



**EUROPEAN UNION - EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND
OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME "HUMAN RESOURCES"
PROJECT BG051RO001-6.2.05 "ASSESSMENT OF
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CHILD STRATEGY"**



CONDUCTING SOCIOLOGICAL AND SPECIALIZED SURVEYS AND ASSESSMENT RESEARCH TO EVALUATE THE RESULTS FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CHILD STRATEGY (NCS)

The project is implemented with financial support by the Operational Programme "Human Resources", funded by the European Social Fund, the European Union

This document was prepared with financial support from the European Social Fund. The Contractor shall be solely responsible for the content of this document, and under no circumstances can be considered as an official position of the European Union or the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.



Survey methodology

Survey methodology

Main research questions

- To assess levels of awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011
- To gauge stakeholder assessments of the first three year of strategy implementation
- Do the NCS documents have a contribution in the implementation of measures and policies in each of the main areas of child protection?
- To assess effectiveness of currently implemented measures by institutions and NGOs
- To gauge the attitudes of children and families with specific needs towards the services that have been provided to date
- To find out whether stakeholders induce proposals for priority and approach changes in the implementation of NCS documents
- To assess how stakeholders estimate the need for additional resources

Target groups

- Bulgarian general public (bulgarian population in economically active age);
- Children who use health, social or other services and direct and indirect beneficiaries of social assistance
- Adults taking care of children in family or close to family setting as parents, extended family, foster families or parents;
- Professionals working with children in institutional or non-family setting: directors of institutions for children, teachers, educators, psychologists, doctors, etc.;
- Experts and professionals in public institutions at national, regional and local level working on projects related to child protection;
- NGO representatives working on projects related to child protection or providing services related to children.

Survey methodology

Methodological approach

Target groups have been addressed and the listed survey questions have been explored through a combinations of qualitative and quantitative methods.

A total of eight different sociological survey methods have been used to ensure full coverage of all topics and information blocks.



Sociological surveys

- National representative survey of the economically active population
- National representative survey among families with children receiving social assistance and/or other social services
- National representative survey among children with specific education needs and their parents
- National representative survey among children in institutions or foster families.
- In-depth interview with representatives of NGOs engaged with child protection activities or projects
- In-depth interviews with representatives of SACP, MLSP and SAS at regional and national level
- Online survey with RSAD representatives – regional directors and protection experts
- Self-completion questionnaires with child protection departments with Social Assistance directorates

Survey methodology

Survey	Number of surveyed persons	Survey method
General public	1014	Telephone interview
Families with children who are beneficiaries of social services or social assistance	225	Telephone interview
Children with special education needs	101	Personal interview
Parents of children with special education needs	101	Personal interview
Children outside families and persons who take care of them	108	Personal interview
Directors of institution for children of residential type centers	83	Online survey
Foster parents	100	Telephone interview
NGO representatives	10	In-depth interview
Experts with MLSP, SANC, SAS	11	In-depth interview
Directors and child protection experts with Regional Social Protection Directorates	55	Online survey
Officials from child protection departments with social assistance directorates	638	Selfcompletion questionnaire

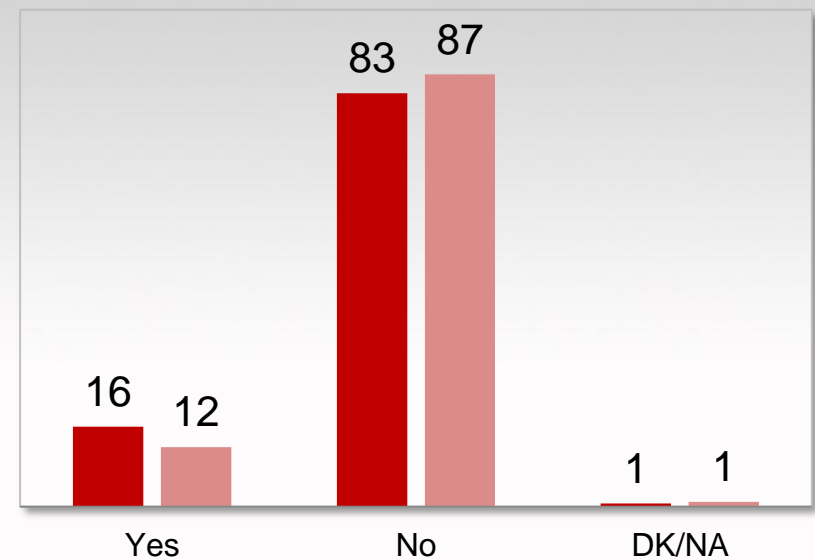
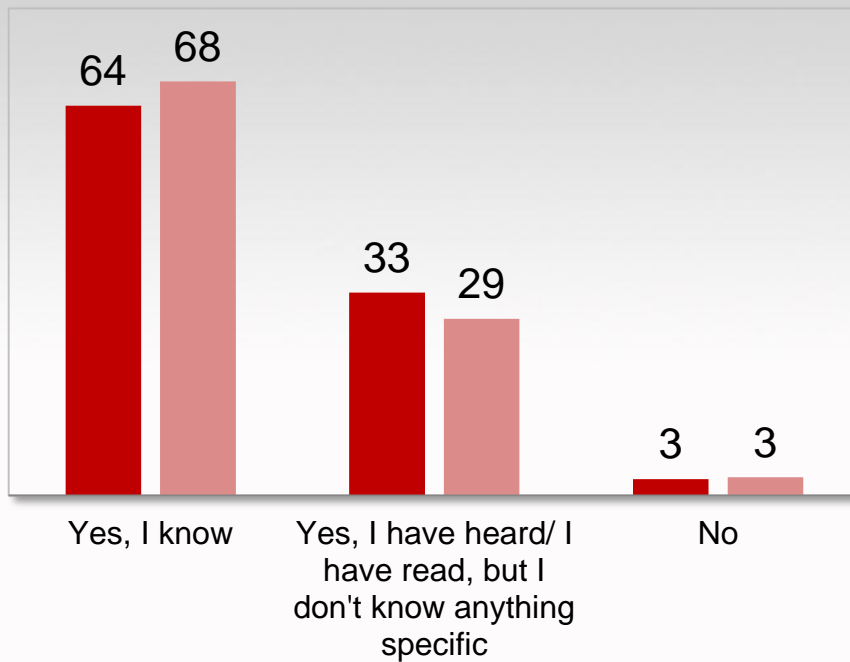
Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCPP 2008-2011



Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Do you know whether SACP exists in our country?

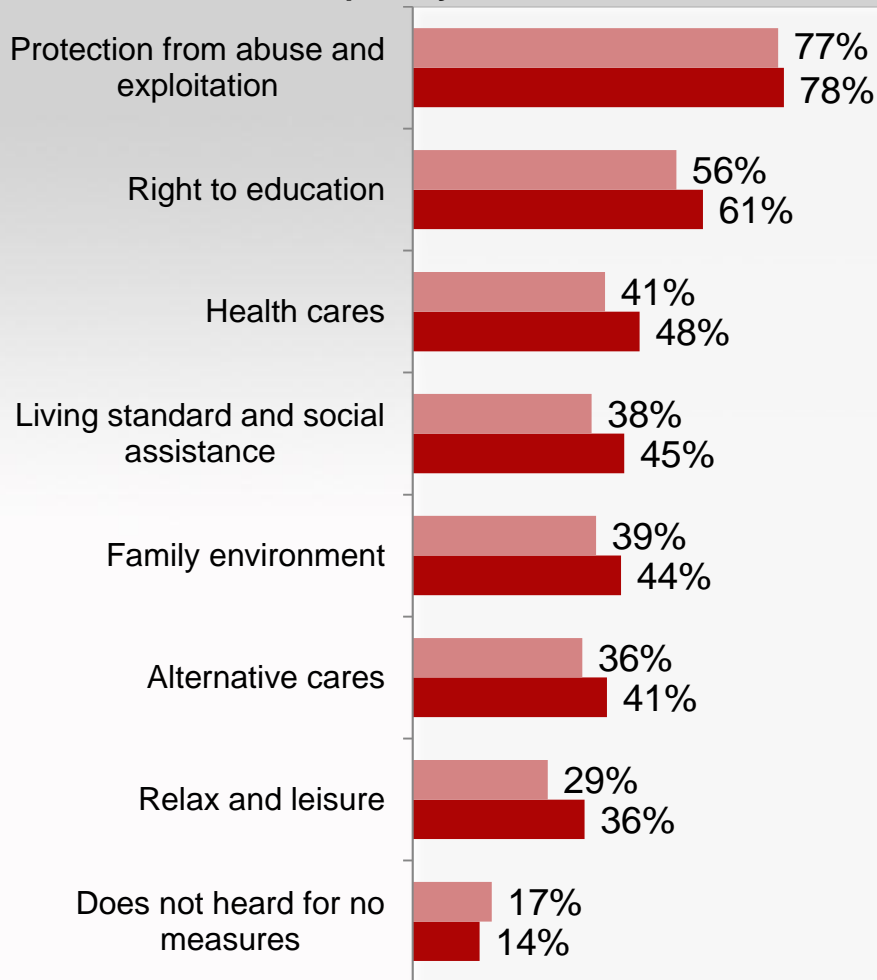
Have you heard about NCS 2008-2018?



■ Citizens (15-64)
■ Families with children beneficiaries

Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Relative share of people aware of specific measures by priority areas



■ Families with children beneficiaries
■ Citizens (15-64)

Base: All respondents (Families N=225, Citizens - N=1014)

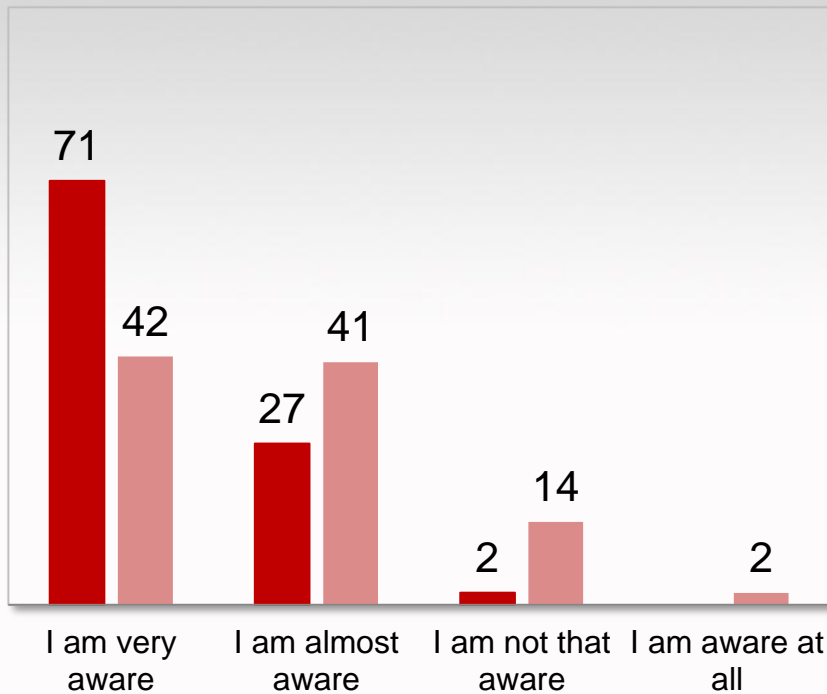
Levels of awareness

- Four in five respondents (general public and families with children beneficiaries) have heard of at least one concrete measure in at least one priority area.
- Essentially, almost all citizens (15-64) claim they would inform authorities, if they witness situations with children at risk. However, one in every four does not know how to inform authorities.

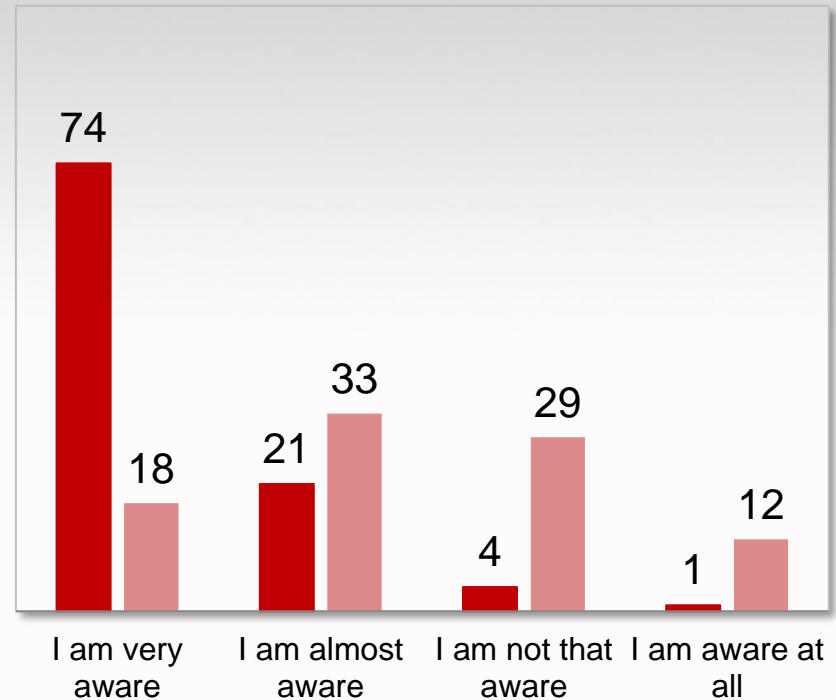
Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Foster parents and parents of children with special education needs (SEN)

Awareness of the needs of the child taken care of



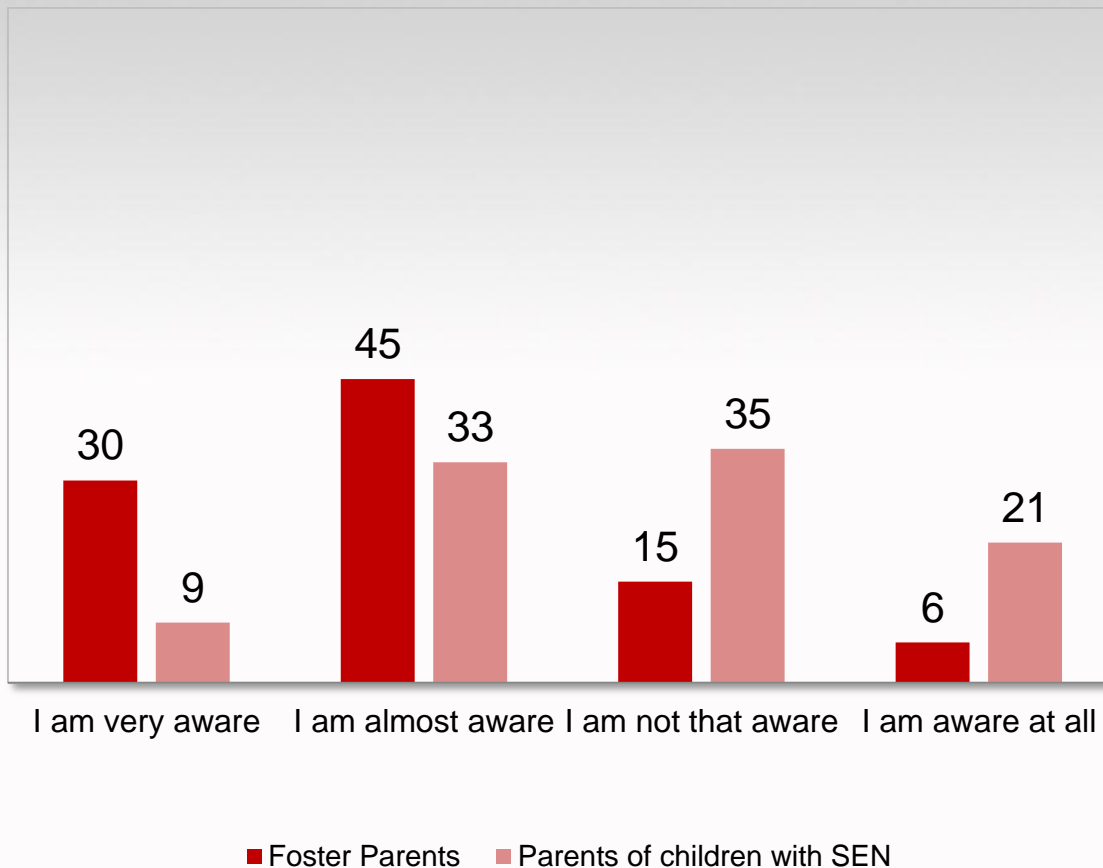
Awareness of the rights of the child taken care of



■ Foster Parents
■ Parents of children with SEN

Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Awareness of procedures for enforcing the rights of the child taken care of



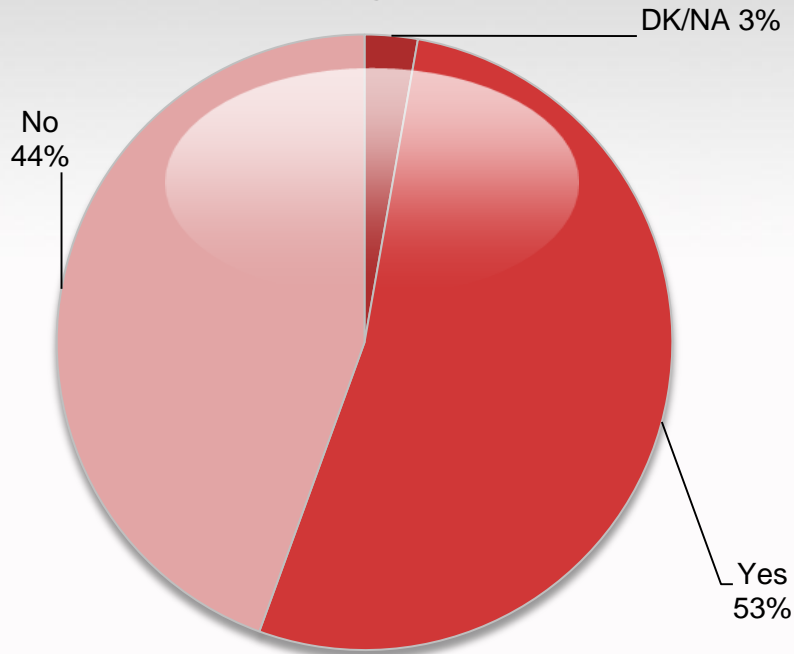
Levels of awareness

More than half of the parents of children with SEN do not feel sufficiently informed about the way to enforce the rights of their children. Among foster parents this applies to one in five cases (respondents).

Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

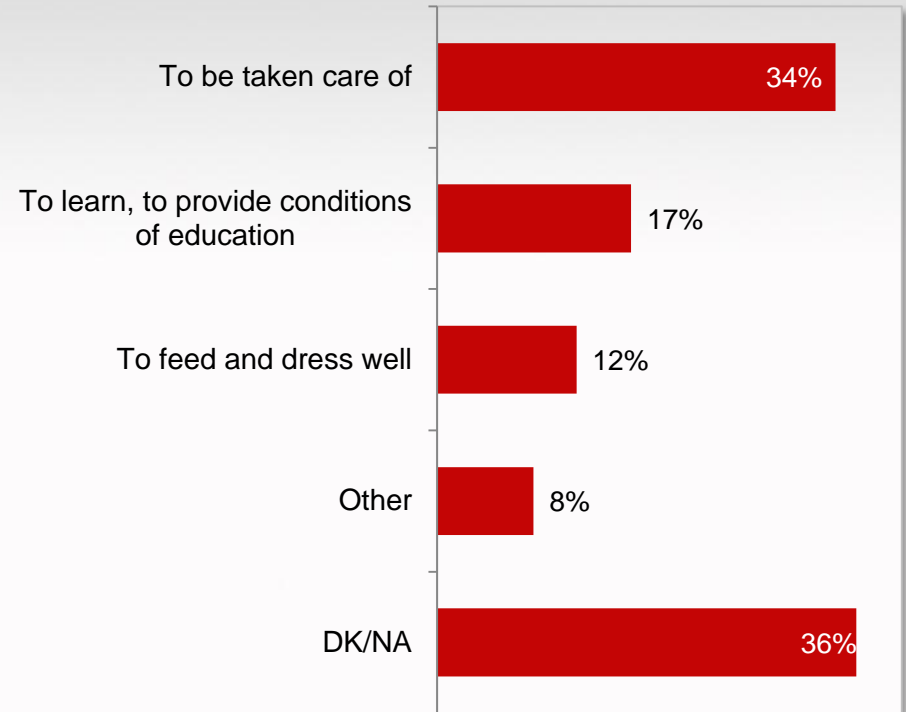
Children living outside their family

Relative share of children living outside their family, who have heard about childrens' rights



Base: All respondents (N=108)

Awareness of children living outside their family with specific rights



Base: Those who have heard about children's' rights

Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Children living outside their family

Level of awareness among children living outside their family about their rights

More than half of the children living outside of their family have heard that children have rights. Most of these children are not able to mention at least one specific right or say, more generally, that children should be taken care of. The only rights that children are able to recognize relatively easy are the right to education and the right to a decent living standard.

Special telephone numbers

A bit more than half of the children have heard about special telephone numbers for children who are in danger or need assistance. However, only one in five children could mention a valid phone number. In all correct answers No: 116111 is mentioned.

Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Representatives of NGOs which provide services to children

NGO representatives who rate their awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and the Annual National Child protection Program as poor

- Need more communication with relevant national level institutions in order to get better understanding and interpretation of specific issues in the documents which are publicly available;
- Each NGO focuses primarily on the target groups it works with;
- NGOs know well the specific area they are working in, but do not rate as “good” and “detailed” their knowledge of the policies and measures included in the Strategy and the Programme

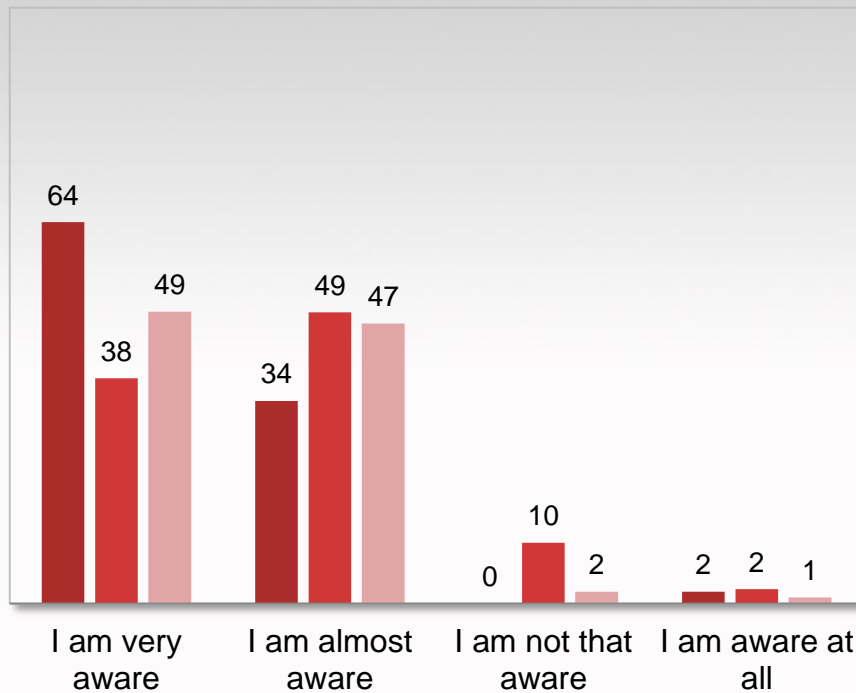
NGO representatives who rate their general awareness as relatively good

- Comprise about one third of the respondents;
- Work for organizations which have been working in the child protection area for many years;
- Are well known at national and regional level;
- Have had a lot of opportunities for direct contact and review of various elements of child policies with representatives of national and regional institutions.

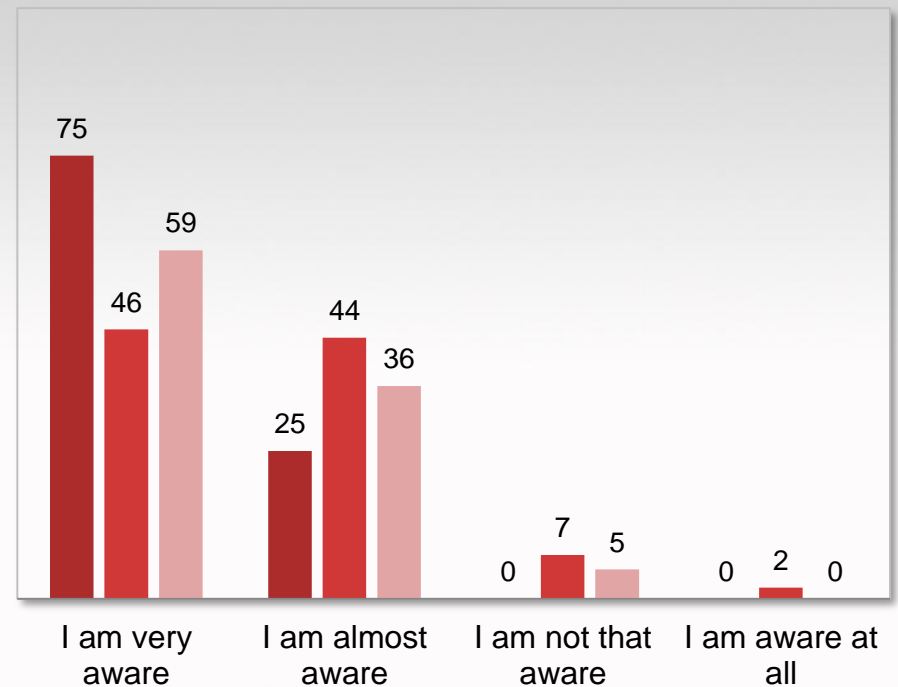
Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Level of awareness among representatives of institutions at local level

Awareness with NCS 2008-2018



Awareness with NCS 2008-2011



- RSPD
- CPD (Child protection department)
- SI and residential type centers

Base: All respondents. Directors and child protection experts at RSPD N=55. Officials at CPD N=638, Directors of SI and residential type centers N=83.

Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

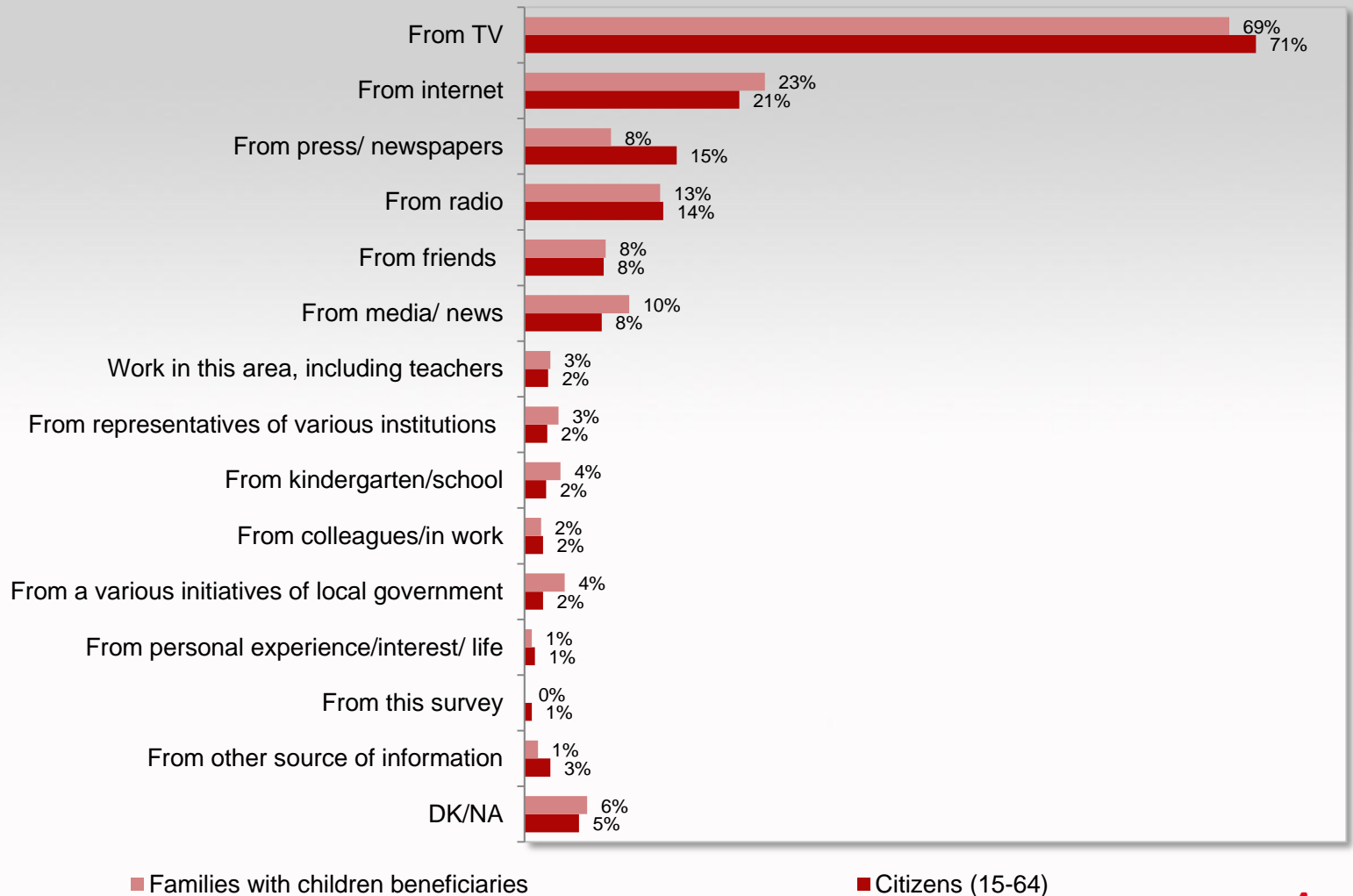
Awareness among representatives of institutions at national and regional level



- The representatives of institutions at national and regional level admit that they (personally or institutionally) have participated or are participating in the drafting of NCS and the NCPP
- Some territorial departments would not only like to participate in the drafting process, but also in the review of the final versions of documents before they are submitted to the political level

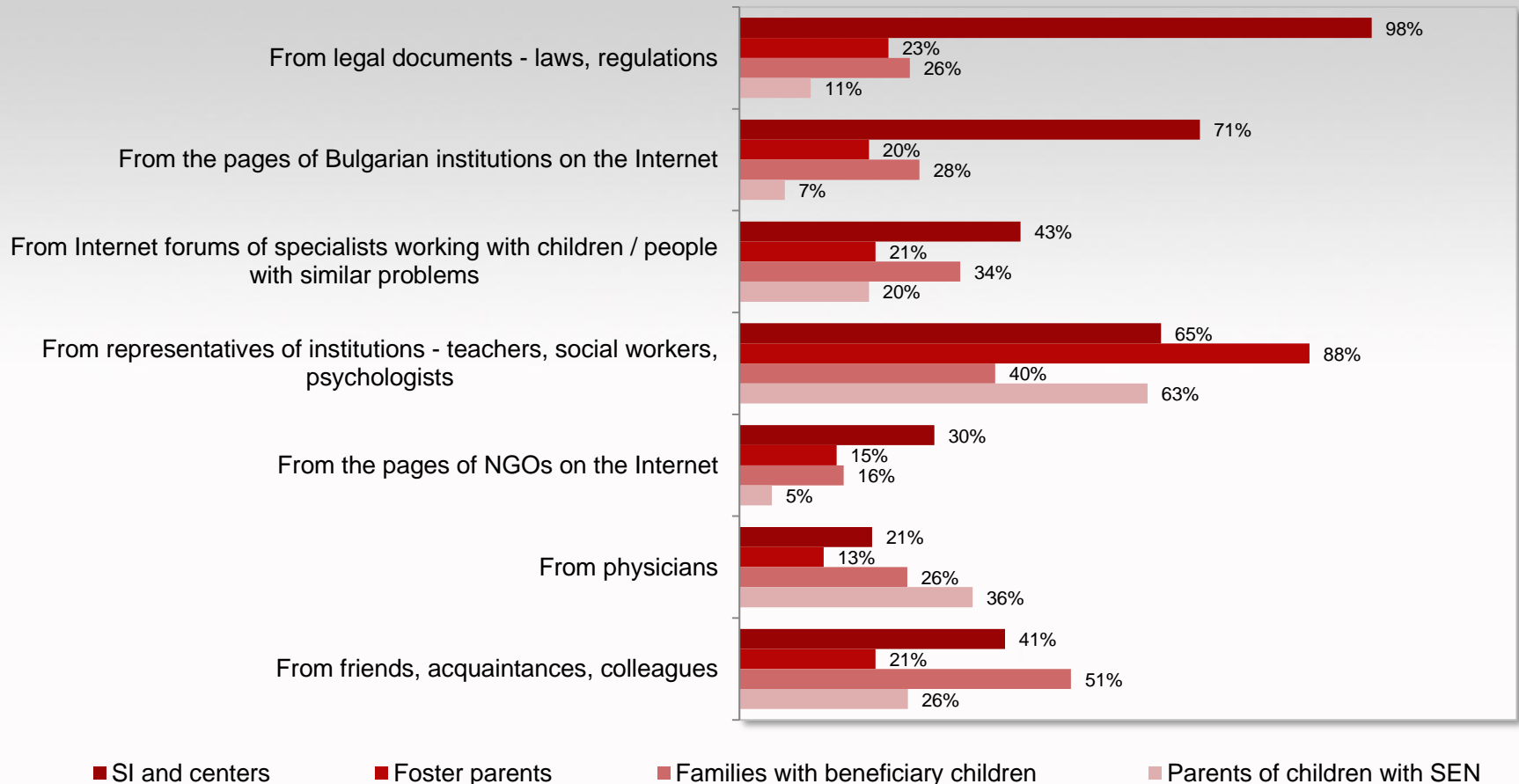
Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Sources of information for: Measures for children



Awareness of NCS 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Sources of information for rights and needs of children taken care of



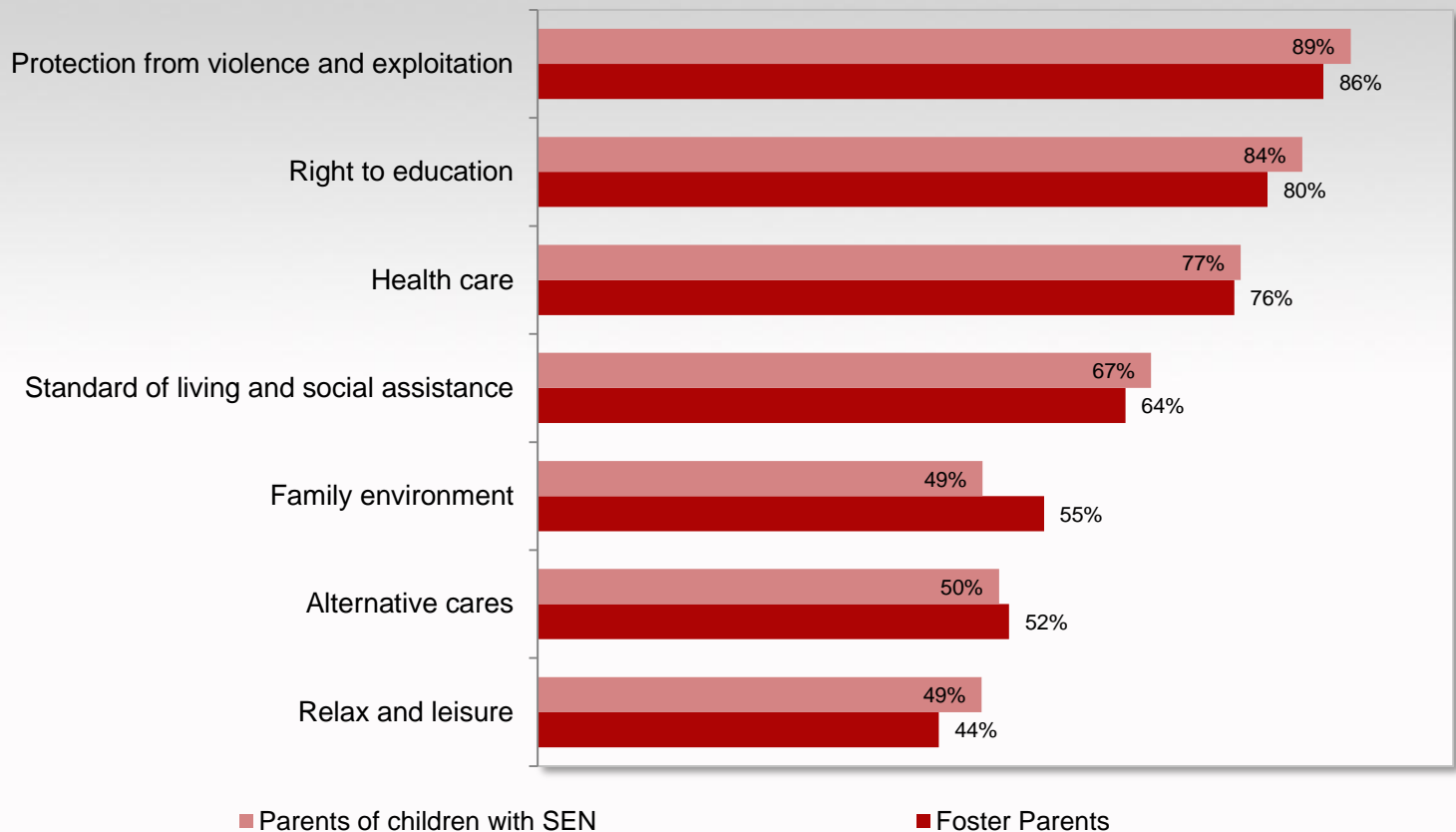
Base: All respondents. (SI and centers N=83. Foster parents N=100. Families with beneficiary children N=225. Parents of children with SEN N=101)

Support for the main principles of NSC 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011



