

# Deinstitutionalisation and a Child's Right to a Supportive Family Environment

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PAL Stream 3

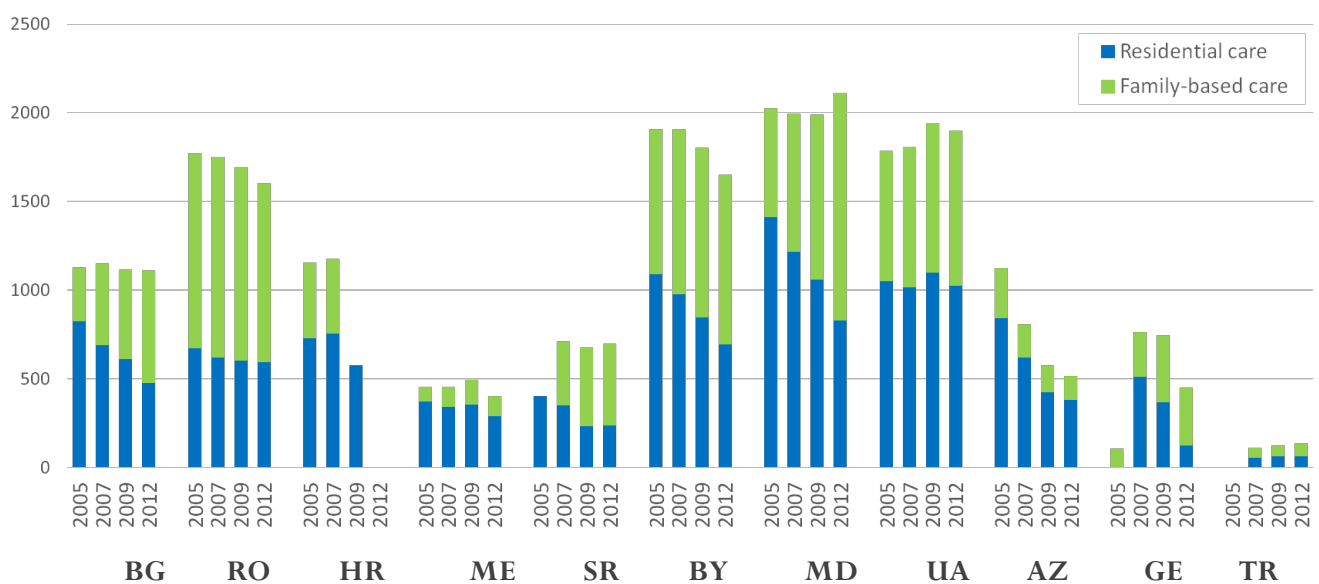
Bečići, Montenegro 21-24 October 2019

## UNICEF Evaluation: a regional picture

- Multi-country evaluation of child care reform in 11 countries  
- AZ, BY, **BG**, HR, **GE**, MD, **ME**, RO, **SR**, **TR**, **UA**
- Measuring and accounting for changes in children's lives as a result of child care reform
- Reference period: 2005-2012
- 5 criteria - **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact**
- Desk review, quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, focus groups

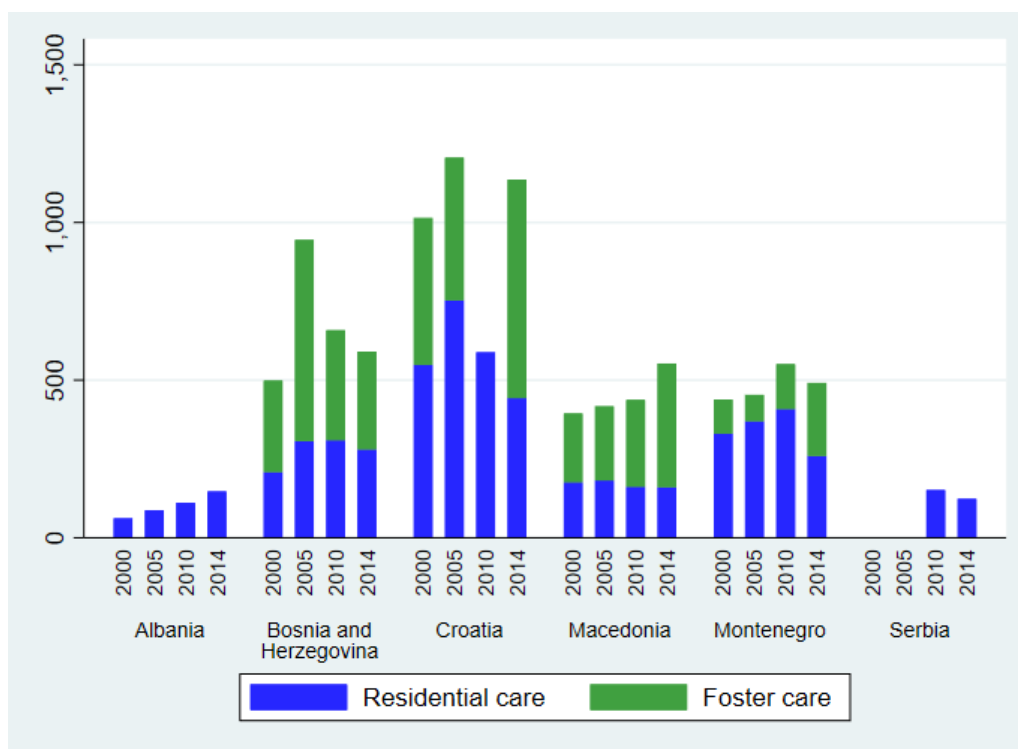
## Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics?

### Rate of Children in Care per 100,000 child pop 2005 - 2012



Source: TransMONEE Database 2014, except for Turkey where data was provided by Ministry of Family and Social Policy, Directorate of Child Services. Data from Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia is 2006 instead of 2005, 2008 instead of 2007 and 2010 instead of 2009; data from Serbia is 2011 instead of 2012

## Rate of Children in Care, W. Balkans 2000-2014 per 100,000 child pop.



## Critical findings

- Fragmented and inconsistent approach to reform
- Insufficient attention to financial flows and budgets
- No continuum of flexible alternative care services
- Rapid expansion of small-group homes (re-institutionalisation or trans-institutionalisation) and foster care (with no follow-up)
- Lack of development of range of meaningful preventive services
- Significant equity gaps remain and may be growing (poor, rural, ethnic minority households, children with disabilities)
- Time-limited 'Projects' rather than accessible, sustainable, quality services
- The social work paradox – mostly under-investment but sometimes too much emphasis on over-professionalised responses
- Disconnect between child care and social protection 'reforms'
- User voice is virtually nowhere or highly fetishised
- Evidence-base is much less solid than it seems

## Conclusions – points for discussion

- Importance of strategic approach linking: political will; stakeholder engagement; clear responsibilities across levels and between agencies; public support; clear advocacy messages; targeted transitional financing mechanisms
- Combination of approach linking system-level and individual plans
- Importance of NGOs and social movements — especially including or led by users
- EU Funding needs to be carefully planned, implemented and sequenced (importance of full domestic ‘buy in’)
- Reforms which are top-down, technocratic, over professionalised or externally-driven are destined to fail – new community development approaches may be needed
- Beware of net widening ... need for a new consensus on what the child care system is for (prevention, support, reintegration ... Or surveillance and control)
- Work on building user, family and community support for change (N. Macedonia)