

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Macedonian National Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights

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CONTENTS

PREFACE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
INTRODUCTION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
General approach and values of the Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children’s Rights.....	9
Activities of the coalition in the project “Capacity Building of the Non-Government Sector for Monitoring of Children’s Rights”	10
Methodological framework.....	10
Coalition for the monitoring of children’s rights	12
Problems that arose during the research activities	14
Implementation of monitoring of the status of children’s rights.....	14
1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILDREN’S RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATION.....	16
1.1. Methodology	17
1.2. Results	17
1.3. Observation	19
Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHTS TO EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS	20
2.1. Methodology	21
2.2. Results	21
2.2.1. Difficulties encountered by schools in everyday work with students with SEN	24
2.2.2. Measures and activities undertaken by schools to overcome difficulties faced by students with special education needs	25
2.2.3. Types of initiatives undertaken by municipalities to improve the inclusion process for students with special education needs	26
Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3. IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILDREN’S RIGHTS TO HEALTH	27

3.1. Immunization	27
3.1.1 Methodology	28
3.1.2. Results.....	28
Recommendations:	29
3.2. Adolescent health	29
3.2.1. Methodology	29
3.2.2. Results.....	30
Recommendations:	30
4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WHO USE DRUGS	31
4.1. Methodology	31
4.2. Results	31
4.3. Observation	33
Recommendations:	34
5. ROMA CHILDREN AND EARLY SHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT	35
5.1. Methodology	35
5.2. Results	36
6. CHILD VICTIMS OF SALE, TRAFFICKING AND ABDUCTION	39
6.1. Methodology.....	39
6.2. Results	40
6.2.1. Percentage of identified child victims of human trafficking in the total recorded number of victims of trafficking (in Open Gate La Strada).....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6.2.2. Children at high risk of becoming victims of human trafficking out of the total number of potential victims of trafficking (in Open Gate La Strada)	42
6.2.3. Number of child victims and children at high risk covered by the social assistance program out of the total number of groups at high risk of becoming victims of trafficking (at Open Gate La Strada)	42
Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
7. JUVENILE JUSTICE.....	45

7.1. Methodology	45
7.2. Results	45
7.2.1. Juveniles who have committed criminal offenses in the area of computer crime, out of the total number of criminal offenses committed by juvenile perpetrators	46
Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
7.2.2. Minors indicted for organized crime and corruption	48
7.2.3. Juvenile victims of organized crime and corruption	49
Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
7.3. Implementation of the children’s right to education in reformatory/correctional institutions.....	51
7.3.1. Methodology	51
7.3.2. Results.....	52
7.3.3. Observation	53
Recommendations	53
8. BREASTFEEDING	53
8.1. Methodology	54
8.2. Results	54
Recommendations	56
9. ANNEXES	57
Annex 1.....	57
Annex 2.....	61
INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR CHILDREN’S RIGHTS	66

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

RCI – Reformatory/correctional Institution

IT – Information Technology

CO – Criminal offense

CC – Criminal Code

CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child

MIA – Ministry of Internal Affairs

MES – Ministry of Education and Science

MLSP – Ministry of Labor and Social Policy

NGO – Non-Government Organization

UN – United Nations

PS – Primary school

SEN – Special Education Needs

RHM – Roma Health Mediator

RoM – Republic of Macedonia

SIA – Secretariat for Interior Affairs

ECDC – Early Childhood Development Center

CSW – Center for Social Work

PREFACE

This is the Report on the Implementation of the Rights of Children in the Republic of Macedonia, which offers an overview of the situation regarding the implementation of the right to education for children with special education needs, as well as the inclusion of Roma children in pre-school child care and education institutions. This Report also reviews the situation in the areas of breastfeeding, juvenile justice, respect of the rights of children in the area of child participation, children who use drugs and child victims of trafficking and abduction.

The basis for the monitoring of the status of children's rights in the areas mentioned was the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the two Optional Protocols to the CRC and the Recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child addressed to the Republic of Macedonia in 2010.

This Report covers the monitoring of the status of children's rights during the year 2012. The Report was prepared by the informal Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights, established and coordinated by the First Children's Embassy in the World "Megjashi". This Coalition numbers 14 organizations and one coalition of civic organizations, in addition to the First Children's Embassy in the World "Megjashi".

The most important findings with regard to the implementation of and respect for the rights of children in the indicated areas are given in the Report in the form of significant results that we have arrived at through obtaining information, general insights and conclusions. The Report includes recommendations that we offer as a Coalition with the aim of improving the implementation of children's rights through full implementation of the leading international document that defines children's rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

As a Coalition we would like to express our gratitude to all involved in the data collection effort as data providers or as participants in data provision. Their participation and sharing of information was a welcome contribution as it not only helped in the preparation of this Report, but also helps create a better world for children.

The development of this Report was supported by the UNICEF Country Office in Macedonia through the project "Capacity Building of the NGO Sector for Monitoring of Children's Rights."

INTRODUCTION

This Report on the Implementation of the Rights of Children in the Republic of Macedonia is a result of a process undertaken to examine and analyze the extent to which rights are being exercised in everyday life. The process of development of the Report went on over the period February – June 2013, in accordance with the methodology developed by the Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights, in collaboration with the UNICEF Country Office in Skopje.

A number of activities were undertaken:

- assessment of relevant documentation and statistical data
- organizing and conducting interviews
- organizing and conducting focus group work with children and youth
- summarizing and analysis of data collected by organizations in the course of their routine activities
- implementing specific research and analysis of the results obtained from the research
- identifying examples of good practice

The structure of the Report comprises an introductory section that contains the main findings from the research that was undertaken, a description of the methodology used in the data collection and development of the Report, as well as the principal challenges, insights and recommendations that came out of the monitoring.

The Report further includes 8 chapters:

Chapter One is about the right of children to participate, where the focus is mainly on youth participation in secondary school organizing and decision-making at the school level.

Chapter Two is about education of children with special education needs, i.e. their inclusion in regular education in the Republic of Macedonia.

Chapter Three gives an overview of the implementation of children's rights to health; one part focuses on immunization of children and another part focuses on provision of information on prevention of HIV/AIDS to children.

Chapter Four is about protection measures for children who use drugs.

Chapter Five deals with the topic of inclusion of Roma children in pre-school child care and education institutions.

The situation with child victims of trafficking and abduction is presented in *Chapter Six*, whereas the last two Chapters, the seventh and eighth, deal with issues related to juvenile justice and breastfeeding.

The principal findings from the process are presented in a section on main conclusions and recommendations that the Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights hopes and expects would become a baseline for creating policies and strategies of the Republic of Macedonia for enhancing the respect for children's rights, improving the welfare of children and creating a society in which children fully participate in issues of interest to them.

General approach and values of the Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights

The Macedonian National Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights (an informal coalition) was established on 13 November 1997 and headquartered at the Secretariat of the First Children's Embassy in the World "Megjashi" . The Coalition was established with the goal of improving child protection and children's rights, as well as to provide the best response to the requirements of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

The main goal of this initiative is to contribute to the improvement of the status of children and better implementation of the CRC through systematic monitoring and reporting on the status of children, including monitoring and progress in the implementation of the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child by competent authorities. This goal would be achieved through fulfillment of the following objectives and tasks:

- Monitoring of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in the Republic of Macedonia
- Preparation of annual reports on the status of children's rights. The reports prepared by the Macedonian National Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights are aimed at informing the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Geneva) and relevant ministries about key observations of the situation concerning children's rights in the Republic of Macedonia. At the same time, the Macedonian National Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights will ask the Government of the Republic of Macedonia's National Commission on the Rights of Children and the competent ministries to provide us information about actions they undertake and observations they make in the process of implementation of the CRC in the Republic of Macedonia.
- Data available to the members of the Coalition and reports that are prepared would be used to plan development programs, to advocate and address existing problems in order to protect the rights of children.
- Advocacy, lobbying for children's rights and action in cases of violation, denial or threat to any children's right.

The end result should be an improvement of the status of children's rights and better performance in the implementation of the CRC, the Committee recommendations, as well as monitoring the Government of the Republic of Macedonia's National Commission on the Rights of Children, ministries and competent state authorities in implementing the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Activities of the coalition in the project “Capacity Building of the Non-Government Sector for Monitoring of Children’s Rights”

The First Children’s Embassy in the World “Megjashi”, being the coordinator of the Macedonian National Coalition of Civic Organizations for Protection of Children’s Rights, started implementing the project “Capacity Building of the Non-Government Sector for Monitoring of Children’s Rights” in January 2011; the project was envisaged to run for three years, from January 2011 to 2013. The goal of this project is to strengthen the capacities of various relevant stakeholders; to upgrade skills and knowledge among the civic organizations so that the latter may be able to use and process indicators related to planning, budgeting and management of activities in the process of monitoring children’s rights at the national and local levels.

This Report is one of the expected results of this project, which also aims to support the Coalition of non-government organizations in sharing of information on issues of common interest related to children and their rights. The sharing of experience and knowledge among NGOs helps build a stronger voice for advocacy, strengthening their capacities, resource mobilization, and more sustainability to continue the process in the future.

The Children’s Embassy “Megjashi” recognizes the role of children in monitoring children’s rights, with an emphasis on the issue of inclusion of children in decision-making processes at all levels of society.

Methodological framework

This Report was prepared in accordance with the methodology developed at the joint workshop of member organizations of the informal Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children’s Rights, organized in collaboration with the UNICEF Country Office in the Republic of Macedonia.

The Report presents the results of research activities undertaken to examine and analyze the extent to which provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are being implemented in the Republic of Macedonia.

For purposes of this report, the following areas were analyzed:

- child participation as one of the general principles at the core of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- rights of children with special education needs in the education system
- rights of children who use drugs
- inclusion of Roma children in preschool education

- child victims of trafficking
- juvenile justice
- newborns/breastfeeding

The process of preparation of the Report went through several phases. The first phase was dedicated to preparatory activities, defining the team and coordinators who would work on developing the Report, identifying target groups and involvement of relevant factors in the monitoring process. The second phase involved analysis of the Articles of the CRC and recommendations conveyed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in June 2010 to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. In this phase, certain parts of the Articles of the CRC and recommendations were selected to guide the Coalition's collection of data on the actual situation. Indicators were designated to be used by member organizations of the Coalition to conduct research in specific defined areas of children's rights in accordance with the indicators.

Dedicated research was undertaken on the inclusion of Roma children in preschool education; inclusion and treatment of children with special education needs in regular primary education; participation of secondary school students in decision-making at the secondary school level, as well as student organizing in secondary schools.

Another set of organizations who track and maintain data for certain areas of children's rights as part of their routine activities adapted the data that they track for purposes of the defined indicators, summarized, analyzed and shared that information for this Report. Thus, the data analyzed included data on the rights of child users of drugs; child victims of trafficking and abduction; juvenile justice, child immunization, youth awareness of HIV virus transmission modes and prevention methods etc.

The next (third) phase included more precise elaboration of the indicators and defining ways to obtain the required data. Questionnaires were prepared as part of the research effort undertaken specifically for purposes of this Report – Questionnaire on the education process for students with special education needs and Questionnaire on the inclusion of Roma children 3-5 years old in pre-school child care and education institutions.¹ This was followed by designating the municipalities where the organizations would collect data in these areas, i.e. schools and kindergartens where the research activities would take place and are territorially located in the designated municipalities.

The fourth phase involved implementing the research by the participating organizations; the research was focused on inclusion of children with special education needs in the education system, as well as inclusion of Roma children in pre-school child care and education institutions. Organizations that had data from their own practical experience from prior years analyzed the data and compared it to prior years.

¹ The questionnaires are appended to this Report

After the research activities and data analysis, the Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights prepared this Report, which presents the main findings, conclusions and recommendations as guidance for future action in the area of children's rights.

This Report, aside from being a monitoring report, also aims to strengthen the data collection system in the Republic of Macedonia in general, and to provide data as the basis for assessment of the progress achieved in the fulfillment of children's rights. This, in turn, will help create future policies for implementation of the Convention.

After the publication of this Report we will organize multiple events to disseminate the key findings and conclusions, and thus have an impact on expanding awareness of children's rights and the degree to which they are respected, not only in the professional community but among the general public as well.

Although the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child indicated that "While noting ongoing development of a child protection data system, the Committee regrets that there is no systematic approach to data collection for monitoring the situation of children in the State party and no centralised database on children in general and on children in vulnerable situations in particular".² This is why in the course of the preparation of this Report we were led to cover multiple municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia. Both urban and rural municipalities were selected in order to obtain insights into the status of various segments of children's rights in the urban municipalities versus rural municipalities. Are there differences, what are those differences and what is behind the differences? During the preparation of the Report this data was segregated, i.e. divided according to multiple criteria, to the extent practicable with the data collection and analysis. Some of the data is disaggregated by gender, ethnic affiliation, place of residence (rural or urban community), with particular emphasis on children in vulnerable situations.

Coalition for the monitoring of children's rights

The informal Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights was established at the initiative of the First Children's Embassy in the World "Megjashi" in 1997. The Coalition comprises civic organizations that include children's rights in their domains of activity. At this time there are 15 member organizations in this informal Coalition. The Coalition is committed to the exercise of the rights of children and all of the principles contained primarily in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the two Optional Protocols to this Convention. All member organizations of this Coalition are guided by the best interests of

²Committee on the Rights of the Child; Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention; Concluding observations; CRC/C/MKD/CO/2, 11 June 2010.

children in their work, and they respect the rights of children guaranteed under the CRC and other international and national norms and standards.