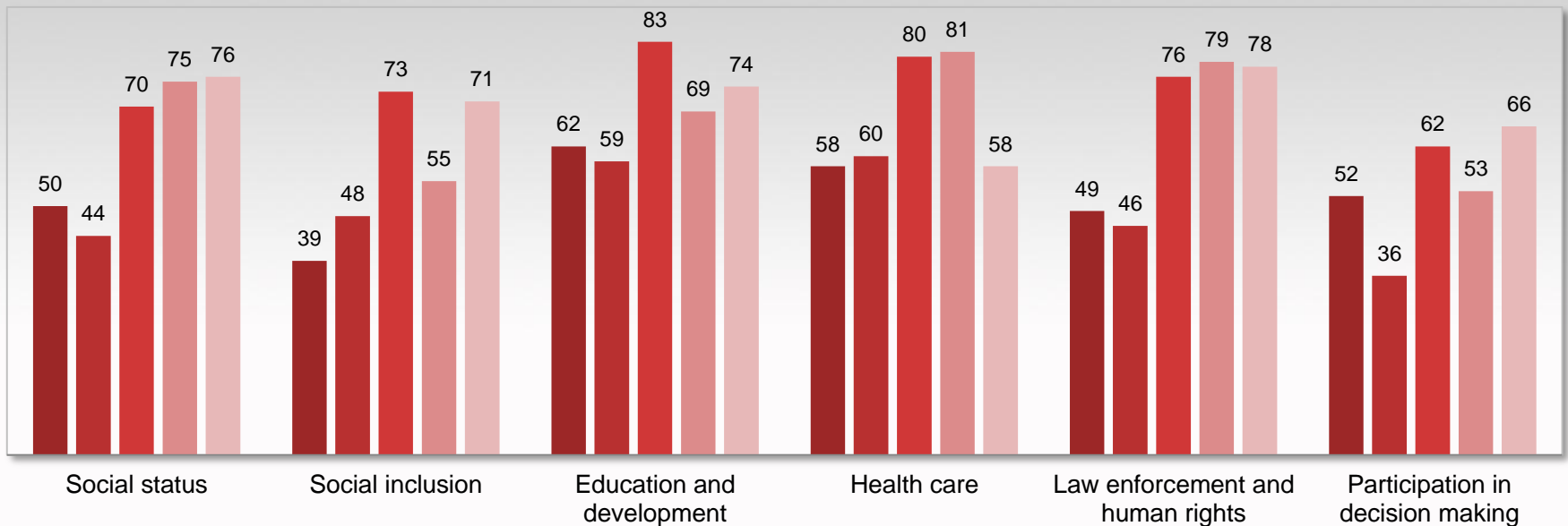
Support for the main principles of NSC 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Evaluate the implementation of measures in priority areas such as "extremely urgent"



Support for the main principles of NSC 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Share of respondents who have rated protection of rights “fully protected” and “protected to a large extent” by priority areas

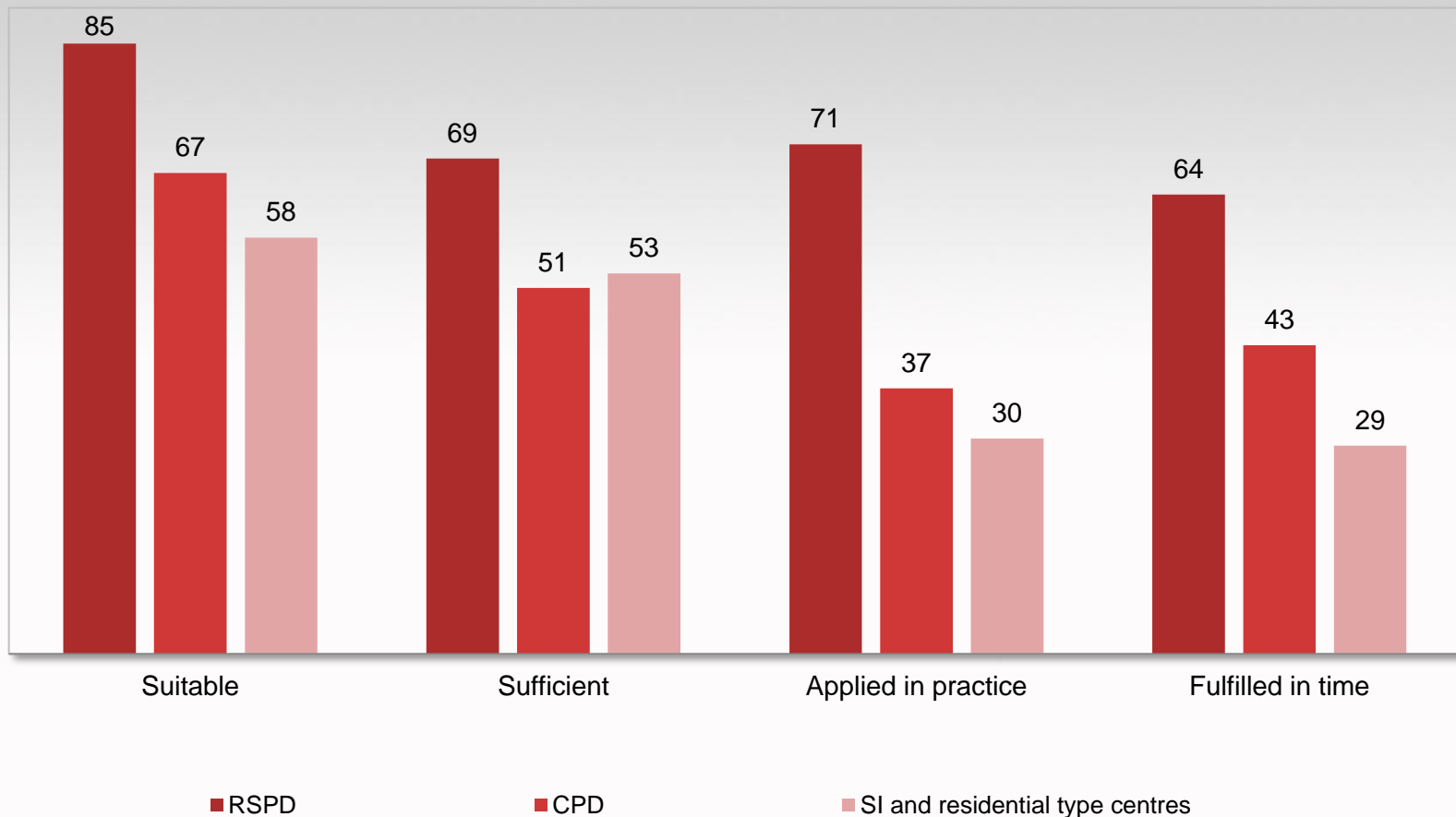


■ Families with children beneficiaries
 ■ Parents of children with SEN
 ■ Foster parents
■ SI and residential type centres
 ■ RSPD

Base: All respondents. Beneficiary families N=225. Foster parents N=100. Parents of children with SEN N=101. SI and centers N=83. Directors and experts in child protection in RDSP N=55.

Support for the main principles of NSC 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Share of respondents who have assessed all or most measures as “adequate” and “implemented”



Base: All respondents. Directors and experts in child protection in RDSP N=55; Officers in CPD N=638; Directors of SI and centers and residential type centers N=83.

Support for the main principles of NSC 2008-2018 and NCS 2008-2011

Conclusions

1

Respondents who have mentioned concrete measure they have had experience with, unanimously find children's situation in the respective area has improved

2

A certain discrepancy exists between the priorities the public considers most urgent and the actual implementation of measures by priority areas. Measures addressing protection from violence and exploitation and health care are considered most urgent. However, progress is most frequently observed in the areas of alternative care and education.

The contribution of NCS and NCPP for the implementation of child protection policies: views

Positive

Some respondents display fully positive attitudes stressing on the comprehensiveness of the Strategy and its role as a starting point for developing all subsequent strategic and normative documents in the area of child protection.

Negative

The Strategy and respectively the spin off programs are too general, too dispersed and unfocused. There is no clear listing of the responsibilities of relevant institutions with regard to concrete policies and measures. Financing of each of the enlisted measures and policies is not properly ensured.

Assessments of the changes and the effectiveness of implemented child protection measures in the period 2008-2011

Public assessments

General public

43 %

Have noticed the implementation of concrete measures aimed at improving the situation of children in the last three years.

33 %

Can list concrete measures in specific areas.

Observed execution of concrete measures by priority areas

- **Mentioned most often:** Alternative care – 32%, Right to education – 27%
- **Least mentioned:** Recreation and free time – 13%, Family environment – 16%

Families of beneficiary children

50 %

Have noticed the implementation of concrete measures aimed at improving the situation of children in the last three years.

34 %

Can list concrete measures in specific areas.

Observed execution of concrete measures by priority areas

- **Mentioned most often:** Alternative care – 36 %, Right to education – 28 %
- **Least mentioned:** Health care – 14%, Recreation and free time – 15 %

Assessments of the changes and the effectiveness of implemented child protection measures in the period 2008-2011

NGO representatives

Positive changes

- Areas:
 - ✓ Right to education and development of children with disabilities and children with SEN
 - ✓ Right to live in an environment close to the family for children who cannot live with their biological families.
- Measures and activities:
 - ✓ Setting up of various social services in the community
 - ✓ Deinstitutionalization of the youngest children through the Childhood for Everyone project
 - ✓ Integrated education for children with SEN
 - ✓ Mechanisms for coordination between institutions in cases of violence, exploitation and trafficking of children.

Insufficient changes

- Areas:
 - ✓ Rights of delinquent children
 - ✓ Health care for specific groups: mothers and newborn children, children with disabilities, children in institutions
 - ✓ Family environment: living standard of children and families, prevention of child abandonment

Assessments of the changes and the effectiveness of implemented child protection measures in the period 2008-2011

NGO representatives

1

Most NGO representatives think that the focus of funding and concentrated efforts of experts has been shifted from support of the biological families to support for foster care.

2

Specific groups the situation of which has not been addressed sufficiently include:

- Children in smaller towns/villages
- Children with rare diseases

Assessments of the changes and the effectiveness of implemented child protection measures in the period 2008-2011

Representatives of institutions

Positive changes

- Most statements view deinstitutionalization, setting up of alternative care and services for children and families in the community as a uniform process
- The efforts aimed at intergrated education of children with SEN
- Mechanisms for coordination between institutions is cases of violence, exploitation and trafficking of children.
- Municipalities start assuming their propor role and responsibilities in the area of child protection
- The mean rating of the execution at the national level is 4.49 (min=2, max=6), and for the own regional directorate of the responent - 4,65.

NCS and NCPP measures with poor implementaion

National level	RCPD	CPD
Introduction of the principle “money follow the child”, which stimulates municipalities to develop services like alternative care	73%	60%
Increase of the social assistance for children who go to school regularly	66%	70%
Creating incentives for fathers to use family leave	60%	57%
Regional level		
Measure aimed to support good parenthood, e.g.: family planning services, pregnancy assistance, development of parent skills, family crisis alleviation	62%	72%
Imposing sanctions on parents, who do not ensure regular school attendance of their children	58%	82%
Measures aimed at preventing and sanctioning of irresponsible parenting and child abandonment	58%	81%

Assessments of the changes and the effectiveness of implemented child protection measures in the period 2008-2011

Representatives of institutions

1

Most representatives of RCPD and CPD officers note that about half of the planned measures are not properly implemented in their region. This refers to measures like:

- Support for the family environment
- Health prophylactics measures

2

According representatives of national and regional institutions, specific groups not addressed in the national policies are:

- Children in smaller towns/villages
- Children with rare diseases

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

- 1 Family environment
- 2 Deinstitutionalization and alternative care
- 3 Standard of living
- 4 Social inclusion
- 5 Education and development
- 6 Health care
- 7 Protection from violence and exploitation
- 8 Law enforcement and protection against crime involvement
- 9 Protection against discrimination
- 10 Participation in decision making

Family environment



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Family environment

Vulnerable groups of children

- **Strongly vulnerable:**
 - ✓ Abandoned children
 - ✓ Children in risk to be abandoned
- **Also vulnerable:**
 - ✓ Children of divorcing parents, divorced parents and parents in conflict
 - ✓ Children of parent who work abroad and are raised by grand parents
 - ✓ Children of busy parents

Children outside their biological family

- Still most of these children reside in specialized institutions for children
- 93% of these children have biological families and at least four in five children have at least one biological parent
- According to institution directors, 42% of the children in institutions and residence type of centres at risk of full breaking the link with their biological family
- About 2/3 of the children outside their biological family maintain contact with this family
- 64% of the children meet with their biological relatives in person but about one in four has meetings at least one a week
- 48% of the children talk with their biological relatives over the phone but about one in three do this at least once a week
- 36% express willingness to communicate more often with their family

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Family environment

1

Representatives of NGOs find substantial shortages in the social work with families aiming at:

- Prevention of child abandonment
- Successful reintegration of abandoned children
- Guaranteeing the right of children to contact with their biological families

2

Practices and normative documents which harm children:

- Transferring children between institutions
- Settling children in an institution which is too far away from the biological family
- The rule which provides that adoption should be initiated if a child has not been visited by its biological parents for more than 6 months

3

General public: policies and measures aiming at strengthening of the family environment are not among the most urgent ones.

Experts: seriously worried that such measures are not implemented in full.

This discrepancy of assessments is due to the fact that public attention usually focuses on the most visible and most serious problems, while experts usually focus on the factors that generate these problems.

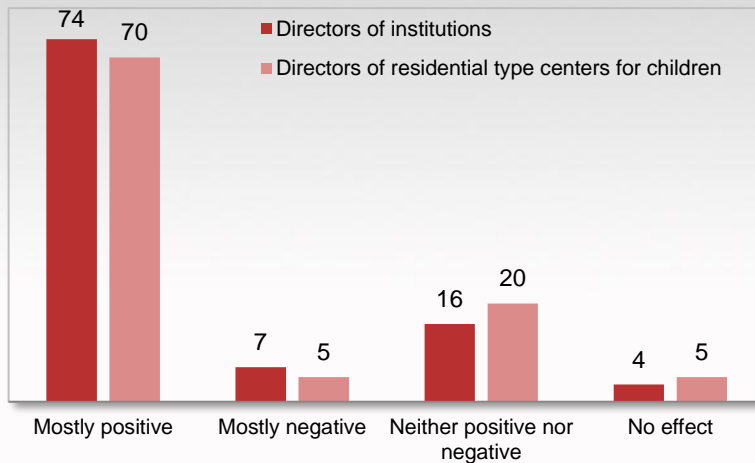
Deinstitutionalization and alternative care



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Deinstitutionalization and alternative care

**Assessment of the effects of
Deinstitutionalization and alternative care**



Base: All respondents. Directors of SI N=63. Directors of RTC- N=20.

- Most NGO representatives at national and regional level spontaneously point at deinstitutionalization and alternative care as:
 - ✓ The biggest change
 - ✓ The most positive change
 - ✓ The best example of effective child protection policy
- Most directors of institutions for children and residential type centers assess the effects from deinstitutionalization and alternative care as predominantly positive

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Deinstitutionalization and alternative care

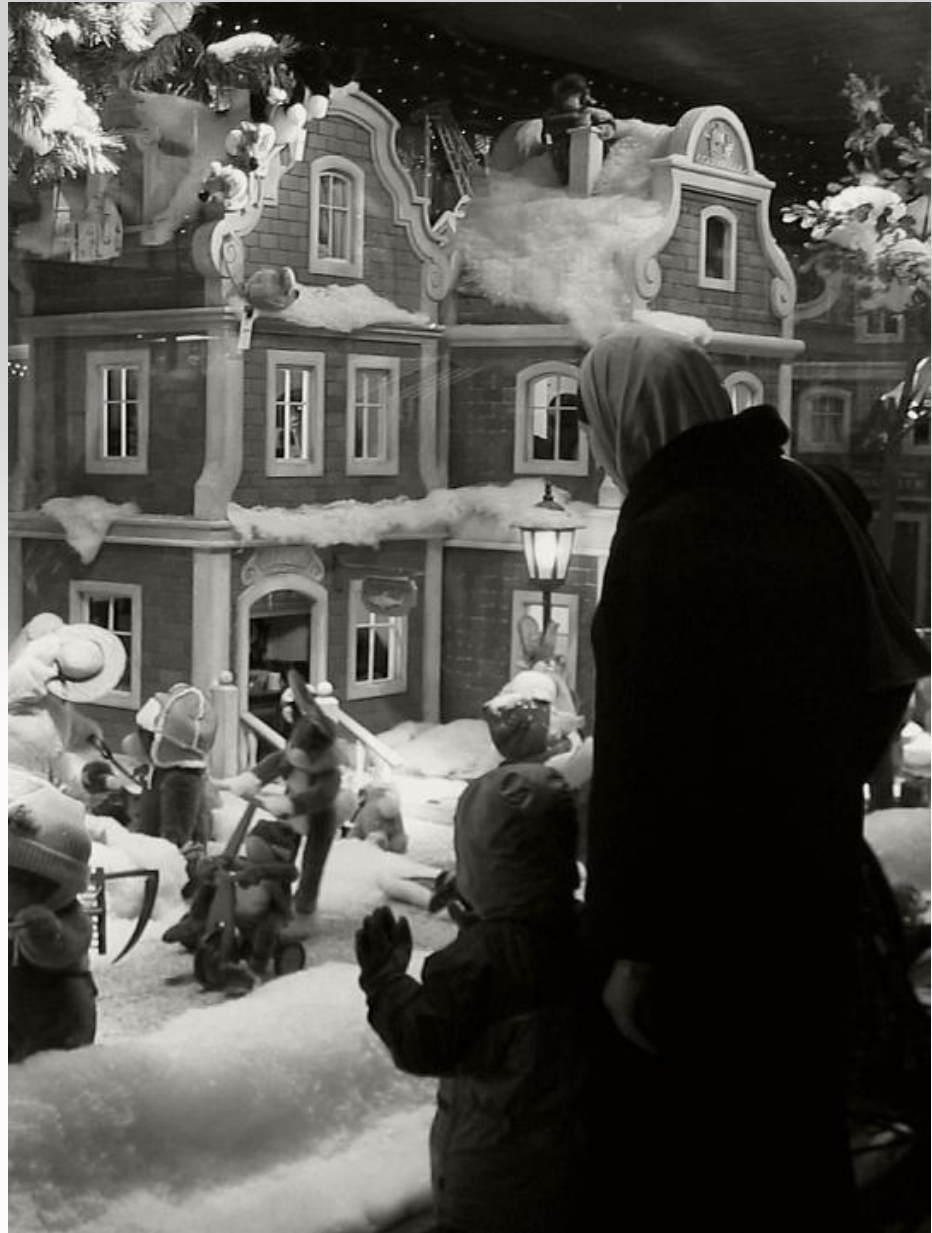
Positive changes identified by representatives of NGOs and institutions at central and regional level

- Development of foster care, both in terms of the number of foster families and to develop necessary legislation for implementation of foster care
- The closing down of some specialized institutions for children. Most often mentioned are Homes for Mediacal and Social Care for Children (0-3), and Homes for Mentally Retarded Children and Youth; also mentioned are the reducing of Social Pedagogical Hostels and Training School Hostels to a total of nine across the country
- Improving the quality of care in specialized institutions, thanks to the assessment of the social status of children from 55 homes. Positive comments mainly affect ongoing work of Homes for Mentally Retarded Children and Youth on specifically listed measures and the positive experience with the staff there, the introduction of spoon feeding and intensive communication
- Restructuring of the institutions into alternative services such SFTH, Transitional housing, group homes, day care centers, CSC

Negative opinions and concerns about future development

- Slow development of alternative care
- Doubts at all in Bulgarian conditions they may develop a degree sufficient to compensate the imminent closure of institutions, in planned time
- Reveal alternative social services without preliminary study of the needs of the relevant municipalities
- Doubts about how to restructure the institutions into alternative services and quality of care that is provided in restructured institutions
- Encumbered procedures, conflict of interest and corruption in adoptions
- Psychological trauma to the child caused by the possibility of being taken by the foster family and then returned to the institution but also to pick up and returned for holidays and vacations
- Neglect of work with biological families and the efforts to reintegrate the expense of other alternative measures

