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<tr>
<td>NIC</td>
<td>National Income per Capita</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADHS</td>
<td>Albania Demographic and Health Survey</td>
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<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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<td>RED</td>
<td>Regional Educational Directorate</td>
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<td>ELP</td>
<td>Educational Legal Provisions</td>
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<td>HRE</td>
<td>Human Rights Education</td>
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<td>IEPS</td>
<td>Institutions for the Execution of Penal Sentences</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Institute of Curricula and Training</td>
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<td>INSTAT</td>
<td>Institute of Statistics</td>
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<td>IPH</td>
<td>Institute of Public Health</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<td>MoES</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Science</td>
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<td>MoJ</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
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<td>MLSAEO</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities</td>
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<td>MoH</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>Unit for Children’s Rights</td>
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<td>UCP</td>
<td>Unit for Children’s Protection</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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<td>NPO</td>
<td>Non Profit Organization</td>
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<td>DP</td>
<td>Disabled People</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Action Plan</td>
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<td>SG</td>
<td>Student Government</td>
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<td>General Standards on Social Services</td>
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<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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INTRODUCTION

With a population of 3.1\textsuperscript{1} million, Albania is one of the countries with the youngest population in Europe (average age of the population is 32.2 years and number of people aged 0-19 years is 1,091,509\textsuperscript{2}). Since 1991, Albania has had a profound and rapid transition. Macroeconomic reforms have contributed to a relatively sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and inflation control (3-6 per cent)\textsuperscript{3}. Since 1998, annual economic growth is estimated at about 6\% whereas poverty has been reduced by about 7\% in the last three years. Average annual income has increased from $1,390 in 2002 to $2,930 in 2008\textsuperscript{4} (National per Capita Income - NCI). However, Albania remains one of the countries with the lowest per capita income in Europe.

Albania has been and continues to remain committed to the improvement of standards with regard to the protection and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. A clear evidence of this commitment is Albania's ratification or signature of almost all international human rights conventions, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Also, Albania has signed the two optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child: the Optional Protocol "On the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography" (adopted by Law No. 9834, date 11.22.2007) the Optional Protocol “On the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict” (adopted by Law No. 9833, date 21.12.2007).

Albania gained NATO membership in April 2009. In April of the same year, Albania applied for EU membership. The Albanian Government, the legislative bodies and the civil society are making great efforts to meet the requirements under the Stabilization and Association Agreement. The National Plan for the Implementation of the SAA (adopted by DCM No. 463, date 5.07.2006, as changed by DCM No. 577, date 5.09.2007 and DCM No.1317, date 1.10.2008) pays great attention to the adequate legal and institutional reforms, including reform of the judiciary, in order to ensure the implementation of human rights and individual freedoms in accordance with international standards. This document defines priorities in respect of human rights enforcement, including the rights of the child.

Following the parliamentary elections of June 2008, the new coalition government submitted its program for the next 4 years to the Parliament. The program re-affirms Albania’s strategic commitment to EU integration. It considers children's rights as an issue of special importance, as indicated by the institutional and legislative reforms designed to create a protective and inclusive environment, at the family, societal and institutional levels.

\textsuperscript{1} INSTAT, Statistical Yearbook, 2008
\textsuperscript{2} INSTAT estimations, Source: World Development Indicators
\textsuperscript{3} Central Bank of Albania, Annual Reports 2004-2008
\textsuperscript{4} World Bank figures, Source: http://devdata.worldbank.org
The Government takes special care to make child protection policies part of its social inclusion agenda. The most recent government strategy, i.e., the National Strategy for Development and Integration, relies on a comprehensive methodology in addressing the critical issues of socially excluded groups, including children. In addition, a National Strategy for Social Inclusion and a National Children’s Strategy and Action Plan have been adopted. The need for a law on children's rights is being discussed. The new social services strategy provides for the establishment and extension of integrated community-based social care services under the decentralization strategy. The Government is committed to integrating the Millennium Development Goals and the National Strategy for Development and Integration with the objectives under the Stabilization and Association Agreement, signed on June 12, 2006.
EVALUATION PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives


a) provide an analysis of the level of implementation of the NCS through the measurement and evaluation of indicators selected from the most important relevant sectors providing an overview of the real situation of children's rights in Albania;
b) identify critical issues in the National Action Plan and its implementation and provide recommendations for the improvement of children's rights in the future;
c) propose directions in which both the government and civil society may provide institutional or financial support towards further progress.

Procedure and participants in the evaluation

A working group was established to implement the evaluation project. The members of the working groups held meetings and discussions with specialists in the public institutions responsible for the design and implementation of health, education and social protection policies. These meetings were attended by representatives of civil society, the academic institutions, and the various donors who provided their input on the various issues under discussion.

Two questionnaires were used: one for the public administrators and one for the civil society organizations. The public administration questionnaire contained five sections:

*Section I*: The impact of the strategy on the implementation of the right to social protection.

*Section II*: The right to health care.

*Section III*: The right to quality education.

*Section IV*: The right of the child to participation.

*Section V*: The right of the child to legal protection.

The civil society questionnaire was designed to collect quality information in connection with civil society involvement in the NCS implementation.

The working group formulated a list of questions and indicators to assess the extent to which the strategy and action plan were implemented. The indicators were widely discussed in the meetings, and were applied only following broad based validation. Information resulting from data analysis was used to analyze the level of implementation of the selected indicators.
Interviews lasted from 40 to 65 minutes and the interviewers duly recorded the responses. Interviews were conducted over two months (November-December 2009).

The participants in this evaluation were members of the public administration and representatives of civil society in some of the main Regions of Albania, such as Tirana, Shkodra, Durrës, Kukësi and Elbasani. The first questionnaire was used to interview 23 public administration employees and the second questionnaire to interview 11 representatives of civil society (Annex 1). The following map shows the number of the interviewees and their distribution according to respective Regions\(^5\).

\(^5\)\textit{Note}: The first number shows respondents from the public administration; the second number refers to civil society representatives. In total, 34 people were interviewed, of whom 23 public employees and 11 civil society representatives.
The Regions were selected based on whether they had established special structures to protect children’s rights. The Kukës Region already had a Unit for Protection of Children’s Rights, and the regions of Elbasan and Shkodër were in the process of establishing such units. In four of the Regions, there are children rights observatories (civil society structures) and there are plans to establish one in Tirana in 2010.

The Report is based on the analysis of data collected in accordance with the methodology described above. It is not a copy of previously submitted reports, or of the strategy progress reports. This report represents an important and original contribution. The evaluation is based on indicators designed to assess achievement of the objectives under the strategy. The report focuses on the rights of the child as covered by the National Children’s Strategy and Action Plan. It consists of five chapters, an introduction and a summary.

The first chapter presents the legal framework on children’s rights in Albania and describes the institutional structures charged with monitoring and reporting on the implementation of children's rights.

The second, third, fourth and fifth chapters have the same structure. The first part of each chapter provides information on the situation of children’s rights in Albania. The second part describes the level of implementation of each objective, through an analysis of the activities mentioned in the Action Plan based on the quantitative and qualitative indicators specially designed under this project. The third part identifies critical issues encountered in the implementation of the respective right under the strategy and in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The last part of each chapter provides recommendations that, if taken into account by policymakers, may create an enabling environment for the implementation of the strategy and approximation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
CHAPTER I: LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON CHILDREN’S RIGHTS

1.1 Changes in the legal framework, June 2008 - May 2009

Legislation is key to improving and updating social policies and to produce substantial changes in the implementation of human rights as required by international standards, including the rights of children. Over June 2008 – May 2009, a number of laws and by-laws were passed towards improving implementation of children’s rights, of which mention can be made:

Law No. 10 138, date 11.05.2009, “On Public Health” is a law in the field of public health which is designed to protect public health and promote a healthy way of life for the population. The law defines the basic health care services provided to the public, including reproductive and mother and child health.

Law No. 10 071, date 09.02.2009, “On Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children from sexual exploitation and abuse” aims at: (i) preventing and combating sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children; (ii) protecting the rights of children who have suffered sexual exploitation and sexual abuse; (iii) promoting national and international cooperation against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children.


Law No. 10 039, date 22.12.2008, “On Legal Aid”, defines the conditions, the circumstances, the type and manner of the state-provided aid towards the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual and his lawful interests. This law also provides for legal aid for minors who come to conflict with the law.