The organizations that took part in the development of this Report, listed by thematic area and data sharing at the level of municipalities, are:

- Association for Health Education and Research “HERA” – Skopje, in the area of child immunization and youth awareness about HIV/AIDS;
- Association of Albanian Women in Macedonia – Kicevo, member of the Women’s Civic Initiative “Antiko” – Kicevo, in the area of education for children with special education needs and in the area of inclusion of Roma children in preschool child care and education institutions;
- Coalition “All for Fair Trials” – Skopje (coalition of 17 NGOs), in the area of juvenile justice;
- “Lifestart” – Growing and Learning Together – Bitola, in the area of breastfeeding;
- Youth Educational Forum – Skopje, in the area of child participation;
- Association for Action Against Violence and Human Trafficking – Open Gate La Strada Macedonia – Skopje, in the area of child trafficking;
- “Otvorete gi prozorcite (Open the Windows)” – Civic Association for Support and Promotion of Accessible Information Technology for Persons with Disabilities – Skopje, in the area of education for children with special education needs;
- First Children’s Embassy in the World “Megjashi” – Republic of Macedonia, in the area of education for children with special education needs and in the area of inclusion of Roma children in preschool child care and education institutions;
- Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency – Kavadarci, in the area of education for children with special education needs and in the area of inclusion of Roma children in preschool child care and education institutions;
- Federation of Defectologists of the Republic of Macedonia, in the area of education for children with special education needs;
- HOPS – Options for Healthy Living – Skopje, in the area of the rights of children who use drugs;
- Humanitarian Association “Majka” – Kumanovo, in the area of the rights of Roma children, specifically their inclusion in pre-school care and education;

- Humanitarian and Charitable Association of the Roma in Macedonia “Mesecina” – Gostivar, in the area of the rights of Roma children, particularly their inclusion in preschool care and education institutions;
- Center for Civic Initiative – Prilep, in the area of inclusion of Roma children in preschool care and education institutions, as well as in the implementation of the rights to education for children placed in reformatory/correctional institutions;
- Center for Human Rights “AMOS” – Bitola, in the area of education for children with special education needs

Problems that arose during the research activities

A characteristic limitation that we encountered during the research is the fact that some of the entities we intended to survey (kindergartens and primary schools) did not respond to the questionnaires sent to them. This situation is to be expected in this type of research activities, as it is assumed that a certain percentage of potential respondents would not participate in the research or would not submit fully completed questionnaires, which later makes the process of analysis of the collected data more difficult. We also believe that one of the reasons for the less-than-full response on the part of the contacted schools is the political situation at the time of distribution of the questionnaires – namely, it was a period of local elections, and primary schools are under the jurisdiction of local governments.

Another problem that we identified during the analysis of responses received through the questionnaires was the fact that some of the questionnaires were not answered completely, even though it had been emphasized that complete answers were needed in order to take a questionnaire under consideration in the analysis. Thus, some of the questionnaires were left out of the analysis process, so analysis was done on data that could yield some insight. Some questionnaires came back with partial answers, so those questions that were not answered were also left out during analysis.

Implementation of monitoring of the status of children’s rights

Reports prepared previously by this Coalition were comprehensive and encompassed all Articles of the CRC. In preparing this report we identified specific areas of the Convention on the Rights of the Child that were subject to monitoring and analysis. Thus, several indicators were set up as the basis for data collection by the member organizations. Some of the member organizations of the Coalition used data that they gather in their everyday activities and shared it for the purpose of this Report; those organizations are HOPS, HERA and Open Gate. Another set of organizations collected data for this report according to pre-designated indicators. A joint workshop was held to precisely elaborate the indicators and prepare questionnaires for the survey. Also, municipalities where research activities would be carried out were selected.

The following indicators were subject to monitoring:

Area: Child participation

- Degree of awareness among secondary school students about the existence and function of the Secondary school Students Union;
- Percentage share of secondary school students who have contacted the Secondary school Students Union;
- Number of schools that have representatives in the Secondary school Students Union.

Area: Implementation of the right to education for children with special education needs

- Number/percentage of students with special education needs who are included in regular primary schools.
- Number of schools that have undertaken measures and activities in 2012 to overcome difficulties faced by students with special education needs;
- Number and types of initiatives undertaken by municipalities to improve the inclusion process for students with special education needs in the year 2012;
- Age (years) of children with developmental disabilities who have been identified as such for the first time;

Area: Implementation of children's rights to health

- Percentage share of children who have sought information about HIV/AIDS (out of the total number of persons who have sought such information) from appropriate health organizations and civic organizations primarily oriented at addressing this issue;

Area: Rights of children who use drugs

- Percentage share of children who use drugs, out of the total number of registered users

Area: Roma children and early childhood development

- Percentage share of Roma children at age included in preschool institutions/centers, out of the total number of children in kindergartens

Area: Child victims of trafficking and abduction

- Percentage share of identified child victims of human trafficking, out of the total number of recorded victims of human trafficking
- Percentage share of children identified as high-risk of becoming victims of human trafficking, out of the total number of recorded potential victims of human trafficking

- Number of child victims and high-risk children covered under the program for social assistance, out of the total number of recorded groups at high risk of becoming victims of trafficking

Area: Juvenile justice

- Percentage share of juvenile offenders who have committed IT-related criminal offenses, out of the total number of criminal offenses perpetrated by juveniles
- Number of juvenile defendants indicted on charges of organized crime and corruption
- Number of juvenile victims of organized crime and corruption
- Number of youths/children from RCI Tetovo who attend an appropriate level of education

Area: Breastfeeding

- Number of breastfeeding educational programs for new mothers
- Number of newly opened centers for early childhood development in the selected municipalities (capacity of the centers, utilization of the centers etc.)
- Number of early childhood development programs aimed at parents

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATION

In this report we review the adherence to one of the fundamental principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child - the principle of child participation. In terms of creating conditions that enable the application of this principle, the Committee recommends in its Concluding observations that the Republic of Macedonia should “promote and facilitate, within the family, in schools, the community, and society at large, respect for the views of children and their participation in all matters affecting them.”³

This is precisely why in this section we focused in detail on the monitoring the situation in the area of respect for children’s views and participation in decision-making in the schools, i.e. we focused on student organizing in high schools and participation of high-school students in decision-making in the schools. Indicators used to monitor the status of these issues are: *Degree of awareness among secondary school students about the existence and function of the Secondary school Students Union; Percentage share of secondary school students who have*

³ Committee on the Rights of the Child; Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention; Concluding observations; CRC/C/MKD/CO/2, 11 June 2010.

contacted the Secondary school Students Union; Number of schools that have representatives in the Secondary school Students Union.

The research in this area was carried out by the Youth Educational Forum (Mladinski obrazoven forum - MOF) in the municipality of *Veles* in 4 secondary schools and in the municipality of *Stip* in 5 secondary schools.⁴

1.1. Methodology

The Youth Education Forum conducted the research using two qualitative methods – document analysis and focus groups. The purpose of first part of the research was to find out about the administrative regulation of secondary school student organizing. The second part of the research was carried out by submitting requests for free access to public data, which would yield responses directly from school authorities about the situation in the area of secondary school student organizing. The Youth Education Forum sent questionnaires to the indicated number of schools, with questions about whether the school has bylaws for its own operation, whether the school has a rulebook regulating student government/organizing, and if there is no such rulebook they were asked to explain how student government is organized in the school. These are followed by questions about the rules for election of class president/grade-level student body president, and if there is no document that regulates this issue, they are asked to explain the election procedure. Next come the questions directly pertaining to the Secondary school Students Union, i.e. whether the school has representatives in the Secondary School Students Union / Union of Secondary School Students or another for of high-school student organizing. Copies were requested of all documents that the schools claimed to have in place.

The goal of the second part of the research was to examine the experience and views of secondary school students about student organizing. The Youth Education Forum conducted 2 focus groups in the two cities for this purpose.

1.2. Results

Current situation in the representation of secondary school students in the decision-making processes in Macedonia – access analysis

In order to offer answers, it is necessary to have a good knowledge of the situation, barriers and opportunities faced by secondary school students. Thus, it was necessary to review the bylaws of secondary schools as the highest-level general regulatory documents of the institutions. The analysis of these documents helped assess the position of secondary school

⁴More information about this research is available at: <http://www.mof.mk/mofmk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Srednoskolsko-organiziranje-i-ucestvo-.pdf>

students in decision-making processes in their schools, whether they are represented at all in decision making- bodies, and if they are – what are their rights.

Current status of the bodies of school governance:

- School Board. This is a governance body comprising 12 members: 3 representatives of the school's founding authority, 3 parents/guardians, 4 teachers, 1 representative of the Ministry of Education, 1 representative (non-voting) of the business community. The school board as a governance body is concerned with: enactment of bylaws, proposals for Annual Program and Annual Report, proposal for annual financial plan, proposal for annual statement of accounts, public procurement processes, decisions on complaints and objections from teachers, students, parents etc. *Reviewing this position of this secondary school governance body, it is recommended and needed to include the students. The most appropriate action would be to include representatives of students from each grade level, so that decision-making would not take place without involvement of the secondary school students.*

- Principal. The principal is a management authority of the secondary school responsible for legal compliance of the school's operation and financial matters related to the school's operation. The principal is appointed and dismissed by the mayor of the municipality for a 4-year term in office. *The principal is the person who, in the eyes of the students, has the top position and makes the main decisions.*

- Teaching Council – Comprises all teachers and professionals in the school. The teaching council is responsible for: reviewing and assessing student's academic performance, offering opinions on the proposed Annual Program and monitoring of its implementation, issuance of disciplinary measures against students, issuance of commendations and awards to students, approval of student field trips, professional visits etc. Other bodies composed of professional staff in the schools include: Grade-Level Council, Class Council, Class Head, professional groups for various professional areas.

- Parents Council – The parents council has a role in school governance. *In a way, this is how the student's views are indirectly represented through their parents. However, a parent cannot be a substitute for a secondary school student's view because the parents are not direct beneficiaries or direct subjects of decisions/policies. In accordance with their official position, the presence of grade-level student bodies is needed at the sessions of the parents council, although without voting privileges. This is needed for the views of the secondary school students to be presented and taken into consideration in all governing bodies.*

Current situation in the area of secondary school student organizing

The responses received from secondary schools and the analysis carried out by the Youth Education Forum indicate that school organizing is not unified, or even close to such a structure. Very varied forms of organizing are found, depending on whether the school is a general secondary school or a vocational school, which makes sense. However, this is the case in only some of the schools, as we found situations where there is no organizing of the secondary school students at all.

As presented above, depending on the type of education offered by different schools, there are different modalities of student organizing, as well as same forms under different names – youth activism, school community, youth organization, school parliament are only some of the names for the forms of student organizing in secondary schools.

What is most demoralizing in the current situation, according to the Youth Education Forum report based on responses received from schools, is that the participation of students in the educational work of the school and consideration of important issues related to the operation of the school ultimately comes down to consultation only, with no real say or vote in the decision-making processes, which shows that the secondary school students are not partners in the education process and the possibilities for expressing their opinion and influencing decisions are limited. This means that although there are some forms of organizing students at the secondary school level, nonetheless the opportunity for advocacy of the students' rights and expression of their views is limited to channeling through the parents councils, if the students wish to be heard by a higher-ranking body that has some influence or decision-making authority for matters related to the work of the secondary school.

1.3. Observation

In the past there were two national-level organizations of secondary school students: The Union of Secondary School Students and the Secondary School Student Union. According to the Youth Education Forum, today we only see the Union of Secondary School Students, and only because it is registered as such. The Youth Education Forum research indicated that the actual situation is different. Out of all schools surveyed, only one responded that they have representatives in the Union of Secondary School Students, which raises the question if there really is a true national-level organization of secondary school students, and if it exists – how does it operate with so many high schools not having delegated representatives? According to the responses received from schools, the most recent activities in this area had been the protests by secondary school students against state exams for graduation in 2008, which had to do with external grading. The Youth Education Forum states that these responses only further confirm the overall picture that secondary school students are not involved in decision-making processes in any way, that their views are consultative only, which is contrary to their central role in the education process at the secondary school level.

Recommendations

- Policies for democratic inclusion of secondary school students in decision-making processes in the secondary schools should be promoted.
- Resources should be provided for implementation of inclusive and democratic models of secondary school student organizing in each of the secondary schools, created by the schools themselves in accordance with the needs of the students, as well as national-level organizations of secondary school students.

- Amend the Law on Secondary Education and the Law on Vocational Education to include the students, through their forms of representation, in order to guarantee participation of their representative bodies in the governance bodies at the school level. This change in the regulations is expected to guarantee the secondary school students active participation in the decision-making processes, as well as creation of activist students and citizens.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHTS TO EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

According to the most recent Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there is „concern at the persisting inadequacy of educational, social and health services for children with disabilities and their families in their own living environment. In particular, the Committee notes that there remain many obstacles to ensuring equal access to education for children with disabilities. “⁵

Following the recommendations of the Committee, the education of children with special education needs (SEN) was designated as one of the research areas. More specifically, we were interested in the possibilities for inclusion of students with special education needs in regular primary education, the facilities and conditions available to them, the difficulties they face, as well as acceptance by the community.

Before the research activities regarding the implementation of the right to education for children with special education needs, the following indicators were defined for monitoring: *Number/percentage of students with special education needs who are included in regular primary schools; Number of schools that have undertaken measures and activities in 2012 to overcome difficulties faced by students with special education needs; Number and types of initiatives undertaken by municipalities to improve the inclusion process for students with special education needs in the year 2012;*

Research activities in this thematic area were undertaken by several organizations in multiple municipalities:

- *“Otvorete gi prozorcite (Open the Windows)” – Civic Association for Support and Promotion of Accessible Information Technology for Persons with Disabilities* conducted research in the municipality of Karpos (10 primary schools) and in the municipality of Gjorce Petrov (6 primary schools), thus covering all primary schools in these municipalities;

⁵ Committee on the Rights of the Child; Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention; Concluding observations; CRC/C/MKD/CO/2, 11 June 2010.

