



## **OPENING DOORS FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN**



# **LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN FAMILIES AND END INSTITUTIONALISATION FOR CHILDREN IN EUROPE**

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## FOREWORD

The transition from institutional to family- and community-based care has received growing support from the European Union and its Member States. On one hand, the EU has been issuing policy guidance and allocating significant amounts of EU funds while, on the other hand, countries across Europe are increasingly adopting strategies or action plans to shift away from institutions. More and better family-based care options are available for children unable to grow up with their families of origin.

Since 2013, we have joined forces under the Opening Doors for Europe's Children campaign to influence and monitor these developments at national and European level, using our expertise from the ground.

As the Opening Doors campaign comes to an end, we should not forget that this journey is far from over. Much more needs to be done to ensure that no child grows up in an institution, to prevent placement in alternative care for reasons of poverty, disability or other discriminatory practices, and to build strong child protection systems that ensure children are not harmed.

As negotiations for the EU Budget 2021–2027 are ongoing, and countries are setting their EU funds priorities for these seven years, we have a unique opportunity to ensure that future investments respond to the needs of children and families. EU funds should be directed towards developing a wide range of prevention and quality alternative care services, including family support, social housing, foster care, inclusive education, health and other mainstream services.

We call upon the new European leadership to renew the EU's commitment towards the transition from institutional to family- and community- based care.

We welcome in particular the recent European Parliament's Resolution on Children's Rights, which calls on "Member States to ensure that unnecessary family separation is prevented, and that family- and community-based services

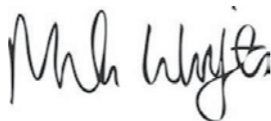
<sup>1</sup> [P9\\_TA\(2019\)0066, para 43](#)

are strengthened to allow all children to grow up not in institutions but in families and communities".<sup>1</sup>

As civil society actors engaged in the protection and promotion of children's rights, we will keep advocating for the end of institutionalisation of children. Join us in this growing movement: together, we will build a Europe that protects children and helps them to thrive in loving families and communities.



**Jana Hainsworth**  
Secretary General, Eurochild



**Mark Waddington**  
Chief Executive, Hope and Homes for Children



**Valerie Ceccherini**  
Representative to the EU, SOS Children's Villages International



**Danielle Douglas**  
President, International Foster Care Organisation



**David Astiz**  
Advisor, FICE Europe

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With the campaign coming to an end, we would like to thank all Opening Doors international partners, national coordinators, civil society partners, experts and supporters, without whom the Campaign would not have been possible. Though many have changed positions over the years, we would like to highlight some of the following (not an exhaustive list).

The Opening Doors campaign was guided by experts in each of the international partners: Jana Hainsworth (Eurochild); Delia Pop, Mark Waddington, Michela Costa, Nolan Quigley (Hope and Homes for Children); Marie Wuestenberg, Valerie Ceccherini, Radostina Paneva, Miriana Giraldi (SOS Children's Villages International); Olgica Cekic, David Astiz (the European branch of the International Federation of Educative Communities – FICE Europe) and Britta Schölin, John Role, Danielle Douglas, Jean Anne Kennedy (International Foster Care Organisation – IFCO).

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Augutavicius (SOS Children's Villages Lithuania); Liliana Rotaru, Lina Botnaru (CCF Moldova and HHC Moldova); Tomasz Polkowski (Child and Family Foundation Poland); Stefan Darabus, Adrian Oros (HHC Romania); Dragana Ciric Milovanovic, Maja Popovic, Lazar Stefanovic, Sasha Stefanovic (the Network of Organizations for Children of Serbia – MODS); David Astiz, Irene Kopetz (FICE Spain); and Halyna Postoliuk, Kateryna Zalevska (HHC Ukraine).

Many officials from the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of the EU, and Member States governments have supported and contributed to the campaign. They are too numerous to mention. Nonetheless two European Commission officials stand out for their commitment and time investment: Marie-Anne Paraskevas and Andor Urmos, thank you for keeping the issue of institutional care for children high on the EU agenda.

We have benefitted enormously from working side-by-side other civil society colleagues and partners, in particular members of the European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-Based Care. Particular thanks to: Simona Giarratano, Nadia Hadad and Haydn Hammersley (European Disability Forum); Frank Sioen, Ines Bulic and Natasa Kokic (European Network for Independent Living); Gabor Petri, Laura Marchetti (Mental Health Europe); Irina Papancheva, Caroline Rose (Lumos); Irene Bertana, Magdi Birta (Coface-Families Europe); Milan Šveřepa (Inclusion Europe); and international agencies, namely Aaron Greenberg and Michaela Bauer (UNICEF); Jan Jarab and Susanne Bosman (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights). We also acknowledge the partnership with the Platform on International Cooperation of Undocumented Migrants, European Council of Refugees and Exiles, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes Foundation and Missing Children Europe.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CPR	Common Provision Regulation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Country Specific Recommendations
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
ECCP	European Code of Conduct on Partnership
ERDF	European Regional and Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
ESF+	European Social Fund Plus
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Fund
EU	European Union
FICE	International Federation of Educative Communities
IFCO	International Foster Care Organisation
IPA	Instrument of Pre-Accession
MFF	Multi-Annual Financial Framework
NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
UN	United Nations
UN CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UN CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It all started, in 2013, with a common vision: to end institutional care for children in Europe. Decades of research show that institutional care simply cannot provide the one-to-one care, love, and attention a child needs to develop. The European Union plays a key role in transforming child protection systems, by providing the additional investment needed to accelerate reform, leading the transfer of knowledge and experience among Member States, and keeping the transition from institutional to family- and community-based care high on the political agenda.

To maximise the potential of the European Union and realise the vision where no child grows up in institutional care, civil society organisations across EU Member States, pre-accession countries and neighbourhood countries came together under a pan-European campaign: Opening Doors for Europe's Children. The campaign aimed to support national efforts to develop comprehensive, integrated child protection systems that strengthen families and ensure quality family- and community-based care for children, by leveraging EU funding and policy, and building capacity in civil society. More than a sum of individual efforts at national level, the campaign presented a united position of relevant civil society organisations towards key decision-makers.

Based on the information gathered throughout the course of the campaign and through the Opening Doors for Europe's Children National Coordinators, this final report first reflects on the rationale for the campaign and how it operated (part 1). Part two discusses the progress towards child protection system reform across campaign countries as well as the developments at the EU level, while highlighting some key contributions of Opening Doors throughout the years. The report does not attribute all the signs of change to the campaign, but rather provides an overview of the contributions made and progress achieved. Finally, drawing on the lessons learnt from the campaign, the report ends by presenting some final recommendations to the European Union (part 3).





