



Child Protection Index

GEORGIA
2015

Measuring the
Fulfillment of a
Child's Rights

Created by a Consortium of Local, National, Regional and International Members of Civil Society



ChildPact



The Georgian Coalition for Child and Youth Welfare (GCCYW) is a union of Georgian civil society organisations that work for children and youth and together advocate for the protection of child rights and the development of systems to support children and youth. GCCYW is a member organisation of ChildPact. www.gccy.ge

The Coalition for Child and Youth Welfare includes the following member organisations:

Anti-Violence Network of Georgia • Association of Helping Children with Hearing and Speaking Disorders • Association Anika • Association of Disabled Women and Mothers of Disabled Children “Dea” • Association of Small Group Homes Service Providers • Breath Georgia • Caritas Georgia • Charity Humanitarian Center Abkhazeti • Child and Environment • Child and Family Association • Children of Georgia • Civitas Georgika • First Step Georgia • GCRT – Georgian Centre for Psychosocial and Medical Rehabilitation of Torture Victims • Georgian Alliance for Safe Roads • Georgian Association of Child Neurologists and Neurosurgeons • Georgian Association of Social Workers • Georgian Autism Society • Georgian Union of People Living with HIV “Real People – Real Vision” • Georgian Young Lawyers’ Association (GYLA) • Global Initiative on Psychiatry – Tbilisi, Foundation • Human Rights Priority • Institute of Non-violent Communication • International Association for Aid to Children Suffering from Leukemia • International Support Fund for the Children Suffering from Leukemia • Juvenile Justice Research Center • Life Chance • McLain Association for Children • Mtskheta-Mtianeti Committee of AVN of Georgia • Our Home Georgia • Partnership for Children • Partnership for Human Rights • People in Need • Public Health Foundation of Georgia (PHF) • Rehabilitation Initiative for Vulnerable Groups • Right for Health • Save the Children International Georgia • Society “Biliki” • SOS Children’s Villages Georgia • Studio “A D C” • Tanadgoma – Center for Information and Counseling on Reproductive Health • The Union “Parent’s Support” • Union “Child, Family, Society” • Union “Imedi +” • Union “Oriony” • Union “Sapari” • Welfare and Development Center • Women’s Information Center • World Vision Georgia • Young Partners

ChildPact is a regional coalition of 650 NGOs that advocates for greater child protection reform in the Southeast Europe and South Caucasus subregions. Established in 2011, ChildPact is a coalition of coalitions: its members are national networks of child-focused NGOs from 10 countries within the European Union’s Enlargement and Neighbourhood zones. www.childpact.org

World Vision is a network of Christian relief, development and advocacy organisations dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. World Vision Middle East and Eastern Europe Office is the partner for the Child Protection Index. www.wvi.org/meero

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INTRODUCTION

Acknowledgements

The development and publication of the Child Protection Index in Georgia has been possible due to the collaborative efforts of many individuals. Two individuals in particular have made this publication possible. Together, we would like to thank

Mirela Oprea, ChildPact's Secretary General, for her strategic support, her never-ending energy and enthusiasm, and her compassionate yet driven leadership. Ms. Oprea was instrumental in all tasks leading up to the Index – strategy, fundraising, communications, and most of all, building momentum amongst key stakeholders.

Andy Guth, World Vision's key technical child protection expert for the index. Mr. Guth has worked tirelessly towards a unified monitoring approach for child protection policies and implementation across the region. His first-hand knowledge of both field-level and policy-level reform realities provided the right perspective for a strong index design and data implementation plan.

ABBREVIATIONS

CPS Child Protection System

UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Making it Real: 25 Years after the UNCRC

Last November, we marked the twenty-five year anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We also marked the twenty-five year anniversary of a changed region. With the fall of Communism twenty-five years ago, open borders, migration, trafficking, disability, child labour, domestic violence and the institutionalisation of girls and boys became “issues” in a wider regional conversation.

With this “new” regional narrative and a new child rights convention in hand, Georgia and other countries in the region have been working to set new systems in place that make communities and nations safer for girls and boys. However, there is a complexity to the reform process that demands multiple, coordinated steps by many actors for successful steps forward. This is the challenge that still eludes most governments throughout the world.

To overcome this complexity, all stakeholders must work together in unity – government at all levels and sectors, civil society, donors, experts and citizens – for the sake of our children.

The Child Protection Index is a tool to help us unify our efforts more concretely. In simple terms, the UNCRC provides a list of rights for children and youth that are necessary to ensure their protection, participation and well-being. In this pilot year, the Index measures government policy and actions to ensure these rights. For now, the Index concentrates only on government because governments are signatories to the UNCRC. There are also some child protection actions that only governments can achieve, given their unique status to govern, control territory and look after the well-being of their citizens.

With a more complete understanding of government policy and actions, we believe that other child protection actors will be take more strategic actions in support of government reform efforts. The alignment of donors, civil society actors and non-state international organisations can build a productive platform to align strategies and accelerate progress towards the fulfillment of the UNCRC.

We hope the Child Protection Index is a tool to convene new partnerships and unpack the complexity of the reform process to afford greater contributions from all.

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Conny Lenneberg
Regional Leader
World Vision Middle East & Eastern Europe

Towards Unity: Civil Society's Unique Role

With support from World Vision's family of organisations, ChildPact organised in 2011 to support and unify civil society organisations dedicated to child rights and protection around the Southeast Europe and South Caucasus subregions. Today, as a fully registered and independent regional coalition, ChildPact hosts ten member coalitions from ten countries and represents 650 local and national NGOs at regional and international fora.

ChildPact's primary objective is to improve the protection and well-being of girls and boys. The Child Protection Index was created to monitor and influence child-related policies at national levels so that together civil society can be an active and influential voice for policy and implementation changes nationally, regionally and internationally.

The Index offers a unique opportunity across the region. Together with the same indicators, measurements and timeline, we can build a unified approach to monitoring government policy and action. Using this approach, we can compare country reforms and progress with an eye towards strategic cooperation. With both successes and challenges in all countries, we can use comparison to exchange those successes and learn from each other to overcome the barriers that stop progress. With this knowledge, civil society can help lead on regional cooperation.

The index also provides an effective path to involve citizens and civil society in a new discourse with governments in the region. Given the complexity of reform and action that every government must pursue, each member of civil society and each citizen experiences the overall "system" in a different way. Now with a holistic or "big picture" view of child protection, civil society can offer a more unified approach for government and donor partnership. A unified approach is an important component for greater influence and joint action to achieve collective impact that improves the lives of girls and boys.

On behalf of ChildPact, we thank our partners, donors and members of the public for their support towards index implementation. ChildPact's Steering Committee adopted the goal to create a regional index in 2012. We are happy to see this goal achieved!



Mariana Ianachevici
President of ChildPact

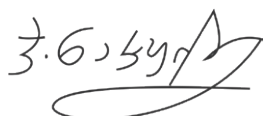
We can compare
country reforms and
progress with an eye
towards strategic
cooperation.

We Go First! Welcome to the Index

As a society, we will never finish the job of protecting children. Instead, we are on a journey towards greater well-being, protection and participation of our national treasures and future: children!

The Georgian Coalition for Children and Youth Welfare has had the privilege to join this special project and we are the first to publish preliminary results. This small briefing provides a snapshot of some of the rich material gleaned from the Index. Preliminary results verify that our country has made significant achievements to improve the lives of our girls and boys. Next steps will require new partnerships and united purposes. The European Union and Georgia's recent Association Agreement identifies child protection as an important element for closer engagement. We hope that the results of the Index verify a path of partnership and purpose for all levels of stakeholders.

This small briefing provides a snapshot of some of the rich material gleaned from the Index.