Standard of living

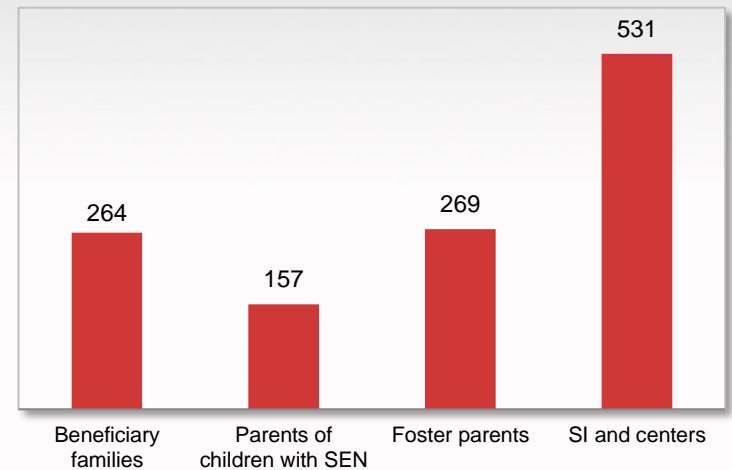


Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Standard of living

- According to the provided data, children in specialized institutions and residential type centers should enjoy the highest standard of living among all covered target groups of children in this survey. Average monthly amount for the maintenance of a child who lives with them exceeds:
 - ✓ almost twice the monthly income per household member in foster families and families of child beneficiaries of social benefits or services
 - ✓ more than 3 times the income per household member in a family of children with SEN
- If compared with the calculations of the Trade Unions for the cost of living and the poverty threshold in December 2011:
 - ✓ families of children with SEN live well below the estimated minimum life of BGN 202 per person in a family of four
 - ✓ only the standard of living of children in institutions and residential centers can be defined as decent (close to the required BGN 536)

Average estimates of monthly income per household member and child maintenance in institutions and residential type centers (BGN)

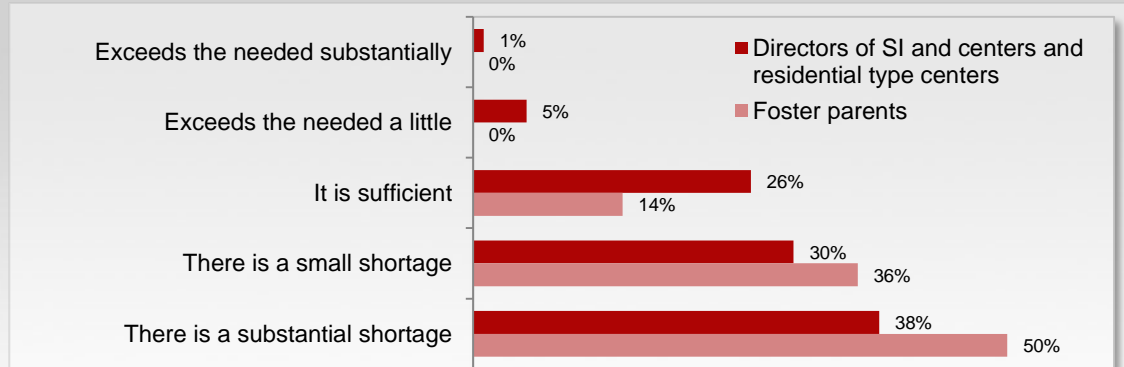


Base: All respondents. Beneficiary families N=225. Parents of children with SEN N=101. Foster parents N=100. SI and centers N=83

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Standard of living

Ratings for the compliance of monthly income for child maintenance with state regulations and standards for rising



- Among the heads of the specialized institutions and residential type centers:
 - ✓ 68% reported a shortage of funds, and 32% optimistically estimated amount of maintenance
 - ✓ average estimate of the share of vulnerable children of all placed children was 34%
 - ✓ nearly half (46%) estimate that among children placed with them none child haven't threatened by similar risk
- Among foster parents:
 - ✓ 86% report shortage of means and 14% find means sufficient
 - ✓ 2/3 think that prior to being settled in institutions, children have experienced low living standards or poverty, but only 20% admit such a risk once settled

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Living conditions of children raised outside their family

Living space

- Subjectively children settled outside their families do not feel the lack of enough personal space. Only 4% report such deficiency.
- About 40% of the children study and do their homework along with 6 or more other children or adults around them
- About 31% sleep in a room with 4-6 other children or adults, and another 15% with more than 6 other children or adults

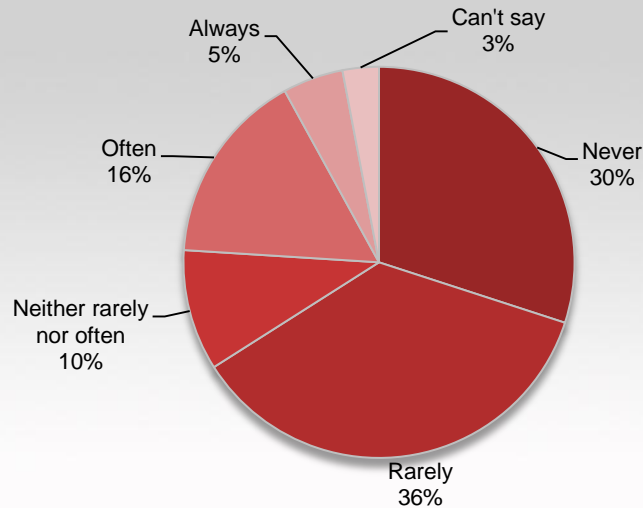
Clothes

- Almost all surveyed children dispose of all elements of basic clothing
- The most serious shortage identified during the study (conducted during the winter months) is that one in seven children does not have gloves and scarf, one in ten does not have a hat, and one in twenty does not have warm shoes. Also worth noting is that 9% of the children do not have good shoes for sport and games and 7% do not have comfortable everyday trousers.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Living conditions of children raised outside their family

Feeling of hunger among children raised outside their families



Food

- One in five children raised outside their family says it feels hunger often or almost permanently
- Children aged 6-11 years complain feeling hunger permanently. This is twice more often than children in the age group 12 and over. Feeling of hunger could not be explained with other subjective factors, e.g. increased appetite during the puberty years

- Quality of provided food:
 - ✓ Despite rules and prescriptions carbohydrates predominate in the menu.
 - ✓ Protein rich milk and meat products come next in the daily menu.
 - ✓ Fish products are almost absent from the menu. Eggs also appear in the menu of very few children
 - ✓ The share of children who receive fresh fruit and vegetables is not satisfactory, but is higher than expected
 - ✓ Most children do not receive fresh or processed vegetables every day

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Standard of living

Views of NGOs and institutions at national and regional level

- Representatives of NGOs and institutions speak rarely about poverty among children living outside their families. The main issue discussed is that financial standards for raising children in institutions have not been updated for several years despite inflation.
- Several types of problems and respectively vulnerable groups have been identified:
 - The need to view children and families as one unit and provide more assistance to biological families to prevent abandonment and encourage reintegration
 - The need to ensure more flexibility and greater coverage of the social assistance system
 - Special attention and extended measure should be focused on families with disabled children, socially isolated and poor Roma families
 - A fundamental restructuring of policies for integrating the Roma is necessary: improvement of literacy, education of adults, labor market integration. According to respondents, if integration of Roma fails, all policies aimed at children are doomed
 - Measure which link social assistance with education and health coverage of children have been criticised. Most respondents dispute the effectiveness of these measures and think they violate the rights of children and parents

Social inclusion



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Social inclusion

Assessments of parents of children with SEN, foster parents and institution directors

- Social inclusion:
 - ✓ According parents of children with SEN (41% “in full” and 31% “to a large degree”) their own efforts contribute to children's social adaptation, independence and skills.
 - ✓ 37% of directors of institutions consider the future opportunities for social inclusion of their disciples good; another 33% consider future opportunities fair
- Social isolation:
 - ✓ Most directors of institutions and residential type centers (63 %) do not think any of the children they host is at risk of social isolation
 - ✓ 76% of foster parent think that from the moment children are living in their family, they have not faced the risk of social isolation. This risk has been real prior to settlement according to 45% of foster parents
- Lack of age specific life skills:
 - ✓ 30% of directors of institutions and centers do not think any of their hosted children lack life skills. The average assessment of the share of such children is 25
 - ✓ According to 31% of foster parents, the children they raise has skills deficiencies that had to be compensated. Prior to settlement 56% of children were considered to lack adequate life skills

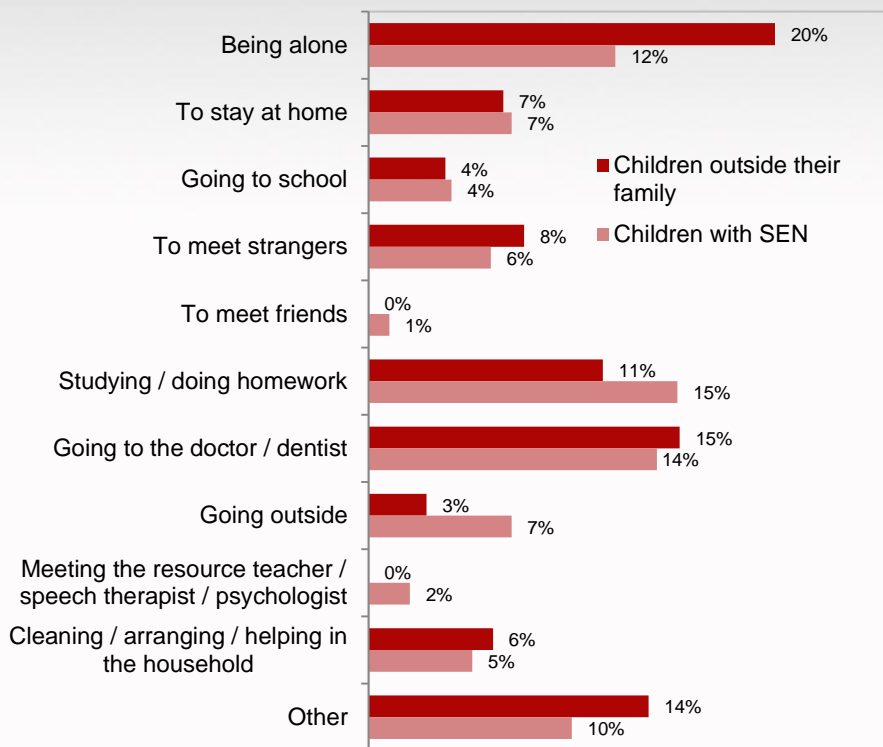
Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Social inclusion

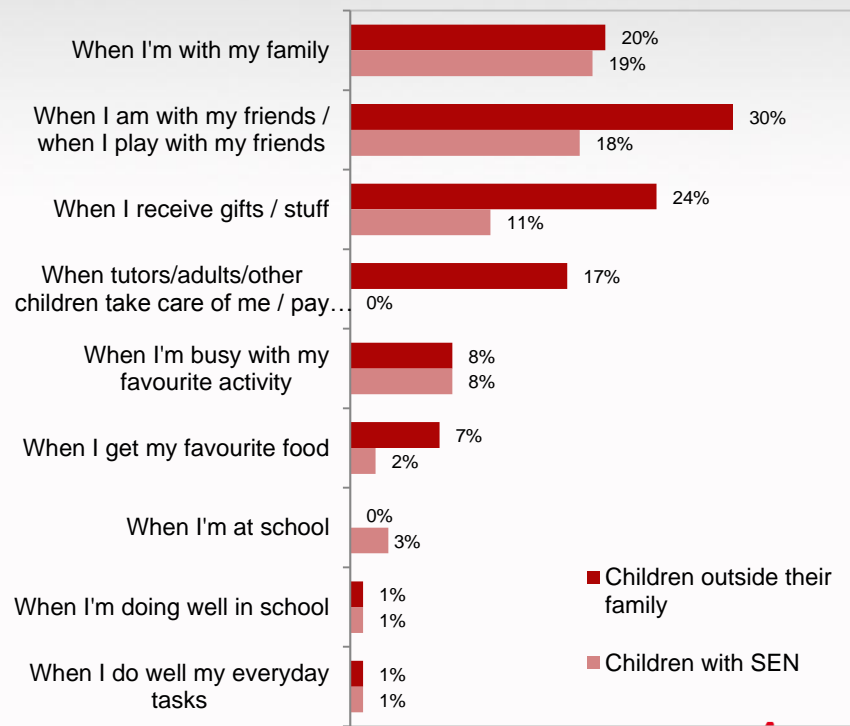
Children with SEN living outside their own family

- The answers of children living outside their own family show clear signs of subjective feeling of isolation. They point to “being alone” as the most unpleasant thing much more often than children with SEN
- Only one in 100 children in both groups is happy when achieving success in school, which shows low leaning motivation

Undesired activities by children with SEN and children living outside their family



Things that make children with SEN and children living outside their family happy



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Social inclusion

Representatives of NGOs and institutions at national and regional level

- Groups of children most frequently mentioned as vulnerable to social isolation :
 - ✓ Children in institutions. Most often isolation is related to the small size of the town/village where the institution is located, lack of funding for participation in cultural or sporting events and other leisure activities
 - ✓ Children with disabilities. Isolation is most often related to access to infrastructure and the low level of development of integrated education
 - ✓ Also mentioned (rarely) are groups like:
 - ✓ Children of refugees
 - ✓ Children abandoned by refugees
 - ✓ Children in poor families
 - ✓ Children in small towns/villages
 - ✓ Children living in the “virtual world”

Education and development



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

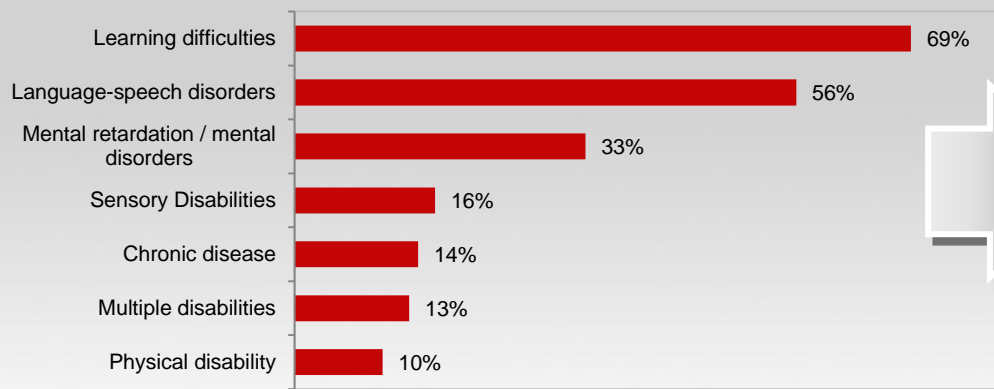
Education and development

- Education and development is an area where in principle rights of children are guaranteed most comprehensively by government policies
 - Progress in this area is the most frequently discussed by experts
 - Experts focus comments on education of children with SEN and children of poor Roma families. The survey shows that children living outside their families also have problems.
-
- **Risk to drop out of the education system or delayed graduation:**
 - ✓ About 18% of directors of institutions and residential type centers their disciples run this type of risk
 - ✓ Assessments of foster parents are similar – 15% consider this risk is present
 - **Share of children not covered by the education system:**
 - ✓ In both among children outside their families and children with SEN about 14% do not attend school
 - ✓ Among children in foster families not attending school applies to 5% of the children
 - ✓ While among children with SEN most cases relate to delayed enrollment, among children living outside their family delay usually occur after the age of 12 (i.e. primary and secondary education)
 - **Change of school:**
 - ✓ Among 14% of children with SEN in half of the cases the decision to change the school has been taken by the parents, the main reason being the possibility to match the education needs of the child
 - ✓ Among about 1/3 of children in school age in foster families. Most often this is due to the fact that with settlement the foster family relocates.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Education and development among children with SEN

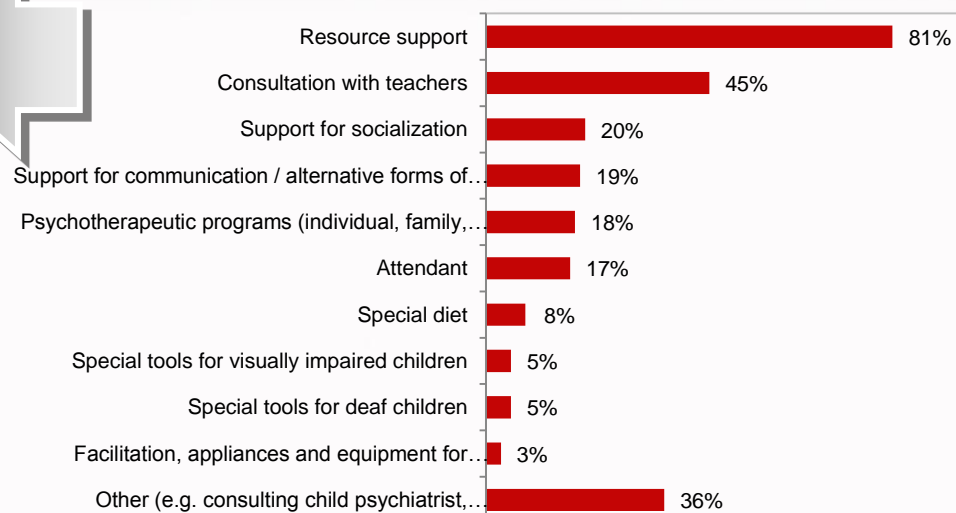
Disabilities and difficulties of children with SEN



- Most frequently children with SEN have: specific educational problems (69%) and language disorders (56%). Very often both problems refer to the same child (41% of children with SEN).

- The most frequent recommendation of experts (81%) is for increase of resources.
- The most often recommended type of education is the integrated education in a general school or kindergarten (82%). In some cases (10%) a specialized group in a general school is the recommended.

Reccomendations of expert commissions

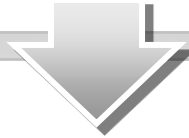


Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Assessments of parents of children with SEN regarding the recommendations of expert committees (GCPA)

Adequacy

- On the whole GCPA recommendations match the needs of children.



- Discrepancies found by the survey include:
 - ✓ The recommendation for consultations (GCPA) with experts regarding general disorders of children covers only about 50% of the children that effectively need it
 - ✓ Recommendations for consultations of children with physical and neurological disorders with experts (psychologist, neurologists, etc.) are rare (19% of cases)
 - ✓ Only 43% of children with autism have received recommendations for psycho-therapeutic, assistance with socialization and communication assistance programs
 - ✓ Only 56% of children with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders have been recommended consultations with experts. For 26% of children recommendation is for psycho-therapeutic programs. The programs that are considered effective are the multicomponent and multidisciplinary ones
 - ✓ In most of the cases, children with sensory disorders are not provided for (consultations, equipment or programs)
- 45% of the children with SEN do not have an individual education program, because, in most cases GCPA did not find this necessary. In 1/3 of the cases this does not become known to parents.
- A troublesome fact identified is that GCPA recommendations are to different needs are usually uniform and refer to resource assistance not accompanied by an individual training program

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Assessments of parents of children with SEN regarding the recommendations of expert committees (GCPA)

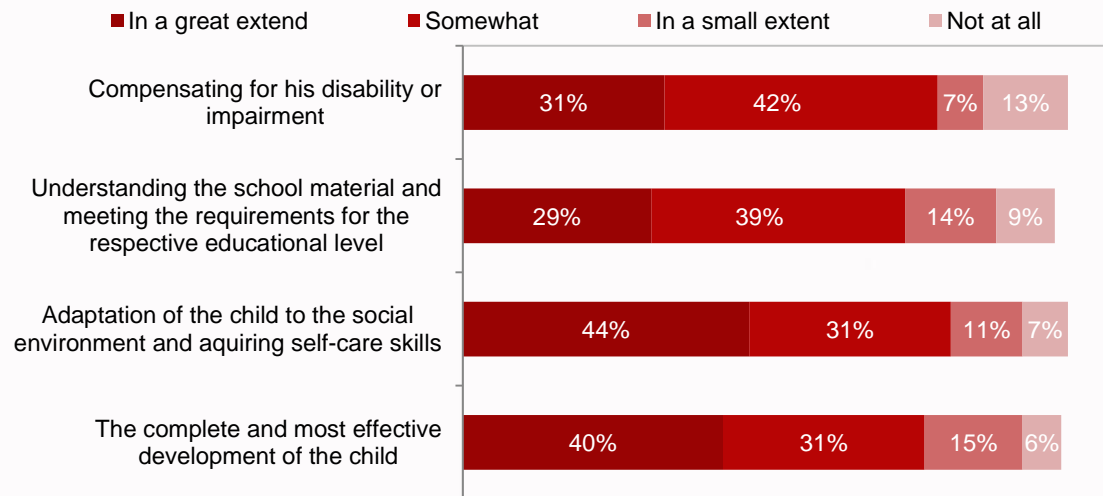
Execution

- In many cases recommendations are not followed. One in four parents confirm that fact. The most widespread reason for lack of implementation is the transfer of responsibilities between institutions.