## PART 1 – WHY A CAMPAIGN?

### The problem: institutional care of children

A caring and protective family, immediate and extended, is central to a child's health, development, and protection.<sup>2</sup> Yet over a million children grow up in care across Europe and hundreds of thousands are confined to institutions for children.<sup>3</sup> Most of these children have at least one living parent and their separation could be often prevented if the right services were in place to support families.

Institutions are residential settings characterised by a “one size fits all” approach: depersonalisation, rigid routines, closed doors, and a lack of any warmth, love or affection. Children are grouped together in numbers, sometimes running into the hundreds. These large groups of children are supervised by employed staff and are stigmatised, isolated and discouraged from maintaining ties or reconnecting with their own parents and families. Siblings are often separated due to disability, gender, and age, further eroding children's sense of identity and belonging to a family and a community.

Institutions are damaging to children without exception. Most children experience low academic attainment, while some fall victim to trafficking and exploitation. On leaving care children and young adults are often met with uncertainty and fear, because of the lack of support available to them. They are more likely to experience higher rates of unemployment, social isolation, homelessness and depression. Many struggle with parenting responsibilities and end up having their own children taken into care.<sup>4</sup>

When child protection systems rely on institutions, they do not consider the individual needs and best

interests of child. Other forms of quality family-based<sup>5</sup> and community-based care offer a more caring and suitable environment for the development of children. Furthermore, institutions are expensive, ineffective and hold back the development of services to support vulnerable families preventing their breakdown, and the provision of quality family- and community-based alternatives.

### The solution: transition from institutional to family- and community-based care<sup>6</sup>

Children need stable and secure relationships with caring adults to thrive. A safe, loving and nurturing family environment is crucial to a child's development. When the separation of children from their parents is absolutely necessary, the choice of the care setting and the period spent in care has to be appropriate to each child and promote stability and permanence: children need individualised care, which institutions cannot provide.

The transition from institutional to family- and community-based care is a long-term process requiring systemic changes at national level. It involves the planned closure of institutions for children, as well as other crucial aspects such as:

- The development of a range of support services in the local community that aim to prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families;
- The development of a range of quality alternative care options for children who need alternative care;
- Support to young people ageing out and leaving care in their transition to independent living.

2 Corinna Csáky (2009) “Keeping children out of harmful institutions: why we should be investing in family-based care” (Save the Children UK); Anne E. Berens and Charles A. Nelson (2015) “The science of early adversity: is there a role for large institutions in the care of vulnerable children?” *The Lancet* 386(9991)

3 Eurochild (2010) *Children in alternative care: National Surveys*, 7

4 Opening Doors for Europe's Children (2018) “[Maintain, Strengthen, Expand – How the EU can support the transition from institutional to family and community-based care in the next MFF](#)”, 9

5 Li, D. Ching, G. S. & Chu, C. M. (2019), “Comparing Long-Term Placement, Outcomes of Residential and Family Foster Care: A Meta-Analysis”, *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, 20(5). 653–664.

6 Opening Doors for Europe's Children (2018) “[Maintain, Strengthen, Expand – How the EU can support the transition from institutional to family and community-based care in the next MFF](#)”, 19–22

## Our response: a pan-European campaign

At the request of its membership, Eurochild conducted a survey and published the report on the situations of children in alternative care in 2009.<sup>7</sup> Most notably, it found that an estimated one million children in the EU were living in alternative care. Many of those children were confined to harmful institutions. At the time, the placement of children under three years of age in institutions was still happening in several Member States.<sup>8</sup> The survey also revealed that certain vulnerable groups were over-represented in care and that the implementation of standards to protect the rights of children in alternative care was still weak and with little involvement of children and their families in the planning.

At the same time, with the publication of the report of the Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care,<sup>9</sup> the European Union (EU) had taken important steps to promote the transition from institutions to quality family-based and community-based care (also known as deinstitutionalisation) for all persons. The approach was rooted in the international human rights framework, including the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>10</sup> (UN CRC), the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD),<sup>11</sup> and the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (the Guidelines)<sup>12</sup>.

The EU has also a key role to play in leveraging national commitments and providing additional resources to achieve systemic transformations, ultimately ensuring that children can grow up in inclusive societies.

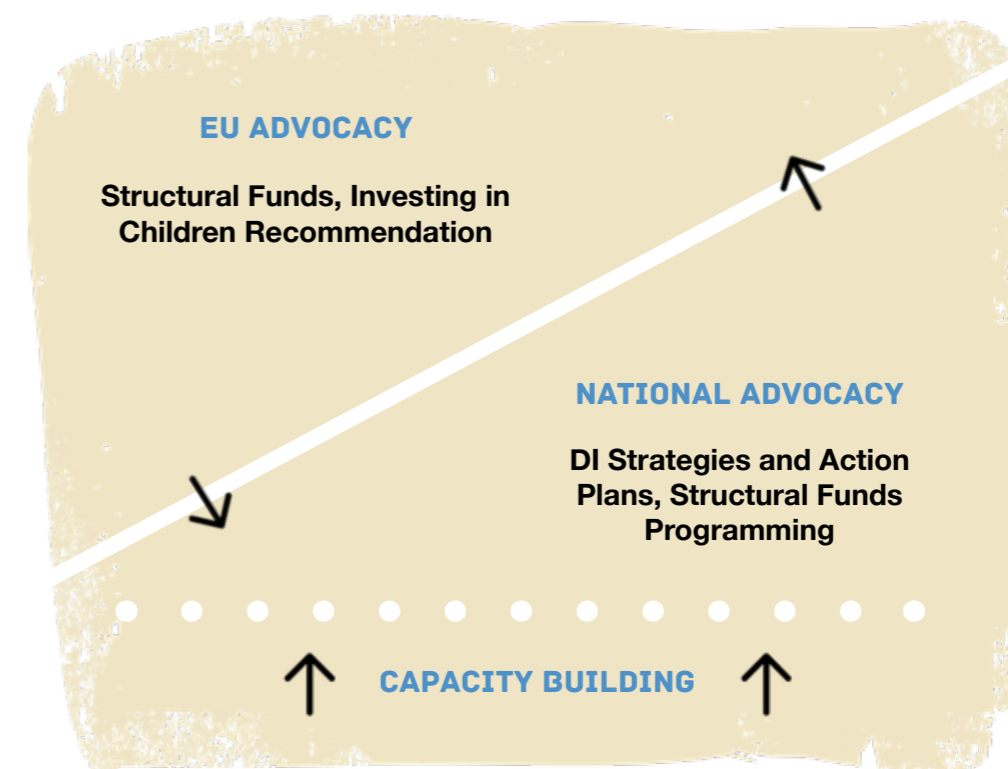
To join up national and EU efforts, Eurochild and Hope and Homes for Children launched the Opening Doors for Europe's Children (Opening Doors) campaign in 2013, calling for the strengthening of families and the end of institutional care in Europe. During Phase I, the campaign ran across twelve European countries, eight EU Member States (Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania), two EU pre-accession countries (Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina) and two EU neighbourhood countries (Ukraine and Moldova).