Law No. 10 024, date 27.11.2008, “On some changes and additions to Law No. 8331, date 21.4.1998 ‘On the execution of penal sentences’” defines the mechanism for enforcing alternative punishment and the relationship of this mechanism to the courts and the public institutions.

Law No. 10 023, date 27.11.2008, “On some changes and additions to Law No. 7895, date 27.1.1995, ‘Penal Code of the Republic of Albania’”, Article 63, referring to public interest labor, provides for cases of cancellation of imprisonment sentences and the

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6 “Unaccompanied minors” are foreign nationals or stateless persons under 18, arriving in the territory of the Republic of Albania, unaccompanied by adults who are responsible for them under law or by tradition, and/or for as long as they are not effectively under the care of such a person. This refers also to minors who are left unaccompanied following entry into the territory of the Republic of Albania”
enforcement of labor in the interest of the public, whenever there is no great threat to society. Labor in the interest of the public may replace up to one year sentences.

**Law No. 9952, date 14.07.2008,** “On HIV/AIDS prevention and control”, is designed to provide improved protection to those suffering from this condition through policies and measures to prevent and control HIV/AIDS. The Law provides for the prevention of mother to child transmission and underlines the obligation of public educational institutions to provide education on HIV/AIDS to students. In addition, the Law stipulates that HIV/AIDS infected people under 18 are entitled to economic aid or in kind services. Abandoned HIV/AIDS infected people and those who have lost connection with their families and are unable to work, are placed in institutional foster care, public or private.

**Law No. 9942, date 26.06.2008,** “On prevention of iodine deficiency disorders in the human body” is designed to prevent disorders caused by iodine deficiency in the human body, through enforcing the use of iodized salt for human and animal consumption as well as by the food processing industry.

**Law No. 9928, date 09.06.2008,** “On stomatological health care” provides for free of charge stomatological service both as a prevention and curative function for: (i) people 0 to 18 years; (ii) people hospitalized in public facilities when they need urgent treatment; (iii) special categories of people who are granted free of charge stomatological services by relevant laws and bylaws.

**Agreement between the Republic of Albania and Iceland,** “On re-admission of people without permit to stay” (ratified by Law No. 10015, date 06.11.2008). Based on the agreement, Albania will re-admit minors and unmarried people, despite birth place and ethnicity, whenever they stay in Iceland without authorization.

**Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education and Science** on the education of the detainees and pre-detainees in the Institutions for the Execution of Penal Sentences in accordance with MoES approved curricula. Teaching will take place on a full time or part time basis in facilities adapted for teaching at the IEPS. The Memorandum states that upon completion of the academic year, the detainee is entitled to the same document as is awarded to students outside the institution for the same level curricula. The school document does not indicate that the holder has been a former detainee.

**Decision of the Council of Ministers, No. 499, date 06.05.2009,** concerning an addition to the DCM No. 384, date 20.05.1996, “On protection of minors at the working place” (with changes) provides for medical examinations for employees under 18 years.

**Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 303, date 25.03.2009,** concerning the approval of the General Regulations of Prisons, which defines the method and manner of implementation of the rights and obligations of inmates, both convicts and pre-detainees, the arrangements for their daily life, the manner and conditions for the execution of penal sentences, their labor and relevant remuneration, as well the operations of the General
Prison Directorate and the IEPS, in accordance with the relevant laws and by-laws. The Regulation prescribes special rules and measures for the implementation of the rights and obligations of the minor convicts placed in the IEPS-s.

**Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 1205, date 27.08.2008,** concerning the adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and ILO, on “Elimination of Child Labor”.

**Decision of the Council of Ministers Nr. 1104, date 30.07.2008,** on some additions to DCM No. 80, date 28.01.2008 “On Approval of the Sector Strategy on Social Protection and its Action Plan”, provides for the protection of orphan children through the definition of criteria to be met by foster families (Document on Custody Care).

**Decision of the Council of Ministers Nr. 1083, date 23.07.2008,** “On Adoption of the National Strategy to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, 2008-2010”, and its supplementing document “National Strategy on the Fight against Trafficking in Children and Protection of Child Traffic Victims” establishes measures for cooperation and coordination between/among actors and defines their roles and responsibilities towards achieving an efficient and coordinated approach against this phenomenon.

**Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 786, date 04.06.2008,** “On adoption of the Regulation on the State Police Discipline” defines the obligations and adequate behavior for state police in the lawful discharge of their duties, including the special treatment of children.

**Order of the Justice Minister, No. 4763, date 08.06.2009,** “On approval of the Internal Regulation of the Albanian Adoption Committee”, provides the rules which should govern the internal operations of the Committee in order to ensure the normal conduct of adoption procedures.

**Order of the General Police Director, No. 981, date 31.10.2008,** concerning measures to be taken by the State Police to prevent and reduce domestic violence and ways and manner of treating victims of domestic violence.

Currently, following consultation with all stakeholders and interest groups, the framework draft law on the rights of the child has been submitted for review to the relevant bodies. This draft-law puts forth the need for re-structuring the administrative childrens’ units at central, regional and local level. The new law is a transposition of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strongly reflects the principles, rights and safeguards contained therein.

**1.2 The National Children’s Strategy and the Inter-sectoral Dimension of Social Policies**

In addition to the national and international frameworks, children’s rights should be made part of strategies and policies dealing with social inclusion. It is worth mentioning that
the Technical Secretariat for Children at the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities has a fruitful cooperation with the Technical Roma Secretariat, the Technical Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities (PWD), the Unit for Poverty Monitoring and Assessment, as well as with other units monitoring relevant cross-cutting strategies at the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. These sectors have the task to coordinate and monitor strategies and to detail the objectives to be achieved by the different actors at central and local level.

Information gathered by monitoring the above-mentioned strategies is used as a tool for analysis and reports, which are in turn used to improve the current actions and policies. In addition, these sectors have the duty to provide support to national councils and ad hoc working groups established on a case by case basis, in accordance with the needs in the areas under review.

The National Children’s Strategy is an integral part of the Inter-sectoral Strategy on Social Inclusion (2007-2013). The fight against social exclusion is the focus of this strategy, whose objectives are coordinated with those under the NSDI.

The Social Protection Strategy and Action Plan (2008-2013) adopted by Decision No. 80, dated 28/01/2008, are detailed into a number of indicators in order to enable the evaluation of social protection policies. The strategy lays the ground for the design of policies to protect vulnerable groups, and pays special attention to children outside parental care and children with disabilities. Reformation of the social protection system has a direct impact on the social welfare of the child.

Further, the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities and its Action Plan (Decision No. 8, dated 7.01.2005) foresee special measures for children with disabilities, namely their rights to freedom of expression, education, health services and entertainment. However, it is important to introduce improvements to the strategy, especially with regard to child abuse, child violence and neglect in reflection of the principles under the CRC.

The National Strategy against Trafficking in Human Beings (2008-2010) and the supplementing National Strategy against Trafficking in Children and Protection of Child Trafic Victims (Decree no. 1083, dated 07.23.2008), aim at the complete elimination of trafficking and enhance opportunities for education, inclusion, civil registration, elimination of child labor and the building of networks in the fight against child exploitation.

The Roma Decade National Plan is designed, among other things, to implement the right to quality education for Roma children. The plan contains objectives which are thoroughly detailed, of which the following are worth mentioning:

(i) enforcing the right of Roma children and young people to equal access to education at all levels of education;
(ii) elimination of stigma and discrimination against Roma in the school community; transformation of Roma cultural diversity into a basis for learning and a source for mutual respect, tolerance and understanding;

(iii) preservation and development of the cultural identity of students from the Roma minority.

Furthermore, children’s rights are addressed in other priority fields, such as employment, social protection, health care, etc.

Education and Health Policies (as reflected in the National Children’s Strategy) contain a wide range of targets related to children which serve to guide the work of central-level and subordinated institutions, and to coordinate efforts with civil society achievements. In the field of education, these objectives aim to provide quality education, introduce child rights in school curricula, enable children's participation in decision making, etc. In the field of health, through the various relevant legal norms, they aim at improving mother and child health care and mental health for children and adolescents, strengthening the public dental service and implementing and monitoring the National HIV/AIDS Strategy.

Finally, the NSDI represents the national vision for development towards EU integration and establishes benchmarks indicators for sectoral and intersectoral strategies. A special place in the NSDI is given to the National Children’s Strategy.