- *Center for Human Rights “AMOS” Bitola* – in the municipality of Bitola in all 11 primary schools, in the municipality of Mogila in all 3 primary school, and in the sole primary school in the municipality of Novaci.
- *Federation of Defectologists of the Republic of Macedonia* conducted research activities in the municipality of Kumanovo (9 primary schools) and in the municipality of Staro Nagoricane (3 primary schools);
- *Antiko* in the municipality of Kicevo (3 primary schools), in the municipality of Zajas (2 primary schools) and in the municipality of Oslomej (1 primary school)
- *Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency - Kavadarci* in the municipality of Kavadarci (1 primary school) and in the municipality of Negotino (1 primary school)
- *The First Children’s Embassy in the World “Megjashi”* in the municipality of Aerodrom (3 primary schools), Gazi Baba (4 primary schools), Zelenikovo (1 school), Ilinden (1 school), Petrovec (1 school), Jegunovce (1 school), Bogovinje (1 school), Dolno Orizari-Veles (1 primary school)

2.1. Methodology

In the research into the inclusion process for children with special needs we used a questionnaire with both open-type and closed-type questions. The questionnaire consisted of 12 questions that would be used to monitor the three above-mentioned indicators. The questionnaire was intended for the non-teaching professional staff in the schools who maintain records and are directly involved in the work with students with special education needs. We would like to point out that this data does not provide a full picture of the situation in the whole municipality, as only some of the schools that received questionnaires actually responded, even though a large number of schools were included in this research activity. Those questionnaires that lacked responses in the portions crucial to the research were discarded during the analysis. Some questionnaires had incomplete answers, so those parts that had incomplete data were also not taken into account during the analysis.

2.2. Results

The findings are presented below, by municipality. Each organization, with the consent of the corresponding municipality, submitted data and accompanying comments.

Several questions were created to obtain information for monitoring of the first indicator *Number/percentage of students with special education needs who are included in regular primary schools*; in addition to the number of students with SEN, those responses provided data about their structure according to various criteria.

Municipality	No. of schools in	Total number of	Children with SEN in	Percentage of children
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	the survey	children	surveyed schools	with SEN
Karpos	10	5997	136	2,26
Gjorce Petrov	6	3117	57	1,83
Kumanovo	9	6724	230	3,42
Staro Nagoricane	3	359	31	8,64
Bitola	11	7214	101	1,40
Mogila	3	550	4	0,73
Novaci	1	203	15	7,39
Kavadarci	1	483	17	3,52
Negotino	1	835	25	2,99
Aerodrom	3	2750	43	1,56
Gazi Baba	4	2511	61	2,43
Zelenikovo	1	350	1	0,29
Ilinden	1	420	4	0,95
Petrovec	1	306	4	1,31
Jegunovce	1	228	9	3,95
Bogovinje	1	485	no data	no data
Debarca	1	269	6	2,23
Dolno Orizari	1	238	1	0,42
Kicevo	3	2656	16	0,60
Oslomej	1	115	2	1,74
Zajas	2	659	12	1,82
Total	65	36469	775	

Table 1 – Data from the schools on the total number of children and number of children with SEN included in the regular education process

Municipality	No. of schools in the survey	Children with SEN	Boys with SEN	Girls with SEN
Karpos	10	136	70%	30%
Gjorce Petrov	6	57	65%	35%
Kumanovo	9	230	no data	no data
Staro Nagoricane	3	31	no data	no data
Bitola	11	101	61%	39%
Mogila	3	4	50%	50%
Novaci	1	15	53%	47%
Kavadarci	1	17	76%	24%
Negotino	1	25	40%	60%
Aerodrom	3	43	70%	30%
Gazi Baba	4	61	no data	no data
Zelenikovo	1	1	100%	0
Ilinden	1	4	75%	25%
Petrovec	1	4	50%	50%
Jegunovce	1	9	44%	66%
Bogovinje	1	no data	no data	no data
Debarca	1	6	50%	50%
Dolno Orizari	1	1	100%	0%
Kicevo	3	16	no data	no data
Oslomej	1	2	100%	0%
Zajas	2	12	66%	34%
Total	65	775		

Table 2 – Data on male/female ratio for students with SEN included in regular education in the surveyed schools

Municipality	No. of schools	Children with SEN	Students with physical disability	Students with intellectual disability	Students with vision impairment	Students with hearing impairment	Students with autism	Students with learning difficulties	Students with combined disabilities	Other
Karpos	10	136	5	35	6	7	4	49	25	5
Gjorce Petrov	6	57	1	13	2	1	4	31	5	
Kumanovo	9	230	5	53	31	16	12	69	44	
Staro Nagoricane	3	31	0	9	0	0	0	13	9	
Bitola	11	101	5	34	5	2	5	40	10	
Mogila	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	
Novaci	1	15	1	4	0	0	0	8	2	
Kavadarci	1	17	4	6	0	1	0	5	1	
Negotino	1	25	0	2	1	0	1	19	2	
Aerodrom	3	43	1	7	0	4	4	16	11	
Gazi Baba	4	61	1	10	4	0	1	45	0	
Zelenikovo	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Ilinden	1	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	
Petrovec	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	
Jegunovce	1	9	0	0	0	0	1	6	2	
Bogovinje	1	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data	
Debarca	1	6	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	
Dolno Orizari	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Kicevo	3	16	1	1	0	0	2	8	4	
Oslomej	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	
Zajas	2	12	0	7	0	0	0	5	0	
Total	65	775	24	194	50	31	34	322	115	5

Table 3 – Categories of developmental disabilities among the children according to data received from the schools that participated in the research

2.2.1. Difficulties encountered by schools in everyday work with students with SEN

In order to find how many schools undertake initiatives (and the types of initiatives that they undertake) to mitigate difficulties faced by students with SEN, we first researched the

difficulties that the schools most frequently encounter in daily work with students with SEN. In this regard, the schools had an opportunity to select multiple items from a number of offered situations.

The leading difficulty mentioned by the surveyed schools (43 schools indicated this difficulty) in the selected municipalities is the monitoring and assessment of performance of the students with SEN, i.e. grading. This is closely connected with the difficulties in achieving the learning goals and adapting curriculum content to the needs of the student (30 schools indicated this difficulty), which is the second most often mentioned difficulty by the schools. This is followed by the development of individual education plans in accordance with the capacities and needs of students with special education needs. Next down the list are difficulties related to inclusion of students with SEN in activities with other students and establishment of communication and interaction with the students with SEN.

2.2.2. Measures and activities undertaken by schools to overcome difficulties faced by students with special education needs

In order to overcome the difficulties and facilitate the education process, the schools undertake various measures. Thus, out of the total 65 schools surveyed, 21 school responded that they have access ramps at the entrance of the school building. This is presented in more detail in the table below, by municipality.

Municipality	No. of primary schools in the survey	No. of PS with access ramp
Karpos	10	5
Gjorce Petrov	6	2
Kumanovo	9	0
Staro Nagoricane	3	0
Bitola	11	3
Mogila	3	1
Novaci	1	0
Kavadarci	1	1
Negotino	1	0
Aerodrom	3	2
Gazi Baba	4	2

Zelenikovo	1	0
Ilinden	1	1
Petrovec	1	0
Jegunovce	1	0
Bogovinje	1	no data
Debarca	1	1
Dolno Orizari	1	1
Kicevo	3	2
Oslomej	1	0
Zajas	2	0
Total	65	21

Table 4 – Data from the schools regarding access ramp at the school building’s entrance

Only one school in the municipality of Karpos stated that here is a lift (elevator) in the school. Out of the total 65 schools surveyed in 21 municipalities, 5 schools indicated that the interior fittings, classrooms, toilets and teaching aids are adapted to the needs of students with SEN. 39 schools responded that the teachers develop individual education plans for the students with SEN. 33 schools responded that they have built cooperative relationships with relevant institutions and receive support in working with students with SEN; the same number of schools indicated that they have functioning inclusion teams that monitors and supports the process of inclusive education. It is notable that more substantive activities are being undertaken in urban and larger municipalities to facilitate access and inclusion of students with SEN in the schools.

2.2.3. Types of initiatives undertaken by municipalities to improve the inclusion process for students with special education needs

Support from the municipality is especially significant for the schools, as they are under its jurisdiction. In our research we received information from the surveyed schools that some of the municipalities undertake initiatives to improve inclusion in education through various activities – for example, they renovate schools to comply with accessibility standards; they use the services of a municipal defectologist for a period of time or hire defectologists as support staff to the teachers in working with students with SEN. One school from each of the municipalities of Kumanovo, Bitola, Kavadarci, Gazi Baba and Kicevo indicated that they have a

defectologist on staff, although some of them stated that it is not enough, i.e. more defectologists need to be hired. Schools in the municipalities of Karpos, Gjorce Petrov, Bitola, Gazi Baba and Aerodrom indicated that they receive support from a mobile (municipal) defectologist. Also, some of the schools indicated that they receive support in the process of application for projects related to inclusion, that they are being supported in the process of organizing training, roundtables and events to promote inclusion. What is characteristic of this indicator is that, according to responses from the schools, some of the municipalities that were included in the research provide hardly any help to the schools to improve the process of inclusion of students with SEN and have not undertaken initiatives to improve the process of inclusion of students with special education needs in 2012. This is particularly pronounced in the rural and smaller municipalities. This could be due to insufficient awareness and sensitization, insufficient staffing and funding.

Recommendations

Data received through this research point to a need to implement the following measures and recommendations:

- Establish a system of records and monitoring of the number of students with SEN in regular schools in order to ensure uniformity of procedures in all schools;
- Apply accessibility standards in the construction of new schools or reconstruction of old schools to provide facilities for access and autonomous functioning of students with SEN on school grounds.
- Complete the school teams with professionals, primarily defectologists, who are prepared to recognize and meet the needs, abilities and interests of students with SEN. Also, this completion of the staff is needed to provide support to teachers in implementing the process of inclusion.
- Strengthen and upgrade knowledge, skills and abilities of the teachers to work with students with SEN, by organizing training events and seminars. Strengthening of teachers' capacities is especially needed in the area of developing individual education plans, as well as monitoring and revising (assessing) progress in carrying out the IEPs.
- Intensify collaboration between schools and the local government.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO HEALTH

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, in one of its concluding observations notes that efforts to improve health standards for children should continue through „ increasing the quality and availability of health services to eliminate urban-rural disparities; and ensuring the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the

development of primary health care, in particular by extending coverage to children belonging to the most vulnerable segments of the population ⁶. Following these recommendations, HERA as a member of the Coalition of Non-Government Organizations for Children's Rights conducted an analysis of data collected through its routine activities relating to the number and characteristics of children immunized in their youth centers, as well as the number of children who have requested the school doctor service in the centers.

3.1. Immunization

3.1.1 Methodology

This data is collected from the two youth centers „Sakam da znam” (“I Want to Know”) operated by the non-government organization HERA – Health Education and Research Association. One of the centers is located in Centar municipality, the other in Suto Orizari. Some of the services offered in these centers are related to immunization and check-up by a school doctor. Proper records are maintained for each client coming into these centers. Each service provider fills a client sheet for the service being provided (clients in these centers are identified by code in order to maintain confidentiality), with demographic data and data about the service provided. The information from these lists are entered into a database that can then be used to generate reports.

3.1.2. Results

In terms of immunization, the HERA centers in 2011 immunized 52 juvenile persons, 29 male and 23 female. All persons who received immunizations were of Roma ethnic affiliation and reside in urban communities.

In 2012 immunizations were received by 103 persons, 34 male and 69 female. In terms of ethnic affiliation, 100 persons were Roma, 2 Albanian and 1 person from another ethnic community. All 103 persons declared residence in urban communities.

The greater number of immunized children in 2012 compared to 2011 is due to the introduction of multiple shifts when the staff responsible for immunization are available to serve clients, as well as the building of partnerships with other civic associations and

⁶ Committee on the Rights of the Child; Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention; Concluding observations; CRC/C/MKD/CO/2, 11 June 2010.

institutions. The fact that all juvenile persons immunized in the HERA centers in 2011 and 2012 are from urban communities suggests a possible conclusion that the families living in urban environments are more aware of this opportunity and duty, while the children whose families live in rural communities are not so well-informed.

As for the other service offered by HERA, check-up by a school doctor, it was used by 52 children in 2011. All of them were of Roma ethnicity and come from urban communities. In 2012 the check-up by a school doctor was requested by 39 children, 9 male and 30 female. Of these, 38 were of Roma ethnic affiliation, and only one person belonged to another ethnic community.

The difference in the number of persons turning to the „Sakam da znam“ centers for the school doctor service in 2012 compared to 2011 is due to the increased need for the immunization service in 2012. In parallel, in 2012 so-called Roma health mediators (RHM) started operating on the territory of the municipality of Suto Orizari, and these mediators helped many people exercise their rights to health insurance. Some of these people were users of the school doctor service, which they no longer needed afterwards.

Recommendations:

- Improvement and intensification of collaboration among the civic associations and immunization teams working in the health centers.
 - Using the services of field workers, health mediators and community representatives who would visit and remind families/communities with children that require immunization.
- Improvement of coordination among the public health centers and the centers for social work to improve the coverage of children that had not been immunized or had not undergone a general check-up for whatever reasons.

3.2. Adolescent health

The data presented below pertain to adolescent health, more specifically children and youths who have requested information on HIV/AIDS from HERA's two youth centers.