In 2016, based on lessons learned and achievements from Phase I of Opening Doors<sup>13</sup>, the campaign entered Phase II. It expanded to include three more international partners: the International Federation of Educative Communities (FICE) Europe, the International Foster Care Organisation (IFCO) and SOS Children's Villages International. The campaign also expanded geographically to Austria, Belgium, Croatia and Spain – contributing to break the myth that institutional care is only found in Eastern Europe.



## Our approach

Opening Doors adopted a “top-down/bottom-up” approach. In doing so, Opening Doors influenced the decision-making processes both at national and European level, using the expertise from the ground to inform the policy work at European level and, in turn, influencing European policies and funds to promote improvements at national level.



<sup>7</sup> Eurochild (2010) [Children in alternative care: National Surveys](#)

<sup>8</sup> UNICEF (2010) [At Home or in a Home? Formal Care and Adoption of Children in Eastern Europe and Central Asia](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Report of the Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care \(2009\)](#)

<sup>10</sup> United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child (Adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990)

<sup>11</sup> United Nations (2006) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Adopted 13 December 2006, entered into force 3 May 2008)

<sup>12</sup> [Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children \(2010\) \(Adopted 24 February 2010 by UN General Assembly\) A/RES/64/142](#)

<sup>13</sup> Opening Doors for Europe's Children (2016) [Ensuring EU funds and policy make a positive difference for children. Looking Back. Looking Forward](#)

### National Coordinator Testimony

*“The national pressure to complete the process of deinstitutionalisation was very high, but the “know-how” of the process was very poor. As a result, we decided to put our energy into a bottom-up approach and support professionals working in institutions to make changes and spread their knowledge and new experience. I’m glad to see how this changed process has become more and more contagious”*

Ljiljana Ban, Opening Doors for Europe’s Children coordinator in Croatia and president of FICE Croatia

### Outputs and ways of working

The campaign made use of a variety of tools and approaches to build the capacity of the national coordinators and the campaign’s influence on EU and national policies and funds.

The advocacy capacity building was supported by the following:

- Advocacy toolkit (planner, templates for data collection, advocacy strategy and reporting, and a monitoring and evaluation framework);
- EU elections toolkit;
- Guidance notes on Structural Funds;
- Online survey for capacity needs assessment;
- Partners meetings, and communications and networking training;
- Bi-lateral support for data collection documents, national advocacy strategies.

The external influencing of EU and national policies and funds was supported by:

- Country factsheets: Since 2014, the Campaign drafted and issued country fact sheets with information on alternative care and deinstitutionalisation reforms across Europe. These factsheets represented one of the key strengths of the campaign, welcomed by the European Commission and national decision-makers. The country factsheets introduced a coherent approach to collecting data across Opening Door countries. See annex 1 for an overview.
- Briefings, position papers and publications: See annex 2 for an overview.
- Newsletters, website and presence on social media: The Campaign produced 3 videos and regularly released newsletters targeted at the European Commission, Permanent Representatives to the EU, Members of the European Parliament, European and National CSOs and media.

### Strategic objectives

Although the campaign’s strategic objectives evolved to reflect the rapidly changing contexts, overall Opening Doors sought to achieve the following:

- Ensure deinstitutionalisation is retained as a priority for the EU institutions, and European States are encouraged to use EU funding and policy coordination tools to reform their child protection systems via the transition towards family- and community-based care;
- Support national civil society partners to develop the knowledge, expertise and capacity to advocate for deinstitutionalisation at national level, and to leverage and monitor EU policies and funding;
- Ensure the Opening Doors campaign is a reputable, well-known force for change, providing a platform to promote deinstitutionalisation reforms in Europe, based on broad international partnership, with credible and respected national coordinators.

- Partnerships with other coalitions, networks and civil society organisations: International partners and national coordinators of the campaign worked both individually and in coalitions to push for deinstitutionalisation reforms. At European level, the international partners collaborated with different alliances, such as the European Expert Group for the transition from institutional to community-based care, or groups consisting of different NGOs engaged on DI processes, such as Unicef, Lumos, Save the Children, the European Disability Forum, Coface Families Europe and more. Opening Doors also provided contributions to the Community Living for Europe: Structural Funds Watch.<sup>14</sup>

### Governance of the campaign

The governance structures of the campaign evolved over the years, combining mechanisms for coordination among the international partners with a network of National Coordinators in charge of providing country-specific information and leading national advocacy.

### Advocacy lessons learnt

Opening Doors was an innovative and successful campaign, which has been significantly educational throughout its lifetime. It can be summed up in four key lessons learnt:

1. The need for clarity of focus with a clear theory of change, a monitoring and evaluation framework, and ownership across the partnership of the advocacy strategy and messaging.
2. The importance of buy-in from national civil society. Their involvement should ideally be accompanied by adequate financial resource and continued support for capacity building, training and peer exchange.
3. The importance of country-specific evidence. The Country Factsheets were clearly one of the most valued outputs of the campaign.

4. The importance of working together. This is supported by clear and transparent governance arrangements and clarity on roles and responsibilities.

### National Coordinator Testimony

*“One of the biggest achievements in Hope and Homes for Children BiH advocacy process is participation in creation of laws in the field of social protection. Foster care Law in BiH was adopted in 2017. It regulates placement of children up to 3 years in foster care families. We have also commented the Law on protection of families with children that is foreseen to be adopted next year. The creation and adoption of these laws have been a very important part of the reform of the social protection system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Implementation of these laws will put us one step closer to ensure the placement of children in a family environment.”*

Mirza Avdić, Opening Doors for Europe’s Children coordinator in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Development Coordinator, Hope and Homes for Children BiH

<sup>14</sup> Neil Crowther, Gerard Quinn & Alexandra Hillen-Moore (2017) [Opening up communities, closing down institutions: Harnessing the European Structural and Investment Funds](#) Community Living Europe: Structural Funds Watch



## PART 2 – LOOKING BACK: THE CAMPAIGN’S CONTRIBUTION

Over the years and across the geography covered by the campaign, Opening Doors has observed some trends at European and national level. Several countries across Europe have continued to put in place the legislative and policy frameworks necessary to achieve a systemic and sustainable reform of their care system. At the same time, several challenges persist – including linked to the use of EU funds – which hinder deinstitutionalisation and keep many children confined to institutional care.