The National Children’s Strategy covers all aspects of children’s lives with special attention on poverty reduction. In addition to reforms aimed at improving services for children, mention can be made of other measures:

- **In the justice area** aimed at separating minors from adults in penal proceedings and improving conditions for minors in detention facilities; introducing the services of social workers in pre-detention and detention facilities; improving minor treatment in court proceedings and establishing the Minors’ Rehabilitation Institute.
- **In the health area** aimed at introducing the integrated patient treatment with regard to examination, treatment and provision of counseling about main childhood diseases.
- **In the education area**, establishing multi-disciplinary units at the local level responsible for dealing with obstacles to child development, the implementation of compulsory education and the creation of opportunities for vocational education, elimination of child labor, etc.
- **Establishment of structures** at local level for protection and enforcement of children’s rights.

1.3 Institutions charged with children’s rights monitoring
The Inter Ministerial Committee for Children’s Rights: the highest authority monitoring the achievement of the objectives under the National Children’s Strategy and making sure that children’s rights policies are included in development strategies.

Technical Secretariat for Children (TSC), under the MLSAE MO, is responsible for monitoring and assessing progress with regard to critical issues identified in the area of children’s rights, in general, and the rights of special needs children, in particular. It is also responsible for providing information and reporting to the governmental structures and the public opinion.

Starting from December 2006, TSC has submitted a number of biannual and annual reports on the progress towards the NCS objectives. In June 2008, TSC prepared the Annual Report on the implementation of the objectives under the National Children’s Strategy over June 2007-May 2008, while earlier in February 2008 the TSC had submitted the periodic 6 month report covering June 2008 – December 2008. The Annual Report, June 2007 – May 2008, was initially presented to the Annual Conference on Children’s Rights, June 2008. The Conference appealed for increased roles by the strategy monitoring structures, such as the inter ministerial committee on children’s rights and the Technical Secretariat for Children. In addition, the Conference took note of the achievements and problems noted in the implementation of strategy objectives over 2007-2008 and provided recommendations for further improvements in the operations of institutions charged with its implementation. Following adoption of final recommendations by the Conference, the Report was published and distributed to the responsible institutions for strategy implementation at the central and local level, in all the 12 Prefectures and 12 Regions, as well as in 63 municipalities and communes.

In addition to its main functional duties, during June 2008 – May 2009, the Technical Secretariat for Children focused on the establishment of new UCR-s and UCP-s, respectively at regional and municipality level. It also took part in the preparation of the operations protocol for children protection units at municipality level, and supported various activities and awareness campaigns on children’s rights.

NCS emphasizes the need to establish an institutional mechanism for monitoring the effectiveness of implementation of national and regional strategies on children’s rights. This task has been carried out with the establishment of the Inter Ministerial Committee for Children’s Rights and the Technical Secretariat for Children. In cooperation with the local government and with support form various donors, a number of municipalities and regions have established units for children’s rights, units for children’s protection, and more recently, even observatories for children’s rights. These steps mark substantial progress towards the completion of the entire legal and institutional framework.

Unit for Children’s Rights (UCR) is established at the administrative level of the Region and is tasked with monitoring and assessing the implementation of children’s

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7 Established by order of the Prime Minister, No. 24, date 21.03.2007.
8 Established by order of the Prime Minister, November 2006.
rights policies at regional level. Such units have been made operational at the regions of Kukës, Korçë and Elbasan.

**Unit for Children’s Protection (UCP)** is established at the administrative level, as part of social service structures at municipalities. Its duty is to identify and assess the needs of children in difficult situations, and to coordinate actions for the protection of these children.

**Observatory for Children’s Rights** is a civil society structure which aims to establish mechanisms to collect information towards assessing the implementation of children’s rights at regional level. It collects information from all the regional governmental institutions and at the same time helps these institutions with data generated from various studies. To date, six observatories have been established, namely in the regions of Shkodër, Kukës, Dibër, Durrës, Elbasan and Korçë. In cooperation with the Children’s Alliance, UNICEF plans to establish three additional observatories in the regions of Tiranë, Fier and Gjirokastër.

**The Ombudsman** protects the rights, freedoms and lawful interests of the individual from the wrong and unlawful actions of the public administration, and third parties acting on its behalf. The duty of the Ombudsman is to prevent possible conflicts between the public administration and the individual. The Ombudsman takes action based on requests and complaints filed with his institution. It may also initiate action on its own initiative based on special cases disclosed to the public, with the subsequent consent of the concerned individual, which should always be sought in such cases.

During 2008, the Ombudsman addressed 96 complaints and requests dealing with violation of children’s rights. However, despite the substantial number of reviewed cases, the number of complaints involving children is large, and submitted mainly by parents and relatives.

Central level institutions directly involved with the implementation of the NCS are: The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labor Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the Interior Ministry, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports. These institutions are under the legal obligation to report to the Council of Ministers on the implementation of children’s rights.

Although the implementation of the NCS is mainly considered to be the legal responsibility of central level agencies, the decentralization of powers involves the local government in the process of institutionalization of children’s rights in Albania. Therefore, local governments are increasingly taking on and implementing responsibilities with regard to children’s rights. At the local level, structures charged with the implementation of the NCS are: Regional Educational Directorates/Educational

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9 Respective Law No. 8454, date 4.02.1999 "On the Ombudsman" has been supplemented by Law No. 8600, date 10.04.2000, and has been changed by Law No. 9398, date 12.05.2005.
Offices, Regional Directorates of the State Social Service, Regional Directorates of Public Health, Regional Police Directorates and Local Government Units (Regions and Municipalities).

1.4 Evaluation’s Findings

As part of the efforts to develop legislation and social policies for children, MLSAEo with UNICEF support has launched the initiative to draft a framework law on children’s rights. This initiative reflects the need for an institutional framework on children’s rights and the obligation of the government to define some of the basic concepts regarding these rights. Some of the legal changes are designed to improve the standards of child care and enhance the opportunities for children and young people in foster care. Among these changes are initiatives under the purview of policies designed by the Directorate for Social Service, DCM-s regarding amount of payment for foster families, etc. The Draft law includes 23 standards grouped under three sections:

- Children and young people;
- Foster parents; and
- Foster care institutions and structures.

Draft DCM-s under preparation include, among others, measures to enable the understanding of legislation and legislation amendments regarding discrimination and institutionalization of rights.

At the institutional level, the framework law will enable the implementation of rights, avoid fragmentation of efforts at the central and local level, etc.

The extension of the typology of services to include new services such as the kind of “home family”, the psychological service structures and the decentralized management of social services need to be accompanied with the necessary legal regulations in order to effect the required changes.

The creation of infrastructure to provide protection and services to children may be preceded by legal/sublegal adjustments, such as those needed enable the implementation of the Law No. 9669, which provides for the establishment of a National Center for Protection of Victims of Violence.

The understanding of legislation by interest groups is key to ensuring its implementation. The Ministry of Interior makes use of best practice on dissemination of laws. However, it must be said that every Ministry publishes relevant legislation to make it available to stakeholders. Public information is disseminated continuously, but information on individual basis is a process which should be properly handled by the institutions in accordance with the developments and changes.
Participation of local governments and non-governmental organizations in social service delivery is a necessity. At the local level, there is a need to extend these services and improve their quality. Coordination continues to be an important duty for all the concerned actors. The Action Plan of the NCS (together with budget lines) provides an important tool to assess achievements by all those charged with its implementation.

1.5 Recommendations

The National Children’s Strategy 2005-2010 should have a conclusion stage in order to allow for the quality and quantity assessment of achievements based on the annual progress reports.

Needs identified in the process of strategy implementation should serve as a starting basis for the next strategy.

Given Albania’s effort to integrate with the EU, the future strategy should pay due attention to experiences from the advanced EU countries.

The action plan for the future strategy should define clearly the responsible authority and the monitoring entities. In addition, it should define clear timelines and accurate budgets in line with the Mid Term Budgets Framework. It is also necessary to monitor the impacts that the decentralization process may produce on the implementation of children’s rights and service delivery for children.
CHAPTER II: THE RIGHT TO SOCIAL PROTECTION

Assessing achievement of objectives under the National Children’s Strategy in respect of right to social protection.

2.1 General assessment

Albania has had and continues to have a permanent commitment to the improvement of standards in relation to protection and respect for children’s rights.

The legal framework on social protection and care has been improved and supplemented during 2005-2009. Promotion and implementation of children’s rights in the field of social protection and care is one of the main priorities of the social policies that have been designed and implemented during this period.