3.2.1. Methodology

This data is collected from the two youth centers „Sakam da znam“ (“I Want to Know”) operated by the non-government organization HERA. One of the centers is located in Centar municipality, the other in Suto Orizari. The data is derived from the provision of the following services: gynecology, dermatology, counseling (social worker, pedagogue, psychologist), education by professionals (social worker, pedagogue, psychologist) and peer education.

Proper records are maintained for each client coming into these centers. Each service provider fills a client sheet for the service being provided (clients in these centers are identified by code in order to maintain confidentiality), with demographic data and data about the service provided. When education services are provided, regardless of whether it is peer education or education by a professional, records are maintained about the participants in the particular education session (demographic data, topics covered at the session, techniques used, materials distributed). The information from these lists are entered into a database that can then be used to generate reports.

3.2.2. Results

The number of persons who have requested services/information about sexual and reproductive health and rights, which includes the topic of HIV/AIDS, was 749 in 2011. Of these, 411 were female, the rest male. All of these persons were residents of urban communities. By ethnic affiliation, 170 persons were from the Roma community, 563 Macedonian, 6 Albanian and 6 come from other ethnic communities in the country.

In 2012 this type of service/information were requested by a total of 1793 persons in the “Sakam da znam” centers. Of these, 1294 were female, 499 were male. By ethnic affiliation, 420 were Macedonian, 1360 Roma, 8 Albanian and 7 were from other ethnic communities.

It is evident that in 2012 this type of service was requested by 60% more persons than in 2011. Also, 75% of these were from the Roma ethnic community. According to HERA, this is because of the fact that in 2012 a number of partnerships were made with other civic associations and institutions that are mainly focused on Roma issues.

Recommendations:

- Introduction of comprehensive sexual education in primary and secondary schools so that all young people can have access to information about sexual and reproductive health, including information related to HIV/AIDS;
- Provision of training and guidance materials for comprehensive sexual education for the teachers and trainers;
- Local governments should allocate funds in their annual budgets for activities to inform young people about sexual and reproductive health, including information related to HIV/AIDS;
- Inclusion of associations as direct beneficiaries of the Ministry of Health’s HIV/AIDS prevention programs for the purpose of conducting health promotion activities about HIV/AIDS among the young;

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WHO USE DRUGS

In the portion of the Committee's Concluding Observations regarding adolescent health, the Committee indicates that it is „concerned about the absence of prevention measures and rehabilitation services for children using drugs or alcohol“⁷, and recommends that such preventive measures and rehabilitation services be developed. This spurred the Coalition for monitoring of children's rights to conduct an analysis on the number of children who use drugs, the way they obtain drugs, the age of first contact with drugs etc. HOPS – Healthy Living Options, as a member of the Coalition, conducted a detailed analysis of data it collects in its routine activities.

4.1. Methodology

Since the inception of its activities HOPS has been maintaining records of the types of services provided to drug users by maintaining day lists, monthly, quarterly and annual reports. Children who use drugs receive services attended by a parent, and when they come in by themselves they may receive counseling, food or clothes. Each client is issued a code, combination of letters and numerals, which does not reveal the identity. Data from the day lists and reports are entered into an electronic database that maintains records about the clients, dates, places and types of services received. For purposes of this report we used data from the database established by HOPS and updated since 1999. For specific cases, the HOPS teams prepare case studies that constitute part of the organization's records, and this will also be used in the report on the status of children who use drugs. As HOPS operates on the territory of the City of Skopje, data in this report pertain to Skopje, with particular focus on municipalities where equipment exchange centers operate, namely the municipalities of Centar, Cair and Suto Orizari.

4.2. Results

Based on data held by HOPS, this report provided information about children who use drugs and who are in contact with HOPS, out of the total number of drug users for whom HOPS provides services. Data provided by HOPS for this report reflect the total number of children who use drugs known to HOPS, which does not correspond to the actual number of children who use drugs in the Republic of Macedonia and the City of Skopje. From 1999 to 31.12.2012

⁷ Committee on the Rights of the Child; Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention; Concluding observations; CRC/C/MKD/CO/2, 11 June 2010.

HOPS has had contacts with a total of 3410 drug users. Of these, 2291 are male, 256 female, while for 863 persons there is no on gender or age at the time they were entered into HOPS records. **As of 31.12.2012 the database contains records of a total of 43 persons who had been under the age of 18 at the time of first contact.**

Age of first contact	Number of children
17	19
16	6
15	5
14	5
13	4
12	1
11	3
TOTAL	43

Table 5 – Number of children and their ages at first contact

Among the children for whom records have been maintained so far, five are female. By ethnic affiliation, 30 are Roma, 9 Macedonian, 3 Albanian and 1 Turkish. By level of education, 4 have completed secondary education, 4 have died without completing secondary education, 4 have completed primary education, 9 have died without completing primary education, and 22 children never went into the education system at all. HOPS also indirectly maintains contacts and provides services to children who use drugs or glue, through their parents. No records are maintained in the database for these children as separate clients. The number of these children is four, 3 female and one male. **The total number of children who use drugs that HOPS has made contact with is 47.**

According to HOPS reports, in 2011 contact was made with 15 different juvenile persons who use drugs, at ages 5 to 16, of which 11 were male and 4 female. According to data from 2011, 2 persons have died, and 2 persons were in the Reformatory/Correctional Institution „Tetovo“, currently located in Veles, 1 in the Public institution for Children and Youths with Educational and Social Problems „25 May“ – Skopje and 1 child is in the Pediatrics Clinic in Skopje. By type of drugs used, the breakdown is as follows: 3 use glue, 12 regularly use heroin and occasionally use glue, methadone and benzodiazepines. Some of these children have visited the HOPS centers multiple times, and records show that the same children appear at multiple centers in different locations.

Municipality	Location	Number of children
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		visiting in 2011
Centar	Drop-in Kapistec	6
Cair	Drop-in Mavrovka	11
Suto Orizari	Drop-in Suto Orizari	4
TOTAL		21

According to HOPS reports, in 2012 contact was made with 9 different juvenile persons who use drugs, at ages 5 to 17, of which five were female and four male. One person has died in 2012. By type of drugs used, the breakdown is as follows: 3 use glue, 6 regularly use heroin and occasionally use glue, methadone and benzodiazepines. Some of these children have visited the HOPS centers multiple times, and records show that the same children appear at multiple centers in different locations.

Municipality	Location	Number of children visiting in 2012
Centar	Drop-in Kapistec	3
Cair	Drop-in Mavrovka	9
Suto Orizari	Drop-in Suto Orizari	2
TOTAL		14

4.3. Observation

Most of the children who are in contact with HOPS come from families where at least one of the parents is a drug user or a member of the immediate family is an intravenous drug user. The number of children visiting the HOPS centers different municipalities does not indicate that those children come from the respective municipalities, but rather that they are children who live in Suto Orizari, Topansko Pole or homeless families that frequently change locations throughout the city of Skopje, but visit all HOPS centers.

The decrease in the number of children who have visited HOPS centers in 2012 in the three municipalities does not mean that the number of children who use drugs has declined. Quite the opposite, available sources indicate that the number of children who use drugs is increasing, and the age threshold for starting drug use is going lower. Nonetheless, experience

shows that these children have no legal or institutional possibilities to go into treatment, and later into a rehabilitation and re-socialization program, which is a necessary precondition for their reintegration into society. This factual situation is also confirmed through the case study presented below in the report. HOPS has addressed all relevant institutions, such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Ombudsman with requests for solutions to this serious problem. Data available to HOPS pertain to children who use drugs, who come from families of drug users, or children without parental care, but the number of children who need treatment, rehabilitation and re-socialization is much higher.

Case study

Child who uses drugs at age 12

The child was met by the HOPS team at age 8, when the child started intravenous (injecting) drug use, while previously the child had inhaled glue and solvents. The child is without parental care and was placed in the Public Institution for Children and Youths „25 May“ - Skopje. Since May of 2011 the child was in the Pediatrics Clinic in Skopje, admitted for a drug overdose. On this clinic the child was treated for drug addiction and other ailments that accompany drug use. In August of 2011, due to complications caused by long-term drug use and injecting, the child was transferred to the specialized Orthopedics Clinic in Ohrid. After several days, having undergone no surgery, the child was placed by the Inter-Municipal Center for Social Work of Skopje in a private geriatric institution Sue Ryder in Skopje, as there is no specialized institution for treatment, care and rehabilitation of children who use drugs. In December of 2011 the child was taken back to the Pediatrics Clinic due to a deterioration of the infection of the leg. HOPS maintained contact with the child throughout this period of time, made contacts with the Inter-Municipal Center for Social Work and the health professionals at the Pediatrics Clinic in order to monitor the situation. The Pediatrics Clinic indicated that the child needs surgery on the leg, but the Orthopedics Clinic refuses to admit the child.

As a result of the issue of children who use drugs and the lack of appropriate therapy to treat them, as well as programs for care, rehabilitation and re-socialization following medical treatment, HOPS turned to the Ministry of Health, ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Ombudsman to raise alarm about the overall situation, including the specific case of a child being in a health institution for one year without appropriate care. The child was discharged from the hospital in May of 2012 and was entrusted to the care of distant relatives who receive compensation for it. As a result of inappropriate care, the child has impaired mobility and is in a wheelchair.

Recommendations

On the basis of commitments and obligations undertaken by the state to provide the highest standard of health for children who use drugs, it is necessary to:

- Establish a system for monitoring the status of children who use drugs;

- Provide medically based addiction treatment for all children, regardless of age;
- Open rehabilitation and re-socialization centers for children who use drugs;
- Start programs for work with families that have children who use drugs.

5. ROMA CHILDREN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

„The Committee on the Rights of the Child is concerned about *de facto* discrimination of children belonging to the minorities, especially Roma...“⁸ says one of the comments of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. In order to review the situation in this area, as a Coalition we focused on researching the inclusion of Roma children in preschool child care and education institutions.

Research in this area was carried out by several organizations in multiple municipalities.

- *Humanitarian and Charitable Association of the Roma in Macedonia “Mesecina”* – carried out research activities in the municipality of Gostivar (1 kindergarten);
- *Association of Albanian Women in Macedonia - Kicevo, member of Antiko*, in the municipality of Kicevo (1 kindergarten);
- *Humanitarian Association „Majka“ - Kumanovo* - in the municipality of Kumanovo
- *Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency - Kavadarci* in the municipality of Kavadarci (1 kindergarten) and in the municipality of Negotino (1 kindergarten)
- *Center for Civic Initiative* – in the municipality of Prilep
- *First Children’s Embassy in the World “Megjashi”* in the municipalities of Pehcevo, Vinica, Berovo, Makedonska Kamenica, Kratovo, Bitola, Debar, Aerodrom, Radovis, Gevgelija, Resen, Kocani, Ilinden, Valandovo, Delcevo, Gazi Baba, Bogdanci, Sveti Nikole (one kindergarten in each municipality)

5.1. Methodology

Several member organizations of the Coalition conducted research in this subject area in 24 municipalities by sending questionnaires to at least one kindergarten in each of the 24 municipalities. We would like to point out that this data does not provide a complete picture of the situation in the whole municipality, as even though a greater number of kindergartens were included in the research activities (i.e. questionnaires were sent to them), only some of them responded in each of the municipalities. Those questionnaires that lacked responses in the portions crucial to the research were discarded during the analysis. Some questionnaires had

⁸ Committee on the Rights of the Child; Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention; Concluding observations; CRC/C/MKD/CO/2, 11 June 2010.

incomplete answers, so those parts that had incomplete data were also not taken into account during the analysis.

5.2. Results

Inclusion of Roma children in kindergartens

The research activities covered 24 municipalities, one kindergarten per municipality. From 9 of the kindergartens we received responses that they have no Roma children enrolled. There are Roma children attending kindergartens in 15 of the total number of municipalities, according to responses from the surveyed kindergartens, and the total number of these children is 292.

According to the responses in the questionnaires, one of the most significant reasons for non-inclusion of Roma children in pre-school child care and education institutions is the difficult social and financial situation of the families. Although the research found that in most of the municipalities there is state financial support for children to attend kindergarten, a significant number of children do not use kindergarten services. Hence, additional reasons given in the responses for the non-inclusion of Roma children are: insufficient awareness in the families about the significance of preschool upbringing and education, families with many children where the parents are unable to devote sufficient attention to all children, unemployment, as well as the search for better living conditions that drives many of the families of these children to move/migrate frequently. Another cited reason is the location of Roma communities and the distance from their homes to the kindergartens, especially the issue of transportation during wintertime.

Roma educators and caregivers on staff

Among the surveyed kindergartens, there is one caregiver from the Roma ethnic community on staff in each of 4 kindergartens in 4 different municipalities, and there is one kindergarten with 2 caregivers from the Roma ethnic community. From the responses we conclude that there are no (ethnic Roma) educators in the kindergartens that participated in the survey. We believe that this is perhaps due to insufficient funding to hire staff in the state-run institutions, but also insufficient number of trained professionals in this area from the Roma ethnic community.

Family situation and living conditions of the Roma children who attend kindergarten

Living with both parents – From the data received, there was no data on this topic for 3 kindergartens; among the other kindergartens that are attended by Roma children, or about 95%, the children live with both parents.

Social assistance, urban/rural community – Most of the families of the Roma children who attend kindergartens are recipients of social assistance, most live in urban communities and have fixed/permanent residences. This data item might lead us to conclude that Roma

children from the rural areas have no opportunity to attend kindergartens because the kindergartens are mainly located in urban communities, and access to those kindergartens is difficult for these children.