### EU commitments to deinstitutionalisation

Since before 2013, the EU had shown growing commitment to deinstitutionalisation in both its policies and funding regulations. The adoption of the European Commission Recommendation on Investing in Children in 2013 created momentum as it called on Member States to use European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) to stop the expansion of institutional care in Europe and promote quality family- and community- based care.<sup>15</sup> Thanks also to Opening Doors’ advocacy, in 2017, the European Commission reaffirmed the importance of family support in preventing, when possible, children’s removal from their family.<sup>16</sup>

The European Pillar of Social Rights, adopted in 2017, further recognised the rights of children and young people without or at risk of losing parental care, and recognised the “need of every child to affordable early childhood education and care of good quality”.<sup>17</sup>

### Activity snapshot: Using national evidence to influence EU processes, policies and funds

At EU level, Opening Doors engaged in many relevant EU processes linked to policies and funds: the European Semester process; country progress reporting for pre-accession and neighbouring countries, EU Human Rights Dialogues; and the European Union Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021–2027. The main tools used to contribute to these processes were the Opening Doors country factsheets published from 2014 onwards and shared with targeted European Commission officials. Moreover, the Campaign issued position papers that, where relevant, were prepared in cooperation with other stakeholders such as the European Expert Group for transition from institutional to community-based care.

The European Semester Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) rarely include targeted calls on deinstitutionalisation.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, the need for reforms in policy areas that are critical to the support of deinstitutionalisation are consistently recognised in the CSRs. For instance, in 2019, some Member States received CSRs related to inclusive education. Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, France and Sweden received CSRs related to the employment of disadvantaged groups<sup>19</sup>, and Croatia, Lithuania, Italy, and Poland received CSRs related to the availability and equal access to social services.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> [COM 2013/112/EU](#)

<sup>16</sup> Taking stock of the 2013 Recommendation on “[Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage](#)”, SWD(2017) 258 final

<sup>17</sup> [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) (2017) (proclaimed by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission), Article 115 Li, D. Ching, G. S. & Chu, C. M. (2019), “Comparing Long-Term Placement, Outcomes of Residential and Family Foster Care: A Meta-Analysis”, *Trauma, Violence and Abuse*, 20(5). 653–664.

<sup>18</sup> European Commission 2014 [Country Specific Recommendation for Romania](#) call on Romania to “speed up the transition from institutional to alternative care for children deprived of parental care”

<sup>19</sup> People with disabilities and migrants

<sup>20</sup> European Commission [2019 European Semester: Country Specific Recommendations / Commission Recommendations](#)



However, the country reports that precede the CSRs have increasingly specifically referenced deinstitutionalisation. In 2018, for instance, deinstitutionalisation for children was reflected in three country reports (Bulgaria, Latvia, Romania), and the Hungarian country report mentioned deinstitutionalisation for people with disabilities.<sup>21</sup> In 2019, numerous country reports made references to community services that are linked to deinstitutionalisation, including home care and community-based care. In fact, ten country reports<sup>22</sup> out of a total of twelve Member States participating in Opening Doors featured the topics of inclusiveness, transition to community-based services and care, and low employment of people with disabilities.<sup>23</sup>

Building on the European Commission's proposal for the Multi-Annual Financial Framework for 2021–2027,<sup>24</sup> a novelty was introduced in the 2019 country reports: an annex (Annex D) dedicated to “Investment Guidance on Cohesion Policy Funding 2021–2027”. This demonstrates a strengthening of the ties between EU's policy monitoring mechanism and EU funds. The transition from institutional to family- and community-based care was among the priority investment<sup>25</sup> areas for all Opening Doors Member States in the European Semester Country Reports.<sup>26</sup> For Austria and Spain, inclusive education for disadvantaged groups was also prioritised.

Regarding EU pre-accession countries, deinstitutionalisation continues to remain high on the agenda both in Serbia<sup>27</sup> and Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, deinstitutionalisation has been raised in past EU human rights dialogues with Ukraine and Moldova.

21 European Commission [2018 European Semester: Country Reports](#)

22 Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania

23 European Commission [2019 European Semester: Country Reports](#)

24 [A Modern Budget for a Union that Protects, Empowers and Defends The Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021–2027, COM/2018/321 final](#)

25 Commission (2019) [2019 European Semester: Country Reports](#)

26 Namely Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Spain, Romania

27 [Serbia 2019 Report, SWD\(2019\) 219 final](#), 28 and 79

28 [Analytical Report](#) Accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union, SWD(2019) 222 final, 52 and 139

29 Opening Doors for Europe's Children [ПРОЕКТ ВСЕУКРАЇНСЬКИЙ КОНКУРС ЖУРНАЛІСТСЬКИХ МАТЕРІАЛІВ](#)

30 Opening Doors for Europe's Children Ukraine (2014) [Collection of the all-Ukrainian competition winners' journalistic materials dedicated to children institutional upbringing](#)

31 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISsn7YY7ZXk&list=PL-pOkSd\\_oI2f0ezhvjaMQ9QW9tjzjdLf&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISsn7YY7ZXk&list=PL-pOkSd_oI2f0ezhvjaMQ9QW9tjzjdLf&index=1)

## National progress towards child protection and care systems reform

Child protection reforms are currently being implemented in Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine with the support of national strategic frameworks on deinstitutionalisation.

### Activity snapshot: Engaging journalists and mass-media in Ukraine (2014)

In order to raise public awareness on institutional care and push for change, in 2014, Opening Doors in Ukraine conducted a competition for journalists.<sup>29</sup> Participants included representatives of influential national newspapers such as «Den», «Dzerkalo Tyzhnia», «Reporter», leading national television channels and regional mass-media from all over Ukraine. A publication collated the winning materials.<sup>30</sup> A short and powerful video on the campaign rotated on the main national and regional channels to cover up to 10 million people in TV audiences.<sup>31</sup> Thanks to this intensifying mobilisation in 2014–2015, the President of Ukraine initiated the development of a National De- institutionalisation Strategy, which was approved in 2017.

However, the lack of recent quantitative and qualitative data on children without or at risk of losing parental care remains a major impediment towards the implementation of national deinstitutionalisation strategies, in particular in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belgium, Greece, and Spain. Indeed, the systematic collection of accurate data on the numbers and characteristics of children in care, the root causes of institutionalisation, and the function of the child protection system as a whole is crucial. It would help ensure better policies, improve the state's ability to protect and promote children's rights, and lead to sustainable reforms.

In the last years, alternatives to institutionalisation have been increasingly promoted. For instance, in 2017, legislation on foster care and on the protection of families with children were adopted in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Belgium, and the long-awaited legislation on foster care and adoption came into force in 2018 in Greece and Croatia. Moreover, Ukraine adopted regulations, amongst others, on the provision of social services in the community and the allocation of public funds for inclusive education.