The second chapter, “The right to social protection and social care” makes a presentation of the assessment on the implementation of the NSC and Action Plan 2008-2009, including an overall assessment of the impact of the strategy on children’s right to social protection and social care. The following analysis assesses the implementation of the objectives under the NCS and Action Plan, identifies the critical issues and findings in relation to the part played by social policies on children’s protection from poverty and social exclusion, and identifies community based networks delivering sustainable services to children.

The objectives under the NCS related to social protection are:

- **Objective 1**: Establishment of sustainable networks for community based services to children.
- **Objective 2**: Protection of children from poverty and social exclusion/social protection and survival of the child.

2.2 Assessing objectives aimed at ensuring the right of the child to social protection

The government continues to be the main provider of cash and services for families and children in need. Social problems and needs for intervention/social care continue to grow, whereas institutional capacities, financial and professional resources continue to be limited.

Improvement of legal framework on social assistance and services is one of the important pillars of the SSS’s program. These improvements involve policy environments,
including the Strategy of the State Social Service (SSS) adopted by DCM No. 265, date 28.04.2005 as well as a number of other strategies on various groups in need. The most important step in this direction has been the design and approval of Law No. 9355, date 10.03.2005, “On social assistance and social services”. This law expands opportunities for all groups in need, creates the necessary space for decentralization and strengthening of local government powers and increases the participation of civil society in service delivery.

These laws and by laws for the first time ever (i) create legal space for local governments to make economic aid conditional upon community labor and community services; (ii) provide local government units with legal space to support poor families with revenues made from local taxes; (iii) provide benefits to couples having more than one baby at a time, by making these children eligible for financial assistance until completion of compulsory education (in this case the child is considered to be an individual in a certain social situation and not a member of a poor family); (iv) provide cash and special services to orphans who leave residential care; (v) raises the ceiling of maximum economic aid, an important change in the new legal package; (vi) reassess income made in special sectors (agriculture, livestock, etc.) which will lead to a better targeting of the economic aid.

The Sectoral Strategy on Social Protection sets strategic priorities and aims at achieving the following objectives: (i) reduce the level of poverty; (ii) reduce the level of absolute poverty per capita to 10% until 2013 in accordance with the LSMS; (iii) increase allocations to the economic aid program; (iv) increase coverage of poor families with economic aid in accordance with the LSMS; (v) reduce the number of non poor families receiving economic aid; (vi) increase average amount of economic aid payments; (vii) link economic aid with community labor in additional municipalities and communes; (viii) reform the social service system; and (ix) support groups at risk of social exclusion.

Legislation on economic aid has improved continuously which has enabled the individuals and families in difficult economic and social conditions to benefit from the program.

Based on administrative data, about 200,000 children currently live in families entitled to economic aid. In other words, about 69% of poor families benefiting from economic aid have children. (See table 2.1).

| Table 2.1: Number of families and amount of monthly economic aid over the years |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Description                                      | 2006   | 2007   | 2008   | 2009   |
| No. of families benefiting from economic aid     | 119.000| 115.000| 110.000| 93,500 |
| Average monthly amount of economic aid per family| 2,029  | 1,970  | 3,091  | 4,400  |
Recently, MLSAEO has formulated a number of amendments to law No. 9355 aimed at facilitating the inclusion into the economic aid scheme of groups in need such as children without parental care and outside residential care institutions, including children who have been inflicted by trafficking, once they depart from specialized service facilities. Table 2.2 presents statistical information on disabled children.

### Table No. 2.2: Number of disabled children benefiting cash and services (2006-2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Year 2006</th>
<th>Year 2007</th>
<th>Year 2008</th>
<th>Year 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Individuals</td>
<td>53,380</td>
<td>55,754</td>
<td>57,333</td>
<td>60,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphan Children and Children with Social Problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled Children in Institutional Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Benefiting from Residential Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Benefiting from Day Care Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,297</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data show that during 2009, a total of 3,700 children have received treatment in public and non public institutions, of whom about 80% in non-residential services. This is an important indicator to the stability of the positive trend of the deinstitutionalization of services and the gradual growth of the specific weight of non residential care services. However, it should be noted that some of the respondents thought differently:

> The local government units are not prepared to implement the responsibilities granted to them by the law on social service decentralization. Social care institutions are not funded by local governments.

*State Social Service*
An overview of geographical distribution of services for children shows a greater concentration of NGO provided services mainly in the Region of Tiranë and in several main urban centers. The peripheral and rural areas have limited access, or are outside the coverage of services for children in need.

Statistical data showed that 87% of children in social care institutions come from families with social and economic problems.

The process of passing residential public institutions into the responsibility of local governments has been completed. Decentralized institutions continue to receive funding from the central budget according to the plan for the gradual transfer of financial responsibility, since local governments are unable to respond to the needs for reforming the existing services and establishing new services to address children’s newly emerging needs due to limited financial resources.

Decentralization of powers means that local governments should take responsibility with regard to assessing the needs and commissioning the clients. However, evidence shows that the process of establishing assessment committees at the local level is progressing very slowly.

In addition to efforts to transfer residential centers to the local governments, efforts are being made to promote alternative residential care for children, namely daycare facilities, home-family institutions and community based services.

Local governments are responsible for placing children in foster care families. They should establish multidisciplinary committees to assess cases of children in need. The establishment and operations of multidisciplinary commissions is governed by special rules approved by local governments. The Council of Ministers, by special decision, has defined the criteria, documentation, procedures and amount of allocations for foster care. The Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities releases instructions on procedures related to implementation of service standards. The foster care family model will be initially implemented in two large cities (Tiranë and Shkodër) over 2009-2010. About 80 children in need will benefit from the piloting.

With UNICEF support, in September 2009, the training of foster families and relevant authorities started in Tiranë and Shkodër. The training program involved 24 experts in Tiranë and 12 experts in Shkodër. It was also attended by public employees, officials.
from the municipalities/communes, staff from the SSS at the regional level, representatives of NGO-s delivering social services, independent lawyers to assess the legal implications of cases under review, multidisciplinary teams responsible for assessing cases already submitted to the Economic Aid and Social Services Sections at the Municipality/Commune, as well as court judges. Following an assessment of the piloted cases, opportunities of extending the service allover the country will be explored.

DCM No. 563 defines the duties of the Social Service Section at the Region’s level. These duties relate mainly to the creation of the monitoring and assessing system of poverty levels in the region; the creation of a database of groups in need, poor families and individuals in need for social services; as well as the type of social services provided by legal public and private entities, NGO-s operating at Regional level, etc., in order to assess the needs and address through various services in accordance with resources and capacities.

An assessment of the implementation of children’s rights to social protection shows that policy makers and implementers are paying greater attention to ensuring quality services at community level.

Table No. 2.3: Number of beneficiaries in the category of children and young people at risk and coverage with services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of service</th>
<th>Category (beneficiaries) of children at risk</th>
<th>Beneficiaries in % to total number of needs</th>
<th>Area Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information and counseling services for children and young people</td>
<td>- Abused and maltreated children;</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>Municipality of Tiranë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children from poor families;</td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Shkodër</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Working children;</td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Fushë Krujë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Street children;</td>
<td></td>
<td>Commune of Krrabë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children at risk of trafficking and exploitation;</td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Orikum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children of the Roma community;</td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Vlorë Commune of Qendër</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Disabled children.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Durrës Commune of Ksamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Memaliaj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Kukës</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Vau i Dejës</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Pukë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Poliçan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Delvinë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Commune of Ksamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Berat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support services</td>
<td>- Social orphan</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Municipality of Tiranë</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Clients</td>
<td>Locations</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation services</td>
<td>- Children from poor families;</td>
<td>Municipality of Tirana, Municipality of Shkodër,</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children who have dropped out of compulsory education</td>
<td>Municipality of Vlorë, Municipality of Fushë Krujë,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Vlorë, Municipality of Qendër Fier,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Durrës, Municipality of Maminas,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Kukës, Municipality of Vau i Dejës,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Fier, Municipality of Delvinë,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Berat, Municipality of Gjirokastër</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services</td>
<td>- Children from poor families</td>
<td>Municipality of Tirana, Municipality of Shkodër,</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children who have dropped out of compulsory education</td>
<td>Municipality of Fushë Krujë, Municipality of Vlorë,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Working children;</td>
<td>Municipality of Qendër Fier, Municipality of Memaliaj,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children at risk of trafficking;</td>
<td>Municipality of Kukës, Municipality of Poliçan,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children returned from trafficking.</td>
<td>Municipality of Berat, Municipality of Gjirokastër</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health, prevention and diagnostic</td>
<td>- Disabled children;</td>
<td>Municipality of Tirana (Every Child, APRAD),</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>services</td>
<td>- Children from poor families;</td>
<td>Municipality of Shkodër (The door), Municipality of Fushë Krujë (weapon induced harm),</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children returned from trafficking.</td>
<td>Municipality of Vlorë, Municipality of Qendër Fier,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Durrës (Audio Library), Municipality of Maminas,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Kukës, Municipality of Vau i Dejës,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Laç, Municipality of Rrogozhinë,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Delvinë, Municipality of Berat,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipality of Gjirokastër</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foster Care
- Biological and social orphans; 10%
- Children from families living in extreme poverty
  Municipality of Tiranë
  Municipality of Shkodër
  (Every child)

