by the end of 2008. At present over 200 children are using the services of the DCC. These day-care centres are for children with moderate and severe disabilities. The centres are opened six hours per day, five days per week. Children can play, learn, enhance their skills and develop their potentials. The DCCs allow the children to be integrated within their home, families and community.

Due to the children attendance of the centres and their inclusion in the programs developed by the DCC staff, their communication and learning abilities improved and as a result 14 children have been successfully integrated in the mainstream educational system.

The professional qualification of social workers in the management of day care centres was developed according to a networking approach aimed at increased collaboration of the social service and the local community, which resulted in developing a local action plan for social welfare in some municipalities.

Good practice 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title/description of the good initiative:</th>
<th>Establishment of a Resource Centre for Children –at – risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency/Service/NGO responsible:</td>
<td>Institute for Social Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td>Ms. Mladica Kotevska</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title/Function:</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:riasa@on.net.mk">riasa@on.net.mk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Implementation level: National
- Type of reform effort: Planning and financing, Re-organization/creation of services
- Area of application: Cash benefits, Statutory services, Family substitute services, Family and child support services, Gate-keeping, Outreach, Targeting and forecasting, Costing and financial flows
- Internet link where further information can be found: /
- Attached document: /

Why this is a good practice:
In order to support the MoLSP in the development of evidence-based policies and actions, financial and technical support was provided to the Institute for Social Activity (ISA) for the setting up of a resource centre. The objective of this activity is to improve data collection on children with special needs at national and local level and to advance the existing family and community-based services for children temporarily or permanently deprived of primary caregivers. The resource centre will result in a unified approach in collecting, processing and disseminating data on this category of children. It will also facilitate the monitoring, coordination and delivery of training activities for all relevant professionals on data collection and processing, preparation and circulation of reports related to the available data on children, creation of programs and plans for development of professional capacities, development of regulations and standards based on the data collected etc.

The ISA is under the MoLSP, responsible for monitoring of the professional conduct of social sector professionals, for developing of standards and protocols, and develops guidelines for implementation of social services, provides training to professionals and it is responsible for collection of data, and production of analysis reports.