### National Coordinator Testimony

*“The communication between policymakers, stakeholders and NGOs has improved a lot in the past year. Since September 2018, the Estonian Ministry of Social affairs has called together all the institutions and organizations who are working in the field of alternative care (state institutions and NGOs) and has involved them in the problem-solving, planning and decision-making processes. The working group meets regularly once every three months.”*

Helen Saarnik, Opening Doors for Europe's Children national coordinator in Estonia and Project Coordinator, Estonian Child Welfare Union

32 For example, in Bulgaria, the number of children in foster care have increased by 200% since 2007; in Moldova, the number of professional foster care families increased nine-fold and the number of children in foster care increased 15-fold since 2006

The number of children growing up in institutions also decreased and, in 2018, family-based care grew in most of the campaign countries. For example, in Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Serbia, and Moldova, the number of children without parental care who grow up in foster and kinship families exceeded the number of children living in institutions.

To support the development of family-based solutions, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, and Hungary launched nationwide campaigns to promote foster care and to encourage recruitment of new foster carers for children without parental care. Austria is paving the way to improve the quality and access to family-based care for unaccompanied migrant children as an alternative to reception centres. The quality of family-based placements has also improved in the last years, thanks to legislative reforms which improved the quality of alternative care provided at national level. For instance, according to a new law in Lithuania, each municipality has the duty to develop a network of care centres responsible for recruitment, training, and support of professional foster carers. In Estonia, the national register of foster families ensures the quality of foster care across the country by assessing and monitoring the work of all foster carers. In Romania, in counties where deinstitutionalisation projects are being implemented, there is a positive increase of foster care providers which, as a form of alternative care, is preferred by local authorities. In 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina introduced mandatory training for foster carers and professionals in foster care.

Unfortunately, despite the positive trend of foster care development in Europe,<sup>32</sup> the system does not always function optimally. National Coordinators in Croatia, Hungary, Moldova and Ukraine reported in 2018 that support services for foster families are rare or insufficient; often the allowances provided for children do not cover their basic needs, and there is a lack of specialized foster care for children under the age of three and for children with disabilities.

Children with disabilities, in particular, continue to be disproportionately represented in institutional care, and face high levels of discrimination and neglect. According to UNICEF, across Eastern Europe and Central Asia, children with disabilities are almost seventeen times more likely than other children to be institutionalised.<sup>33</sup> The UN Committee of the Rights of Persons with Disability has emphasised its concern and subsequently articulated clear recommendations on deinstitutionalisation to the European Union (2015)<sup>34</sup> and most campaign countries (except Estonia and Romania who have not yet been reviewed by the Committee).<sup>35</sup> In fact, specialised support services in the community remain underdeveloped,<sup>36</sup> and worrying abuses have been uncovered in some Bulgarian group homes.<sup>37</sup> Some have shown that instead of investing in prevention and the provision of quality family and community-based care for children with disabilities, too many deinstitutionalisation actions focus on the restructuring of the buildings or setting up smaller residential facilities which often retain an institutional character.<sup>38</sup>

There is also a lack of inclusive education in countries covered by the campaign. For instance, in Belgium, children with disabilities are often enrolled in special boarding schools during the week and then transferred for the weekend to other institutions. Furthermore, the waiting period for children with disabilities to access a personal assistance budget and get specialised support in the traditional education system is almost five years, whereas placement in an institution can take as little as nine months.

General concerns have been expressed by national coordinators about the situation of care leavers throughout Europe. The age where young people leave care differs considerably, and their support to independent living is inadequate. Breaking the cycle of disadvantage means continuing the support of young people in the transition out of care, guaranteeing access to education, housing, employment or training opportunities.

#### National Coordinator Testimony

*“From 2009 to the present, only 23% of children in Serbia have returned to their families of origin out of the total number of children who left institutional care. We need to ensure their return to their families of origin or prevent their removal as a priority. Strengthening families and supporting the stay of children in their families should be the task of the social protection system in Serbia.”*

Saša Stefanović, Opening Doors for Europe’s Children national coordinator in Serbia and Director of the Network of Organizations for Children of Serbia

#### National Coordinator Testimony

*“Since deinstitutionalisation had already been successfully completed in Austria; our approach within the OD Campaign was focused on improving the quality of care in small ‘social-pedagogic group homes’ through the development of quality standards for professional alternative care settings in Austria. A further focus was given to advocacy work to achieve equal opportunities for care leavers and improve the quality and access to family-based care for unaccompanied migrant children as an alternative to reception centres.”*

Maximilian Ullrich, Opening Doors for Europe’s Children national coordination in Austria, FICE Austria

33 UNICEF (2012) ‘Children under the age of three in formal care in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: a rights-based situation analysis’, 45

34 CRPD/C/EU/CO/1

35 Austria (2013, CRPD/C/AUT/CO/1), Belgium (2014, CRPD/C/BEL/CO/1), Bulgaria (2018, CRPD/C/BGR/CO/1), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2019, CRC/C/BIH/CO/2-4), Croatia (2015, CRPD/C/HRV/CO/1), Greece (2019, CRPD/C/GRC/CO/1), Hungary (2012, CRPD/C/HUN/CO/1), Latvia (2017, CRPD/C/LVA/CO/1), Lithuania (2016, CRPD/C/LTU/CO/1\*), Moldova (2017, CRPD/C/MDA/CO/1), Poland (2018, CRPD/C/POL/CO/1), Serbia (2016, CRPD/C/SRB/CO/1), Spain (2019, CRPD/C/ESP/CO/2-3), Ukraine (2015, CRPD/C/UKR/CO/1)

The funding of child protection systems reforms remains a concern across all sixteen countries covered by the Opening Doors campaign. The child protection sector continues to be underfinanced and lacks the capacity to ensure the transformation of welfare and protection services and continues to rely on institutions. There is also a widespread shortage of staff, poor material resources and high turnover of professionals who lack training and supervision to change practice in child protection.

#### Use of EU funds across campaign countries

When the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) regulations were adopted in 2013, the intention was to promote a sustainable use of funds by requiring Member States to link their investments to national strategic policy frameworks (also known as the “ex-ante conditionality”). Most notably, Member States were requested to include “measures for the shift from institutional to community-based care” in their strategic policy framework on promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and social exclusion.<sup>39</sup> This was accompanied by specific references to the transition from institutional to community-based care in the fund-specific regulations of the European Social Fund (ESF)<sup>40</sup> and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)<sup>41</sup> – thus showing great political commitment.

Nine Member States<sup>42</sup> of the Opening Doors campaign countries subsequently allocated EU funds for actions supporting deinstitutionalisation. This constituted an important step towards supporting sustainable child protection reforms. In some countries, EU funds have been channelled into the closure of institutions and the development of family- and community-based care and services.