Satisfaction

- About 3/4 of parents of children with SEN are satisfied with GCPA recommendations, but only 8-15% link satisfaction with effects of the recommendation on their child.
- One in five parents is not satisfied with GCPA recommendations.

Contribution of measures aimed at the education of children with SEN for the fulfillment of the main objectives



Base: All respondents. Parents of children with SEN N=101.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Education and development of children with SEN

Information received from children with SEN

- Only 29% of parents are satisfied with the contribution of implemented measures related to leaning and meeting education targets
- Information received from children with SEN confirm the worries of parents. The small test of reading and writing for children (7+) shows that:
 - ✓ Only 16% of children aged 7-11 and 29% of children in the group 12+ can read without problems
 - ✓ 29% of children in the group 7-11 and 17% in the group 12+ cannot read and recognize letters
 - ✓ 38% of the children in the group 7-11 and 30% of the children in the group 12+ cannot complete the writing test and complete two simple sentences

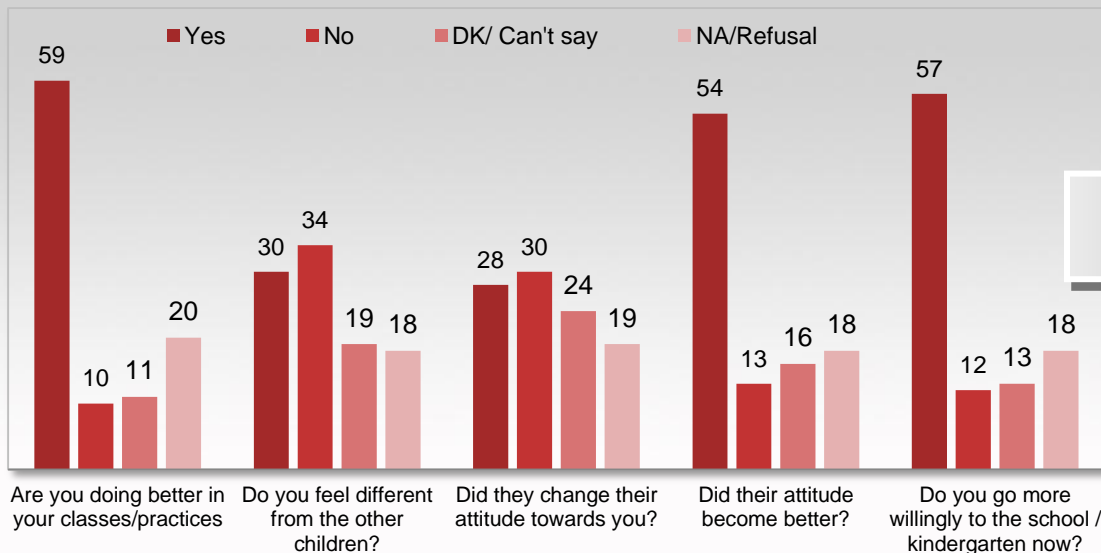


- Essentially a substantial part of the children pass from one grade to another without meeting elementary education standards

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Education and development of children with SEN

Assessments of children with SEN about the effect of changes in models of education



- Most children feel positive changes:
 - 59% cope better with training material
 - 54% have established better relationships with their peers
- The willingness to attend school or kindergarten has increased (57%).

- 16% of the children with SEN are not confident that in case of need, there is someone in school that could provide help. This questions the qualification and professionalism of the people working with children with SEN.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Disadvantages of the educational system pointed out by representatives of NGOs and institutions at national and regional level

Concerning the education and development of all children

- Continuous changes in the educational system which does not allow development of the measures and monitoring results
- Inadequacy of the education system to implement differentiated approaches to children so the differences do not become obstacles for the children to fit into the educational process
- Inadequate presentation of content (e.g.: textbook with inappropriate content)
- Lack of opportunities for extracurricular activities
- Resistance from the teaching staff to cooperate in implementing projects aimed at building emotional literacy, social skills, protection from violence, preventive health

Mainly concerning children with SEN

- Lack of resource teachers and other professionals supporting their education
- Insufficient training of teaching and non-teaching staff in educational institutions for work with these children
- Inadequacy or insufficiency of the resource support
- Inadequacy of integrated education for children with moderate and severe disabilities
- Disorders and getting round the regulations in the homes for medical care for children and special schools that violate children's rights to education and development
- Very little progress towards building an accessible environment

Concerning the integration of Roma children into the educational system

- Lack of adequate records of the dropouts and children who are not included in the educational system and lack of coordination between different institutions which keep similar records
- Infractions and even fabrication by school staff side about school attendance in order for schools not be closed and to continue to receive funding
- Conflicting opinions about the effectiveness of existing and future measures against dropping out of school - different forms of support tied to school attendance, and the measure providing compulsory preschool education for 4 years olds.

Health Care



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Health Care

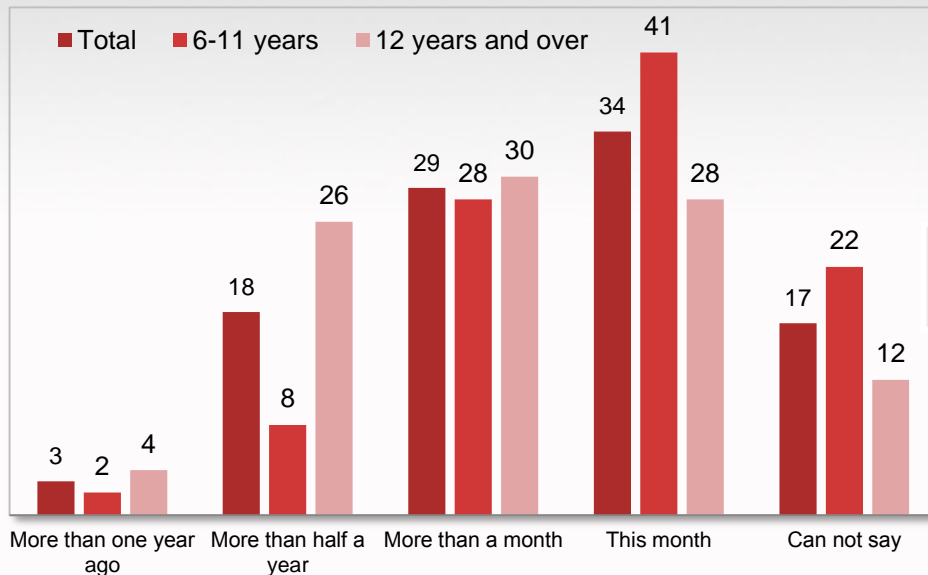
Children's assessment about the quality of health care

- There is a difference between the views of the biological parents on one hand (the parents of the children beneficiary and the children with SEN), and the foster parents and heads of specialized institutions and residential type centers, on the other:
 - ✓ Under ¼ of the biological parents, evaluate the existing policies and measures in the sphere of health care as fully guaranteeing the rights of their children.
 - ✓ Similar attitudes among biological parents are about twice lower than among the latter two groups of respondents.
- Within the group of **parents of children with SEN** opinions vary widely:
 - ✓ parents whose children with permanent disabilities, are less likely to give final positive assessments of policies in health care (only 17% versus 29% among parents whose children do not have disabilities)
 - ✓ More often give moderate or strong negative assessments (19% versus 8% among parents of children without disabilities)
- According to **foster parents**, a very small proportion of children accommodated with them are run health risks before the accommodation.
- According to the **directors of SI and residential type centers** the share of:
 - ✓ children accommodated at their institution who with mental health problems is 15%
 - ✓ children lacking specialized health care - 10%
 - ✓ children who do not receive sufficient health care is 6%

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Attitudes of children outside their family about their health status

Frequency of visits to the doctor of children outside their family

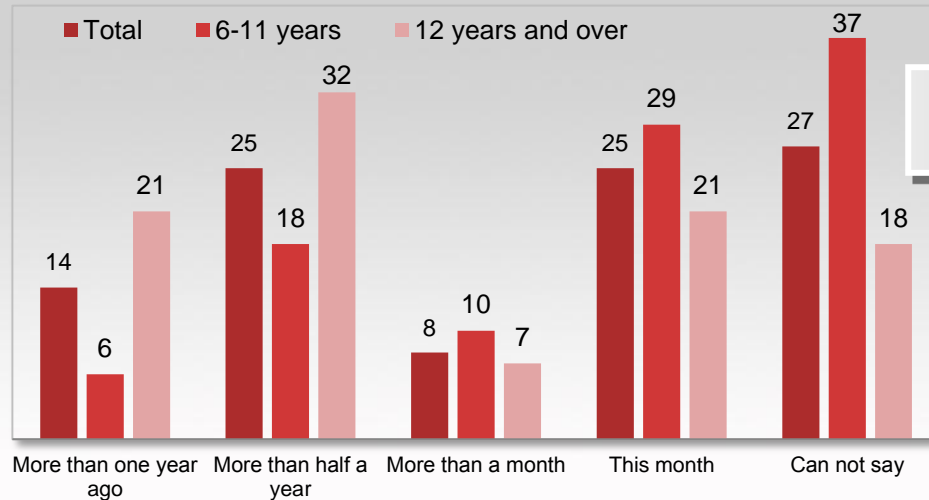


- Children's grades correspond to the valuations of the responsible adults - foster parents and heads of institutions and residential type centers
- Four of five children said they are rarely or never ill and only 9% of children seem to have more frequent or more serious health problems
- The frequency of **consultations with health professionals** of children placed outside their home environment as a whole is also satisfactory - most of the children have consulted a doctor within half year (69% of children 6 to 11 years, and 58% of children 12 years and over)

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Attitudes of children outside their family about their health status

Frequency of visits to the dentist



- The situation with **visits to the dentist**, however, is not favorable:
 - ✓ In the age group 6 to 11 years, 6% have been to the dentist more than 1 year ago and 37% did not remember the last visit. In this age consultations with dentist should be carried out at least twice a year.
 - ✓ In the group of 12 years and over, every fifth child has visited a dentist over a year ago and 18% do not remember the last visit.

- Data on the **use of various substances** among children 12 years and older living outside their family are the following:
 - ✓ Every third child has smoked at least once and 22% - repeatedly. These levels are slightly lower than the average for the country.
 - ✓ About half of the children have tried weak alcoholic beverages at least once, about one third - liquor and 13 percent tried marijuana. These levels are also lower than for the country as a whole, but still troublesome.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Health Care

Ratings of NGO and institutions representatives at national and regional level

- The same problem areas related to children's rights to health are mentioned in both positive and negative respect:
 - ✓ Improving health care for children in institutions and especially children in homes for medical care and homes for children with mental retardation is often mentioned. However significant problems in the health system are also mentioned. These include denial of healthcare for the children in institutions.
 - ✓ The cooperation between the CPD and health professionals has improved, including maternity wards in particular. however there is still a lack of legislation knowledge, the old bad practices are carried on.
 - ✓ Some experts believe that the access to health care in small towns improved, while others argue the opposite opinion.
- Other problems related to health care for children as well as specific vulnerable from this point groups of children include:
 - ✓ Inadequate behavior of health professionals to parents of children with disabilities and creation of false hopes
 - ✓ Need for more care for children with rare diseases
 - ✓ Need for expanding health care for pregnant women and mothers
 - ✓ Need for more and more specialized care for children with mental problems
 - ✓ Need for measures to improve the health of children living in bad conditions

Protection from violence and exploitation



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

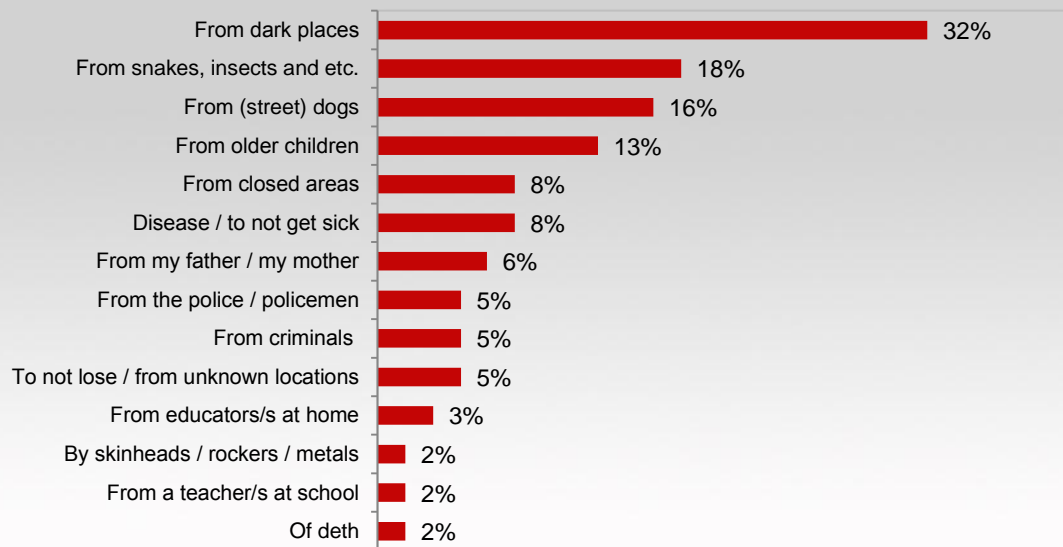
Protection from violence and exploitation

- Protecting children from abuse and exploitation is priority number one for the general public in the country - not so much because of the number of children who are affected, but because violence and exploitation against children are seen as the most serious violation.
 - At the same time, data obtained from direct interviews with children outside their family home, give reason to believe that quantitative estimates of size of the problem made by foster parents and heads of institutions for children and residential centers are reduced.
-
- **Proportion of children outside the family home at risk of violence and exploitation:**
 - ✓ According to the directors of SI and residential type centers and foster parents, the highest risks is associated with abuse or violence by adults: 7% of residents in SI and residential type centers are exposed to this risk, and 4% of residents in foster care have been exposed before their arrival.
 - ✓ According to the directors of SI and residential type centers, 5% of children are at risk of labor exploitation, sexual exploitation and abuse by peers, and 3% have been involved or have been at risk of being involved in begging.
 - ✓ Indirect signs of experienced violence are the chronic loss of appetite, persistent sleep disturbances and systemic unwillingness to care about appearance - frequent and periodic disturbances in these parameters were observed in 11-12% of children.
 - **Fears of children outside the family:**
 - ✓ The majority of children (56%) have experienced fears, but one in five children has chronic fears. About 4 percent of children outside their home environment, have undergone severe traumatic experiences that have lead to attempted self-harm or suicide.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Protection from violence and exploitation

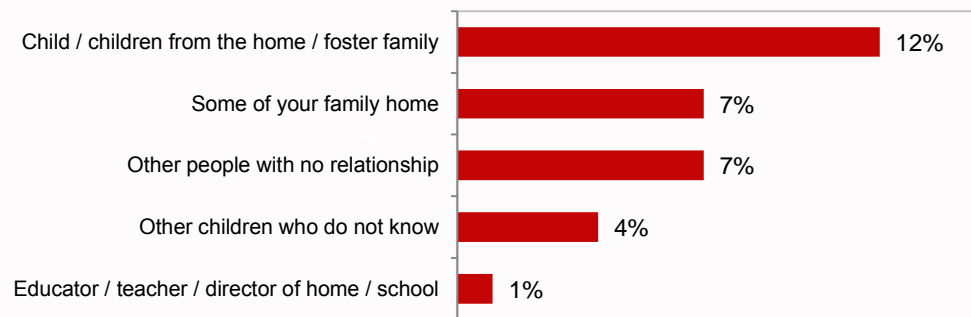
The most common fears of children outside of their family



- Most fears of the children outside of their family are typical for all children. Most children are afraid of the dark (which is implicit fear of violence). It should be noted that 13 percent of children are afraid of older children, 6 per cent - of their parents and 5 percent - of the police (which is called to protect them).

- Overall 12 percent of children living outside their family, reported attack on them by a child, which accounts for 38 percent of all cases of violence.
- At the same time, every fifth child is also in the role of aggressor. In the majority of cases, the object of aggression are other children from the same institution or center.

Persons engaged in physical or verbal violence against children outside their family

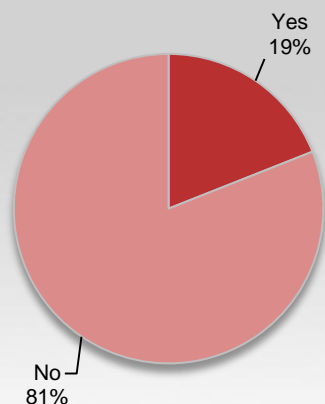


Base: All respondents (Children out of family home - N=108)

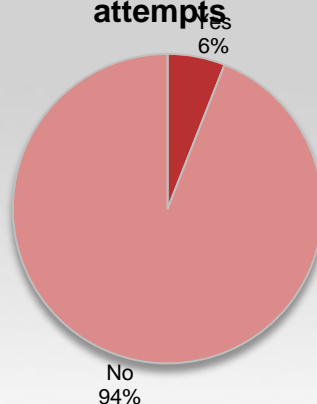
Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Protection from violence and exploitation

Children familiar with cases of trafficking



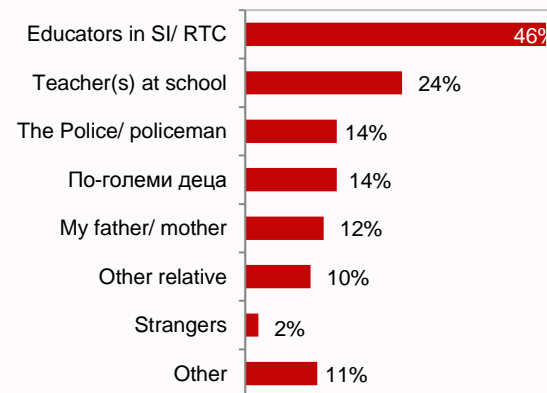
Children who have been subject of trafficking attempts



- Direct attempts to be involved in trafficking were made against 6% of the children, but those potentially at risk are considerably more.
- One in five children reported such cases in their social environment, which means that this is the real share of potentially endangered by trafficking for sexual or labor exploitation.

- Most often help is sought from adults with whom children interact daily - educators in the respective home or center, and teachers in school.
- A significant proportion of children do not identify their educators and teachers as reliable support, but rather would turn to their biological families.
- Despite the conflicts between younger and older children, 14% prefer older children to adults.

Persons who children outside their family would seek for help



Base: All respondents (Children out of family home - N=108)

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Protection from violence and exploitation

Assessments of representatives of NGOs and institutions at national and regional level

Interviewed experts from NGOs and institutions at national and regional level have mixed views on the achievements in the field of protection against violence and exploitation

Coordination mechanisms in cases of violence and trafficking of children and the better interaction between the institutions are identified as progress in this area.

- Issues that need more attention:
 - ✓ Training of all involved in the coordination mechanisms in cases of violence and trafficking of children;
 - ✓ Lack of sufficient number and sufficiently skilled specialists to work with children to overcome trauma;
 - ✓ Failure to comply with the regulations of work by the crisis centers, including the gathering various target groups in the same crisis center, and even allowing offenders and victims to be together;
 - ✓ Inefficient work with victims of violence and exploitation and their surroundings to prevent re-victimization and the need of long-term measures to achieving this goal;
 - ✓ Tendency to keep children in crisis centers, which is seen as a form of institutionalization;
 - ✓ Violation of procedures for working with child victims, which cause additional psychological trauma on children.