Adoptions
- Biological orphans 0%

Psycho-social services
- Abuse children 25%
  Municipality of Tiranë
  Municipality of Shkodër
  Municipalityof Vlorë
  Municipality of Durrës
  Municipality of Berat

Training services
- Young people returned from emigration; 15%
- Boys and girls at risk from trafficking and exploitation;
- Young people with criminal record.
  Municipality of Tiranë
  Municipality of Vlorë
  Municipality of Vau i Dejës

Source of information: Social Services Delivery Project, 2008

From the statistical point of view, the results of the survey for this category show that 72% of children and young people who have benefited from services rendered by projects established under the SSS program are poor. Of this category, 46% are children from families on economic aid, or unemployment benefits schemes. In addition the survey showed that 92% of beneficiaries in this category live in urban, or peri-urban areas, and only 8% in the rural area. 22% of beneficiary children and young people live in informal areas.

Table No. 2.4: Number of children benefiting from community services under the SSS program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Phase I</th>
<th>Phase II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>3012</td>
<td>1515</td>
<td>1479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young People</td>
<td>6058</td>
<td>1069</td>
<td>4989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled People</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and Households</td>
<td>7405</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>5705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly</td>
<td>6175</td>
<td>1455</td>
<td>4720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>25400</strong></td>
<td><strong>6589</strong></td>
<td><strong>18811</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 Asked about the economic status of their families, these children respond that they are poor.
The national line for children (116) is the most recent community service designed to create an enabling environment for the implementation of their right to social protection.

The National Children’s Line for in Albania is an initiative of UNICEF Albania in cooperation with the Center for Protection of Children’s Rights (CRCA/DCI Albania). This line was established to provide psycho-social counseling to children over telephone, to refer children to the relevant structures such as the units for children’s protection at the municipality level and various NGO-s, as well as to listen to complaints by children who have no other possibility to express them.

The National Children’s Line can be accessed by dialing 116. This number has been made available by the Authority of Postal and Electronic Communications by Decision No. 207/3 date 25.02.2009. It represents a pan-European number similar to police and emergency numbers. The line is available to children free of charge 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The following sections present progress towards the implementation of the right to social protection according to groups considered to be excluded, or at risk of exclusion.

2.2.1 Children of poor families

Children’s vulnerability to poverty and its consequences depends on household typology, place of residence, ethnic origin, health condition of the child, etc. According to the LSMS 2002, about 32.8 % of children (293,000) lived under the minimal living standard, and according to the LSMS 2005, about 245,000 or 24.7 % of children lived in poverty. However, poverty levels continue to be high and poverty reduction is accompanied also reduction of numbers of children inflicted by poverty.

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12 LSMS-INSTAT -2002
A survey carried out jointly by INSTAT, UNDP and WB experts (published in April 2009) showed that Albania experienced a substantial reduction of poverty over 2005-2008. The survey is based on data collected through the LSMS and involved household samples representative of the entire population. The questionnaires that were carried out over April-June 2002, May-June 2005 and June-August 2008, involved approximately 3,600 families. Data for 2008 showed that 12.4 % of the population was poor, in comparison with 18.5% in 2005, and 25.4% in 2002. This shows that about 200,000 people of about 575,000 who were poor in 2005 have come out of poverty over 2005-2008. Poverty is defined as the inability of individuals to spend at least 5722 leks per capita monthly in 2008 (or 4891 leks per capita monthly in 2002). However, data showed a tangible slow-down of poverty reduction in the mountainous areas, where poverty continues to display the highest levels with only insignificant reduction rates since 2005. Approximately 3.5% of the Albanians continue to live in extreme poverty (with less than one USD per day) and there is substantial inequality between the rural and urban areas. Economic growth rates, economic reform, macroeconomic stability, good governance, increased investments in the private sector, improved social service delivery (education, health and social protection), along with efforts to enhance and upgrade infrastructure should continue at high rates in order to contribute to poverty reduction in the future. There is visible need to concentrate efforts to promote development in the mountainous part of the country, in order to achieve faster rates of poverty reduction in the short to mid term future.

An analysis of poverty indicators in terms of rural/urban areas reveals that poverty is worse among children living in the remote rural areas, children with unemployed parents, children of households headed by women and children of families with more than three children. The government is trying to address regional inequalities and the needs of vulnerable people through strategies which have attained remarkable results, in particular relative to poverty reduction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 2002</th>
<th>Year 2005</th>
<th>Changes in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albani</td>
<td>25,4</td>
<td>22,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 INSTAT- LSMS, Tiranë 2002
### 2.2.2 Abused Children and Children Inflicted by Violence

In accordance with Law No. 9669 “On measures against domestic violence”, in 2008, the relevant authorities kept accurate data of instances of domestic violence, including violence against minors. Data reported by the State Police showed that during 2008 there were about 822 cases of domestic violence, of which 76 cases involved people under 18 years of age.

#### Table No. 2.6: Minors inflicted by domestic violence, in 2008

| Minors inflicted by domestic violence, in 2008 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Murder          | Homicide        | Intentional serious harm | Intentional light damage | Sexual relations | Obscene acts | Abandonment | Withdrawal of living means | Child abduction | Coexistence under coercion | Intimidation | Destruction of property | Other offences (articles 90; 91; 92; 120; 261) | Total |
| 1               | 18              | 2                | 1                | 8               | 2              | 2              | 1              | 2              | 1               | 2              | 4              | 32              | 76              |

*Source: General Police Directorate*

In order to increase institutional capacities of police forces towards implementation and protection of children’s rights and in order to strictly enforce accompanying procedures, questioning procedures, child treatment in police facilities as well as increase police awareness to child related issues, the General Police Directorate, in partnership with the Minors’ Clinic, held in September 2008 2 training sessions with police staff in the regions of Tiranë, Shkodër, Korçë, Vlorë, Fier, Gjirokastër, Lezhë, Elbasan, Dibër, Berat and Durrës.

During 2008, training was provided for 984 employees from the institutions with direct responsibility to implement the law “On measures against domestic violence” and the National Strategy on Gender Equality and Fight against Domestic Violence, including (i)

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14 UNDP Project: “Domestic violence – not simply a family problem”.
health workers (doctors, nurses and midwives); (ii) police members; and (iii) judges and prosecutors. The training was financially supported by UNDP.

In addition, over 2009-2010, UNFPA in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and with the National Center for Social Studies, is working to prepare the manual “On victims of gender violence”. The manual will also cover child issues and will be used to train 1,800 employees of the primary health care system allover the country to deal with victims of violence (women and children).

A large number of studies focus on violence against children in the family, the school, or in the residential facilities. The studies employ various methodologies to determine the levels of violence against children. However, all studies converge on the same point, namely that the environment in which children are raised is filled violence.

2.2.3 Children of the Roma minority

The National Action Plan to implement the Roma Decade has been recently approved. The formulation of this document is the outcome of a process coordinated and lead by the TSC at the MLSAEo.

In addition, the progress report on the National Strategy on Improving the Living Conditions of the Roma Minority has been publish for the first time both in Albanian and in English and is being made available to every local and central government unit. To protect the Roma Community, the following measures have been taken:

- Integration of the Roma children in the mainstream life by establishing day care centers which also serve as school facilities for these children;
- Systematic controls by the State Labor Inspectorate with regard to Roma children involved in black labor;
- Building awareness of Roma community of their right to benefit from economic aid schemes, unemployment benefit, maternal leave, etc.
- Support to Roma organizations through: (i) identification and registration of Roma NGO-s involved in social affairs; (ii) creation of a Roma NGO network; (iii) strengthening of NGO cooperation with various governmental entities.

The assessment arrived at the conclusion that children of the Roma community have access to all social services, but they need more information and awareness building in order to benefit from these services.