Jaba Nachkebia
Chairman of Georgia's Coalition for
Children & Youth Welfare



WHAT IS THE INDEX?

What is the Index?

The Child Protection Index (the Index) is a comparative policy tool, organised and implemented by local and national level civil society organisations, that measures a country's current child protection system against a common set of indicators. The Index uses specific child protection articles from the UNCRC and principles from a systems approach to child protection as the common foundation. The results from each country level index illustrate each government's actions towards child protection through the lens of policy, service delivery, capacity, accountability and coordination.

The Child Protection Index is not meant to measure the well-being of children directly, rather, it measures government policy, investment, and services related to child protection.

This publication marks the first in a series of country-level indices that will be distributed over the next year to unpack and compare each country's successes and challenges.

The Child Protection Index (the Index) is a comparative policy tool, organised and implemented by local and national level civil society organisations, that measures a country's current child protection system against a common set of indicators.

Why is it Important?

The Child Protection Index is designed to encourage regional cooperation, stimulate more robust implementation of the UNCRC, and serve as an early warning system for countries when they depart from a sound trajectory in child protection. Ultimately, improved cooperation, better implementation, and enhanced monitoring among child protection actors will help ensure that the region's girls and boys can thrive in a safe, nurturing environment.

This pilot year serves as a baseline for analysis and building data sets over time. It is our hope that the Index will allow for a new level of engagement between child protection experts in civil society, citizens, donors and government policy makers in countries throughout the region in years to come.

With the Index we seek to:

- Provide a rigorous, yet accessible evidence base that can inform policy debates;
- Help unite various sectors and actors (government, civil society and academia) under shared principles and increase collaboration;
- Identify gaps between policy and practice by documenting facts on the ground;
- Encourage cross-border learning among Southeast Europe and South Caucasus subregions, by highlighting the experience of countries that have succeeded in key child protection areas;
- Facilitate alignment of donor strategies for child protection, by creating an accessible dashboard of donor investments; and
- Encourage governments to take data collection for child protection seriously, by showing how data can help drive effective, efficient policy.

The Child Protection Index is designed to encourage regional cooperation, stimulate more robust implementation of the UNCRC, and serve as an early warning system for countries when they depart from a sound trajectory in child protection.

The CPI Framework of Indicators

The Index framework includes a series of 626 indicators that together measure a state's policy and actions towards greater child protection. The indicators are drawn from four sources.

The first set of indicators draws from quantitative data about the current child protection status of girls and boys in each country. For example, one indicator considers the rate of children aged 0–2 in residential care (per 100,000 population aged 0–2), at the end of the year. For a review of all quantitative indicators used, please see the endnotes.¹ Data collected for this section originates directly from UNICEF's TransMoEE database,² a widely used source of data on the well-being of children globally and official statistical data reported by the five pilot countries.

The second set of indicators comes from Article 4 of the UNCRC. This Article requires that states apply all appropriate measures within the toolbox of government action to achieve child protection. The Index refers to this category as “the governance environment” for child protection. An example of the governance environment indicator is: Has a consolidated law on the rights of the child and child protection been adopted?

Third, the Index uses specific child protection articles from the UNCRC and principles from the systems approach to child protection as the common foundation and matrix for its qualitative indicators.

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The Index framework includes a series of 626 questions that together measure a state's policy and actions towards greater child protection.

To unpack each Article's requirements, the Index framework heavily relies on the *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child* published by UNICEF. The *Handbook* offers analysis on each UNCRC Article from the Committee on the Rights of the Child's Concluding Observations in over 300 different opinions.³ The *Handbook* provides a series of "yes", "no" and "partially-implemented" checklists to create an understanding of each Article's significance. The Index uses these checklists as core indicators for the framework.

The qualitative indicators are "yes", "no" and "partially-implemented" questions that measure a state's (i) Policy/ legal and regulatory framework; (ii) Services, processes, mechanisms; (iii) Capacity; (iv) Accountability; and (v) Coordination and cooperation in relation to the UNCRC articles on child protection. These key elements are necessary to achieve a functional child protection system.⁴

UNCRC articles chosen are those associated with every child's right not to be subjected to harm. The articles together form adequate responses to prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect experienced by girls and boys in all settings. The following UNCRC articles form the basis of the Index:

Article 9 Separation from parents

Article 19 Child's right to protection from all forms of violence

Article 20 Children deprived of their family environment

Article 21 Adoption

Article 23 Rights of children with disabilities

Article 25 Periodic review of treatment (integrated with other articles, where relevant)

Article 32 Child labour

Article 33 Children and drug abuse

Article 34 Sexual exploitation of children

Article 35 Prevention of abduction, sale and trafficking

Article 36 Protection from other forms of exploitation

Article 38 Protection of children affected by armed conflict

Article 39 Rehabilitation of child victims (integrated with other articles, where relevant)

Three to four reviews over a total period of 3 to 4 months were required for the entire review process.

For example:

Article 19 Does the state protect children from all forms of violence?

LAW & POLICY	SERVICES & MECHANISMS	CAPACITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	COORDINATION
Does the legal and regulatory framework protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, corporal punishment, any other form of cruel or degrading punishment or treatment in any setting?	Does the state provide or sponsor rehabilitative services and measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and the social reintegration of all children who are victims of any form of neglect, violence or abuse?	Does the state provide or sponsor standard services accessible and with national coverage to all children?	Are all decisions taken by state bodies in reference to violence against children (potentially) reviewable by the judiciary?	Does the state provide a central coordinating body for all engagement between various agencies and issues on violence against children?

The fourth set of indicators focuses specifically on government support for social workers. Social work plays a key role within the public sector to administer child protection mechanisms, processes and services at both the local level and regional or national levels. Therefore, the Index includes specific indicators on social work, with the importance of this role in mind.

Data Collection & Validation

Georgia's data collection team included six child protection experts (one served as national coordinator) and two legal experts selected in order to acquire a variety of expertise. A training workshop led by the Index Data Manager (and co-author of the Index framework) provided training to the team prior to collection. In the first stage of collection, groups of two experts collected data independently on one of four sections of indicators (using reports, studies, articles, statistics data, etc.) to validate a "yes", "no" and "partially-implemented" responses to each Index indicator. In this way, two experts reviewed the same indicator separately. Where such evidence-based information was not available, interviews with relevant stakeholders and information based on the personal experience of professionals with relevant expertise in that particular field were taken into account.

After the completion of individual review and validation, responses provided for the same indicator by two different experts were considered and compared side-by-side by the Index Data Manager. Responses found to be inconsistent between the two experts or that lacked sufficient validation required further review and evidence gathering. The two experts assigned to the same indicator again in group work reviewed and discussed the evidence and sought additional information when needed. Joint answers provided by each sub-team were further reviewed by the Index Data Manager. Three to four reviews over a total period of 3 to 4 months were required for the entire review process, in order to reach final agreements on each indicator considered.

A final cross-check of information provided under the various sections of the Index framework was performed by the Index Data Manager before finally validating the National Index, with the support of the National Coordinator and the team of experts.

Scoring

Each qualitative indicator required a “yes,” “no,” or “partially-implemented” answer. To score the results, “yes” = 1, “no” = 0, and “partially-implemented” = 0,5. In situations where several sub-indicators contributed to one main indicator, the final main indicator score is calculated as an average of the scores of its sub-indicators (e.g. $1+0,5+0+1+0,5 = 3 : 5 = 0,6$).

For the quantitative indicators, a linear transformation formula was applied:

$$Y = X - X_{\min} / X_{\max} - X_{\min}$$

where Y is the score, X is the quantitative data for the respective country, X_{min} is the quantitative data of the least performing country, and X_{max} is the quantitative data for the strongest performing country.

