

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Ministry of Social Policy and Youth



**“PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR
REDUCING THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN
IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE”**

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA - SITUATION IN 2010

	NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN FOSTER CARE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTIONS
2010	2,001	4,014

GOALS:

1. reduce placement of children in institutions
2. develop new forms of non-institutional care
3. increase number of foster care families and number of children in foster care
4. increase the general quality of care for children

PRECONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

Governmental strong political will and commitment to:

- Prioritise children's fundamental right to live in a family environment
- Advance social protection and child protection system
- Allocate appropriate resources

KEY ELEMENTS FOR CHANGE

1. Improvement of the Legal and Strategic Framework
2. Strengthening support to families at risk
3. Deinstitutionalization and Transformation of Social Welfare Institutions

1. IMPROVEMENT OF THE LEGAL AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- **SOCIAL WELFARE ACT (2011)**
 - prohibited accommodation of children up to 7 years of age in children's homes (allowed only exceptionally)
- **STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE MINISTRY (2012 – 2016) – focuses on:**
 - development of advisory services and support
 - better targeting of cash transfers
 - transformation of institutions into Community Centres for Children and Families
- **FOSTER CARE ACT (2012)**
 - strengthened support for foster care services

2. STRENGTHENING SUPPORT TO FAMILIES AT RISK

Targeted measures for supporting families at risk:

- A broad range of **social/cash benefits** intended to alleviate poverty and mitigate risks i.e. social-welfare cash transfers, birth allowances
- **Expanded social services** i.e. counselling and psycho-social support services, day care programs for children
- **Increased capacity of professionals** for supporting families at risk

3. DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIAL WELFARE HOMES

- National Plan on Deinstitutionalization and Transformation of Social Welfare Institutions developed and operationalised
- Process of transforming care from an institutional to community-based model is initiated, including awareness raising, increase in the number of foster families, counselling and support services, half-day and full-day programs for children, mobile teams to assist families
- Transition/bridging costs generated through EU accession funds and World Bank funds

SITUATION IN 2013

	NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN FOSTER CARE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTIONS
2010	2,001	4,014
2013	2,306	2,504

LESSONS LEARNED AND CHALLENGES

- REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESS -

- FIRM COMMITMENT - Family environment for every child!
- AWARENESS RAISING - Institution is not an adequate place for childhood
- ENABLING POLICY AND NORMATIVE STRUCTURE - Strategies, laws, procedures...and putting them into practice!
- INTER - SECTORIAL COOPERATION
- RESOURCES - human capacities and prioritization in budgeting
- REFOCUSING - community based services; prevention rather than institutional care
- FUNCTIONAL AND RELIABLE DATA BASE + MONITORING MECHANISMS IN PLACE (to monitor status of EVERY CHILD in public care)
- TIME - no stalling, but no skipping phases either



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

Republic of Croatia
Ministry of Social Policy and Youth

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