2.2.4 Children obliged to work

Charged with supervision of the implementation of the labor legislation by the relevant entities, the State Labor Inspectorate has carried out the inspection of the various subjects employing children. Inspections carried out across the entire country in 2008 identified
540 children under the age of 18 employed in the formal sector. The largest number of these children are employed in the production enterprises. More specifically, about 40% of the working children are employed in the fish processing enterprises, 30% in the shoe production sector, in the clothing sector about 23% and in the construction sector about 7%. Girls represent 89.2% and boys represent 10.8% of working children.

It should be noted that there is increased awareness of the governmental entities as well as of the private undertakers with regard to implementing legislation designed to protect working children. The Institute of Public Health has held round tables to discuss issues related to working children. These events have been attended by representatives of syndicates and confederates of employers and employees.

As part of changes to be made to the Labor Code, a DCM has been approved on compulsory medical examinations for employees under 18 years. The new Law on Safety and Health at Work contains special provisions on children’s protection and prevention of work accidents and professional diseases.

Important part of the National Program on Elimination of Child Labor which is being implemented currently by the MLSAEPO, is also the project on establishing a monitoring system on children’s labor in Albania. The second phase of the project was approved in February 2009. The project is being implemented in Tiranë, Korçë, Berat, Elbasan and Shkodër. Under the project various measures have been taken such as withdrawal from work, re-integration of children in school and prevention of the phenomenon of child labor. The project is designed to progressively eliminate the worst forms of child labor in Albania and will propose to the government the model of the “Monitoring system of child labor” which has been tested in five cities. As a result, 315 children involved in the worst forms of labor, mainly children working on the street, in agriculture, children afflicted by violence and children at risk of trafficking and sexual exploitation will be withdrawn from such situations. The targeted children will be monitored until their integration is secure. This project is designed to provide:

- formal and non-formal education with specialized teachers and teaching materials for 265 children;
- vocational training for 3-6 months; a working license for 50 children who have attained working age;
- tool kits for 15 children who have attended and completed vocational training to enable them to start up a business and help their own families;
- opportunities for vocational training for the adult members of the family, including parents, in the case of households benefiting from the project on provided they return children to school;
- information to 300 parents on the existing social assistance schemes, building awareness on consequences of child labor and on the need to take concrete steps to protect their children;
- counseling services for every child including psycho-social counseling, legal counseling, carrier counseling, re-creational activities, support to benefit from available services, health care, etc.
2.3 Public expenditure in the social protection sector, in particular for children - expenditure trend

**Table No. 2.7: Allocations for economic aid to households (2006-2009)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Allocations (in billion leks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Processed from MLSAEO administrative data*

**Table No. 2.8: Allocations to public foster care and development centers for children (2005-2009)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget over years (in 000/lek)</th>
<th>(in 000/lek)</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Institutions for Children</td>
<td>27,531</td>
<td>36,920</td>
<td>27,200</td>
<td>30,700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Centers</td>
<td>52,358</td>
<td>53,280</td>
<td>53,500</td>
<td>62,400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: SSS*

**Table No. 2.9: Public expenditure towards implementing the right to special care for children from poor families (2006-2008)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Economic aid (in 000 leks)</th>
<th>No. of beneficiary households</th>
<th>No. of persons in these households</th>
<th>No. of children in these households</th>
<th>Budget for children (in 000 leks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d = c * 4.2</td>
<td>e = c * 2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
<td>115,000</td>
<td>483,000</td>
<td>253,000</td>
<td>1,466,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2,600,000</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>462,000</td>
<td>242,000</td>
<td>1,361,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3,300,000</td>
<td>93,000</td>
<td>390,600</td>
<td>204,600</td>
<td>1,728,571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ministry of Finance, 2006-2008*

In addition to government’s budget, the founding of social services for children has been a considered a priority by donors, too. In the field of social services, “The Social Services Delivery Project” was designed to establish community based services for groups in need, such as women, children, elderly, disabled people, etc. The costs for this project were shared by (i) World Bank Loan with 10 million USD; (ii) 2.5 million USD
contributed by the British Government Grant (DFID); (iii) and 2.5 millions USD by the Albanian Government.

Terre Des Hommes Foundation has contributed considerably to these efforts. Since 2001 up until presently, this Foundation has been contributing to the Transnational Action against Child Trafficking (TACT) in Albania. Over the years the project has drawn the support of other donors such as USAID, UNICEF, Austrian Development Agency, Hellenic Aid, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oak Foundation, SIDA, etc.

TACT III has been implemented over June 2006 – September 2009 with funding at 3.3 million USD. The main directions of TACT III intervention were:

- identification of children inflicted by trafficking, or at risk of trafficking over Albania – Greece pathways and Albanian communities’ locations;
- capacity building at central and local level to fight against child trafficking;
- strengthening Roma and Egyptians communities to control child trafficking from these communities;
- technical assistance to improve governmental policies in relation to child protection.

Resources spent to provide direct support to trafficked children and children at risk of trafficking and their families have been as follows:

- 2006 68,264 USD;
- 2007 105,547 USD;
- 2008 82,719 USD.

1. Project: “Improving the capacities of the MLSAEO in the fight against child labor in Albania”.

ILO/IPEC contribution: 18.285 USD
MLSAEO contribution: 14.000 USD (in kind)

2. Project: “Strengthening the capacities of labor inspectors to fight against the worst forms of child labor”.

ILO/IPEC contribution: 22.700 USD
MLSAEO contribution: 17.000 USD (in kind)

3. Project: “Reviewing legislation on child labor in order to harmonize national laws with international standards”.

ILO/IPEC contribution: 3 500 USD
UNICEF contribution: 2 000 USD

4. Project: “National policies to combat child labor and eliminate its worst forms”.

ILO/IPEC contribution: 20.000 USD
MLSAEO contribution: 23.355 USD

5. Project: “Monitoring system of child labor”, first phase April 2005-February 2007. The project was desinged to institutionalise child labor, to identify, review and report achievements and obstacles in the fight against harmful forms of child labor and child exploitation; the strengthening of capacities at the central and local level; the piloting of the project at community level in three regions: Tiranë, Korçë, Berat; and identification of best practice.

ILO/IPEC contribution: 61.855 USD
MLSAEO contribution: 59.000 USD (in kind)


ILO/IPEC contribution: 6.746.200 Leks
MLSAEO contribution: 1.127.000 Leks (in kind)

The budget for foster care pilots in the regions of Tiranë and Shkodër is estimated at 10 millions leks per year. The extension of the service to other regions will require additional resources. The amount allocated for every child placed in foster care is 3 USD per day, or 50% greater than the poverty line.

2.4 Assessment findings

With reference to the matrix of the SSS measures, it can be affirmed that action taken to improve the legal framework responds to the strategic objectives and priorities under the National Children’s Strategy and Action Plan.

Institutional improvements with regard to children’s right to social care and protection have been effected at the central, regional and local level. New structures have been established to (i) assess community needs for social services; (ii) monitor the implementation of standards for supplied services; (iii) train service providers.

The Law on “Social assistance and social services”, expanded the basis of beneficiary groups and created the necessary space for decentralization and improvement of local government capacity and civil society participation in social service provision.

In addition, steps have been taken to improve the legal framework of the economic aid and social services schemes in order to provide support and care to individuals and groups in need because of limited economic, physical, psychological and social opportunities, including children.
The legal framework establishes a range of significant principles such as decentralization and deinstitutionalization of social services towards introducing new typologies of services and sustainable models.

At the central level, adequate structures have been established to regulate and monitor social service delivery. Also, overall managerial units have been created to communicate with the public, plan services and formulate relevant budgets. At the regional level, the region’s offices are actually capable of developing regional plans for community care, effectively managing the services and monitoring provision by public and non-public operators.

A contemporary system of standards for social services has been put in place. Over 2005-2006, the Council of Ministers approved the General Standards for Social Services, and the Standards for Special Categories, such as children, elderly, women, disabled people, etc.

The SSS project was successful in creating a model for the extension and delivery of services at community level in order to ensure the geographical coverage of all parts of the country.

Civil society in general, and NGO-s in particular, are important subjects in the delivery of services for children, including children’s protection. The assessment noted that civil society experiences have been taken into account during priority setting in the social service strategies, and in establishing standards for these services, thanks to which the creation of best practice models has been enabled for certain categories.

Data showed that 80% of children benefiting from the network of public and non-public institutions have received treatment in non-residential facilities. This is an indicator of the positive trend of deinstitutionalization of services and the gradual increase of the weight of non-residential care.