An average score was calculated for three of the four sources of indicators 1) Current Child Protection Status of Girls and Boys, 2) Governance Environment and 3) Social Work. In the case of the main source (UNCRC Articles analysed with the Child Protection Systems Approach), each UNCRC article and its indicators is scored separately (to create one average score per article) and equally contributes to the final Index score. Therefore, the final CPI score for each pilot country is calculated as an average of the three sources and the average scores from each UNCRC article.

Endnotes

1 Quantitative Indicators include:

- Rate of children separated from their families (per 100,000 population aged 0–17)
- Rate of children with disabilities separated from their families (per 100,000 population aged 0–17)
- Rate of children in residential care (per 100,000 population aged 0–17), at the end of the year
- Rate of children aged 0–2 in residential care (per 100,000 population aged 0–2), at the end of the year
- Percentage of children with disabilities in public residential care (all types of institutions), at the end of the year
- Percentage of children placed in foster care out of the total number of children separated from their families, at the end of the year
- Percentage of children with disabilities placed in foster care out of the total number of children 0–17 placed in foster care, at the end of the year
- Percentage of children placed in kinship/ guardianship care out of the total number of children separated from their families, at the end of the year
- Gross adoption rate (per 100,000 average population aged 0-3)
- Percentage of children with disabilities adopted through domestic adoption out of the total number of children adopted through domestic adoption, at the end of the year
- Percentage of children aged 7–17 adopted through domestic adoption out of the total number of children adopted through domestic adoption, at the end of the year
- Ratio of qualified social workers per 100,000 of the general population
- Ratio of specialized judges specialized to work on addressing children issues (per 100,000 population aged 0–17)
- Total social Protection expenditure as percentage of GDP
- Expenditure on social benefits under Family/Children function as % of total social protection expenditure

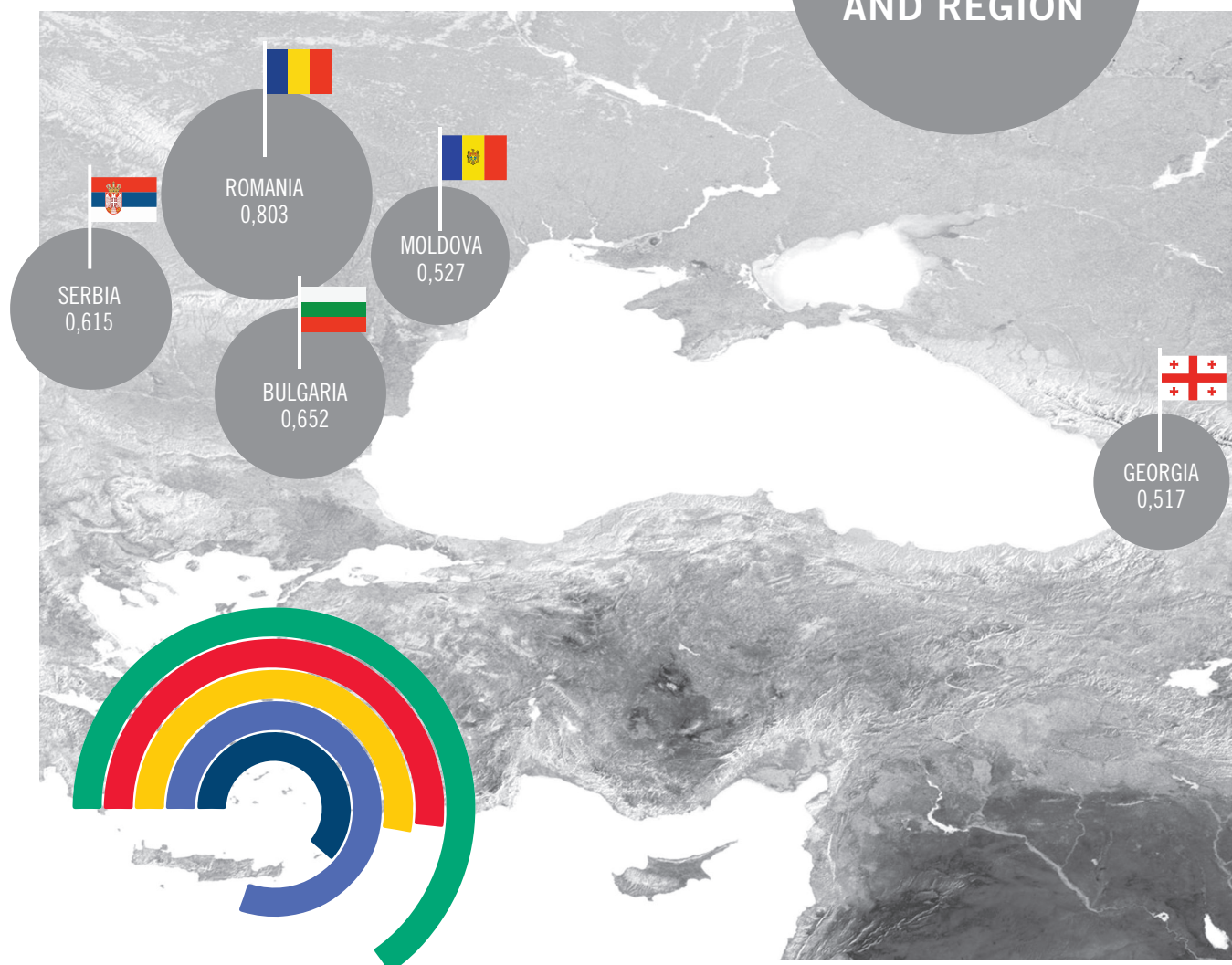
2 www.transmonee.org

3 www.unicef.org/publications/index_43110.html

4 UNICEF – Adapting A Systems Approach to Child Protection: Key Concepts and Considerations: www.unicef.org/protection/files/Adapting_Systems_Child_Protection_Jan_2010.pdf; Save the Children – A Rough Guide to CP Systems: <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/5103.pdf>; World Vision International – A Systems Approach to Child Protection: www.wvi.org/child-protection/publication/systems-approach-child-protection

COMPARISON OF GEORGIA AND REGION

Overall Country Scores



Overall Country Scores

An average score was calculated for three of the four sources of indicators:

- Current Child Protection Status of Girls and Boys
- Governance Environment
- Social Work

In the case of the main source (UNCRC Articles analysed with the Child Protection Systems Approach), each UNCRC article is scored separately and equally contributes to the final Index score.