36 UNICEF and European Disability Forum (2018) [Everybody counts: A situation analysis of the inclusion of children with disabilities in the Western Balkans and Turkey](#)

37 Disability Rights International (2019) [A dead end for children: Bulgarian’s group homes](#)

38 Disability Rights International (2019) [A dead end for children: Bulgarian’s group homes](#); Structural Funds Watch (2018) [Inclusion for all: achievements and challenges in using EU funds to support community living](#)

39 [Common Provisions Regulation, Regulation \(EU\) No 1303/2013](#)

40 [European Social Fund, Regulation \(EU\) No 1304/2013, Article 8](#)

41 [European Regional Development Fund, Regulation \(EU\) No 1301/2013, Article 5](#)

42 Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania

43 [Commission delegate regulation \(EU\) No 240/2014 of 7 January 2014 on the European code of conduct on partnership in the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds](#)

44 Opening Doors for Europe’s Children (2018) [Influencing the use of EU funds in the best interest of children through reviewed EU cooperation framework](#)

45 European Union Thematic Network on Partnership (2018) [Technical Dossier No 7 Review of the European Code of Conduct on Partnership](#)

#### Activity snapshot: Ensuring an efficient implementation of the European Code of Conduct on Partnership

Since 2013 the European Code of Conduct on Partnership (ECCP) requires all Member States to consult with civil society over the planning and spending of ESIF, to involve them as partners throughout the entire programming cycle including preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.<sup>43</sup> To support good implementation of the ECCP, Opening Doors actively participated in the work of the Thematic Network on Partnership.<sup>44</sup> The campaign recommendations on representativeness and transparency in the procedures in the work of the Monitoring Committees of Operational Programmes were adopted. Specifically, Technical Dossier No 7 contains campaign recommendations on the meaningful representation of civil society in the monitoring committees and the role of the EU in their work.<sup>45</sup>

For example, since mid-2016, Estonia started to provide a range of information services for those who were interested to become providers of family-based alternative care (adoptive families, foster families and kinship families) as well as for managers and staff of residential homes for children.



### Activity snapshot: Influencing EU funds in Romania

During 2013–2014, Opening Doors in Romania organised a series of meetings, together with representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and other stakeholders (presidents of the County Councils, secretary of the County Councils and directors of the Child Protection Departments) and with the participation of the Director of the National Authority for the Protection of Children’s Rights.

As a follow-up of these meetings, concrete suggestions and a portfolio of possible EU-funded projects for the 2014–2020 period were developed.<sup>46</sup> Some of the suggestions and the feedback from these meetings were incorporated in the 2014–2020 National Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Children’s Rights, which, inter alia, mentioned DI and the transition from institutional care to alternative care as a priority. By continuing to maintain pressure over the years, two calls were launched in 2018, one regarding prevention of family separation and the other regarding the renewal of the foster network at national level. One call was launched in 2019 regarding the support provided to young care leavers.

46 Hope and Homes for Children Romania (2015) [Concluziile consultarilor privind portofoliile de proiecte din domeniul social, aferente alocarii de fonduri structural pentru](#)

47 Opening Doors for Europe’s Children (2018) [“Maintain, Strengthen, Expand – How the EU can support the transition from institutional to family and community-based care in the next MFF”](#)

48 An update for 2019 was provided by National Coordinator FICE Croatia.

The table below provides a brief overview on the allocation and use of EU funds across campaign countries allocated for actions supporting deinstitutionalisation. It is based on information collected

for the purpose of a report<sup>47</sup> released in 2018 and by Opening Doors’ National Coordinators. All this information is focused on the 2014–2020 programming period.

Country	Amount (million euros)	Fund	Details
Austria	n/a	n/a	Information not available.
Belgium	n/a	n/a	Information not available.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.5	IPA II	4 institutions have been in the process of closure and 98 professionals underwent training seminars.
Bulgaria	160	ESF, ERDF, European Agricultural Fund for Regional Development (EAFRD)	Reconstruction and maintenance of buildings (e.g. small group homes); training and supervision of the specialists working in the newly established services; development of new services for children and families (medico-social services, community centres); foster-care development, and salaries of employees.
Croatia <sup>48</sup>	50	ESF, ERDF	Support for the deinstitutionalisation and transformation of homes for adults and children with disabilities; support of the process of deinstitutionalisation and prevention of institutionalisation of children and youth; expansion of the social services network in the community, improvement of infrastructure of social services providers for children and youth as support to the DI process, improving the infrastructure of centres for social welfare in support of DI process. Of €50 million allocated funds, only 21 million were contracted.
Estonia	6	ESF	Support for care reforms including counselling via internet or phone; individual psychological counselling; mentoring, and different forms of group counselling; PRIDE (Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education), a training programme for adoptive and foster families.
Greece	15	ESF, ERDF	Support for the closure of an institution for children and adults with disabilities. However, since there is no strategy or plan on deinstitutionalisation funds were not directed towards deinstitutionalisation reforms, but have been distributed to children’s institutions.

Country	Amount (million euros)	Fund	Details
Hungary	18.7	ESF, ERDF	Through the Compass Home for Children project, increasing child protection services from 600 to 800 places. The first infrastructure development under this project is a 20-person special home for children that will consist of three housing units, for schooling boys with psychological problems.
Latvia	91	n/a	Support for deinstitutionalisation, including through the preparation of individual deinstitutionalisation plans, reorganisation plans for childcare institutions, development of regional deinstitutionalisation plans, communication, publicity action, and deinstitutionalisation management.
Lithuania	76	ERDF, ESF	For the transition from institutional to community-based care, €38 million has been set aside for the development, piloting, and implementation of new social services and the remaining amount is to be used towards the development of infrastructure.
Moldova	0	n/a	No EU funding has been allocated for deinstitutionalisation reform.
Poland	n/a	ESF, ERDF	Resources are available in Poland with respect to social inclusion and poverty eradication. Some funding is used to support the construction of modern, well-equipped small group homes for up to 14 children without necessarily ensuring quality care for children.
Romania	100	ESF, ERDF	Support for the closure of 50 old-type institutions including institutions for children with disabilities, the development of preventative services.
Serbia	1,45	IPA II	Support for seven projects that contribute towards the deinstitutionalisation reform process. Although the realisation of these projects began in 2017, there is little information on how much of these funds are allocated for deinstitutionalisation reforms for children, since the deinstitutionalisation reform process includes both adults and children.
Spain	n/a	n/a	Information not available.
Ukraine	0	n/a	No EU funding has been allocated for deinstitutionalisation reform.