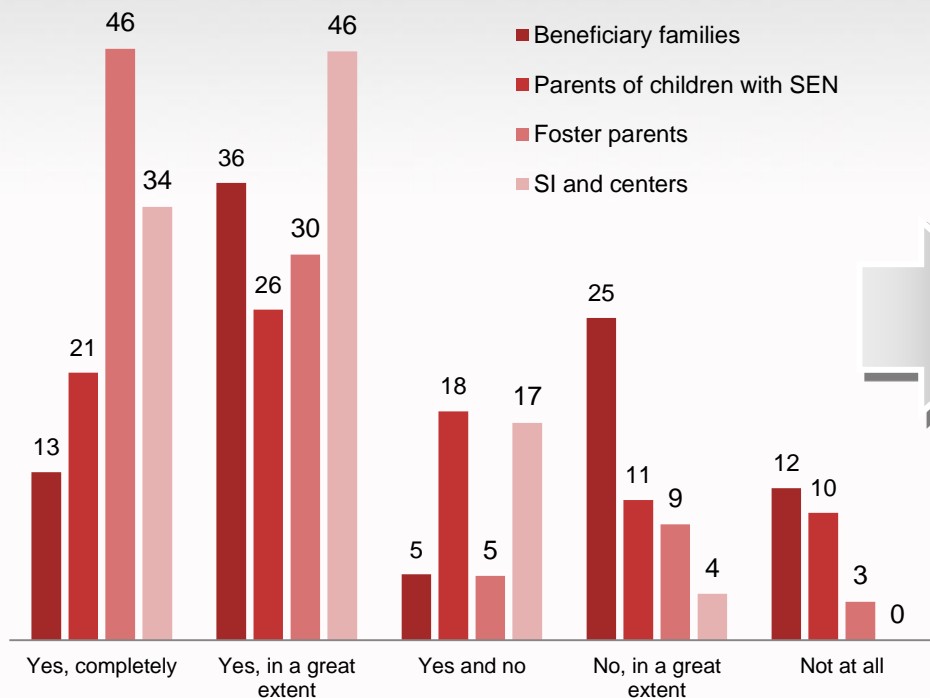
Law enforcement and protection against crime involvement



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Law enforcement and protection against crime involvement

Ability of policies in law enforcement and human rights to ensure the rights of children taken care of



- Doubts that the justice system not only violates the rights of child victims of violence and exploitation, but also other groups of children were distributed by the major groups of respondents in the studies.
- Evaluation of the respondents whether existing policies guarantee the rights of children in law enforcement and human rights:
 - ✓ Foster parents express the most positive views.
 - ✓ The heads of the specialized institutions and centers of residential type are also positive in most cases, but overall, the highest proportion consists of those who express moderate views. Nearly one fifth of them evaluate the prospects of their graduates in law enforcement and human rights as weak.
 - ✓ The most negative views were expressed by families of child beneficiaries of social assistance or services

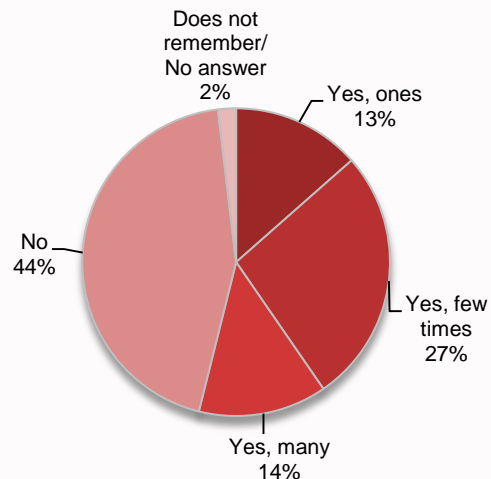
Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Law enforcement and protection against crime involvement

Vulnerable groups of children

- According to foster parents, a fraction of children in foster care are affected or threatened by risks that can lead to conflict with the law.
- According to average estimates of the heads of SI and RTC, however, outside the family environment these risks increase. One in ten residents is at risk of being involved in crimes, and 17% suffer from behavioral problems.
- As most vulnerable groups from the perspective of law enforcement and protection of human rights, interviewed experts from NGOs and institutions at national and regional level determine:
 - ✓ children with behavioural problems
 - ✓ perpetrators of offenses

Tendency of children outside their family to violate social norms



- The responses of the children confirmed that the risk to violate social norms is an essential:
 - ✓ The majority of children over 12 years recognize that they have deliberately violated existing rules.
 - ✓ For about 41% , deliberate violation of rules and regulations is not an isolated case
 - ✓ For about 14% violation could be considered systematic behavior.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Law enforcement and protection against crime involvement

Assessments of representatives of NGOs and institutions at national and regional level

- Very often, these experts indicate justice as an area in which the rights of children in Bulgaria are violated most drastically.
- Big hopes for solving complex problems are assigned to the concept of child justice, which according to most representatives of institutions is a fact.
- Highly vulnerable in terms of justice are the following four groups of children:
 - ✓ children in conflict with the law (most often focused on by experts)
 - ✓ child victims whose situation was reviewed in the previous chapter
 - ✓ child witnesses of crime
 - ✓ children participating in civil cases, the most common are divorce
- Measures which according to respondents are extremely urgent and affecting all vulnerable groups of children:
 - ✓ The need for specialized children's court, or at least specialized children's groups, in which children cases can be treated by trained legal experts
 - ✓ The need for specially equipped rooms for hearings with children, or so called “blue rooms”
 - ✓ The need to change some of the proceedings in a manner that eliminates inflicting harm on the child;

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Law enforcement and protection against crime involvement

Assessments of representatives of NGOs and institutions at national and regional level

- Most significant problems concern the rights of children in conflict with the law, because they relate to specific circumstances which are often a violation of their rights.
- As a source of many troubles mentioned is the conflict between the Child Act and Act to Combat Delinquency of Minors. These laws express different concepts of children in conflict with the law:
 - ✓ as a vulnerable group, respectively, as an subject of protection
 - ✓ as offenders, which are subject to similar “penalties” as adults
- Issues that directly or indirectly arise from dual the treatment of children in conflict with the law:
 - ✓ The existence of WFP and CBS, which is considered a direct violation of the rights of children;
 - ✓ Violation of the terms in which the child may be detained in the NPA and CBS due to the interests of staff;
 - ✓ Accommodation in the NPA and CBS of children who are not delinquent because of a provision of Act to Combat Delinquency of Minors;
 - ✓ Violation of the right to education and development of children in WFP and CBS;
 - ✓ Lack of educational and integration work with child offenders;
 - ✓ Lack of services for children in conflict with the law and of enough specialists, leading to decisions that are wrong and detrimental to children;
 - ✓ Need for significant long-term work with children offenders not currently provided for in the legislation, and lack of effective mechanisms to prevent the repeated involvement in crime and reintegration.

Protection against discrimination



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Protection against discrimination

Assessments of representatives of NGOs and institutions at national and regional level

- Despite their high level of expertise, respondents do not feel fully confident to speak on this issue and provide estimates of its dimensions. The main reasons are:
 - ✓ multidimensionality of the problem
 - ✓ the fact that real problems are usually hidden beneath the surface and often remain hidden and unaccounted for

In Bulgaria discrimination is officially rejected. However, it proves widespread and difficult to counter

- **Causes:**
 - ✓ Discriminatory attitudes are deep, they are based on old and widespread stereotypes that many people would not be aware of. Formal discrimination rules contradict mass mentality and even the mentality of representatives of institutions.
 - ✓ Many Bulgarians, including those involved in childcare, are not familiar with the rights of children and often can not identify cases of child discrimination.
 - ✓ Fear exists to report discrimination, as people are dependent on the representatives of institutions against which they would complain. This is especially true for smaller settlements.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Protection against discrimination

Signs forming groups vulnerable to discrimination:

- Disability or special educational needs
- Children with mental health problems as a specific subgroup of children with disabilities
- Discrimination on ethnic grounds
- Discrimination on the ground of financial or social status
- Discrimination against children in institutions and as a specific subgroup, housed in the NPA and CBS.

1

Some experts believe that in programs and strategic documents, including NCS and NCPP, the issue of discrimination is not adequately treated. They express and principle skepticism whether it is possible include discrimination in documents of this type due to the variable and hidden nature of the phenomenon.

2

The only effective counter measure that respondents identified are permanent campaigns and discussions on the problem in the media. This would raise awareness, increase public sensitivity, improve knowledge of children's rights and the ability of large sections of the population to recognize cases of discrimination.

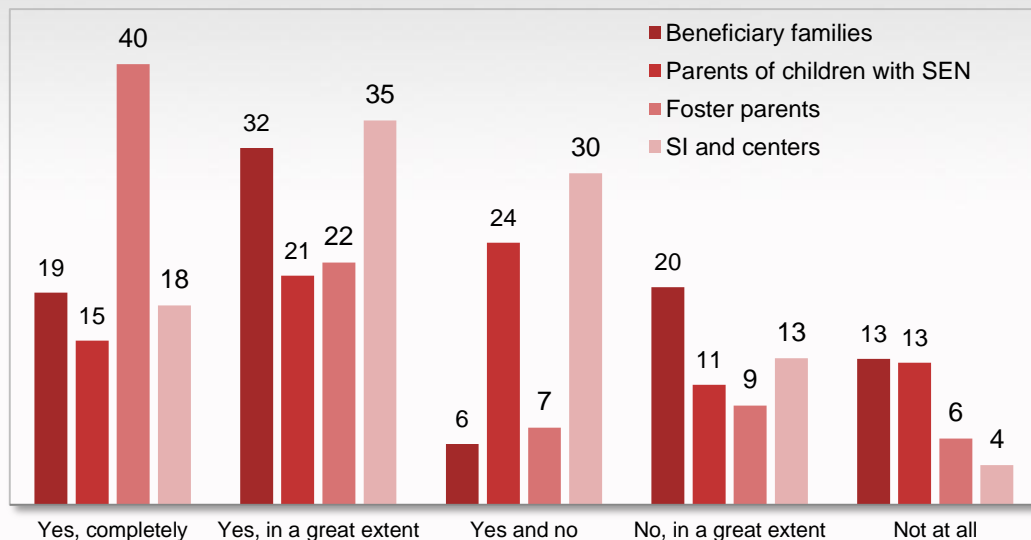
Participation in decision making



Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Participation in decision making

Ability of policies for participation in decision-making to ensure the rights of children

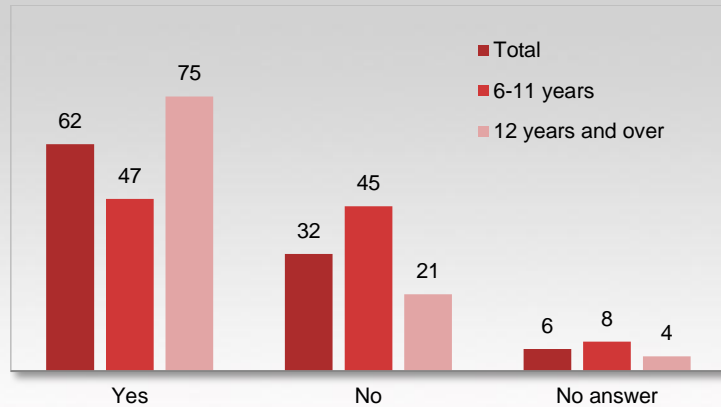


- Regarding the involvement of children in decision making, respondents express strong opinions with difficulty. The main reason for this is that very few of them feel competent to decide when, how, what and who can and should seek the views of children.
- Undoubtedly, however, that there is an objective need for a clear concept for how society should account for the views of children

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

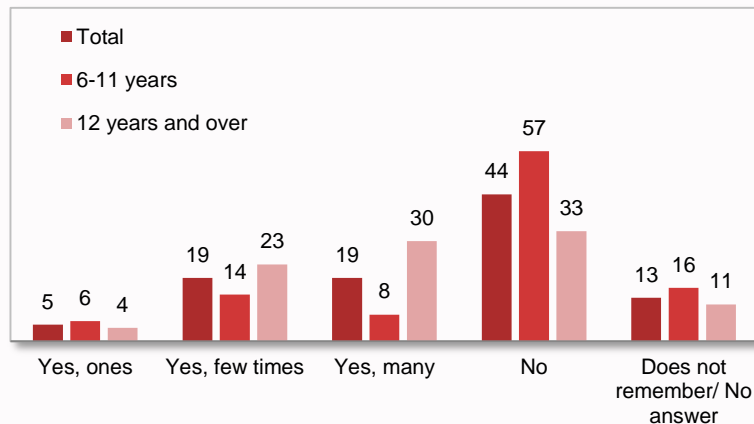
Participation in decision making - Answers of children outside their family

Freedom for the individual decisions of children outside their family



- Less than half of the children aged 6 to 11 feel confident to make decisions about their life.
- Most often the children decide on issues related to clothing, daily activities and the people with whom they communicate.

Consultation with children outside their family



- Worryingly, however, is the large number of children who say their opinion is not taken into account on matters that directly concern them.
- More than half of children between 6 and 11 years and one third of those 12 years or more do not remember any cases of this type.

Policy effects by child protection areas and target groups

Participation in decision making

Assessments of representatives of NGOs and institutions at national and regional level

- Representatives of NGOs and institutions at national and regional levels are divided on how and whether it is right to develop policies for children's participation in decision making:
 - ✓ There is a concern that the children are transferred a responsibility of adults which they are not able to bear.
 - ✓ On the other hand, making children comply with decision on matters that affect their own development, especially in education, has resulted in passive attitudes and lack of motivation for participation and cooperation in educational and extracurricular activities

1

While rules for children's participation in the decision to attend the programs and regulations needs to be refined, it also should be included in the rules of most social systems so that it can actually become a reality

2

Two very important preconditions for children's participation emerged as a result of discussions:

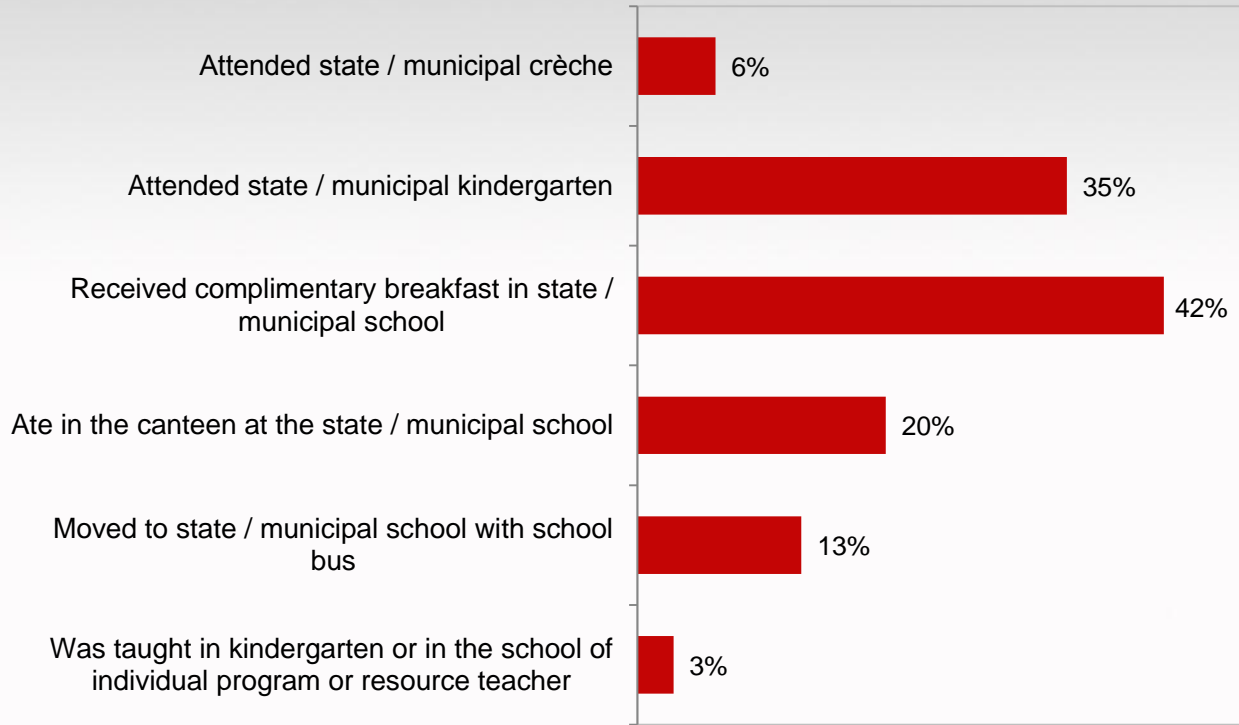
- ✓ A massive and detailed information for adults on when and how to solicit the child's opinion
- ✓ Informing the children about the nature of specific cases so that their opinion could be accounted for in a correct manner

Ratings for services provided to children and families



Ratings for services provided to children and families

Use of services by children cross-beneficiaries in the last 12 months

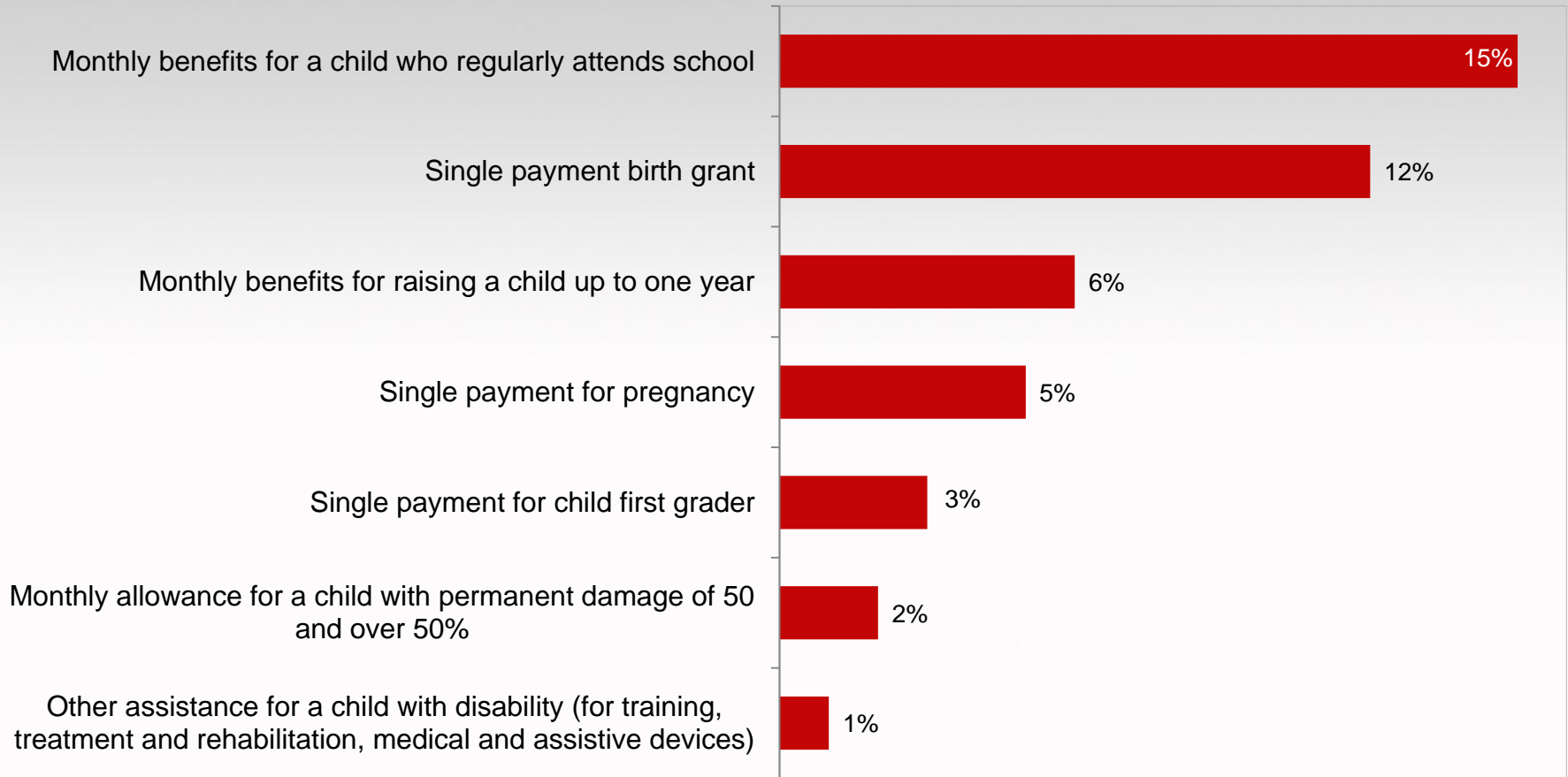


Main beneficiary groups

Overall, among the families of child beneficiaries of social benefits or services, the highest proportion are covered by sectorial policies, binding studies with indirect forms of social support.