	No. of kindergartens included in the research	No. of Roma children	Families receiving social assistance	Permanent residence	Urban community	Rural community
Pehcevo	1	26	12	26	9	17
Vinica	1	41	27	41	41	0
Berovo	1	24	19	no data	24	0
Mak. Kam.	1	0	/	/	/	/
Kratovo	1	0	/	/	/	/
Bitola	1	0	/	/	/	/
Debar	1	15	15	15	no data	no data
Aerodrom	1	0	/	/	/	/
Radovis	1	0	/	/	/	/
Gevgelija	1	0	/	/	/	/
Resen	1	0	/	/	/	/
Kocani	1	35	30	35	35	0
Ilinden	1	0	/	/	/	/
Valandovo	1	2	no data	2	2	0
Delcevo	1	17	9	17	15	2
Gazi Baba	1	20	11	17	11	9
Bogdanci	1	0	/	/	/	/
Sv. Nikole	1	6	no data	6	5	1
Gostivar	1	21	21	no data	21	0
Prilep	1	30	30	30	30	0

Kicevo	1	5	no data	no data	no data	no data
Kumanovo		24	no data	no data	no data	no data
Kavadarci	1	2	no data	2	2	0
Negotino	1	24	no data	no data	no data	no data
Total		292	174	189	193	29

Table 6 – Data from the kindergartens about families of Roma children who attend the respective kindergartens

Programs for Roma children

The research showed that most of the municipalities have no special program for working with the Roma children. Among the surveyed kindergartens only 3 responded that they have a special program for working with the Roma children, and these were kindergartens involved in projects to serve this population. One of those three kindergartens responded that they have a program for working with the Roma children, but have no children attending the kindergarten who have self-declared as Roma, they have children from other ethnic affiliation.

Language of the preschool program in the surveyed kindergartens attended by Roma children is the Macedonian language. Only in one questionnaire there was a response that the preschool activities in the kindergarten are carried out in both Macedonian and Albanian languages.

Waiting lists – There are no waiting lists in 5 of the kindergartens attended by Roma children, and there was no data for one such kindergarten. All other kindergartens attended by Roma children indicated that they have waiting lists for enrollment. All kindergartens that have waiting lists have established criteria for enrolment of children from the waiting list, and in one kindergarten there is a dedicated commission established for admission of children according to criteria set in advance.

The most frequently mentioned criteria are: the time the child has been on the waiting list, the order in which the enrollment application has been received, the employment status of the parents, socially vulnerable family status. One kindergarten indicated that priority is given to single self-supporting parents and to children with special needs. By way of commentary we may add that priority is given to children who have been awaiting enrollment in kindergarten longer, children whose both parents are employed, followed by children from socially vulnerable families. The ethnic composition of the waiting list is mixed, depending on the ethnic composition of the population living in the respective community.

Funding support by the state – Among municipalities where there are Roma children, there is no data on this topic in 3 municipalities, and another three have not provided adequate

responses. The other kindergartens indicated that the state provides financial support by paying for kindergarten services. In some kindergartens the financial assistance is effected by 1/3 support from the Ministry of Labor and Social policy, 1/3 from the local government and 1/3 from the kindergarten. One of the kindergartens indicated that some of the costs are covered by the Roma Education Fund. Two kindergartens indicated that transportation of the children from their homes to the kindergarten and back is covered by the municipality.

6. CHILD VICTIMS OF SALE, TRAFFICKING AND ABDUCTION

In the segment on protection of children from sale, trafficking and abduction, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends to the state party to „continue and increase efforts to prevent, protect children from and strengthen measures to prosecute the crimes of sale and trafficking and in particular: (a) Fully implement national legislation against trafficking in persons; (b) Conduct capacity-building programmes for law-enforcement officers, judges and prosecutors; (c) Investigate and prosecute all cases of sale and trafficking to avoid impunity; (d) Strengthen measures to protect child victims and ensure access to child-sensitive social and psychological assistance for their recovery and reintegration; (e) Address the root causes the sale of children, child trafficking and abduction, in particular by giving special attention to families in its programmes to combat poverty, to prevent school dropout and gender-based discrimination; and (f) Carry out awareness-raising activities, in cooperation with NGOs and the media, in order to make both parents and children aware of the dangers and consequences of these crimes.“⁹

The identification of trafficking in children and children’s organs is one of the key problems that the Republic of Macedonia is facing. The Association for Action Against Violence and Human Trafficking – Open Gate La Strada as a civic association active in this field conducted an analysis of data in its possession, as well as the for the shelter that helps child victims of trafficking.

6.1. Methodology:

⁹ Committee on the Rights of the Child; Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention; Concluding observations; CRC/C/MKD/CO/2, 11 June 2010.

For purposes of this report, the Association for Action Against Violence and Human Trafficking „Open Gate“ used the following sources:

- Analysis of individual cases of the beneficiaries of the Program for Social Assistance implemented by „Open Gate“;
- Consultations/views and opinions from key people that have participated or participate in activities helping victims of human trafficking;
- Review of the „Open Gate“ reports for protection of victims of human trafficking;
- Review and analysis of strategic documents (national strategies, programs, action plans and standard operating procedures);

Qualitative and quantitative methods were used for this report, an analysis of the individual files of the victims of human trafficking was carried out and the data was statistically processed. Three persons were interviewed; they are members of the „Open Gate“ team and have worked directly with victims of human trafficking.

The data was analyzed to achieve full and comprehensive understanding of the risks posed by human trafficking, the process of inducing people into human trafficking, and support to the victims with special emphasis on the children.

One particular challenge in the preparation of this analysis was the systematizing of data (statistical and qualitative) about the socioeconomic characteristics and support to the victims of human trafficking who were included in the Program for Social Assistance implemented by the non-government organization „Open Gate“.

6.2. Results

6.2.1. Percentage of identified child victims of human trafficking in the total recorded number of victims of trafficking (in Open Gate La Strada)

According to data maintained by Open Gate, in 2012 there have been 8 victims of human trafficking identified, of whom five are children, i.e. 62.5% of the identified victims are children. Data was taken on the children’s age, gender, origin – place of residence, family structure, education, who has identified them, how long they had been trafficked, what has been provided to them. We will exhibit this data in tables through various indicators.

Number of users accommodated in the Shelter by age in 2012					Total
age 10 – 14	age 15 – 18	age 19 - 24	age 25 – 29	age 30 – 34	
2	3	3			8

In terms of age, 2 children were 13 years old, 1 child was 15 years old, 1 child was 16 years old and 1 child was 17 years old.

Child victims by gender in 2012				Total
Male		Female		
2		3		5
Child victims by level of education in 2012				Total
Not included in education	Incomplete primary education	Incomplete secondary education	Other	Total
1	3	1	/	4
Child victims by place of residence in 2012				Total
Rural area		Urban area		Total
2		3		5
Child victims by family structure in 2012				Total ¹⁰
Dysfunctional family	One parent	Both parent	No parents	Total ¹⁰
5	3		2	5

It can be seen from the tables that three of the children are girls and two are boys. With respect to education, one child is not included in the education system at all, 3 children have started primary education, but have not completed it. Usually the dropping out occurs in the third or fourth grade. One child had started secondary education, but dropped out because of the involvement in human trafficking. Two of the child victims of human trafficking come from rural areas, and three from urban areas. It can be seen that children from rural areas and children from urban areas are equally affected. In terms of family structure, it can be seen in the data for 2012 that the children with a single parent are under highest risk – there are three such children in this instance. Children from dysfunctional families and children without parents are left to fend for themselves and the danger of them getting involved in trafficking is elevated. In this report there are two children without parents, but they have been placed under guardianship of the Center for Social Work. One of the boys was identified by the MLSP as being exploited for labor.

Number of beneficiaries accommodated in the Shelter by age

¹⁰ One child may be counted in multiple categories

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
10 – 14	1	2	2	5	1	2	2	15
15 – 18	2	4	5	7	6	7	7	38
19 - 24	1	2	9	0	0	0	1	13
25 – 29	1	0	7	0	2	0	0	10
30 – 34	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	5
Total	6	9	26	12	9	9	10	81

Table 7 – Comparative overview with data from previous years on beneficiaries accommodated in the Shelter of Open Gate La Strada

6.2.2. Children at high risk of becoming victims of human trafficking out of the total number of potential victims of trafficking (in Open Gate La Strada)

The project Supplementary Social Work, implemented by Open Gate, identified 12 persons, of which 7 were children (or 58.3%), as being at risk of human trafficking. Three cities in the Republic of Macedonia were covered – Skopje, Prilep and Sveti Nikole. Prior to commencing activities with children the Open Gate team of social workers held meetings with their parents. At these meetings the parents were informed about the goals of the project and they voluntarily stated their willingness to let their children be involved in this project. They signed cooperation agreements and statements of acceptance of the program. This project implemented the social program covering the children and their families. The beneficiaries were referred by the Centers for Social Work. Most of these children’s families are beneficiaries of cash benefits granted by the MLSP. The project activities were carried out in the field and individually. Meetings take place two times a month, while meetings with the families take place once a month. The meetings with the children and families are arranged in advance in order to carry out the project activities more efficiently. The team of social workers has an individual plan developed for each child, and those plans are created according to the resource matrix that covers multiple segments such as family income, housing, employment, health, mental health, social work, recreation, education, legal assistance and routine activities. The most urgent needs from the individual plan are selected for most intensive work to address those areas.

6.2.3. Number of child victims and children at high risk covered by the social assistance program out of the total number of groups at high risk of becoming victims of trafficking (at Open Gate La Strada)

Open Gate’s social assistance program during the year 2012 covered 20 people. Five children accommodated in the shelter for victims of human trafficking were provided with safe

accommodation, food, hygiene packages, clothes, footwear, health packages including general and specialist examinations, laboratory tests for infectious diseases. 3 children are included in the education process, which they had dropped out of when they were being trafficked.

Case study

The juvenile girl NN, brought as a victim of human trafficking to the Victims Center on 11.02.2011 by the Center for Social Work Gostivar, stayed at the Center until 26.08.2012, with decisions by CSW Gostivar (at the recommendation of the team of professionals from the Citizen's Association Open Gate that provides help and support at the Center) to extend the stay and continue working with the child.

The juvenile NN had been designated a missing person by the Gostivar police since 02.12.2010 after her father had reported her missing, until the moment she was found by the police in a café bar where she had been working as a waitress, singer, dancer and provider of sex services. Upon evaluation of CSW Gostivar she was immediately referred for accommodation at the Center for victims of human trafficking for her safety and inclusion in the reintegration program implemented by Open Gate.

The juvenile comes from a family of six, with divorced parents; a father, stepmother, two younger sisters and a brother. After the divorce the mother left to live abroad and has no contact with the children, who remain to live with the father. The father goes to work in Italy occasionally, and the children left at home are cared for by the oldest child NN.

The juvenile has completed 5 grades of primary education.

The father of the juvenile signed a consent form for accommodation in the Center, and together with the juvenile girl they accepted Open Gate's social program.

Involvement of the juvenile girl in Open Gate's social assistance and reintegration program:

- In terms of education, the girl was immediately brought into the education system. She was enrolled in 6th grade and successfully completed primary education by receiving a certificate of completion of the 8th grade.
- She was then enrolled in a secondary school as a part-time student and successfully passed the examinations for the first year of secondary education and received a certificate of completion for the academic year.
- Attended practical apprenticeship in a cosmetics studio to acquire skills in that area.
- During her stay in the Center she was enrolled in an English language course, for which she showed particular interest.
- During her stay in the Center she learned techniques for drawing on glass, porcelain, textile, knitting.
- Developed work habits, self-care habits, personal hygiene, cleanliness of living quarters and culinary skills.
- Relations between the father and the daughter were successfully established, as well as a good relationship with the stepmother. Conditions for good communication with the family were established.

- regular individual and group sessions aimed at overcoming stress situations, acceptance of the community, self-acceptance.

Health activities:

- Health check-ups conducted at the Infectious Diseases Clinic (HIV, hepatitis, TBC)
- Gynecological exams
- Laboratory tests
- Dental check-ups (teeth repair)
- Ophthalmic check-ups (glasses provided)
- Check-ups by internists

Legal proceedings

- Indictments filed against 5 suspects for criminal offenses
- The juvenile appeared as a key witness in the proceedings with statements given on a video recording
- She was taken twice to a forensic psychiatric examination to establish the degree of trauma and stress
- The court proceedings began in April and ended in September of 2011
- The five defendants were convicted and sentenced to prison. 3 were sentenced to 8 years in prison, 2 were sentenced to 2 years in prison.

Throughout the court proceedings the juvenile was being prepared and accompanied by professionals from Open Gate. Legal representative/attorney was also provided by Open Gate.

Recommendations

Several recommendations were derived from the analysis conducted during the research, offering guidance on how to improve protection for the victims of human trafficking at the institutional level. The recommendations include:

- Planning and provision of technical, human and financial resources at the state institution levels in order to provide appropriate social support to the victims of human trafficking, in accordance with their individual needs.
- The government should allocate funds for NGOs that implement activities against human trafficking. In addition to the support from international donors, there is a need to also provide funds from domestic resources.
- There is a need for preventive work with families that represent a risk factor for individuals to become victims of human trafficking, namely: overcoming dysfunction, conflicts between spouses/parents, family violence, alcoholism, criminality and improvement of the family's economic situations.
- More intensive efforts are needed in finding exploitation, especially labor exploitation which is on an upward trend, by adopting more sophisticated approaches in finding victims of human trafficking and prosecuting traffickers.