The allocation of EU funds towards deinstitutionalisation within the EU, pre-accession and neighbourhood countries, has not been without challenges. Not enough EU funding is channelled in to the development of prevention services and quality family- and community-based care options for children (e.g. services to support reintegration into the family of origin, support for foster parents for all children, personal assistance, social housing, etc). Instead, there is evidence that some Member States are using EU funds to modernise existing facilities and re-organising institutions for children by creating smaller units (Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, and Poland),<sup>49</sup> which have been observed, in some cases, to provide institutional treatment and abuse.<sup>50</sup> In addition, national coordinators report that in Croatia and Romania in 2018, there were considerable delays in launching EU calls for funding deinstitutionalisation reforms.

#### EU funds in the next programming period (2021–2027)

The current EU budget cycle ends in December 2020. The new EU budget cycle 2021–2027 presents an opportunity for the EU to renew its commitment to deinstitutionalisation. Negotiations are still ongoing, and a final agreement should be reached by the end of 2020. At the time of writing this report, promising trends can be observed.

#### Activity snapshot: Prioritising deinstitutionalisation in the 2021–2027 EU funds

Opening Doors stepped up its efforts in 2017 to ensure the EU funds will continue to support deinstitutionalisation. The campaign worked together with other civil society organisations at EU level, including the European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-Based Care, in order to influence the European Commission proposals for fund-specific regulations for the 2021–2027 programming period. Once released, the campaign assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals, issued concrete recommendations (released in December 2018)<sup>51</sup> and amendments to the European Parliament, Council of the EU, and Member States.

For the EU funds to be disbursed across EU Member States, the European Commission proposal echoes the 2014–2020 regulatory framework. For the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR),<sup>52</sup> the Commission continues to require Member States to link their investments to national strategic policy frameworks (now called “enabling conditions”).<sup>53</sup> It further asks Member States to include “measures for the shift from institutional to community-based care” under their national strategic policy framework for poverty reduction and social inclusion.<sup>54</sup> This proposal is supported by the European Parliament.<sup>55</sup> Equally noteworthy is the specific reference to deinstitutionalisation among the cross-cutting priorities of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+).<sup>56</sup>

49 Structural Funds Watch (2018) [Inclusion for all: achievements and challenges in using EU funds to support community living](#);

Fundamental Rights Agency (2017) [From institutions to community living. Part II: funding and budgeting](#)

50 Disability Rights International (2019) [A dead end for children: Bulgarian's group homes](#); Mental Advocacy Centre (2017) [Straight jackets and seclusion: An investigation into abuse and neglect of children and adults with disabilities in Hungary](#)

51 Opening Doors for Europe's Children (2018) [Maintain, strengthen, expand: How the 2021-2027 EU budget can end the institutionalisation of children in Europe – Recommendations](#)

52 According to the European Commission proposal, the Common Provisions Regulation sets out common provisions for seven shared management funds, including the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund Plus

53 [Proposal for a Common Provisions Regulation, COM\(2018\)375 final](#), Article 11

54 Ibid, Annex III

55 [European Parliament Resolution on the European Commission proposal for the Common Provisions Regulation, P8\\_TA\(2019\)0310](#)

56 [Proposal for the European Social Fund Plus, COM\(2018\)0382](#), Article 6; [European Parliament Resolution on the European Commission proposal for the European Social Fund Plus, P8\\_TA\(2019\)0350, Amendment 91](#)

The European Parliament goes one step further, by proposing that an additional 5.9 billion euros is dedicated to a “Child Guarantee” scheme.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, it proposes to strengthen the Partnership Principle and to earmark 2% of the ESF+ for the capacity building of civil society.<sup>48</sup>

Unfortunately, the European Commission did not explicitly reference deinstitutionalisation in the European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF),<sup>49</sup> nor the Instrument for Pre-Accession III (IPA III).<sup>50</sup> However, the European Parliament asks to explicitly reference deinstitutionalisation in both the ERDF and the IPA III.<sup>51</sup>

Responding to concerns over investments in institutions, as described above, the European Parliament further asks to exclude from ERDF investments the construction and refurbishment of institutional care facilities that segregate or infringe on personal choice and independence.<sup>52</sup>

Regrettably, the European Commission IPA III proposal did not include a provision that ensures the participation and capacity of civil society organisations and service users in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes. Both the European Parliament and the European Council proposed to introduce a form of partnership.<sup>53</sup>

Finally, the European Commission showed high political commitment for deinstitutionalisation globally by introducing for the first time a reference to the transition from institutional to community-based care for children in its proposal for the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).<sup>54</sup> This proposal is supported by the European Parliament and the Council.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>47</sup> [European Parliament Resolution on the European Commission proposal for the European Social Fund Plus, P8\\_TA\(2019\)0350, Amendment 97, 332](#)

<sup>48</sup> [Ibid, Amendment 94](#)

<sup>49</sup> [Proposal for a regulation on the European Regional Development Fund, COM\(2018\)/372 final](#)

<sup>50</sup> [Proposal for a regulation of the Instrument for Pre-Accession III, COM\(2018\) 465 final](#)

<sup>51</sup> [European Parliament Resolution on the proposal for a regulation on the European Regional Development Fund, P8\\_TA\(2019\)0303, Amendment 55; European Parliament Resolution on the proposal for a regulation on the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, P8\\_TA\(2019\)0299, Amendment 99](#)

<sup>52</sup> [European Parliament Resolution on the proposal for a regulation on the European Regional Development Fund, P8\\_TA\(2019\)0303, Amendment 104](#)

<sup>53</sup> [European Parliament Resolution on the proposal for a regulation on the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, P8\\_TA\(2019\)0299, Amendment 52; Council Partial General Approach 7539/19](#)

<sup>54</sup> [Proposal for a regulation on the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, COM\(2018\) 460 final, Annex II and III](#)

<sup>55</sup> [European Parliament Resolution on the proposal for a regulation on the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, T8-0298/2019, Amendment 337 and 481; Council Partial mandate for negotiations 10305/19, Annex II and III](#)



## PART 3 – LOOKING AHEAD: OUR RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

There have been many positive developments over the course of the campaign, both at EU and national level. At the same time, across Europe children continue to be unnecessarily separated from their families and many are still placed in institutions for children. Equally, quality family-based care and support services in the community – like day care centres; specialist support for children with disabilities; social housing, etc. – remain underdeveloped, thus failing to tackle the root causes of family separation.