Ratings for services provided to children and families

The most used social benefits by children and families in the last 12 months



Ratings for services provided to children and families

Assessment of access to social support

Evaluation of users of ad hoc aid

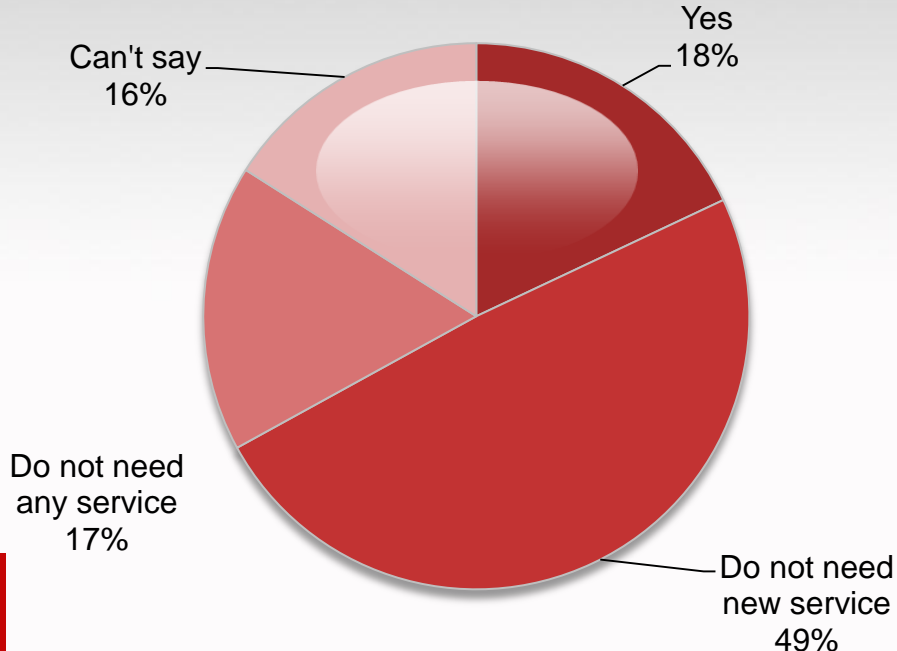
About two thirds of all users of benefits (pregnancy, childbirth and child-first grader) united around the opinion that access to these benefits is easy enough.

Evaluation of users of monthly benefits

Most users of monthly allowances for children with disabilities and the majority of users of monthly benefits for child up to one year, evaluate the procedure for obtaining them to be linked to unnecessary difficulties or complications.

Ratings for services provided to children and families

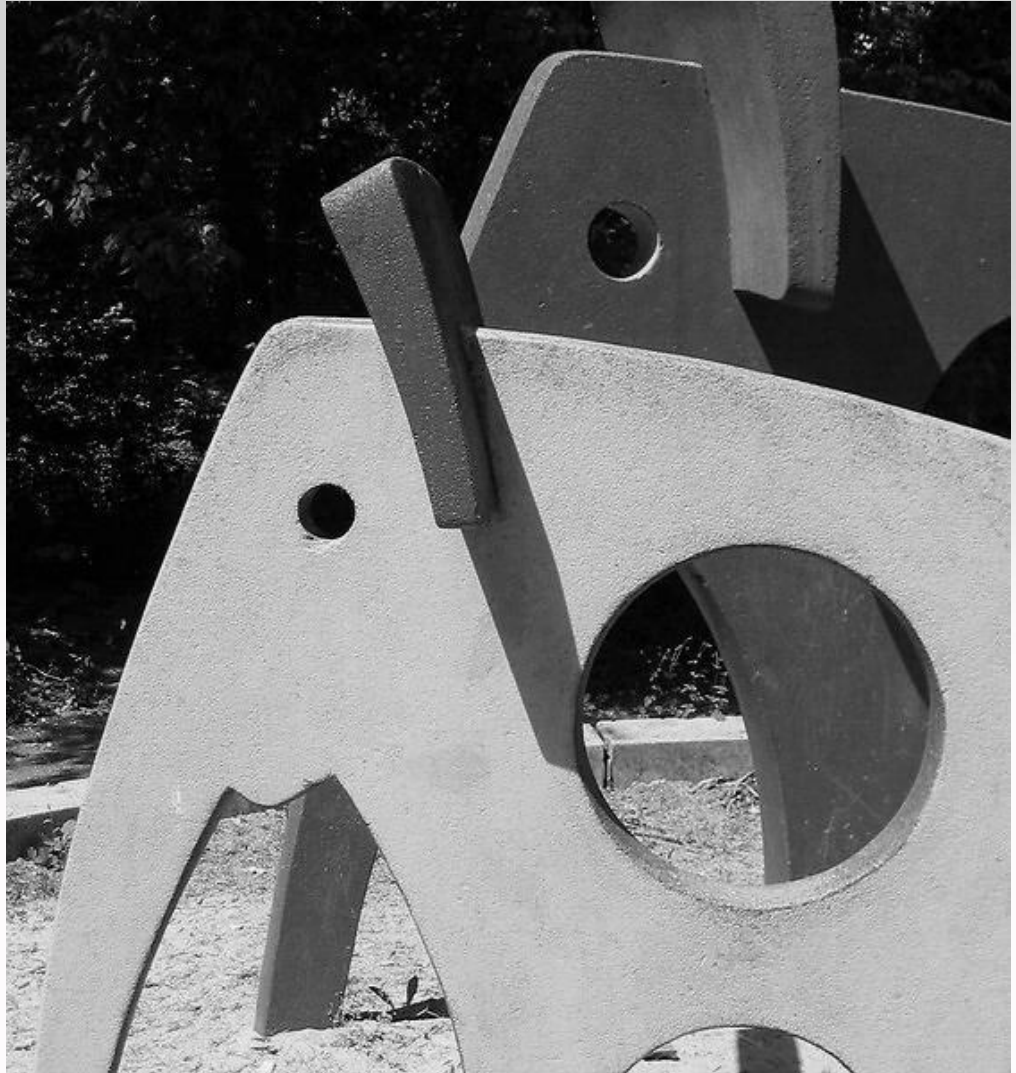
Need for social services for children not yet available



Requested needs

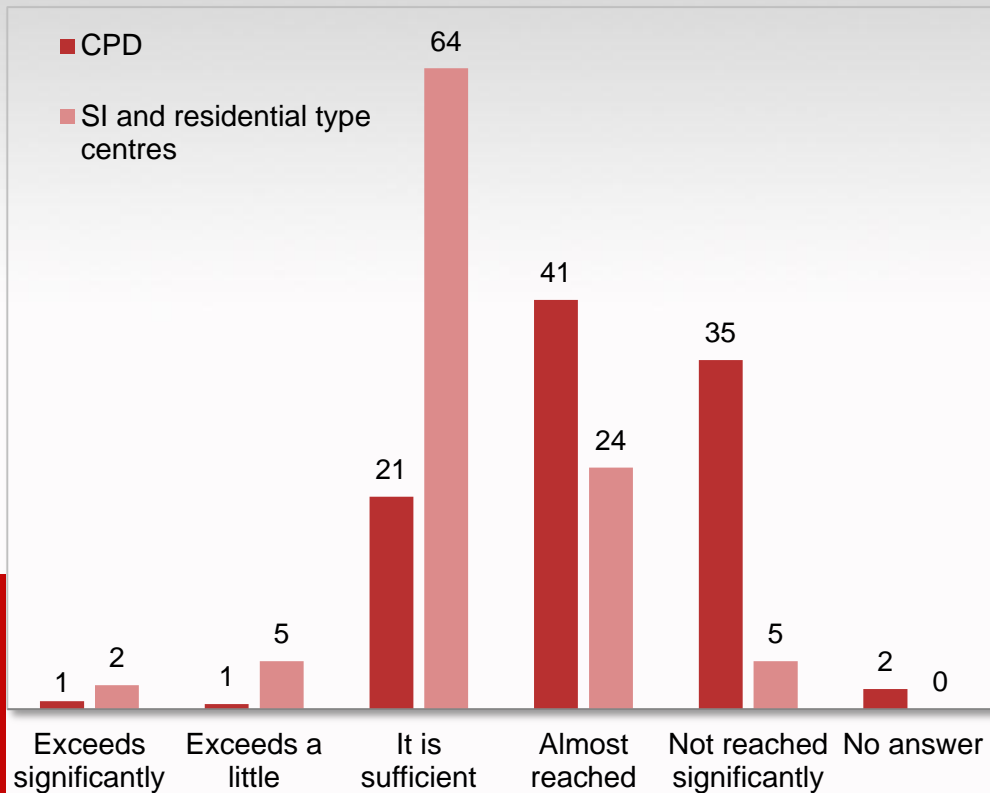
- Need for new, more flexible or modified forms of childcare such as part-time places for children, half-day or weekend day care, etc
- Need for more, more advanced, more diverse forms of extracurricular activities
- Extended coverage of social assistance
- Increase scholarships for orphans and excellent students, reduction of fees in kindergartens, matching grants for educational materials, clothing and footwear;
- Measures to assist in raising the child in organizational aspect;
- Need for specialized medical services within a given settlement;
- Need for centers to free and anonymous help for parents who need psychological support or advice;

Need for additional resources

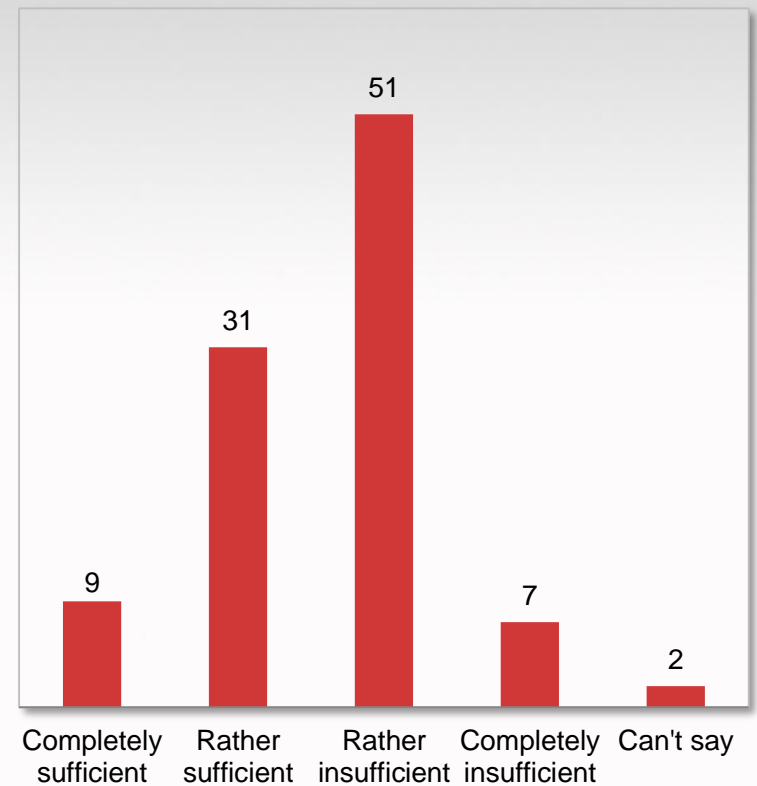


Need for additional resources

Estimates for the number of necessary staff in CPD, SI and residential type centers



Estimates for the number of necessary staff in RSPD



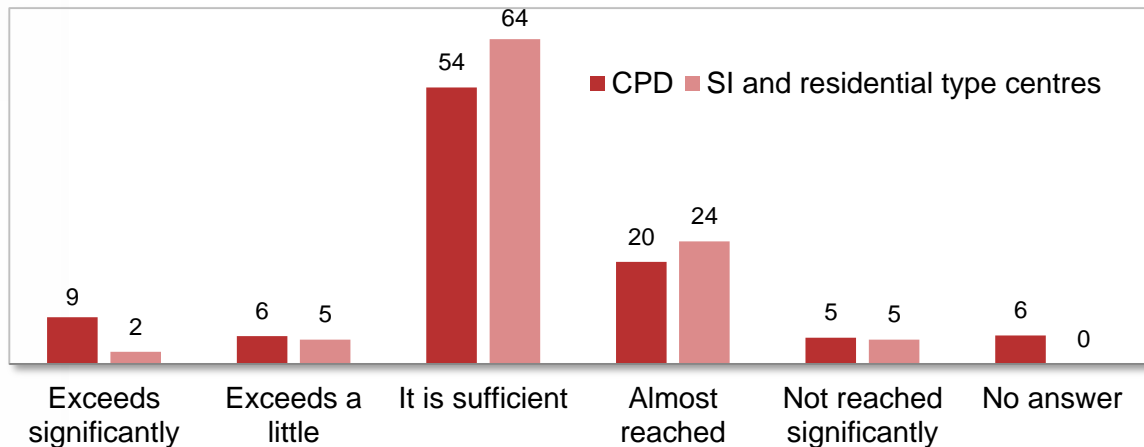
Base: All respondents : (Officials in CPD - N=638; Directors of SI and residential type centers N=83

Base: All respondents (Directors and child protection experts at RSPD - N=55)

Need for additional resources

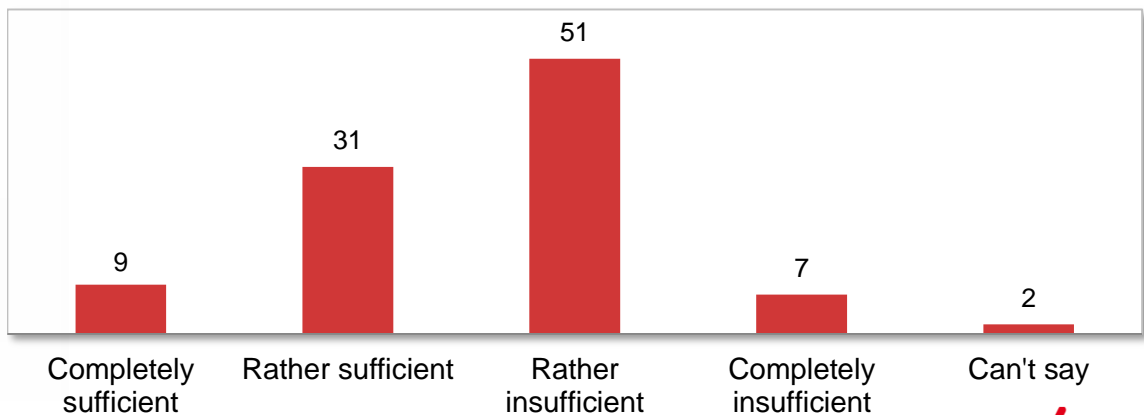


Qualification of staff in CPD and SI and residential type centres



Base: All respondents : (Officials in CPD - N=638; Directors of SI and residential type centers N=83)

Qualification of staff in RSPD



Base: All respondents (Directors and child protection experts at RSPD - N=55)

Need of additional resources

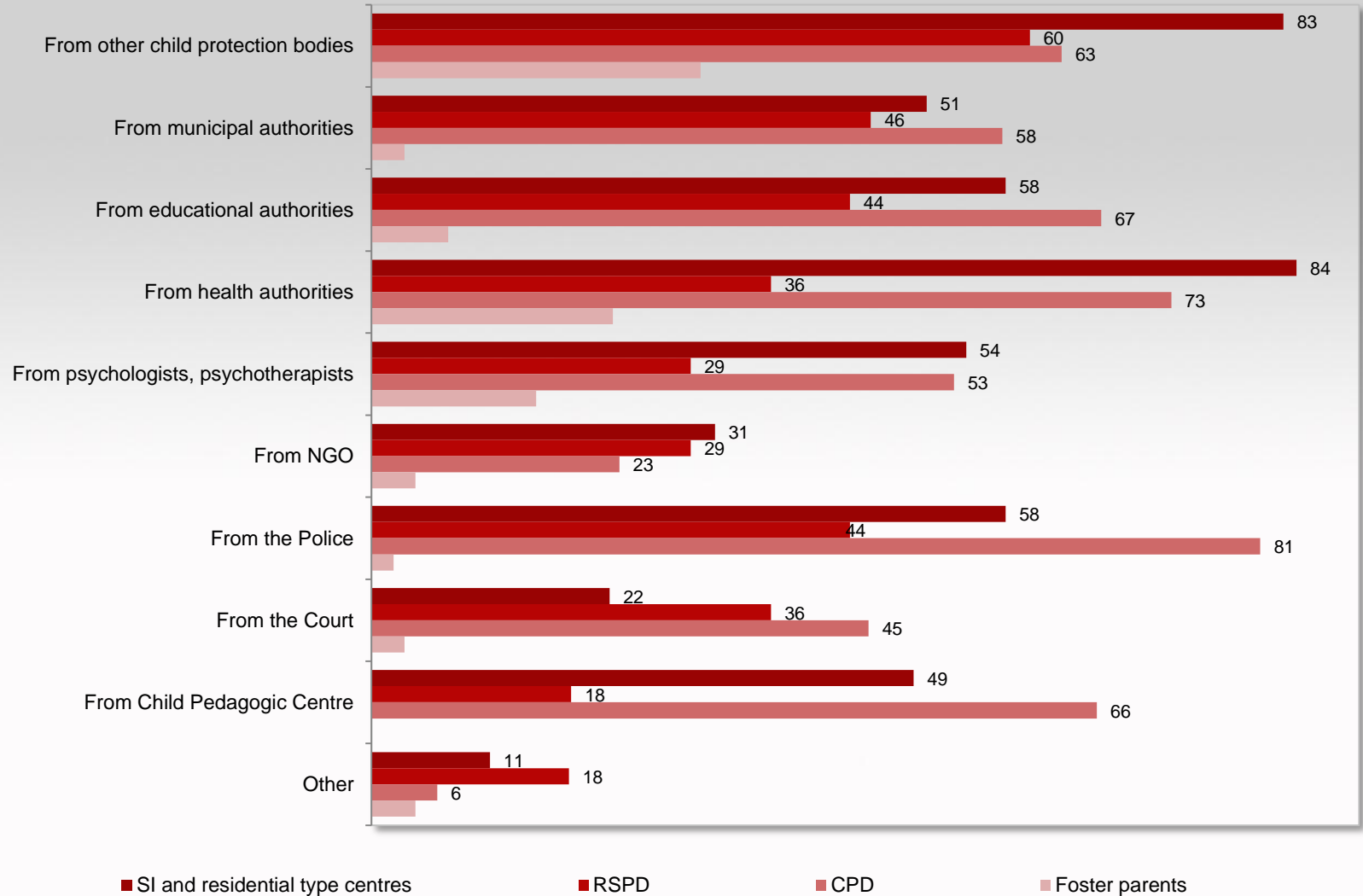
Completed training by staff in the last four years