- Partnering in the planning and execution of these activities is a requirement, and the interests and needs of the persons/children should always come first in offering direct assistance and protection. Longer and more intensive treatments should be developed for the victims of human trafficking in order to overcome the victim's condition.
- In view of the fact that many of the victims return to the same community and environment, and would thus face the same problems that they had prior to becoming victims, there is a need for more support from the CSW, NGO and the community to achieve more efficient integration of these victims into society.
- Find new ways of sheltering and re-integration of the victims, while immediate return to the biological family should be done only when it would be in the victim's interest.
- Re-integration processes at the local level should be strengthened. The civic sector can contribute to these efforts in partnership with the Centers for Social Work.
- Strengthening of the role of the available SOS lines in the process of identification and referral of victims of human trafficking by promoting the telephone numbers and services offered to the general public.
- Find ways for efficient compensation of the victims of human trafficking when such compensation has been awarded by a court.

7. JUVENILE JUSTICE

In this section the focus on two indicators is about juveniles as perpetrators of criminal offenses, i.e. juvenile delinquency, so data was collected on the number of juveniles who have committed offenses in the area of information technology, better known as computer crime, as a relatively new type of criminality in this domain. There was also interest about the number of juveniles charged with organized crime offenses. The third indicator is about juveniles as victims of criminal offenses, specifically victims of organized crime and corruption.

7.1. Methodology

The data used for this Report come from the records of the Coalition "All for Fair Trials", and it was obtained through direct monitoring of court proceedings in the Department of Organized Crime and Corruption of the Primary Court Skopje I – Skopje. The monitoring is carried out by teams of trained observers (graduates with law degrees) who enter data from the observations into a standardized questionnaire and send them to the project coordinator. The person in charge of servicing the database enters the data into the database.

The rest of the data needed for the report were obtained from published court verdicts and communications with the competent institutions that hold the data.

7.2. Results

7.2.1. Juveniles who have committed criminal offenses in the area of computer crime, out of the total number of criminal offenses committed by juvenile perpetrators

In view of the fact that children¹¹ spend increasing amounts of time using new information and communications technologies, the danger that they would commit a criminal offense in this area is significant, especially since most of them cannot tell the difference between what is unlawful and what is permitted. A good definition of which acts constitute computer crime can be found in the Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime of 2001¹². Namely, this convention defines this form of criminality into four categories: 1) Offenses against the confidentiality, integrity and availability of computer data and systems; 2) Computer-related offenses; 3) Content-related offenses, and 4) Offenses related to infringement of copyright and related rights.

For the first two categories, the form of incrimination can be found in Articles 251, 251a, 251b and 379a of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia. The third category, relating to content (including pornography) is incorporated in Articles 193 and 193a of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia. Offenses related to infringement of copyright and related rights are incorporated in Articles 157 Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia, 157a "Interference with the rights of distributors of technically protected satellite signal", 157b „Piracy of audiovisual work“ and Article 157c "Piracy of phonogram"

According to data obtained from the Sector for Analysis, Research and Documentation of the MOI, in 2011 there have been a total of 29,529 registered criminal offenses, of which 1,849 have been perpetrated by 2,813 juvenile perpetrators. In the domain of computer crime there have been a total of 60 registered criminal offenses, for which 52 suspects have been charged. Of those, two offenses have been perpetrated by two juvenile perpetrators, namely the offense of "damage and unauthorized intrusion into a computer system" according to Article 251 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia and "computer fraud" according to Article 251b of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia.

In 2012 there were a total of 29,939 registered criminal offenses, of which 1,580 had been perpetrated by 2,018 juvenile perpetrators. A total of 51 offenses in the domain of computer crime have been registered, and charges have been filed against 48 suspects. None of those offenses were perpetrated by a minor.

Although data from the MOI suggests that minors (children) rarely (or not at all, as in 2012) appear as perpetrators of criminal offenses in the domain of computer crime, we nonetheless believe that the dark numbers for this type of crime are far higher than the

¹¹ According to Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

¹² Law on Ratification of the Convention on Computer Crime, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 41 of 24.06.2004

number of exposed cases, and in those dark numbers there are minors (children) among the perpetrators.

SIA	Criminal offenses			Offenses perpetrated by juveniles			Total perpetrators		
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>SIA SKOPJE</u>	<u>15028</u>	<u>15891</u>	<u>5,7</u>	<u>741</u>	<u>546</u>	<u>-26,3</u>	<u>7472</u>	<u>5393</u>	<u>-27,8</u>
<u>SIA BITOLA</u>	<u>2337</u>	<u>2143</u>	<u>-8,3</u>	<u>147</u>	<u>137</u>	<u>-6,8</u>	<u>2347</u>	<u>2109</u>	<u>-10,1</u>
<u>SIA VELES</u>	<u>1501</u>	<u>1260</u>	<u>-16,1</u>	<u>193</u>	<u>127</u>	<u>-34,2</u>	<u>1671</u>	<u>1382</u>	<u>-17,3</u>
<u>SIA KUMANOVO</u>	<u>2313</u>	<u>2690</u>	<u>16,3</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>163</u>	<u>53,8</u>	<u>1336</u>	<u>1663</u>	<u>24,5</u>
<u>SIA OHRID</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>2031</u>	<u>1,7</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>92,4</u>	<u>1563</u>	<u>1932</u>	<u>23,6</u>
<u>SIA STRUMICA</u>	<u>2047</u>	<u>1704</u>	<u>-16,8</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>-14,9</u>	<u>1806</u>	<u>1471</u>	<u>-18,5</u>
<u>SIA TETOVO</u>	<u>2345</u>	<u>2219</u>	<u>-5,4</u>	<u>210</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>-60</u>	<u>1505</u>	<u>1414</u>	<u>-6</u>
<u>SIA STIP</u>	<u>1823</u>	<u>1856</u>	<u>1,8</u>	<u>245</u>	<u>248</u>	<u>1,2</u>	<u>2099</u>	<u>1794</u>	<u>-14,5</u>
<u>CSOSC</u>	<u>137</u>	<u>145</u>	<u>5,8</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>630</u>	<u>419</u>	<u>-33,5</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>29529</u>	<u>29939</u>	<u>1,4</u>	<u>1849</u>	<u>1580</u>	<u>-14,5</u>	<u>20429</u>	<u>17577</u>	<u>-14</u>

Recommendations

In the domain of prevention, more efforts are needed to educate children about computer crime and its harmful consequences, as well as sanctions as the legal consequence of a criminal offense. For example, there are instances of people not realizing that opening an email account under the name of another person and then using it to send letters (communications) with harmful content is no joke – it is a criminal offense.

We should also keep in mind that the Republic of Macedonia ratified the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime that criminalizes racist or xenophobic offenses carried out through information technology systems.¹³ Social networks can commonly be used in a reckless manner or abused to spread racist or xenophobic propaganda¹⁴. We see a major problem there and believe that the institutions should devote more attention to all forms of computer crime, not just those that constitute property crime. Nonetheless, we believe that all forms of prevention should be exhausted first, before proceeding with criminal prosecutions of the suspects.

¹³ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 56 of 13.07.2005

¹⁴ Article 394 – d of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia

In terms of suppression of this form of criminality, more collaboration is required between the MOI, i.e. the Computer Crime Unit, and the police services of the countries in the region, as well as the Interpol services, in view of the international character of computer crime. There is also a need for training for judges and prosecutors to be prepared to deal with computer crime as a modern and unconventional type of criminality.

7.2.2. Minors indicted for organized crime and corruption

In order to present a clearer picture of this subject area, first we will provide a brief explanation of what is meant by the concepts of corruption and organized crime. The World Bank definition is often used to delineate the concept of corruption; according to this definition, corruption is the abuse of public authority for private gain. Organized crime means: the illegal activities carried out by structured groups of three or more persons existing for a prolonged period of time and having the aim of committing serious crimes through concerted action by using intimidation, violence, corruption or other means in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit. (Council of Europe 2002, 6)

The only entity with jurisdiction to process cases in the domain of organized crime and corruption for the entire territory of the Republic of Macedonia is the Department for Organized Crime and Corruption, a division of the Primary Court Skopje 1. In 2012 the Coalition “All for Fair Trials” reviewed 33 cases processed by this Department. There were no indicted juveniles in any of the cases, as in most of the cases the defendants were indicted for abuse of official powers and authority (Article 353 of the Criminal Code), where the offenses had been perpetrated by elected or appointed public officials, officers or accountable persons in legal entities.

Case study

In proceedings taking place in 2012 where a juvenile was indicted, , the Primary Court Skopje 1 issued verdict no. 744/12 on 10.01.2013 about the case known in the public as “Brisac 1 (Wiper 1)”, finding 26 persons and 1 juvenile guilty as charged for the offenses of “abuse of official position or authority” under Article 353 paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code, “forgery of an official document” under Article 361 paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code, “fraud” under Article 247 paragraph 3 and paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code, “ insurance fraud” under Article 250 paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code, and sentenced them to alternative measures – conditionally suspended sentences, where the most severe sanction was 2 (two) years imprisonment that would not be enforced unless the convicted person commits another offense over a period of 5 (five) years, and the mildest prison sentence was 3 (three) months imprisonment, which would not be enforced unless the convicted person commits another offense over a period of 1 (one) year.

The juvenile was ordered to serve a reformatory measure of 1 (one) year duration under closer supervision by the IMCSW (Center for Social Work) and parental supervision.

Pursuant to Article 28 of the Law on Juvenile Justice, minors may be subject to the following sanctions: 1) For an act defined by law as a criminal offense, a younger juvenile may only be subject to reformatory measures; 2) For an act defined by law as a criminal offense, an older juvenile may be subject to reformatory measures, and in exceptional circumstances may be subject to punitive sanctions or alternative measures; 3) An older juvenile may be released from sanction under the general conditions stipulated in the Criminal Code; 4) For an act defined by law as a misdemeanor, a juvenile may be subject to misdemeanor sanctions as stipulated under this law; 5) A juvenile may be subject to security measures under conditions stipulated in the Criminal Code and this law; 6) Confiscation of property, material gains and articles obtained through criminal acts and misdemeanors of juvenile offenders shall be conducted in accordance with the general conditions stipulated in the Criminal Code.

In weighing the sanction of the juvenile, the court had taken full account of the goal of the reformatory measure ordered, i.e. provision of protection and assistance to the juvenile by maintaining supervision over him/her, development of his vocational skills and development of his/her personal responsibility in order to ensure his/her education, character reformation and proper development.

Measures of closer supervision are ordered for a juvenile when there is a need of longer-lasting measures of education, character reformation or treatment with appropriate supervision, but full separation from the habitual environment is not required.

In weighing the sanction, the opinion of the representative of the IMCSW (Center for Social Work) is taken into consideration; in this case the representative stated that the juvenile defendant demonstrates maturity, strives to restore the parent's trust and is regret regretting the rashness.

7.2.3. Juvenile victims of organized crime and corruption

A victim of a criminal offense denotes any person who has suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, loss of material value or other violation or endangerment of fundamental freedoms and rights as a consequence of the criminal offense. A child victim of a criminal offense is a juvenile person less than 18 years old.¹⁵

According to the monitoring carried out by the Coalition "All for Fair Trials" in the Department for Organized Crime and Corruption as the competent entity to process cases where the defendants are charged with the criminal offense of "trafficking a juvenile person" according to Article 418-d¹⁶ of the Criminal Code, there are 6 active cases. Usually the number

¹⁵ Article 122 paragraph 22 of the Criminal Code

¹⁶ Trafficking a juvenile person, Article 418-d of the Criminal Code

(1) Any person who shall recruit, transport, transfer, purchase, sell, shelter or accept a juvenile person for purposes of exploitation through prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, pornography, forced labor or servitude, slavery, forced marriage, forced fertilization, unlawful adoption or similar relation, or transplantation of parts of the human body without permission, shall be punished by no less than eight years imprisonment.

(2) Any person who shall commit the offense indicated in paragraph 1 with the use of force, serious threat, misrepresentation or other form of coercion, abduction, fraud, abuse of power or abuse of another person's

of defendants in the cases is three or more. The locations where these offenses are alleged to have taken place are night clubs and bars, and a more stealthy way of operating is the use of beauty and massage salons, employment agencies etc.

The total number of juvenile victims in these cases is 7:

case KOK no.73/10	1 (one) juvenile listed as a victim
case KOK no.16/11	1 (one) juvenile listed as a victim
case KOK no.18/11	1 (one) juvenile listed as a victim
case KOK no.30/11	1 (one) juvenile listed as a victim
case KOK no.14/13	1 (one) juvenile listed as a victim
case KOK no.13/13	2 (two) juveniles listed as victims

In most of the cases the recruitment, transfer, transport, purchase, sale or sheltering of juvenile persons by the defendants is for purposes of exploitation through prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation. In the monitored cases where the juvenile victim is the aggrieved party, a witness, or both, the court acted in ways that avoid possible harmful consequences for the juvenile's personality and development¹⁷.

Namely, a juvenile was questioned in the capacity of an aggrieved party, in the presence of his guardian, a pedagogue and a representative of the Center for Social Work. The public was excluded to protect the interests of the juvenile. At the hearings attended by observers from the Coalition „All for Fair Trials“ as members of the professional community, the president of the council warned the people present at the main hearing (closed to the public) of their duty

pregnancy, frailty or physical or mental incapacity, or by offering or accepting money or other gains to obtain the consent of a person that has control over another person, shall be punished by no less than ten years imprisonment.

(3) Any person who uses or facilitates another person's use of sexual services or other kinds of exploitation of a juvenile person, where the first person knows or has a duty to know that the juvenile person is a victim of human trafficking, shall be punished by no less than eight years imprisonment.

(4) Any person who shall seize or destroy an identity card, passport or other identification document of another person for purposes of perpetrating the offense indicated in paragraphs 1 and 2, shall be punished by no less than four years imprisonment.

(5) If the offenses indicated in paragraphs (1), (2), (3) and (4) of this Article are committed by a duly empowered officer in the course of performing official duty, such officer shall be punished by no less than ten years imprisonment.