### National Coordinator Testimony

*“In the previous two decades, successful and progressive de-institutionalisation reforms were on-going. Unfortunately the last ten years show no further developments, but rather deterioration in some areas. Despite substantial EU funding and national legislation in Hungary prohibiting the placement of children under twelve years of age in institutions, the number of children entering care has risen during the past three years. This has been the case in particular for children under three years old, due to a lack of appropriate preventative measures, early support services, and gate-keeping efforts. The promotion of foster homes have been ineffective. In particular, Roma children and children with disabilities are still in institutionalised care in high numbers: there is no strategy developed for the de-institutionalisation of the most vulnerable children in care”.*

Maria Herczog, Opening Doors for Europe’s Children national coordinator in Hungary and Chair, Family, Child, Youth Association, Hungary

It is essential that the EU continues to champion deinstitutionalisation as a human rights issue. The EU has the opportunity and the means to give millions of children within and beyond its borders the chance to access a better life – no longer confined to institutions but growing up with the love and support of families and communities, equally included in society.

Drawing upon lessons learnt throughout the years, the partners of Opening Doors would like to make some final recommendations to the European Union’s institutions to continue promoting the transition to family- and community-based care for children in Europe.

We call on the newly elected European Parliament, the Council of the EU, and the new European Commission to take concrete steps to maintain, strengthen, and expand support towards deinstitutionalisation:

- **Mainstream the reform of child protection systems and the transition towards family- and community-based care in all relevant policies and bilateral processes, namely the:**
  - New comprehensive strategy on child rights, as proposed by President Ursula Von der Leyen in her proposals for Vice-President Dubravka Šuica (Commissioner-designate for Democracy and Demography) portfolio;
  - European Child Guarantee;
  - Post-2020 European Disability Strategy;
  - Post-2020 EU Strategic Framework for national Roma integration strategies;
  - Post-2019 EU Human Rights Action Plan;
  - EU semester process;
  - Enlargement package;
  - Pre-accession dialogues;
  - Human Rights Dialogues.

- **Ensure in the trilogue phase of the next EU budget negotiations that all relevant EU funds will explicitly support the transition from institutional to family- and community-based care**, namely the Common Provisions Regulation, the European Social Fund Plus, the European Regional Development Fund, the Instrument for Pre-Accession III and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument.
- Ensure that, in the **2021–2027 period**, the programming and implementation of the European Social Fund Plus, the European Regional Development Fund, the Instrument for Pre-Accession III and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument:
  - Prioritises **preventing the separation** of children from their families and the institutionalisation of all children;
  - Prioritises **child protection system** strengthening, with a particular focus on deinstitutionalisation and the provision of quality family- and community-based services and care;
  - Explicitly **excludes investment in institutions**, regardless of the size, which perpetrate institutional treatment, across all policy objectives;
  - Ensure the **participation of civil society** in the development, implementation and monitoring of the programmes.
- **Evaluate the use of EU funds in the 2014–2020 programming period for de-institutionalisation and child protection systems reforms**, in line with the requirements of the UN CRC, UN CRPD and the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, and make the results public.
- **Expand and systematise data collection and improve related methodologies to ensure all children are taken into consideration.** Data collection should support the goals and use the definitions of the UN CRC, UN CRPD and the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children.

<sup>56</sup> European Expert Group on the transition from institutional to community-based care with Hope and Homes for Children (2019) [Checklist to ensure EU-funded measures contribute to independent living by developing and ensuring access to family-based and community-based services](#)

## ANNEX 1: OPENING DOORS COUNTRY FACTSHEETS

All publications listed below are available on the website of Opening Doors until December 2021. After this date, you will find this material on the respective websites of the International Partners of the Opening Doors campaign.

Country	National Coordinator	Factsheets available for the following years
<a href="#">Austria</a>	FICE Austria	2018, 2017, 2016
<a href="#">Belgium</a>	La Porte Ouverte	2018, 2017, 2016
<a href="#">Bosnia and Herzegovina</a>	Hope and Homes for Children	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Bulgaria</a>	National Network for Children	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Croatia</a>	FICE Croatia	2018, 2017, 2016
<a href="#">Estonia</a>	Estonia Union for Child Welfare	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Greece</a>	Roots Research Center NGO	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Hungary</a>	Family, Child, Youth Association	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Latvia</a>	SOS Children's Villages	2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Lithuania</a>	SOS Children's Villages	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Moldova</a>	CCF Moldova	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Poland</a>	Child and Family Foundation	2018, 2017, 2016
<a href="#">Romania</a>	Hope and Homes for Children	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Serbia</a>	Network of Organisation for Children of Serbia (MODS)	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014
<a href="#">Spain</a>	FICE Spain	2018, 2017, 2016
<a href="#">Ukraine</a>	Hope and Homes for Children	2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014

## ANNEX 2: OPENING DOORS PUBLICATIONS

All publications listed below are available on the website of Opening Doors until December 2021. After this date, you will find this material on the respective websites of the International Partners of the Opening Doors campaign.

- [Deinstitutionalisation and Quality Alternative Care – Lessons learned and the way forward](#) (October 2014)
- [DI Myth Buster](#) (October 2014)
- [Are European Structural and Investment Funds opening doors for Europe's institutionalised children in the 2014-2020 programming period?](#) (February 2015)
- [Child protection system reform in the Hellenic republic: Call for action](#) (July 2015)
- [Mapping institutional and residential care for children in Greece](#) (September 2015)
- [Collection of Ukrainian competition winners' journalistic materials dedicated to children growing up in institutions](#) (2015)
- [Manual for journalists «Media coverage of children being forced to institutional upbringing: how the media can affect the situation in society»](#) (2015)
- [Guide «Destroying the myths of deinstitutionalisation»](#) (2015)
- [Overview «Deinstitutionalisation and quality alternative childcare in Europe \(Lessons learned and moving forward\)»](#) (2015)
- [Maximising the use of EU funds – Supporting DI reforms in Bulgaria: Good and Bad practices](#) (April 2016)
- [Ensuring EU funds and policy make a position difference for Children: Looking Back. Looking Forward](#) (December 2016)
- [Ending the Era of Institutional Care in Europe: Call for action](#) (June 2017)
- [Position Paper to the European Union in Preparation for the next Multiannual Financial Framework prepared for the Estonian Presidency Conference Dignity and Independent Living, Tallinn, Estonia](#) (September 2017)
- [Deinstitutionalisation of Europe's Children: Questions and Answers guide](#) (2017)

- [Strengthening Families, Ending Institutional Care: Recommendations to the European Union on post-2020 Multi-Annual Financial Framework](#) (January 2018)
- [Maintain, Strengthen, Expand – How the EU can support the transition from institutional to family and community-based care in the next MFF](#) (March 2018)
- [Maintain, strengthen, expand: How the 2021-2027 EU budget can end the institutionalisation of children in Europe – Recommendations](#) (December 2018)
- [The use of EU policies and funding for deinstitutionalisation reforms in 2014-2020 in Europe](#) (December 2018)
- [Why the institutionalisation of children must end: key facts](#) (2018)

**WWW.OPENING DOORS.EU**