The system of social protection aims at providing services to all individuals in need towards their integration into mainstream life, i.e. towards creating a National System of Sustainable Social Care Services.

2.5 Recommendations

The economic aid program should address children’s needs and impact, in a tangible way, the reduction of poverty and prevention of negative social phenomena affecting children. The economic aid program should be reviewed in order to pay due attention to children’s needs and condition social benefits with implementation of children’s rights by the beneficiary families.
The local government units should make additional efforts to take over financial responsibility, the task of reforming residential institutions and establishing new services to respond to the dynamics of children’s needs at community level.

It is of primary importance to operationalise the social service structures at the Region, as an indispensable measure to implement assessment and monitoring tasks with regard to poverty at regional level, creation of a data base of groups in need, poor families and individuals who are in need of social services. They are also necessary to conduct need assessments and to establish new services in accordance with possibilities and resources.

In addition, greater efforts should be made to increase coordination among local governments, NGO-s and donors towards implementing the “home-family” model and ensure the sustainability of this model following extension in all parts of the country.

The relevant authorities should work to decrease the rate of penal offences by individuals under 14 years of age and increasingly apply alternative punishment.

Local government units should take over the cost of community services established by the social services delivery project, in order to guarantee sustainability of these services.

Devinfo methodology should become increasingly an effective tool to collect and process social and economic data and disseminate it to all stakeholders.

Establish specialized centers for victims of domestic violence (children and women) at the local level, since the services provided by NGO-s for these victims are insufficient and do not ensure national coverage.

Central and local allocations for social protection and social care policies directed at children should be guided by careful assessment of actual needs.

Integration of excluded children in mainstream life is a target for the entire society to be mobilized. In particular, the government and the MLSAEIO should make increased efforts to build the awareness of the entire society in order to turn the costs of re-integration into real social and economic returns.

Child labor and all forms of child exploitation should be at the focus of national policies in order to combat this phenomenon which impedes the rights of the child (for survival, development, protection and participation).

The framework law on the rights of the child should be passed by the parliament and the mechanism for the protection of children’s rights should be institutionalized, both at central at local level.

Custody care should be the number-one alternative in order to protect the best interest of the child.
The quality of residential care facilities for children should be improved.

In order to identify special needs children at an early stage, specialized services for children should be extended to the rural parts of the country.
Chapter III: THE RIGHT FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

The long term direction of educational policy, as determined by the Ministry of Education and Science, is the development of an education system in accordance with European educational standards. The main objectives of pre-university education are formulated in the National Strategy for the Development of Pre-university Education 2004-2015 (Adopted by DCM No. 538, date 12.08.2004). This document states that the main targets to be attained are: access to all levels of education, curricular and structural reform of pre-university education and the lengthening of compulsory education from 8 to 9 years. These objectives are in line with the NCS objectives which underline the need for a quality and inclusive education.

The year 2008-2009, marked the transition of the 8 year education into the 9 year system and of the 4 year secondary education into the 3 year secondary system. This measure was designed to better implement the right to education by increasing the years of compulsory schooling. The transition to the 9 year system was accompanied by a reform of curricular programs and the liberalization of textbook production. The new curricular framework reflects the necessary changes effected by the 9 year system and creates space for 10% of the curricula to be designed at school level. This measure enables schools and students to implement annual activities based on projects that address the needs and interests of students. In order to be implemented, this new policy requires the training of teachers, which is now a three year policy at the focus of attention of the Ministry of Education and Science. Thanks to this policy, teachers of all cycles will be trained to implement the new curricula.

Textbook liberalization is one of the reforms designed to promote competition in textbook production as a measure to improve quality and supply alternative textbooks for selection at school level. Alternative textbooks are now available for all subjects taught at pre-university level. As a leap forward, alternative textbooks represent an important measure towards improving the quality of teaching and learning, but at the same time it requires careful monitoring by MoES.

Enrolment rate in compulsory education for 2008 was 94%, and 70% in secondary education. Overcrowding of classrooms remains a problem. In 2008, the number of students in compulsory education was 27 per classroom in comparison to 22 in 2007, whereas in secondary education the number is 30. The ratio student/teacher in the 9 year system remains unchanged: 17, while at secondary education the ratio has improved to 16 students/one teacher in 2008, in comparison to 20/1 in 2007.

Public investments for re-construction, building of new schools, equipment with teaching materials and other capital expenditures have grown to 6 billion leks, up from 4 billion in 2008. This indicates a positive development towards attaining the established standards for school construction and school rehabilitation. However there have been a number of cases of poor hygiene and sanitary conditions and lack of safety in certain schools and kindergartens, in particular in the rural and northern parts of the country.
In 2008, enrolment rate in pre-school education was 53%, a non satisfactory figure which has remained almost the same in the last five years. MoES policy to promote preparatory classes at pre-school level for children 5-6 years was experimented in several schools in 2008. However, greater attention should be paid to the education of 5-6 years old children in order to prepare them for an easy transition to lower elementary education. The implementation of this policy will result in an increase of schooling years and at the same time requires the training and preparation of teachers, improvement of school facilities (classrooms, toilets, etc.) to accommodate the needs of 5-6 year old children.

Inclusion of the average child in compulsory education remains an objective still to be attained by the MoES. National dropout rate is 0.86% and in the rural areas is lightly higher, 1.1%.

Despite the continuous efforts of MoES, inclusion of Roma and disabled children in education continues to remain a critical issue. The education level of these categories is very low and teacher training for these categories is inadequate, as a result of which these children are exposed to social stigma.

Improved access by children to ICT is an important objective of the government, in particular MoES and the NCS. Under the ICT project, with a considerable budget of 59 million Euros, computer labs have been established at all secondary schools in the country and the equipment of elementary schools with computer labs is underway. In 2009, the ratio student/computer is 15/1 compared to 61/1 in 2007.

### 3.1 Budget expenditures to ensure the right to education

Below is a table showing MoES allocations. The greatest part of MoES budget goes to pre-university education. Data show that MoES budgets have increased from year to year, both in absolute and percentage terms, in relation to budget expenditures and the GDP. However, the 3.5% of the GDP allocated to education is low vis-à-vis MoES challenges to implement European standards in Albania’s education system.

#### Table No. 3.1: MoES budget

(2004-2009, in leks)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MoES budget</td>
<td>23,976,857</td>
<td>25,440,000</td>
<td>26,188,115</td>
<td>29,752,145</td>
<td>37,008,924</td>
<td>41,464,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-university education budget</td>
<td>19,891,971</td>
<td>20,577,130</td>
<td>21,184,769</td>
<td>24,209,198</td>
<td>29,646,973</td>
<td>31,264,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-university budget in % to MoES budget</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP (in)</td>
<td>795,035,050</td>
<td>836,879,000</td>
<td>899,700,000</td>
<td>982,200,000</td>
<td>1,180,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3.2 Objectives of the National Children’s Strategy in relation to the implementation of the right to quality education

**Objective 1:** Reformation and strengthening of management capacity in the education system.

**Objective 2:** Improvement of the quality of teaching and learning.

3.3 Assessment of the implementation of objectives under the National Children’s Strategy in relation to the implementation of the right to quality education

**Objective 1:** Reformation and strengthening of management capacities in the educational system

3.3.1 Ensuring a quality and inclusive education system

For the purpose of the early identification of disabled children and their individualized treatment, MoES in cooperation with Save the Children is working in 6 Regional Educational Directorates in Tiranë, Elbasan, Berat, Shkodër, Vlorë, Gjirokastër and Korçë. The project is being implemented in 34 nine-year schools and 27 kindergartens. Individualized treatment is provided to 343 disabled children in elementary school and 219 children of kindergarten age.

In the current year, 4 new schools and 4 new kindergartens were build in Gjirokastër; 3 schools and 3 kindergartens in Korçë; and 5 new schools and 5 new kindergartens in Vlorë.

New educational curricula have been designed for all grades of compulsory education for minority children.
According to the survey “Educational Situation of Roma Children in Albania” (2007), carried out by the Center for Human Development, only 27% of 6 year old Roma children attend the first grade and 13.5% of Roma children aged 3-5 years attend preschool education. Currently, 54% of Roma children in the age of compulsory education (6-16 years) have not completed any grade. Enrollment rate of school-age Roma children is low and the quality of education that Roma children receive is considerably lower than that of non-Roma children. The reasons for Roma children dropping out of school, or their irregular attendance, are: non-registration of Roma children at the time of birth, emigration, employment, or helping parents with their jobs, lack of knowledge of the Albanian language, poor achievement, stigma to resume school after long periods of interruption, the tradition of confining teenage girls at home, low parental support for school work, lack of material and financial resources, etc.