(6) Consent from a juvenile to the actions indicated in paragraph 1 is of no significance in constituting the criminal offense indicated in paragraph 1.

(7) If the offense under this Article is committed by a legal entity, it shall be fined.

(8) Real property, articles and means of transport used in perpetrating the offense shall be seized.

¹⁷ See Articles 137 - 143 of the Law on Juvenile Justice (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 87/07 of 12.07.2007. Amendments 19.08.2008 and 24.12.2008, modification and addition 05.11.2010.)

to keep secret everything that they learn at the hearing, and pointed out that disclosure of such privileged information constitutes a criminal offense. From this we can conclude that the court pays attention to the protection of the psycho-physical integrity and privacy of the juvenile.

A juvenile victim may be questioned as a witness only if such questioning is harmless to his/her psycho-physical development. A juvenile person may be questioned as a witness no more than twice; third questioning may be allowed only in exceptional circumstances as required by extraordinary particulars of the case.

Recommendations

Proceedings are urgent when the victim is a minor. Nonetheless, due to the complexity of cases tried in the Department for Organized Crime and Corruption and the frequent unavailability of the defendants, as well as postponements and continuances, the trials last several years, and this has a negative impact on the victim. Better management of court cases is needed to avoid prolonging the main hearing unnecessarily.

In cases where a juvenile is a victim of human trafficking, there is a danger when going back to the previous environment and circumstances of a high likelihood of becoming a victim again. For this reason, the government should undertake measures for full protection of the victims after the end of the legal proceedings, i.e. to separate them from the environment in which they had become victims of trafficking.

Although Article 418-d paragraph 7 of the Criminal Code allows the possibility of fining a legal entity, the Coalition „All for Fair Trials“ states that fines have not been levied on any legal entities in the cases monitored by the Coalition. Courts should start levying fines for corporate offenders as well.

Courts should adopt a more stringent sentencing policy in determining sanctions. More efficiency needs to be achieved in restituting the juvenile victim or aggrieved party, even though a restitution fund has been established and is being managed by the National Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. Still, the procedure is slow because the juvenile who is determined by a fully enforceable court decision to be a victim or an aggrieved party of a criminal offense or other violation, and whose property claim is granted, may file a request to the court to seek restitution from the fund when the property claim cannot, even after a repeated attempt, be enforced against the property of the perpetrator of the criminal offense or other violation due to legal or practical impediments and only after six months have passed since the entry into full force and effect of the decision on the property claim.

7.3. Implementation of the right to education of juveniles in reformatory/correctional institutions

7.3.1. Methodology

Data presented in this section come from statistics maintained by the citizens' association "Center for Civic Initiative" – Prilep. The data contributed come from the project „Juvenile inmates and their rights in reformatory/correctional institutions“ implemented by the association. Specifically, the data pertain to the Reformatory/Correctional Institution "Tetovo" and are about the juvenile inmates' right to education. The data was obtained by interviews and official reports with all relevant stakeholders: Ombudsman, Bureau for Development of Education, MES, Inter-Municipal Center for Social Work, Ministry of Justice.

7.3.2. Results

Age of juvenile inmates in RCI "Tetovo"	Number of juvenile inmates in RCI "Tetovo"
Age 14 to 16	4
Age 16 to 18	16
Age 18 to 23	22
Total	42

Male	42
Female	0

Children from families with two parents/guardians	24
Children from families with divorced parents	7
Children from families with one parent/guardian	11

Children with primary education	42
Children with secondary education	0

7.3.3. Observation

From the data presented in tables above, in 2011 there were a total of 42 juvenile inmates serving correctional measures of referral to a RCI in the Reformatory/Correctional Institution “Tetovo”. All of the juvenile inmates were male. They come from the Macedonian, Albanian and Roma ethnic communities. 4 of the juvenile inmates are in the 14 – 16 years old, 16 are 16 - 18 years old, and 22 are 18 to 23 years old. The inmates that are 18 - 23 years old are in the juvenile section in accordance to the age when they commenced serving the sanction.

Article 135 of the Law on Enforcement of Sanctions („Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia“ no. 2/06 and 57/10) prescribes that primary education must be organized in the penal/correctional and reformatory/correctional institutions, and the Ministry of Education and Science has a duty to organize and fund primary education for the convicted persons as proposed by the Directorate.¹⁸

Recommendations

- Introduce delivery of secondary education within the reformatory/correctional institutions in accordance with current educational curricula in the Republic of Macedonia
- Create protocols between the reformatory/correctional institutions and the MES that would guarantee mandatory secondary education
- Appoint “mentors” to students who enroll in institutions of higher education, to follow and assist their progress
- Introduce educational and rehabilitative training programs aimed at developing intellectual skills that can be used to acquire professional competencies.

8. BREASTFEEDING

In the Concluding Observations for 2010 the Committee noted a “declining rate of exclusive breastfeeding¹⁹”, despite insertion of provisions from the International Code banning

¹⁸ Annual Report of the Directorate for Enforcement of Sanctions about the situation and operations of the penal/correctional and reformatory/correctional institutions in the Republic of Macedonia in 2011 http://www.pravda.gov.mk/UIS/God_izvestaj%20UIS-2011_.pdf

¹⁹ Committee on the Rights of the Child; Consideration of Reports Submitted by State Parties under Article 44 of the Convention; Concluding observations; CRC/C/MKD/CO/2, 11 June 2010.

breast milk substitutes in the Law on Food Safety and the Law on Consumer Protection, and that paid maternity leave and breastfeeding breaks are guaranteed by law. Three indicators were set up to observe if this declining trend is continuing or if there is some improvement here, in three municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia. The indicators were related to the existence of *educational programs for nursing mothers about breastfeeding*; *Number of newly opened centers for early childhood development in the observed municipalities (capacity of the centers, utilization of the centers etc.)*; *Number of programs intended for parents on the subject of early childhood development*; *Number of parents who have gone through these programs, and the number of parents of children with special needs who have gone through this program.*

8.1. Methodology

“Lifestart” as a member organization of the Coalition that has been following the situation with breastfeeding for years in some municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia, prepared data for purposes of this Report from the municipalities of Bitola, Mogila and Novaci and made comparisons with the data obtained for the 2007 - 2012 period. The data contributed by “Lifestart” was collected from interviews and statistical information obtained from the Public Health Institution Health Center Bitola. The questions asked in the interviews were about the contents of the breastfeeding program aimed at nursing mothers, the goals of that program, number of mothers covered, number of newborn babies, as well as number of babies breastfed to 3 and 6 months age.

8.2. Results

Municipalities: Bitola, Novaci, Mogila

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total births	1019	1066	1000	1074	1014	971
Male newborns	462	460	458	477	411	411
Female newborns	381	432	462	414	439	394
Newborns at risk	176	174	180	183	164	166
Breastfed to 3 months age	622	599	632	841	861	890
Breastfed to 6 months age	225	248	261	612	662	709

It can be seen from the information obtained that there are year-on-year increases in the number of newborns being breastfed to 6 months age.

Educational programs for nursing mothers about breastfeeding – The goals and fundamentals of the programs for promotion of breastfeeding are the following: - The act of breastfeeding establishes a unique and irreplaceable relationship between mother and child; - Breast milk has an influence on the immune system of the infant and is the most efficient protection against infections; - Breast milk does not cause allergic reactions; - The chemical composition of breast milk is adapted to the growth and development needs of the infant and is suitable for the particular properties of his/her digestive system; - Breast milk is sterile and most economical.

Number of newly opened early childhood development centers in the municipalities of Bitola, Novaci and Mogila, i.e. facilities and institutions for education, care and early childhood development of children in the 0 - 6 years age range. In Bitola there are 2 kindergartens with clones:

- Majski cvet - 7 clones
- Estreia Ovadia Mara - 8 clones

In terms of facilities and institutions for education, care and early childhood development of children in the 3 - 6 years age range there are also 7 centers for early childhood development (playrooms) that operate in rural areas and suburban communities not served by kindergartens, i.e. in areas where the children have no opportunities to participate in programs that stimulate early learning or playrooms supported by donors, the local community and the municipalities. There have been amendments to legislation in this domain.

Municipalities	Mogila	Novaci	Bitola
Number of early childhood development centers	1	1	5
Number of children attending ECDC	20	20	200

Programs for parents on the subject of early childhood development – Early Learning and Development Standards – a program for working with children and working with parents, along with this document, present the expectations to be met by preschool children in various

domains of development (motor skills development, socio-emotional development, learning approach, language development, literacy and communication, cognitive development and acquisition of general knowledge), and the values that they should adopt while achieving the Early Learning and Development Standards are independence, creativity, initiative, responsibility to self and the environment, acceptance and respect for persons different from oneself, tolerance and solidarity, as well as respect for the community and state as a whole.

Parent meetings are held once a month as part of the work of the ECDC on topics related to the Early Learning and Development Standards that the children should achieve at certain ages; all of the parents of children who attend these centers are involved.

Recommendations

- Continue the implementation of programs that promote exclusive breastfeeding
- Stronger inclusion of parents and children with special needs in early childhood development programs

9. ANNEXES

Annex 1

Questionnaire for the education process for students with special education needs

Dear recipients,

This is a questionnaire that we wish to use to obtain information about the way in which the process of inclusion in education is being implemented in your school. This questionnaire is intended for the non-teaching professionals (pedagogic/psychological service) in the school. In responding to the questions please take into account only the students with special education needs included in regular classes.

If special classes operate in your school, please indicate that below this paragraph and also indicate the number of students attending the special classes.

There are special classes in the school YES NO

If the answer is YES, please indicate

- **Number of special classes** _____
- **Number of students in the special classes** _____

Thank you for your cooperation!

1. How many students in total does your school have? _____

2. What is the number of students with special education needs who are included in regular classes in your school?

Total number of students with special education needs: _____

Male		Lower grades	
Female		Upper grades	

3. Please indicate the number of students with special education needs, in accordance with the scheme below:

Students with physical disability	
Students with intellectual disability	
Students with vision impairment	
Students with hearing impairment	
Students with autism and autistic-spectrum behavior	
Students with learning difficulties	
Students with combined disabilities	

Please count each student only once. If there are students with combined disabilities in the school, count them only once in the "Student with combined disabilities" row. Please also describe the combined difficulties or disabilities.

4. For how many of your students have the parents submitted documentation (finding and opinion) from a relevant institution certifying the student's special education need?

5. Do you count in the total number of students with special education needs those for whom you have not received documentation from a relevant institution certifying the student's special education need?

6. Which are the greatest difficulties that you face in working with students with special education needs attending your school? (multiple items may be selected).

- Achievement of the learning goals and adaptation of curriculum content to the needs of the student;
- Development of individual education plan;
- Monitoring and evaluation (assessment) of the students' performance;
- Inclusion of students with SEN in activities with the other students;

- Establishing communication and interaction with the students with SEN;

7. What measures does your school undertake to facilitate access and inclusion of students with SEN? (multiple items may be selected).

- The school has an access ramp at the entrance to the school building;
- The school has a lift (elevator);
- Interiors, classrooms, toilets and teaching aids are adapted to the needs of the students with SEN;
- Teachers develop individual education plans for the students with SEN;
- The school has developed collaboration with relevant institutions and receives support in working with students with SEN;
- An inclusion team operates in the school; it monitors and supports the process of inclusive education;
- Other _____

8. What kind of direct support do you receive to improve your work with students with special education needs?

- The school has a defectologist on staff;
- The school receives support from a mobile (municipal) defectologist;
- Students with SEN receive support from personal assistants hired by the parents;
- Other _____

9. During the past year 2012, did teachers from your school attend training for improving work with students with SEN?

10. How many teachers attended these training events?

Total number of teachers who have attended training : _____			
Men		Lower-grade teachers	
Women		Upper-grade teachers	

11. Please briefly list the topics of the training events attended by teachers from your school, as well as the organizers of training:

Topic:

Organizer/implementer

12. Please describe in brief the initiatives undertaken by your municipality so far to improve inclusive education for students with SEN?

ANNEX 2

Questionnaire about the inclusion of Roma children 3 to 5 years old in preschool child care and education institutions

Dear recipients,

This is a questionnaire that we wish to use to obtain information about the inclusion of Roma children in your kindergarten / early childhood development center. This questionnaire is intended for the counseling professionals in your institution, and the data requested is about the number and manner of inclusion of Roma children in preschool child care and education institutions.

The information received from this survey will be part of the Report on the Status of Children's Rights in Macedonia.

Thank you for your cooperation!

1. What is the total number of children 3 to 5 years old in your kindergarten / early childhood development center?

Total number of children 3 to 5 years old	
Boys	
Girls	

2. What is the total number of Roma children in your kindergarten / early childhood development center?

3. Please indicate the number of Roma children according to the criteria given below:

Total number of Roma children	
Boys	
Girls	

	Boys	Girls	Total
Roma children living in families with one parent/guardian			
Roma children living in families with two parents/guardians			
Roma children whose families are beneficiaries of social assistance			
Roma children whose families have fixed/permanent residence			
Roma children living in urban areas			
Roma children living in rural areas			

4. How many of the Roma children enrolled in your kindergarten / early childhood development center attend regularly? (please indicate a number)

5. Does the kindergarten / early childhood development center have a dedicated program for the Roma children? If yes, please indicate what kind of programs.

In what language do the Roma children follow the program of the kindergarten / early childhood development center?

6. Do you have Roma educators on staff in your kindergarten / early childhood development center?

7. Does your kindergarten / early childhood development center have a program for working with parents/guardians of the children who attend your institution?

8. Do the families of Roma children receive state support? If they do, what kind of support is it?

9. Is there a waiting list for enrollment of children in your kindergarten / early childhood development center?

- If there is one, please indicate the ethnic composition of the children?

