

Written Contribution for the EU-Moldova Human Rights Dialogue 2015

Chapter 4. Rights of the Child

4.1. Strategy for child protection and children in institutions

ChildPact welcomes the decision no. 434¹ of the Moldavian government from the 10th of June 2014 who approved the **National Child Protection Strategy for 2014-2020** to reduce the number of children in residential care, to prevent and combat violence against children and prevent exploitation, and to assist families in balancing work and family life. However, as emphasised by the most recent ENP Country Progress Report, despite of the development of standard operating procedures in line with EU standards and good practices in regard to the respect of child rights, Moldova continues to be a source for child trafficking and a country at EU's borders where children still have to go a long run for a safe and decent life.

Our concerns bellow aim to further detail the current child protection challenges hindering progress in Moldova:

- A. The governmental coordination regarding the implementation of an action plan in line with the national Child Protection Strategy for 2014-2020 could be substantially improved. Child protection is a field encompassing a wide range of sectors – such as labour, education, health, social protection, judiciary – and an efficient implementation requires the cooperation of several responsible ministries. So far, the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family (MLSPF) has been working alone on the development of a child protection action plan. **ChildPact stresses that a better final outcome and an eased further actual implementation would result from the coordination of the MLSPF with the National Council for Child Rights.**
- B. The directives regarding the implementation budget for the Child Protection Strategy for 2014-2020 have not been yet clarified. In this regard, **ChildPact is concerned that many of the future actions in line with the strategy will not be included in the ordinary budget.**
- C. The deinstitutionalisation of children is the priority of the Child Protection Strategy for 2014-2020. Nonetheless, **ChildPact argues that special attention should be given to the closing process of institutions and to the development of alternative care services - such as maternal assistants - and to the prevention services to be developed or improved at local level.**
- D. Although local autonomy is desirable, when it comes to budgetary management, with the recent amendments brought to the local public finances law², it is likely that poorer

¹ Find more information at: <http://lex.justice.md/md/353459/>

² Find more information at: <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&id=312821>

communities start cutting from the social services' budget³. Thus, the new legal financial frame is hindering social services at local level. Despite of the national funds aiming to balance this situation for the next 2 year, it is unlikely that poorer communities won't make cuts from the social services once they have to manage the budget on their own. **ChildPact suggest that a standard package of community social services should be supported by the state, from the national budget, and that local communities should contribute to those standard services according to their budgetary possibilities.**

ChildPact's written contribution for the EU-Moldova Human Rights Dialogue is mandated by our Moldavian child-focused coalition member, APSCF, reuniting 116 NGOs working and advocating for better child welfare in the Republic of Moldova.

ChildPact, the Regional Coalition for Child Protection⁴, is a network of 10 child-focused national networks from 10 different countries: Armenia, Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania and Serbia. Bringing together 600 NGOs, our members work with more than 500.000 vulnerable children from the Western Balkans and the South Caucasus areas. ChildPact's four objectives are: **1.** Monitor and influence child-related policies at regional and European levels; **2.** Strengthen the capacity of its members by actively supporting their expertise development, visibility and credibility; **3.** Advocate for regional cooperation at inter-governmental and civil society level; **4.** Raise public awareness of child rights and protection issues.

For further information regarding ChildPact's recommendations on child protection and child rights issues in the Republic of Moldova, please contact:

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³Find more information at: <http://www.expert-grup.org/en/biblioteca/item/981-noua-lege-servicii-sociale&category=7>

⁴ Find more information about ChildPact at: www.childpact.org