SI and residential type centers	Completed at least one training	Average number of training sessions for the last four years of employment:
Management staff (Director / Manager, deputies, accountants)	95%	3.0
Teaching staff (counselors, teachers, educators)	88%	1.1
Psychologists, psychotherapists	76%	4.8
Medical staff (doctors, therapists, nurses)	58%	3.3
Support staff who works directly with children (orderlies, assistants)	49%	0.9

RSPD	Completed at least one training	Average number of training sessions for the last four years of employment:
Management staff (Director / Manager, deputies, accountants)	84%	2.5
Child protection experts	80%	2.4
Other experts	67%	1.9

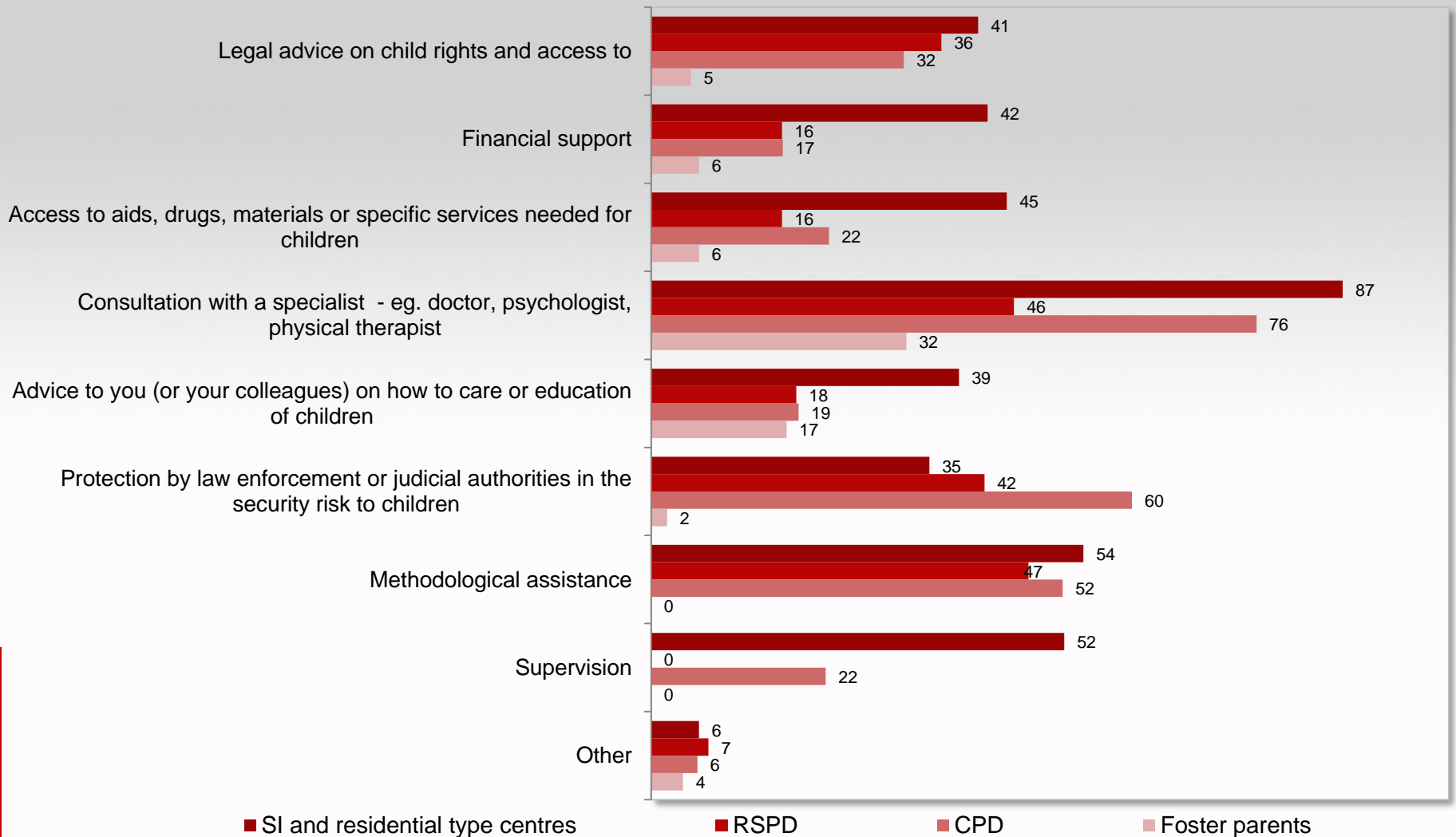
Need for additional resources

Persons and authorities whose assistance is sought



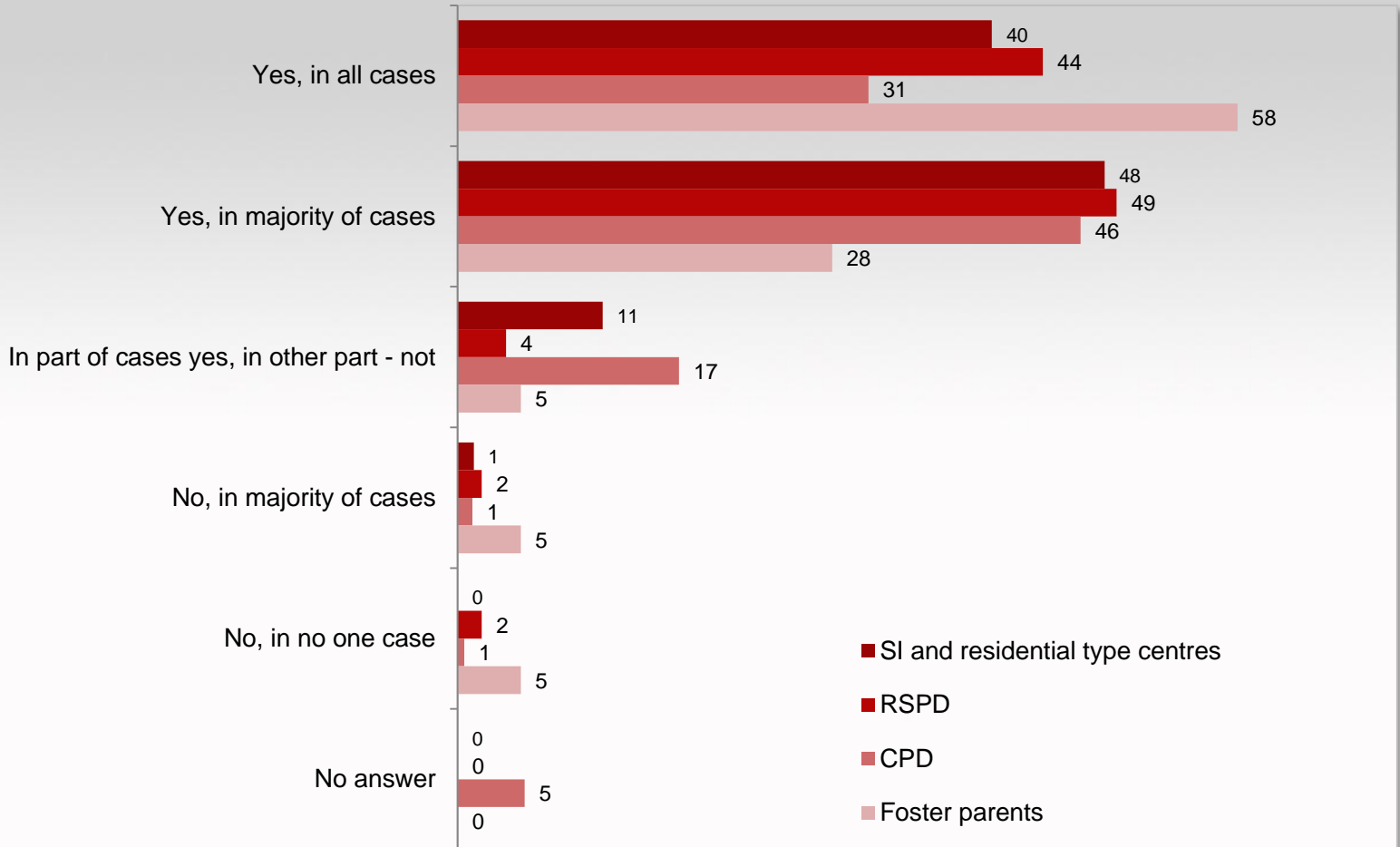
Need for additional resources

Types of aid and assistance sought



Need for additional resources

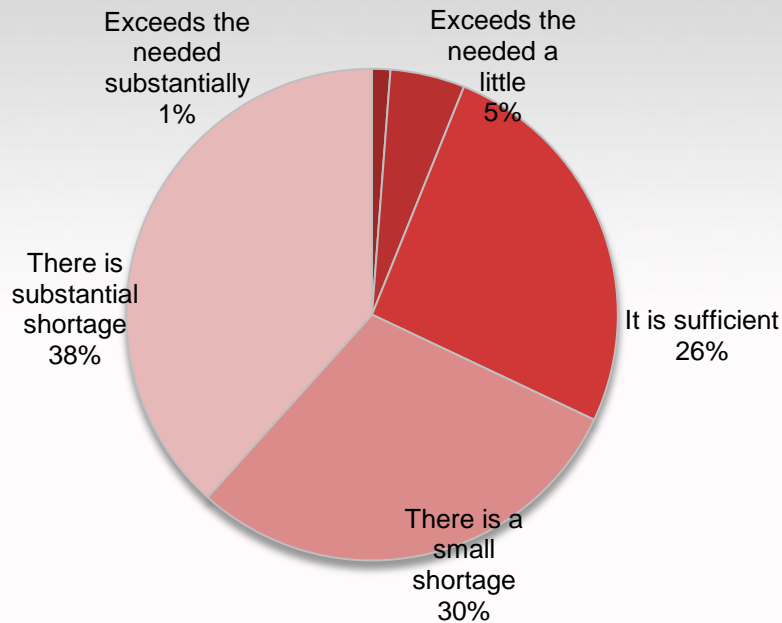
Receipt of the requested support and assistance



Need for additional resources

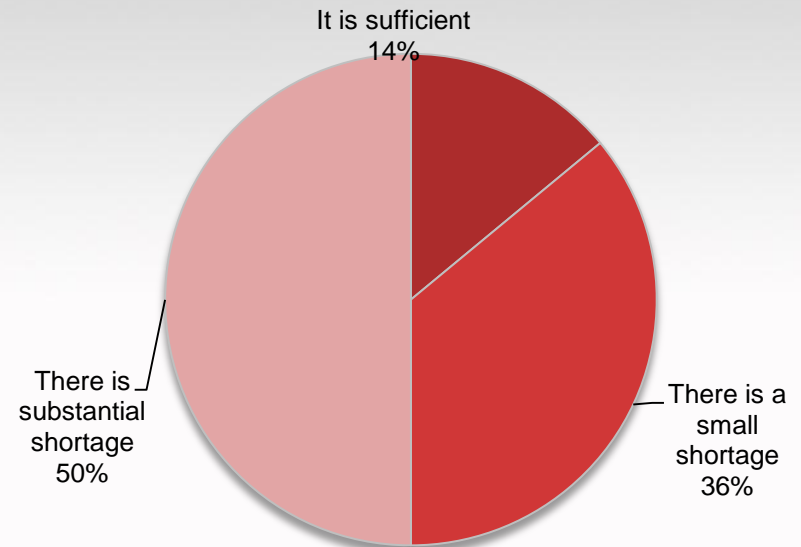
Financial and material resources

Assessment of the amount available for child care



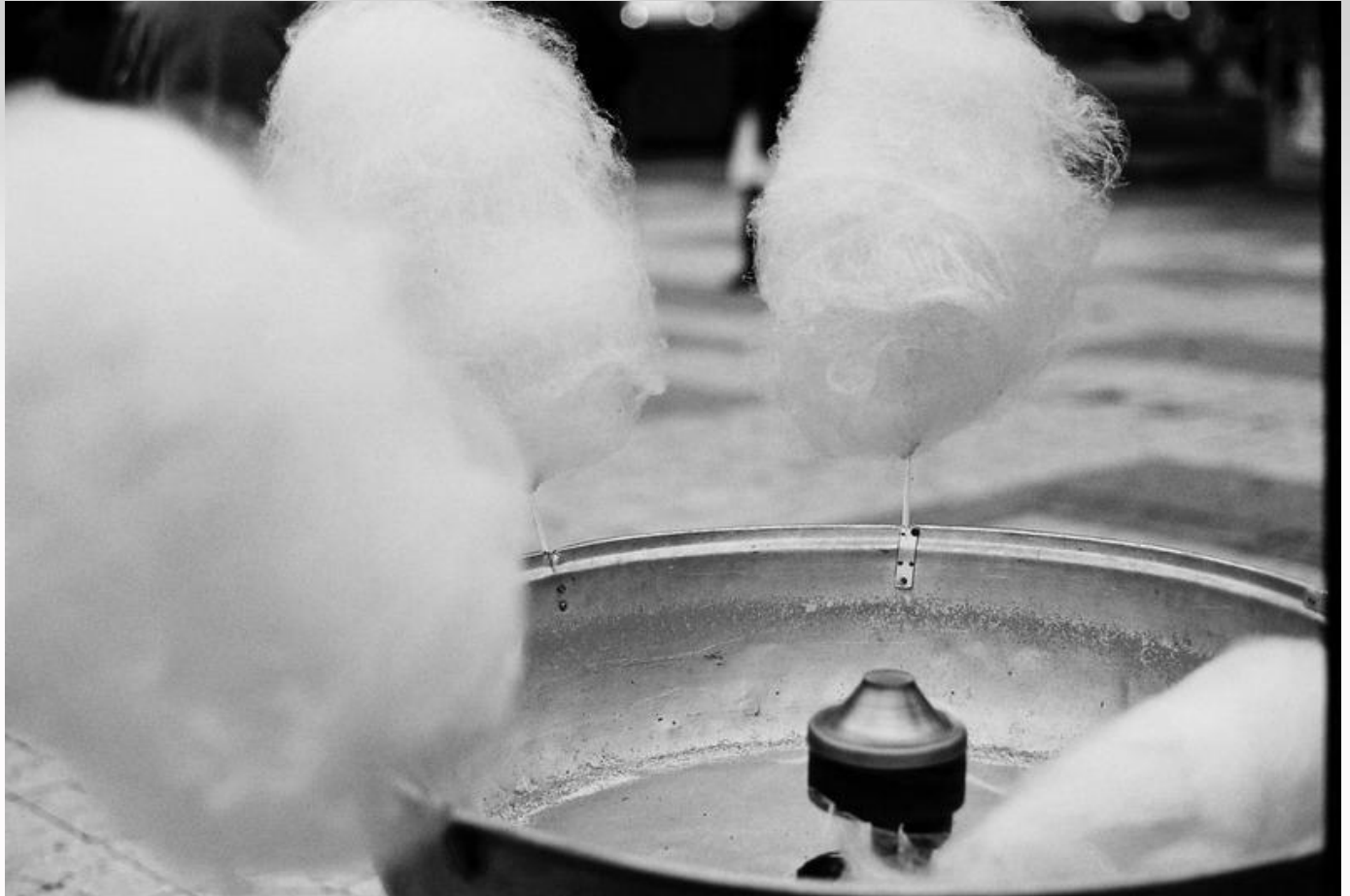
Base: All respondents (Directors of SI and residential type centers N=83)

Assessment of the amount available for child care



Base: All respondents (Foster parents - N=100)

Suggestions from stakeholders to complement and optimize child policy



Suggestions from stakeholders to complement and optimize child policy

NGO representatives

- Focused, persistent, systematic and long-term effort to work with families to create a safe and relaxing family environment;
- Giving greater priority to prevention activities and measures in the education and health system;
- Introduction of an information system about available community services that can be used by potential beneficiaries of these services;
- Systematic and accurate assessment of the number, type and needs of different target groups of children and families both nationally and regionally;
 - ✓ introduction of uniform records of children covered by the activities of institutions and NGOs,
 - ✓ uniform criteria and methods for collecting statistical information,
 - ✓ termination of collection of the same statistical information from various institutions
- Introduction and strict adherence to the principle "money follows the child";
- Better communication between institutions at all levels;
- Increased control over the obligations of all involved;
- More systematic and better information on child rights for society as a whole, and targeted information for parents about the options available for their child;
- More attention to all children who are not in any of the defined risk groups, and to issues that affect wider circles – demotivation to education, poor quality of education, dangers of the Internet and bullying.

Suggestions from stakeholders to complement and optimize child policy

Professionals in public institutions at national and regional level

- Each priority of NCS to be supported by strict timeframe, specific responsibility of institutions responsible for specific measures, and specific separate source of funding;
- Introduction of a unified information system that would solve the problem of disparity in the statistical data from various sources and make it possible to trace the history of a child;
- Decentralization and capacity building at local level, giving more powers to municipalities;
- Comprehensive review and institutional and organizational restructuring to avoid duplication of functions:
 - ✓ CPD to be structured again on municipal basis (every municipality to have a CPD)
 - ✓ SACP to receive the status of primary budget administrator

Suggestions from stakeholders to complement and optimize child policy

Directors of institutions and residential type centers for children

- Increasing the funding, because the requirements and standards of care are changing and inflation affects prices;
- Alimentation of children should not be incorporated into the general budget of the institution or center;
- Encouraging foster parents and adoption parents to accept children over the age of 10. Serious reconstruction of homes for children in order to reshape their environment closer to the family;
- Construction of dormitories or homes of family type for young people leaving social institutions;
- More opportunities for children to adequately orientation in specific occupations, more flexible forms of training through courses, resource support, appointment of teachers in institutions and centers;
- Appointment of additional medical staff who can provide round the clock care;
- Return of school doctors and dentists in all schools;
- Health education that is more systematic and more interesting to children, including sexual and reproductive behavior education;
- Better and age-specific information to children about their rights;

Suggestions from stakeholders to complement and optimize child policy

Foster parents

- Increase of funding for foster parents and improve targeting (firewood, treatment, books, building houses for foster families);
- Clear legal controversies related to the employment contracts of foster parents because they are committed to caring for children not 8 but 24 hours;
- Foster parents to be allowed to take children on holiday, including abroad;
- More attention to be paid to children by GPs and other health care personnel, more screening;
- Requests for special assistance in the training of children;

General public

- Ensuring adequate specialists (psychologists) in educational institutions to work actively with children prone to aggressive behavior;
- Introduction of compulsory pre-schooling;
- Providing organized transport to schools and kindergartens;
- Providing medical teams (doctor / dentist) in all educational institutions and increasing the funds that are allocated to specialized medical treatment;
- Financial support for troubled families and specialized work with parents and children;

Suggestions from stakeholders to complement and optimize child policy

Directors and child protection experts with RSPD

- Switching from standardized to individualized approach to assessing needs and determining the amount of financial aid;
- Extensive state intervention in the process of integration of minority groups;
- Providing access to the educational process of children with disabilities and children with SEN;
- More intensive monitoring and prevention work in the area of child health;
- Informing children about their rights, family counseling and legal assistance for parents;
- Children to be involved in the overall process of decision making;

Officials from child protection departments with social assistance directorates

- Provide more social workers and financial support for at risk families, especially those involving children with disabilities;
- Preparation and development of measures aimed to reduce the number of illiterate children and to provide methods for continuing education for school leavers;