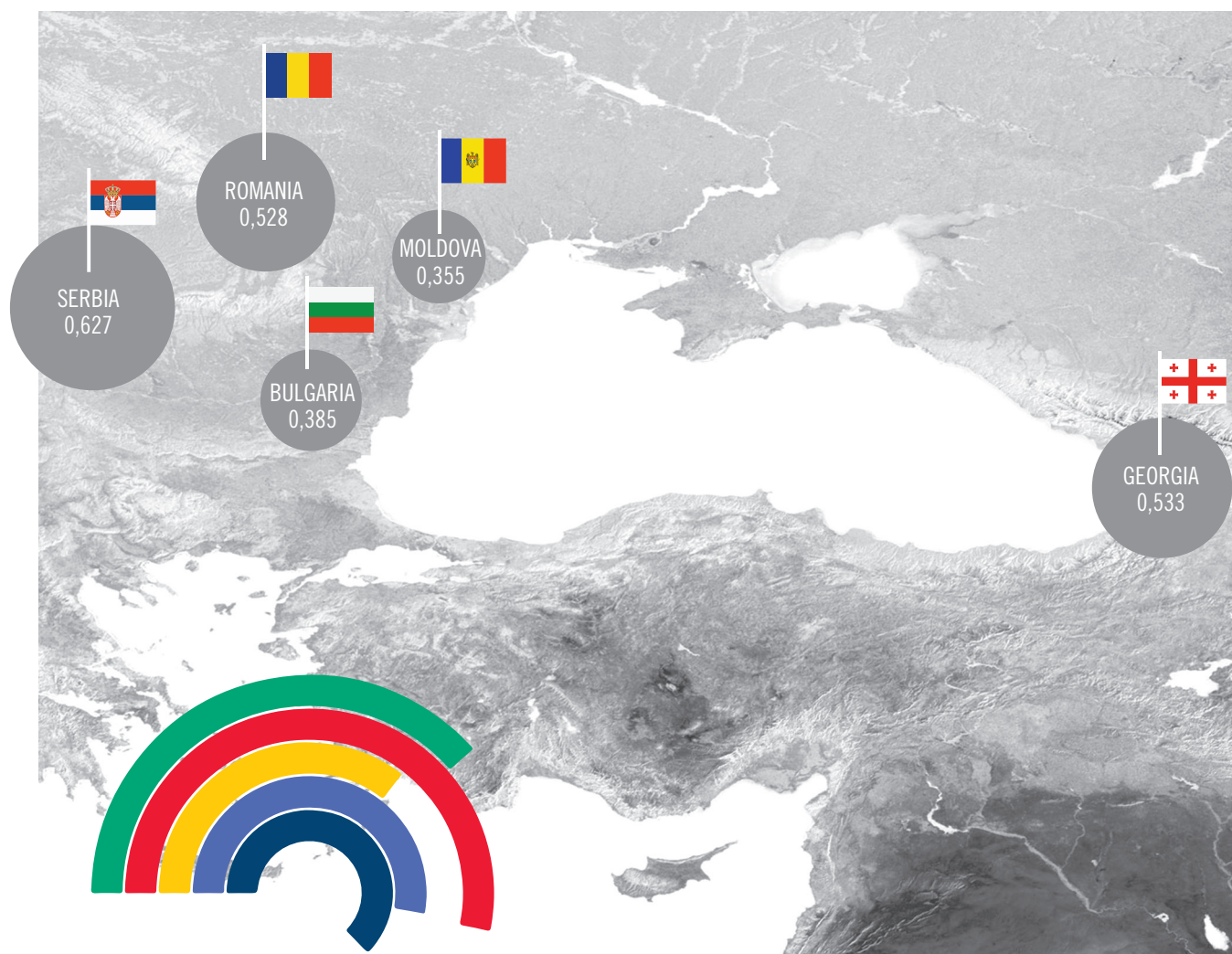
Therefore, the final CPI score for each pilot country is calculated as an average of the three sources and the scores from each UNCRC article.

Based on all the aspects mentioned above, with a **total CPI score of 0,517**, Georgia is currently holding the last position in the region (out of the 5 pilots considered so far).

The map displays a comparison of scores from the five pilot countries: Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania and Serbia. Larger circles represent higher scores with 1 as a maximum possible score, and 0 as the lowest possible score.

The swatch chart represents a parallel display of the data. A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to protect children (with a score of 1).

- GREEN Bulgaria
- RED Georgia
- YELLOW Moldova
- BLUE Romania
- NAVY Serbia



Current Child Protection Status of Girls and Boys

Index results place Georgia as a strong performer in six out of fifteen quantitative indicators in comparison to Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and Serbia. These indicators measure the current child protection status of girls and boys. For example, Georgia maintains low rates of children separated from their families (including children with disabilities), low rates of children living in state-run institutions, and for children separated from their families, a high percentage of these children live in foster care.

For example, a high percentage (64%) of Georgia's girls and boys separated from their families live in foster care environments, rather than large institutions or small group homes. This is one of Georgia's strongest child protection policies implemented.

The map displays a comparison of the current child protection status of girls and boys in each of the five countries. Larger circles represent less vulnerability overall (with a score of 1 as a possible maximum score, and 0 as the lowest possible score).

The swatch chart represents a parallel display of the data. A full circle represents low numbers of girls and boys in situations of vulnerability (with a score of 1).

- GREEN Bulgaria
- RED Georgia
- YELLOW Moldova
- BLUE Romania
- NAVY Serbia

While Georgia's rates of girls and boys in situations of vulnerability are comparably low to other Index countries, these rates do not take into account girls and boys outside the control of both the state and the biological family environment: notably girls and boys placed in private environments. NGOs, other private providers and the Georgian Orthodox Church offer residential services to girls and boys. At present time, there is no accurate data on the numbers of girls and boys living in private placements.

These placements are currently beyond the control of the State because there are no sanctioned monitoring and accountability systems in place to inspect the residential conditions and actions of service personnel. Without such systems, it is difficult to identify and stop situations of abuse and neglect that may occur.

Recommendations:

- Collect data on the numbers of girls and boys living in private placements. Only the State has the authority and means to collect data on the numbers of girls and boys living in private placements.
- Establish and implement a child protection monitoring and accountability system that extends to all organisations that provide care and support to girls and boys, public and private.

State action to collect data and monitor all services, whether public or private, will diminish the numbers of girls and boys exposed to abuse and neglect, strongly validate the contributions of private and religious organisations for the protection and care of Georgia's children, and provide more realistic data on the situation of vulnerable girls and boys to enable more relevant interventions in future.

