



OPENING DOORS
FOR EUROPE'S CHILDREN

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STRENGTHENING FAMILIES. ENDING INSTITUTIONAL CARE.

Strengthening families and ending institutionalisation of children:
Lessons learned from the Opening Doors Campaign
15 January 2019

*EESC building, 2 rue Van Maerlant, 1049 Brussels
Second floor - Room 2*

A caring and protective family is central to a child's health, development, and protection¹. Yet over a million children grow up in care across Europe and hundreds of thousands are confined to institutions for children.

In response, civil society organisations across EU Member States, pre-accession countries and non-EU countries came together with one common vision: to end institutional care for children in Europe. This vision was transformed into the pan-European campaign "**Opening Doors for Europe's Children**" (Opening Doors). The campaign aimed to support national efforts to develop child protection systems that strengthen families and ensure high-quality family- and community-based care for children, by leveraging EU funding and policy, and building capacity in civil society. In view of new EU Commission taking office, Opening Doors is keen to ensure that child protection reforms remain at top policy and funding priority for the EU.

With the campaign closing in December 2019, it is essential to reflect on the achievements of the Opening Doors campaign, and the key challenges ahead to support children to grow up in families and end institutional care of children.

The campaign closing event will highlight the contributions and lessons learnt of the Opening Doors campaign to child protection and care systems reform. It will provide practical examples from Opening Door activities and results, and present recommendations for the future national policymaking and EU funds. The event will be a space for fruitful and proactive dialogue with key stakeholders, to reflect on how continue to strengthen families and end institutionalisation of children.

¹ Corinna Csáky, "Keeping children out of harmful institutions: why we should be investing in family-based care" (Save the Children UK, 2009), Anne E. Berens and Charles A. Nelson, "The science of early adversity: is there a role for large institutions in the care of vulnerable children?" (2015) *The Lancet* 386(9991)



Draft Agenda

15:30 Introduction

Opening Doors Closing video

- *Katarina Ivanković-Knežević, Director for Social Affairs, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion*
- *Jana Hainsworth, Secretary General, Eurochild*

15:45 Opening Door's contribution to child protection and care system reform

- Presentation on the Opening Doors campaign, the key achievements & recommendations
Michela Costa, Head of Global Advocacy, Hope and Homes for Children
- Example from the national level
Halyna Postoliuk, Opening Doors National Coordinator Ukraine

16:15 Panel discussion: What are the key challenges and opportunities ahead to strengthen families and end institutionalisation of children in Europe?

Moderator: Jonathan Ellis

Speakers:

- *Radostina Paneva, Programme Adviser, International Office Region CEE/CIS, SOS Children Villages*
- *Marie-Anne Paraskevas, Senior Policy Officer, European Commission*
- *Helen Jõks, Adviser, Department of Child Well-Being, Ministry of Social Affairs Estonia (tbc)*
- *Ljiljana Ban, National Coordinator, FICE Croatia*
- *Andreeas Novacovici, President, Institutionalized Youth Council, Romania*

Q&A

17:15 Closing remarks

- *Mark Waddington, Chief Executive Officer, Hope and Homes for Children*
- *Danielle Douglas, President, International Foster Care Organisation*
- *Valerie Ceccherini, Representative to the EU, SOS Children's Villages*

17:30 Networking cocktail
