



De-Institutionalisation: Supporting transition from institutional to family- and community-based alternative care

WEBINAR

15 February 2023, 10-12 CET

Webinar will take place on the **Zoom platform**.

Registration link: [Register here](#)

Moderation will be done by UNICEF ECARO: Ms. Joanna Rogers, UNICEF Expert on Deinstitutionalisation

Background

Children separated from their families and placed in institutions and isolated from mainstream society, are highly vulnerable to violence, neglect and abuse and often end up in adult institutions. Deep-rooted social norms in many countries contribute to the separation of children from their families, particularly for [children with disabilities](#). Institutional care is strongly associated with stunting, and poor health and educational outcomes. These adverse effects increase with the duration of time spent in institutions. Leaving institutions for family-care is strongly associated with substantial levels of recovery for growth and cognition, weight and height, educational and health outcomes. Conversely, children raised in supported family-based care demonstrate significantly higher outcomes across all domains.

The [DataCare project](#), a joint initiative of Eurochild and UNICEF's Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO), has calculated a total number of 302,979 children in residential care in the EU countries. DataCare has mapped alternative care data systems across the 27 Member States of the European Union and the United Kingdom to inform a shift towards a more transparent, common approach to data collection and reporting across Europe.

Over the past decade, many countries in the region have made progress on phasing out institutional care for children or are starting to do so, particularly for children under the age of three. A [UNICEF independent evaluation](#) on the progress of reforms from 2005 to 2012 found a noticeable decline in the rate of children being cared for in large facilities. It also concluded, however, that deinstitutionalisation efforts in many countries have not prioritized the most vulnerable children of all – those under the age of three, the Roma, and those with disabilities – and that reforms require continued investment and momentum to ensure that no child is left behind in institutional care.

Webinar series - Exchange Platform for Child Guarantee National Coordinators

The term 'deinstitutionalization' (DI) refers both to the return of children to the community from institutional settings and the prevention of entry to institutions. It is therefore essential that as much attention is paid to the prevention of children, particularly young children, entering institutions as to enabling them to return to live in families and communities.

Objectives

The webinar will highlight some the key elements of the deinstitutionalization process, including prevention, and high-quality care for children, as well as identify key drivers that stimulate the necessary deinstitutionalisation reforms and good practices and practical tools for their implementation, monitoring and sustainability.

Using examples from the European Child Guarantee Phase III pilot countries as well as other member states, the webinar will highlight programmatic interventions, partnerships and targets being used to accelerate the deinstitutionalisation agenda. It will also highlight the importance of representation of deinstitutionalisation into national plans and budgets and will also acknowledge the ongoing response to the Ukrainian refugee crisis and challenges related with the adequate care and durable solutions for refugee children in need for protection.

Agenda

| Opening of the Webinar | |
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| 10:00 – 10:05 | Moderator: Ms. Joanna Rogers, UNICEF Expert on Deinstitutionalisation |
| Opening remarks | |
| 10:05 – 10:15 | Ms. Katarina Ivanković-Knežević, Director, Social Affairs, - Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission |
| | Mr. Philippe Cori, UNICEF Deputy Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia |
| Overview of child care reforms: key drivers and common challenges in the EU and neighboring countries | |
| 10:15-10:40 | Ms. Stela Grigoras, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF ECARO Ms. Joanna Rogers, UNICEF Expert on DI |
| Panel Discussion: The journey to child care reform and lessons from the phase III of the European Child Guarantee | |
| 10:40 – 11:50 | Government Representatives from Member States - Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Name, position, Bulgaria- Name, position, Croatia,- Name, position, Greece- Name, position, Italy |
| Closing remarks | |
| 11:50 -12:00 | Mr. Aaron Greenberg, Child Protection Chief, UNICEF ECARO |