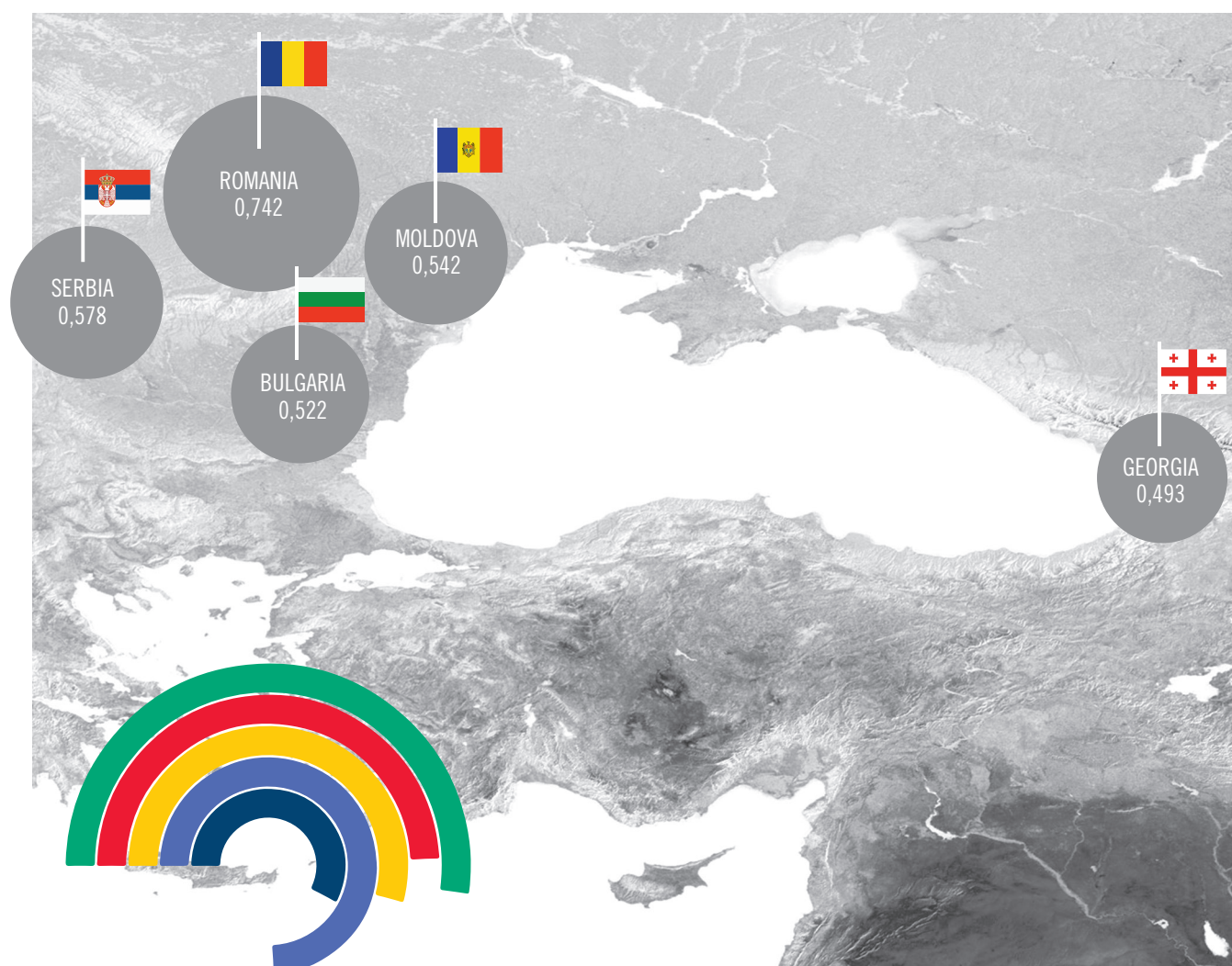


Percentage of girls and boys separated from their families who live in foster care.

The swatch chart represents the percentage of girls and boys separated from their families who live in foster care. A full circle represents 100% of girls and boys separated from their families.

● GREEN	Bulgaria
● RED	Georgia
● YELLOW	Moldova
● BLUE	Romania
● NAVY	Serbia

State action to collect data and monitor all services, whether public or private, will diminish the numbers of girls and boys exposed to abuse and neglect, strongly validate the contributions of private and religious organisations for the protection and care of Georgia's children.



Governance Environment

Georgia is a low performer in the category of “governance environment”. It scores 0,493 in comparison to other countries (Romania as a strong performer at 0,742 and Bulgaria ranking above Georgia at 0,522).

Highlights from the governance environment indicators verify that Georgia hosts a well-functioning Public Defender’s Office (Ombudsman). The Public Defender’s Office maintains a strong focus on child-related issues.

Georgia’s Constitution (Article 6 of the Constitution) confirms that international treaties signed and ratified by Georgia take precedence over national legislation. In application, articles of the UNCRC take precedence over national legislation. However, current national legislation is not fully aligned with UNCRC requirements, although efforts continue towards alignment.

The map displays a comparison of the current child protection status of girls and boys in each of the five countries. Larger circles represent less vulnerability overall (with a score of 1 as a maximum possible score, and 0 as the lowest possible score).

The swatch chart represents a parallel display of the data. A full circle represents low numbers of girls and boys in situations of vulnerability (with a score of 1).

- GREEN Bulgaria
- RED Georgia
- YELLOW Moldova
- BLUE Romania
- NAVY Serbia

The following data contributed to Georgia's low performing score:

GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT	YES	NO
Consolidated child rights and protection law adopted?		●
Coordination mechanisms between central and local government for monitoring and assessing policy implementation?		●
National-level permanent consultation mechanism to engage civil society and children directly on policy and implementation?		●
Permanent parliamentary body mandated to assess and solve child protection issues?		●

The effects of a weak governance environment for child protection can be observed in Georgia's other low qualitative results linked to the UNCRC and the System's Approach to Child Protection (Law/Policy, Services/Mechanisms, Capacity, Accountability and Coordination). A weak governance environment minimizes potential "wins" in other categories because there are not formal, distinct and known authorities, relationships and actions to create a consistent system. Without such confidence, even strong components of a child protection system may not flourish.

For example, Georgia is a low performer in coordination between actors and sectors that relate to child protection. Georgia measures 0,525 in coordination (Romania

as a strong performer is 0,903 and Moldova as a low performer is 0,471).

With formal or open mechanisms for communication and coordination, actors and various sectors can locate and directly engage with the correct public sector officials. Lacking formal mechanisms, it may be difficult to determine which agency or official owns the final responsibility for certain actions or decisions. For citizens and beneficiaries of the child protection system, formal mechanisms increase accountability channels where "on the record" documentation from formal mechanisms mitigates corruption or a lack of real assistance. For parliamentarians charged with legislative power, up-to-date information and a keen understanding of day-to-day child protection affairs bolsters their ability to legislate effectively and hold the public sector accountable to the law.

Because a strong governance environment naturally enhances the overall reform process and its many parts, **this preliminary Index review recommends full and focused attention on the governance environment as a key element for long-term child protection success.**



Coordination score as an indicator of a weak governance environment

A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to adequately coordinate between various sectors and agencies to protect children, in accordance with child protection articles of the UNCRC and the Child Protection Systems Approach (with a score of 1).

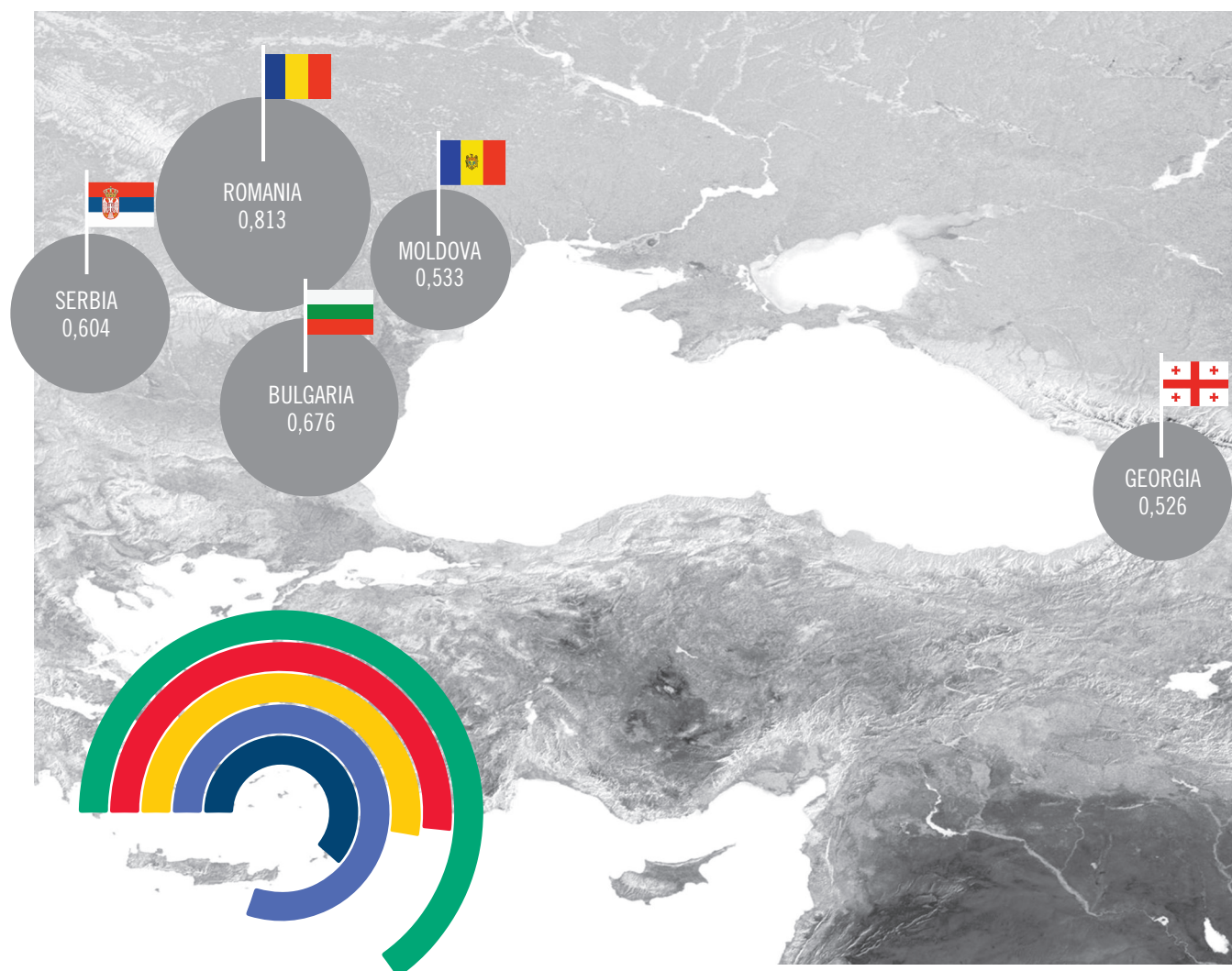
- GREEN Bulgaria
- RED Georgia
- YELLOW Moldova
- BLUE Romania
- NAVY Serbia