- What criteria are used to select the children to be enrolled in kindergarten / early childhood development center when a place becomes available?

10. How many Roma children 3 to 5 years old have dropped out of your kindergarten / early childhood development center in 2012?

Number of Roma children who dropped out in 2012	Boys	Girls

11. Do you have information how many of the Roma children who have completed kindergarten / early childhood development center have continued / enrolled in regular primary school in 2012?

Number of Roma children who graduated in 2012	Boys	Girls

Number of Roma children who enrolled in school in 2012	Boys	Girls

12. In your opinion, what are the reasons that the parents/guardians of do not enroll Roma children in kindergarten / early childhood development center, or why do they take out those already enrolled?

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE NATIONAL COALITION FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

1. Health Education and Research Association "HERA" - Skopje

"HERA" – Health Education and Research Association is a nonprofit organization established by free association of citizens with the aim to facilitate the exercise of the fundamental human right of women, men and youths to be informed and to freely make their individual choices about sexual and reproductive health; the association also engages in advocacy to ensure that right. Special emphasis is placed on provision of information, advocacy, provision of services or referral to services for advancement of sexual and reproductive health, provision of information about HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted or blood-borne diseases, unwanted pregnancy and avoiding unsafe abortions. The activities are intended for the general public, with particular attention to the young, poor and those without access to services or unable to exercise their rights.

Contact:

ul. „Debarca“ 56/4, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia

tel./fax: + 389 2 3290 395

E-mail: hera@hera.org.mk

Web: www.hera.org.mk

2. Women's Civic Initiative "ANTIKO" – Skopje (a network of 18 local organizations)

The Women's Civic Initiative "ANTIKO" is an inter-ethnic network of 18 civic organizations working in the areas of nondiscrimination, pluralism and tolerance. Its mission is to promote a culture of peace and nonviolence through social engagement of women from multiple ethnic communities in the Republic of Macedonia. "Antiko" supports the affirmation of the importance and security of each individual in all of its dimensions: physical safety, socio-economic security, respect for human dignity and right to identity and inclusion. Nonviolence, tolerance, solidarity, multiculturalism, equal rights, sustainable development, networking, civic activism, social justice - these are the fundamental values that underpin its 13-year history of activities in the local communities in the Republic of Macedonia.

Contact:

ul. "Tale Hristov" lamella 1 lokal 9

1000 Skopje, Macedonia

tel. + 389 (0)2 2 614 641

fax: +389(0)2 2 60 11 12

E-mail: contact@antiko.org.mk

Web: www.antiko.org.mk

3. Coalition „All for Fair Trials“ – Skopje (coalition of 17 NGOs)

The Coalition „All for Fair Trials“ is a network of 17 civic associations established in 2003. The principal mission of the Coalition is monitoring of human rights and freedoms, especially international standards for fair trials, in particular through various form of action aiming at elevating the level of implementing said standards, initiate institutional and legal reforms and restore the citizens' trust in the judiciary and other institutions of the system.

Contact:

ul. „Makedonija “ 11/2-10, 1000 Skopje

tel./fax: +389 (0) 2 613 9874

E-mail: contact@all4fairtrials.org.mk

Web: www.all4fairtrials.org.mk

www.pravicosudenje.org.mk

4. “Lifestart” – Bitola

The NGO “Lifestart” form Bitola is an organization founded in 1998. From its beginnings it is oriented towards projects for education of parents and preschool- and school-age children. The following projects have been implemented: “Growing and Learning Together”, “Early Childhood Development”, “Babylon”, “Adult Literacy”, “Community Social Development”. Evaluations have shown that the projects significantly help preschool-age children to acquire the appropriate foundational knowledge to be ready to start school. The parents become aware of all the changes that accompany the children's growth and development and receive information about how to deal with and how to make a positive impact on those changes.

Contact:

ul. "Petar Petrovic Njegos" no. 129

P. fah 137, Bitola

tel./fax: +389 (0) 47 253 637

E-mail: lifestartmk@yahoo.com

5. Youth Education Forum – Ckonje

The Youth Education Forum is a youth non-government organization established in 1999 that works in the area of education and human rights. The activities of this organization are implemented in the framework of three programs:

- 1) Informal education (including the programs Debates, Learning Law and Training for Young People);
- 2) Research, analysis and creation of youth and education policies;
- 3) Youth activism;

The programs of the Youth Education Forum are aimed at promoting critical thinking, encouraging tolerance and respect for the views and ideas of others, promoting law and democracy and development of high-quality transparent education.

Contact:

ul. Drenak 34-a

1000 Skopje, Macedonia

02 31 39 692, 02 31 14 412

info@mof.org.mk,

www.mof.org.mk

6. Association for Action Against Violence and Human Trafficking - Open Gate La Strada Macedonia - Ckonje

The Association for Action Against Violence and Human Trafficking "Open Gate" was registered in 2000 as an independent, critically oriented, non-political non-governmental nonprofit organization.

Open Gate, a member of La Strada – the international European network against human trafficking is a citizens' association that promotes human rights and represents the needs and

interests of people at risk or people who have suffered human trafficking; this is done through prevention, social support and lobbying at the national and European level.

WW provide protection, strengthening of capacities integration of trafficked persons and other vulnerable groups in society.

Contact:

ul. "Sava Kovacevik" no. 1A

p. fah 110, 1000 Skopje

tel. +389 2 2700 107

E-mail: lastrada@lastrada.org.mk

Web: www.lastrada.org.mk

7. "Open the Windows" – Citizens' association for support and promotion of accessible information technology for people with disabilities – Skopje

"Open the Windows" (OW) is a unique civic organization in Macedonia and the wider region focused on facilitating access to information technology for people with disabilities. On one hand, the organization offers services to people with different kinds of disabilities, including intellectual, physical, combined or sensory disabilities. On the other hand, OW implements projects for promotion of assistive information technology in all domains of society. Over the past three years the organization was especially active in primary education; in 2010 it conducted a national survey for the first time about the needs for assistive technology in the primary schools in our country, and over the past three years it has collaborated with 31 primary school where it provides assistive technology, support and training for the teachers and other education professionals through a USAID-funded project for e-accessible education.

Contact:

bul. "Partizanski odredi " 62/2-29

1000 Skopje, Macedonia

tel./fax +389(0)2 3068 630

E-mail: contact@openthewindows.org

Web: www.openthewindows.org

8. First Children's Embassy in the World „Megjashi“ – Ckonje

First Children's Embassy in the World „Megjashi“ – Republic of Macedonia was founded on 29 April 1992 as an international non-government organization for protection of children's rights.

The Children's Embassy „Megjashi“ advocates for respect of the child's person through protection of children's rights, representation of children's interests and enrichment of life with activities that make childhood safe and creative.

The embassy „Megjashi“ and its activities contributed to the development and strengthening of civic awareness about children's rights. It broke the silence about the suffering of children, especially the physical, sexual and economic abuse of children, revealing several cases of abuse to the public and directly engaging in advocacy for establishment of more efficient child protection mechanisms.

Contact:

ul. „Kosta Novakovik“ 22a, 1000 Skopje

Republic of Macedonia

Tel/fax +389 2 2465 316

E-mail: info@childrensembassy.org.mk

Web: www.childrensembassy.org.mk

9. Council for Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (CPJD) – Kavadarci

CPJD was founded in 1996, and the main activities are aimed at combating all types of anti-social and other harmful behavior among the young in Kavadarci. The work of the CPJD is mainly divided into two sectors:

- The legal sector, which works on improving the status of juveniles in the framework of the juvenile justice system, through changes and improvement of juvenile justice, legislation and proper implementation;
- The youth sector, whose aim is to organize the free time for the young in Kavadarci and neighboring communities, offering various opportunities to get involved in different forms of informal education and activities.

Contact:

Sportska Sala "Jasmin" ul. "Braka Hadzi Tefovi" 28

Kavadarci, Republic of Macedonia

tel./fax: +389 (0) 93 412 947

E-mail: sppmd@mt.net.mk, contact@sppmd.org.mk

web: www.sppmd.org.mk

10. Federation of Defectologists of the Republic of Macedonia

The Federation of Defectologists of the Republic of Macedonia was established in 1953 as a non-government professional and humanitarian citizens' association with a purpose to advance special education and rehabilitation, improve the quality of education, social and health protection and facilitate access to services for people with disabilities.

The mission of the Federation of Defectologists is to create conditions for equal opportunities for social inclusion of all individuals by building the society's capacities, development and advancement of defectology theory and practice.

Contact:

Ul. 11 Oktomvri 42A HDO "Dare Dzambaz", Skopje, Macedonia

Tel. +389 2 3166 131 ext. 23

E-mail: sojuz_defektoloji@yahoo.com

Web: www.sojuznedefektoloji.org

11. HOPS Association – Options for Healthy Living Skopje

HOPS – Options for Healthy Living Skopje is a non-government, nonprofit and non-partisan organization that started as the first project in the Republic of Macedonia for exchange of injection equipment in 1997. Since then, the organization has developed programs for: drug use harm reduction, prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted or blood-borne diseases, social re-integration and re-socialization of vulnerable and marginalized communities

in the Republic of Macedonia. HOPS implements its activities through three programs: services for drug users and sex workers, CEDI – Center for Education, Documentation and Information, and the advocacy program.

HOPS Vision: A society in which all people's human rights and freedoms are respected equally and where all people enjoy social, health and economic wellbeing.

HOPS Mission: Promotion, respect and protection of human rights and freedoms in order to improve the health and socioeconomic status of all people, but especially drug users, sex workers and other marginalized communities, based on the harm reduction principles, through equitable access to services, strengthening of communities, improving capacities, research, analytics and advocacy.

Contact:

ul. "Hristo Smirnenski" no. 48/1-6, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia

tel. 02/3 246 205 fax. 02/3 246 210

E-mail: hops@hops.org.mk

Web: www.hops.org.mk

12. Humanitarian Association "Majka (Mother)" – Kumanovo

The Humanitarian Association "Majka" from Kumanovo has been working since 1992, established as a reaction to the need to help at the time of disintegration of the former Yugoslavia. The Humanitarian Association "Majka" organized numerous humanitarian campaigns for refugees from the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, and during the crisis in Macedonia. Campaigns for distribution of food, medicines and other supplies were organized for the displaced persons in the regions of Kumanovo, Kriva Palanka and the vicinity, and some of the activities included organization of accommodation of families in homes, reconstruction of damaged houses, re-socialization of the children and women, and after the 2001 conflict – organization of psycho-social workshops for women.

Today's vision for the organization is: women, children and youths – equal participants in creating the society. Mission: building a culture of personal participation in the affirmation and exercise of the rights and freedoms of women, children and youth in the Republic of Macedonia through education and direct support. Values of the organization: equal opportunities, knowledge and personal participation. Issues that the organization is working on: violations of human rights – children's and women's rights (information and education), gender inequality and peace in the region.

The association was awarded the November Prize for its contribution to the community twice – in 1995 and 2010 (prize for local achievement awarded by the municipality and the mayor).

Contact:

ul. „Gjorce Petrov“ no.33, Kumanovo

tel. +389 (0) 031 614 139

fax +389 (0) 31 411 088

E-mail: vavku@freemail.com.mk

13. Humanitarian and Charitable Association of the Roma in Macedonia “Mesecina” – Gostivar

The Humanitarian and Charitable Association of the Roma in Macedonia “Mesecina” – Gostivar is a citizens’ association established to contribute to the social integration, effective and equal participation in democratic rights and development prospects for the Roma community at the national and local level through strengthening of capacities, direct support and advocacy for the Roma.

“Mesecina” organizes its work into 4 sectors:

- Education;
- Socioeconomic integration and supplementary education for marginalized groups;
- Human rights and inter-ethnic relations, tolerance and dialogue;
- Provision of information, coordination, awareness raising and policy development.

Contact:

ul. “Braka Ginoski” 61

1230 Gostivar, Republic of Macedonia

tel. +389 (0) 42 22 22 71

tel./fax: +389 (0) 42 22 22 72

E-mail: mesecina@mt.net.mk

14. Center for Civic Initiative – Prilep

The Center for Civic Initiative (CCI) collaborates with non-governmental organizations, government organizations and the business sector to motivate citizens to act towards building the civil society in the Republic of Macedonia and beyond. The ultimate goal of CCI is for all citizens to have equal human rights, to be included in decision-making processes and to have equal access to education. CCI organizes various activities and projects to achieve these aims while enhancing the participation of the Macedonian citizens in the process of building a better and more open democratic society.

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15. Center for Human Rights “AMOS” - Bitola

The Center for Human Rights “AMOS” - Bitola is a citizens’ association registered on 06.04.2001 whose aim is advancement of human rights, women’s human rights, and children’s rights foremost. It is an independent, non-profit, non-political non-government organization that is completely autonomous in its activities.

The Center for Human Rights “AMOS” - Bitola devotes serious attention to:

- Promoting, advocacy and education about human rights, women’s human rights, and children’s rights foremost.
- Monitoring of the implementation of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Declaration on Human Rights, The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the many charters and recommendations in these areas.
- Contributing to the building and development of a democratic civil society
- Prevention of all forms of abuse, primarily directed at children and youth.
- Advocacy for maintaining and building peace, understanding, tolerance, non-discrimination and dialogue
- Collaboration, partnership and networking with other non-government organizations, institutions and individuals in the country and abroad

- Organizing and delivery of training events, seminars, workshops, study sessions, competitions, presentations and exhibitions.
- Production and publication of written, audio and visual materials accessible to the public at large
- Education on human rights, democratic citizenship and prevention of violence and abuse of children and youth.

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