Recommendations:

- Intensify efforts to align the legal framework to the UNCRC requirements
- Consider a consolidated law on child rights and protection to create a holistic approach to child rights and protection
- Develop coordination mechanisms between central and local authorities related to child protection
- Adopt mechanisms to effectively monitor and assess policy implementation
- Establish permanent arrangements for budgetary analysis at all relevant levels of governance to ascertain: (i) the proportion of overall budgets devoted to children; (ii) disparities between regions or particular groups of children, and (iii) the most disadvantaged groups of children
- Create a permanent Parliamentary body mandated to assess and solve child protection issues
- Develop a permanent mechanism at the national level for consulting NGOs and children on matters related to policy development and implementation

Because a strong governance environment naturally enhances the overall reform process and its many parts, this preliminary Index review recommends full and focused attention on the governance environment as a key element for long-term child protection success.

UNCRC Articles Analysis



UNCRC Articles Analysis based on the Child Protection System

On the UNCRC and Child Protection Systems Approach indicators, Georgia is a low performer with 0,526 (Romania as a strong performer is 0,813 and Moldova scores close to Georgia as 0,538). Below, each section provides specific analysis and recommendations within the categories of policy, services, capacity, coordination and accountability.

The map displays a comparison of implementation efforts to comply with the UNCRC articles on child protection in accordance with the Child Protection Systems Approach in each of the five countries. Larger circles represent higher scores (with a score of 1 as a maximum possible score, and 0 as the lowest possible score).

The swatch chart represents a parallel display of the data. A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to adequately create policy, services, capacity, coordination mechanisms and accountability mechanisms to protect children, in accordance with the child protection articles of the UNCRC (with a score of 1).

- GREEN Bulgaria
- RED Georgia
- YELLOW Moldova
- BLUE Romania
- NAVY Serbia

Law and Policy

Georgia is a low performer with 0,655 (Romania as a strong performer is 0,952 and Serbia and Moldova closely ranked at 0,786 and 0,792 respectively).

Georgia's national-level law and policy environment partially addresses many of the child protection articles defined in the UNCRC. Progress towards full adoption of law and policy in accordance with UNCRC requirements is ongoing. A review of policy gaps surveyed in the Index reveal one overall trend; Georgia's regulatory system does not yet include adequate procedures and standards across multiple child protection services and mechanisms to allow for greater monitoring, accountability and a of operations.

The absence of adequate procedures and standards reduces the ability of government, civil society and citizens alike to effectively monitor service delivery, both public and private. Accountability to protect girls and boys becomes more difficult when the rules are uncertain.

The absence of such provisions also minimizes the quantity and quality of service delivery nationwide. Without clear standards, different providers may interpret Georgia's overall policies in different ways. Discriminatory practices may arise that cannot be quickly dealt with through comparison between standard and practice.

This preliminary Index review recommends the following new regulatory provisions:

- Definition and development of quality standards for all relevant services (to date, only 24-hour care services and day care services are regulated by relevant standards);
- Financial or cost standards (linked to quality standards) to allow reliable and transparent allocation of funds to services;
- Licensing (periodically renewable licensing procedures, clearly linked to quality standards, to address all relevant services provided, no matter of the source of funding);
- Case management regulations and procedures (including definition of staff qualifications required and caseloads); and
- Cross-sector coordination and cooperation mechanisms (to address child protection issues, going beyond the current referral of cases that relate solely to violence against children).



A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to adequately create policy to protect children, in accordance with the child protection articles of the UNCRC and the Child Protection Systems Approach (with a score of 1).

● GREEN	Bulgaria
● RED	Georgia
● YELLOW	Moldova
● BLUE	Romania
● NAVY	Serbia

Services

Georgia is a low performer with 0,538 (Romania as a strong performer is 0,885 and Moldova ranks close to Georgia with 0,561). The score references both types of services that exist and the scale of services provided.

Over the last five years, Georgia has adopted and implemented strategies to reduce the number of girls and boys who are separated from their families and for girls and boys who are separated from their families, to reduce reliance on institutionalised care. In this climate, alternative care options are available and institutionalisation is now considered as a measure of last resort. Foster care is a strong component of the strategy. When girls and boys are separated from their parents, State services allow and welcome visitation and contact with parents and or kin in situations compatible with the child's best interests.

Georgia has not yet developed adequate services to address the various needs of girls and boys exposed to labour or any other kind of exploitation, to drug abuse or to homelessness. Community based services for prevention, counseling, support and related referral mechanisms to these services remain limited. For example, in the case of a girl or boy found homeless or working on the street, a State should provide official identity documents and assistance for protection and reintegration.

Specific to children with disability, adequate accessibility and inclusive settings for services such as rehabilitation and education opportunities remain thin.

This preliminary Index review recommends the following new efforts for service provision:

- Develop adequate services to address the various needs of girls and boys exposed to labour or any other kind of exploitation;
- Develop adequate services to address the various needs of girls and boys exposed to drug abuse;
- Further develop adequate services to address the various needs of girls and boys exposed to homelessness; and
- Specific to children with disability, create adequate accessibility and inclusive settings for services, including residential care.



A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to adequately create services to protect children, in accordance with the child protection articles of the UNCRC and the Child Protection Systems Approach (with a score of 1).

● GREEN	Bulgaria
● RED	Georgia
● YELLOW	Moldova
● BLUE	Romania
● NAVY	Serbia

Capacity

Generally speaking, all countries across the region are facing difficulties on Capacity, which includes human resources, financial resources, infrastructure and equipment. Georgia ranks second to last with 0,358 but remains close in score to Moldova at 0,352 and Serbia at 0,408. Romania as the strongest performer ranks 0,540, which is low as well.

In Georgia, next steps for increased human resource capacity depend on improved staff structures, workloads, ongoing training and supervision. Further emphasis on case management will be an important tool to manage coordination and referral across sectors and services.

To scale services nationwide, new funding must be committed. These new commitments should be linked to quality standards in order to scale both the quantity and quality of services.

Finally, there is a need to commit to new infrastructure and equipment required to implement specific services in accordance with quality standards.

This preliminary Index review recommends the following new efforts for increased capacity:

- Improve staff structures and decrease staff workloads;
- Dedicate new efforts to ongoing training and supervision. Increase staff emphasis on case management;
- Commit to new funding that increases the quantity and quality of needed services; and
- Commit to new infrastructure and equipment required to implement specific services in accordance with quality standards;



A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to adequately provide capacity in the public sector to protect children, in accordance with the child protection articles of the UNCRC and the Child Protection Systems Approach (with a score of 1).

● GREEN	Bulgaria
● RED	Georgia
● YELLOW	Moldova
● BLUE	Romania
● NAVY	Serbia

Accountability

Again, all countries across the region are facing difficulties to create accountability mechanisms that adequately monitor public sector actions, decisions and quality, and afford beneficiaries and their guardians the right to question those judgments. Data management is also a component of accountability because data over time builds an understanding of the status of vulnerable children and the impact of services.

Georgia ranks second to last with 0,431 but remains close in score to Moldova at 0,425 and Serbia at 0,439. Romania as the strongest performer ranks 0,730.

Georgia has created some important accountability mechanisms to maintain transparency and provide review for the decisions and actions taken by the public sector. Notably, child-family separation decisions are taken only by authorities assigned this competence. Once taken, there is periodic review of individual girls and boys placed for the purposes of care and protection. All decisions are subject to judicial review. Further, complaint mechanisms are in place and accessible for parents when institutions or placements fail or refuse to allow contact between parent and child.

Careful consideration needs to be given to develop dedicated complaint mechanisms for children as beneficiaries (related to service provision) that are accessible and child friendly. Such mechanisms should be developed with the direct contribution of children themselves according to age and level of development.

Further work is necessary to secure consistent independent quality monitoring mechanisms for services provided to children and their families. Independent monitoring mechanisms should cover public sector services and services provided by private entities and the NGO sector, no matter the source of funding.

The independent monitoring currently provided by the Public Defender's Office is a good example, but this office alone cannot cover all the aspects that need to be considered (for example, the monitoring of services provided by private entities with private sector funding).



A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to adequately make available accountability mechanisms for public sector decisions and actions to protect children, in accordance with the child protection articles of the UNCRC and the Child Protection Systems Approach (with a score of 1).

- GREEN Bulgaria
- RED Georgia
- YELLOW Moldova
- BLUE Romania
- NAVY Serbia

Licensing should be compulsory for all service providers (no matter the source of funding) as a first step towards quality services. Licensing should be required for each specific service and clearly linked to quality standards. Licenses should be provided for a definite period of time in order to re-assess the service from time to time.

Data collection and management as a core activity for improved monitoring and accountability is lacking. For the time being, not all children who are placed in private care are accounted for by the State. There is no data collected or centralized on girls and boys who are victims of violence, exploitation, drug abuse or homelessness. There are no recent State-commissioned or sponsored studies to review issues related to various categories of vulnerable children.

This preliminary Index review recommends the following new efforts for increased accountability:

- Develop a dedicated complaint mechanism for children as beneficiaries (related to service provision) that is accessible and child friendly. Such mechanisms should be developed with the direct contribution of children themselves according to age and level of development;
- Create consistent, independent monitoring mechanisms to review the quality of service provision. Monitoring should review both private and public sector services;
- Introduce compulsory licensing, linked to quality standards, for all service providers. Licenses should be provided for a limited period of time; and
- Create and implement new data collection targets on child protection issues based on urgency, need and gaps, to include data on girls and boys who are victims of violence, exploitation, drug abuse or homelessness.

Coordination

Georgia measures 0,525 in coordination (Romania as a strong performer is 0,903 and Moldova as a low performer is 0,471).

With the exception of the recently adopted (2014) referral mechanisms that are limited to addressing situations of violence against girls and boys, there are no cross-sector coordination and cooperation mechanisms to allow for an integrated, multidisciplinary, case management-based approach to the overall needs of girls and boys. For example, in situations of cross-border trafficking, police and social services need cooperation both nationally and internationally to identify, trace and respond to the trafficking in girls and boys.

Going beyond the referral of cases related to violence against children, girls and boys who are victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation, trafficking, drug abuse or those who are disabled or homeless need holistic responses to overcome the challenges they face.

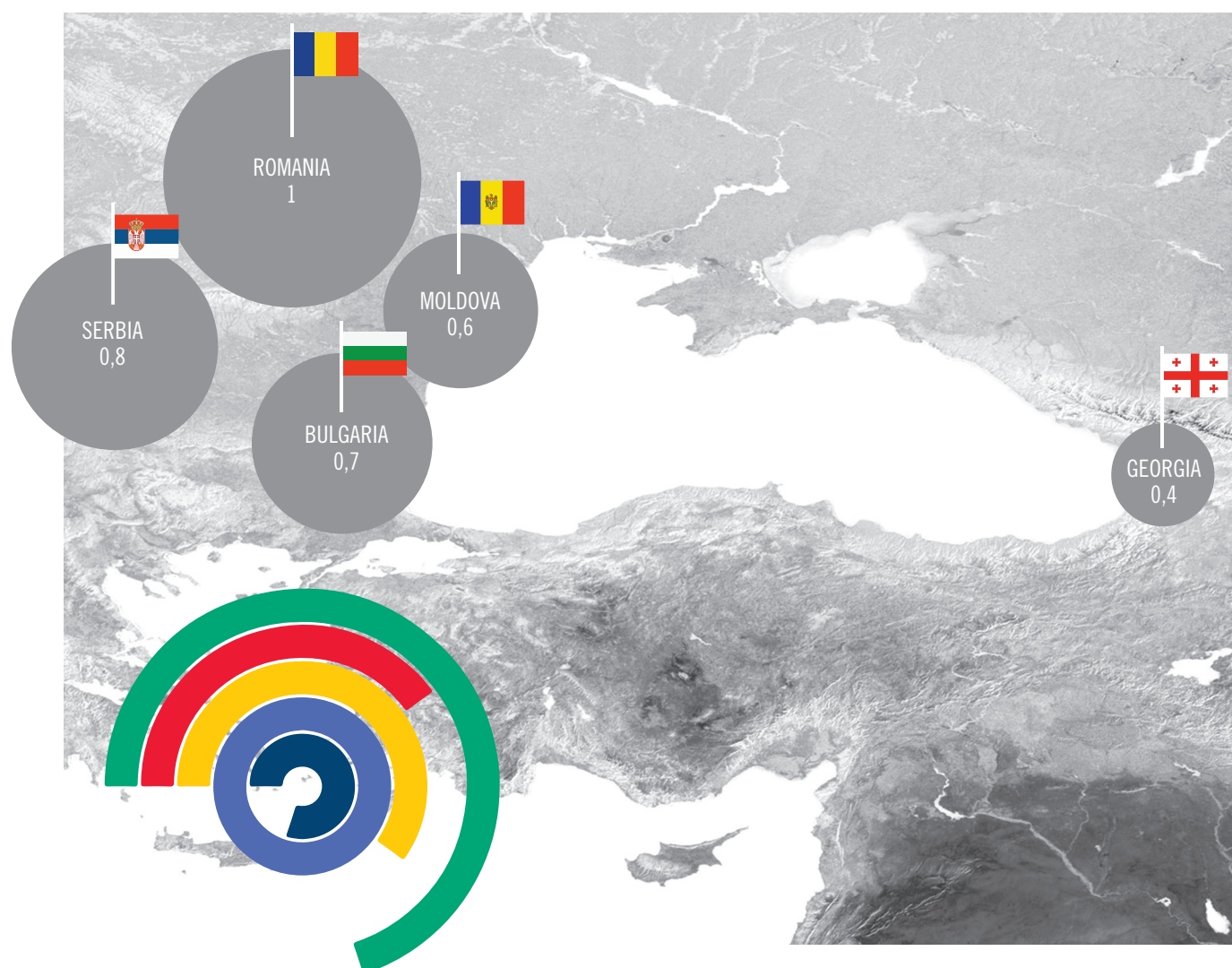
This preliminary Index review recommends the following new efforts for increased coordination:

- Create cross-sector coordination and cooperation mechanisms to allow for an integrated, multidisciplinary, case management-based approach to the overall needs of vulnerable children; and
- Cross-sector coordination and cooperation mechanisms should be supported by guidelines, with clearly defined responsibilities of all actors involved at all relevant levels of administration.



A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to adequately coordinate between various sectors and agencies to protect children, in accordance with the child protection articles of the UNCRC and the Child Protection Systems Approach (with a score of 1).

- GREEN Bulgaria
- RED Georgia
- YELLOW Moldova
- BLUE Romania
- NAVY Serbia



Social Work Scores

Finally, on Social Work aspects, Georgia scores low (0,4) out of the 5 pilots considered (Romania as a high performer at 1,0 and Moldova ranking close to Georgia at 0,6). Georgia has established social work as a university degree as a first step. However, there is no law that regulates the profession of social work and no professional body or organisation with an officially recognized mandate to maintain standards of work or provide continuous or compulsory trainings on latest methods or issues.

This preliminary Index review recommends the following new efforts for social work:

- Regulate the profession of social work by law; and
- Create a professional body or organisation of social work with an officially recognized mandate to maintain standards of work and provide for compulsory ongoing professional trainings.

A full circle represents the fulfillment of a state's responsibility to adequately maintain social work as an important element to local and national level child protection (with a score of 1).

GREEN	Bulgaria
RED	Georgia
YELLOW	Moldova
BLUE	Romania
NAVY	Serbia

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Implementation Contributors

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Jaba Nachkebia is the current Chair of the Georgian Coalition for Child and Youth Welfare (GCCYW) and Executive Director of "Children of Georgia" (CoG) NGO. With more than ten years' experience in child welfare and a background in medicine and research, Mr. Nachkebia is a leading expert in the field. In recent years, he has specialized in the deinstitutionalisation of small children and children with disabilities from large institutions.

Eteri Patariaia is the Social Work Technical Advisor at the NGO EveryChild Georgia. Prior to joining EveryChild, Ms. Patariaia held positions at High Risk Kids, Georgian Foster Care Organisation and Partnership for Children. She is also a lecturer for the Social Work Department at Tbilisi State University. Ms. Patariaia

is known for her advocacy and program development achievements for at risk children, youths and families, training and teaching social workers and child care professionals, and the development of best practices in the social work methodology in Georgia. Ms. Patariaia holds an M.A. in Social Work focused on program development for vulnerable children and their families from Washington University in Saint Louis, U.S.

Ketevan Pilauri is a Project Coordinator at Global Initiative in Psychiatry where he is developing guidelines and procedures related to child rights promotion and juvenile delinquency prevention in schools. Prior to his work at the Global Initiative in Psychiatry, Mr. Pilauri worked for the Public Defender's Office in Georgia where he has monitored residential childcare

institutions. Mr. Pilauri has also worked with the Georgian Ministry of Science and Education to provide educational and training support to children with special needs and to their parents and teachers. He has held the position of psychotherapist for organisations such as the Research-Practical Center for Prevention & Control of Epilepsy and the Centre of Medical and Psycho-Social Support of Patients with Neurological Diseases. Mr. Pilauri holds a PhD in Clinical Neuropsychology. He teaches psychology and research methods at Tbilisi State University and is known within the Georgian research and academic environment, especially for his work on the deinstitutionalisation of orphanages in Georgia (exploring mental health and assessing needs of orphans), mental health services for war-affected populations in Georgia and structural violence in juvenile facilities.

Ketevan Margalitadze is a social policy expert on child rights and protection and lawyer at the Public Health Foundation of Georgia. Ms. Margalitadze is known for her expertise on violence against children, law enforcement affairs and advocacy. She is a member of the Georgian Child's Rights Independent Committee (co-existing with the Public Ombudsman Office) and author of several publications such as: *The Legislation of Georgia and Foreign Countries on the Rights of the Child and Court Practice*; *Relevance of Georgian Legislation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*; and co-author of the Alternative Reports provided to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and UN Committee Against Torture. Ms. Margalitadze has been an invited guest to several governmental and nongovernmental ad-hoc working groups on child protection mechanisms in Georgia.

Marina Menteshashvili is a Project Manager at World Vision Georgia where she is developing child-support services for increased child well-being. Ms. Menteshashvili began her career as a cardiologist with the Intense Therapy Department. She has built her expertise on child protection through a variety of projects and engagements with the Georgian Ministry of Education of Georgia, UNICEF, EveryChild and World Vision. Her expertise includes the Georgian deinstitutionalisation process through prevention, reintegration and fostering of children deprived of parental care. Marina serves on the governmental commission within the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs tasked to develop and implement the new state subprogram on child protection, and she is also a member of the state Child Care & Guardianship Panel.

Maya Mgeliashvili is the Child Protection Services and Advocacy Unit Manager at World Vision Georgia where she is tasked to support and develop programs for Georgia's most vulnerable children and their families. Since 2013, Ms. Mgeliashvili also serves as the Executive Secretary of Georgian National Coalition on Child and Youth Welfare. She has contributed to the development of the social work profession in Georgia as an active member of the Georgian Association of Social Workers and continues to teach and train at academic levels. Ms. Mgeliashvili is known for her experience in counselling and advocacy for abused and neglected children, training and teaching social workers, contributing to the development of best practices in social work methodologies, and assisting in the capacity building of statutory social work teams. Maya has held positions in both

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Tamta Saamishvili is a Clinical and Forensic Psychologist at Children of Georgia NGO and serves as a guest lecturer at the Tbilisi State University and at the University of Georgia. Ms. Saamishvili has worked as a trainer in collaboration with non-profit child-focused organisations such as Save the Children, World Vision, McInnis's Association for Children as well as with governmental bodies such as the Georgian Ministry of Education and Science, the Public Defender of Georgia. Ms. Saamishvili is a PhD student in Personal and Clinical Psychology and holds a M.A. in Psychological Assessment and Counselling from Tbilisi State University.

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Authors

Andy Guth is one of the leading child protection specialists in the region, with over 24 years of work experience in child welfare and protection. His portfolio includes work with various national and international NGOs (The Romanian Orphanage Trust, For Our Children, the Romanian Federation of NGOs for Children, World Learning, SOS Kinderdorf, and World Vision), UN Agencies (WB, UNICEF) and Governments in Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Russia. Between 1991 and 1997, he contributed to the design, implementation and scale up of various alternative care services (small group homes, foster care, mother and baby units), and also contributed to introducing specialized child protection services to Romania. Starting in 1997 Mr. Guth was directly involved in the design of the Child Welfare Reform Strategy for Romania and Bulgaria. He also contributed to developing the child welfare services network in Moldova and promoting child welfare system reforms in Russia (the regions of Kostroma, Rostov, Altay Krai, and Buryatia).

Jocelyn Penner Hall is Policy Director for World Vision's Middle East and Eastern Europe Office. Ms. Penner Hall has worked for greater child protection and child rights in the CEE/CIS region for seven years. Ms. Penner Hall has authored several publications on child protection, including *Welcoming Europe's Youngest: How the EU Accession Process Transformed Child Protection in Romania*. Prior to her work at World Vision, Ms. Penner Hall served as a visiting lawyer at the Inter-American Court for Human Rights and held positions at The Legal Aid Society of Washington, D.C., Fairfax Circuit Court of Virginia, and the International Labour Organisation. Ms. Penner Hall is a founding staff member of the International Justice Mission. Ms. Penner Hall holds a J.D. and LL.M. in International Law from the University of Notre Dame.

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