In accordance with these data, and according the MoES study “Education Situation of Roma Children in Albania” the education of Roma children is highly unsatisfactory. For all these reasons, all RED-s and EO-s have drafted plans towards the inclusion of Roma children in kindergartens and schools.

With MoES and donors resources, kindergartens have been established in Fier, Korçë, and Berat. In addition, Roma children’s attendance of kindergartens and schools is being addressed on priority bases. In accordance with MoES Instruction No.32, date 28.08.2008, “The reduction of the number of students who have dropped out, or are at risk of dropping out of school”, in the academic year 2008–2009 all RED-s/EO-s are working to design special training programs for teachers dealing with marginalized students in order to improve their capacities to address their specific problems. RED-s/EO-s have the responsibility to report two times a year on drop out students and the rate of their return to school. MoES efforts in these directions are being supported by Save the Children, UNICEF, Help the Children, Albania’s and World’s Children, and other donors who have oriented their projects towards the Education of Roma children at all levels of pre-university education.

Under the project “Second Chance”, MoES allocates resources to support teachers dealing with students who have dropped out of school, or are at risk of dropping out. In every part of the country, there are classes of students who have resumed school thanks to this project. These classes are attended by a total of 513 students aged 10–15.

In order to improve protection of the right to education for children of all categories, MoES is reviewing the law on pre-university education and all secondary legislation related to school operations.

3.3.2 Implementation of children’s rights at school level
Human rights education is being piloted in 37 regions. Schools implementing the human rights curricula improve their activity from year to year. The new experiences born out of this project and other projects, are being collected and processed in order to be extended to other schools. Such was the case of the UNESCO supported project “Democracy and Rights Education”.

Human rights education is made part of the core curricula, which means that subjects such as knowledge on society, foreign language, history, geography, biology, arts, language, and others, include topics on children’s rights. In the current year schools have made use of the free hours to implement modules on human rights with emphasis on children’s rights.

The Institute of Curricula and Training has made special efforts to promote children’s participation in environmental protection under the project CLEEN, which has enabled the production of the module “Environmental Education at Elementary Level”. Under this project, children have implemented activities to protect and clean the environment at school and at community level.

RED-s/EO-s have turned into a tradition the holding of local competitions to promote knowledge of children’s rights and knowledge on other topics of civic education.

**Objective 2: Improving the quality of teaching and learning**

**3.3.3 Improving school facilities**

In 2009, MoES investment allocations (re-construction, building of new schools, purchase of equipment” increased to 6 billion leks up from for 4 billions leks in 2008. During the academic year 2008 and 2009, 116 kindergartens and schools were built, or rehabilitated, and 63 additional facilities are in the process of rehabilitation. Constructions and rehabilitation work implements the officially approved standards. However, there have been frequent cases of poor quality of both building materials and workmanship.

There is increased need to pay special attention to construction standards which should respect the needs of disabled children and children with special needs. Relevant authorities should make efforts to enforce these standards, whenever new facilities are built, or existing facilities are rehabilitated.

The report drafted by children over 16 years old of the situation with the implementation of children’s rights in the schools of Elbasan, Dibër and Durrës points to the lack of sports grounds and heating systems in the schools. Children in rural areas are faced with difficulties to progress to secondary education, due to absence of such schools in these areas.

**3.3.4 Improving curricula**
The year 2008-2009 is the year of the introduction of the reformed curricula in compulsory education. The new curriculum is made up of the core and elective curricula, which can be selected by students themselves. Elective curricula is made up of 2 tire subjects. In the first tire, belong the elective subjects and curricular projects, whereas the second tire includes extracurricular activities such as community actions, etc.

The curricular reform also created the opportunity for 10% of the subject-content to be designed by the school. This measure creates an opportunity for students and teachers to carry out activities such as projects and special programs in accordance with the needs and interests of the students and the community. The implementation of the new curricula is accompanied with intensive training of teachers.

At the end of the 2008-2009 academic year, for the first time, MoES will implement the Matura model for the school leaving examinations in order to ensure greater objectivity and transparency with regard to student achievement at the end of compulsory education. In the framework of action taken to reform the curricular framework of general secondary schools, the main reform documents have been drafted, such as “General Education Curricular Framework”, “Standards of Curricular and Subject Fields”, and “Teaching Programs for grade 10”.

In accordance with recommendations of the Geneva Committee on pre-school policies, in particular, the inclusion of children aged 5-6 in a preparatory year of the compulsory education, 13 RED-s and 2 EO-s have established 50 preparatory classes at their 9 year schools. These classes are attended by 1300 children of 5-6 years. In the academic year 2009-2010, 50 additional preparatory classes will be established. Currently, 63% of 5-6 year children and 50% of 3-5 year children are enrolled in kindergarten.

### 3.3.5 Improving children’s access to information technology

Under the project of information and communication technology, all secondary schools in the country are equipped with computer labs, a total of 379 labs. Furthermore, 37 secondary schools have 2 computer labs.

In the academic year 2008-2009, 9 year schools received 6,600 personal computers in 665 computers labs. 2000 mobile labs (1 laptop + 1 overhead projector +1 CD with multimedia teaching materials), with a value of about 1,000,000 Euros, are being made available for 1081 schools of pre-university education. In the year 2009, the ratio student/computer is 25/1 compared to 61/1 in 2007. One of MoES objectives under this project is promotion of multimedia in schools as a tool to improve teaching and learning. The content of digital programs will be enhanced with new teaching modules, which will be adapted in Albanian, and customized to the local curricula.
The Institute of Curricula and Standards is conducting the training of teachers on the use of virtual labs. To date, the Institute has trained over 700 teachers in Tiranë and other parts of the country.

3.3.6 Children’s participation in decision making at school level

The student’s government is the body which gives voice to student’s participation in decision making. Under the various modules in the extracurricular classes, the teachers listen to the students’ opinions on the topics under discussion.

In order to strengthen students’ participation, the MoES Instructional Circular on the new academic year, places emphasis on the need for student governments to function normally. Therefore, each RED/EO should assign one employee to cover the activity of student governments. The new draft law on the pre-university education will contain new articles towards the strengthening of student governments and creating an enabling environment for their activity, on the basis of lessons learned under the pilot projects.

In cooperation with Save the Children, MoES continues to train teachers, school principals and representatives of student governments in order to improve and strengthen SG activity at school and community level.

In 2009, the second phase of the project CLEEN continued its implementation. Funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands, the project is a joint initiative of MoES, the Ministry of Environment and UNICEF. It is implemented in 240 schools in the regions of Durrës, Shkodër, Lezhë, Tiranë, and Korçë and as of presently has provided training for 650 teachers. The project has currently entered the phase in which students, teachers and communities will work together on a project to clean the environment through waste recycling. The implementation of this project is creating positive models for students’ participation in the life of communities.

The student governments have encouraged the participation of 15,000 Roma and disabled children in such activities. The children have been involved in the decision making processes at school level to improve the environment, resolve conflicts, reduce drop out rate, and include all children in extracurricular activities.

In addition, with support of Save the Children a supplement to the National Journal, “The Teacher” has been published for children and young people. In this supplement, published monthly, children comment on the situation of their rights, the issues they are faced with and promote understanding of their right to participation.

3.3.7 Upgrading teacher training

Along with the implementation of the new curricula in compulsory and secondary education, the Institute of Curricula and Training (ICT) has provided training for teachers
of pre-university level. In addition, to help teachers implement the new curricula, the ICT has published 32 manuals, including modules for school principals; 17 publications covering all subjects of pre-university education; the curricular framework of general secondary education; learning standards for general education students; etc.

“Teaching experiences from western countries”, a compendium of teaching plans from advanced countries in a number of subjects, has been considered to be very helpful for teachers.

The process of reforming the pre-university teachers’ career has entered its third year of implementation. The procedures for institutionalization of teacher training at the local level have been approved in the current year. For every teacher, provisions have been made to cover their training at all levels. ICT and other agencies have drafted training programs and modules which are core to teacher training. A needs assessment has been conducted through which every teacher, even in the most remote part of the country, has been able to express his/her needs based on which the RED-s and EO-s will provide training.

Teacher portfolios have been created for all cycles. 2436 teacher from all cycles of pre-university education in 13 RED-s have been tested. Teachers who will pass successfully the test, will be awarded a certificate which will make them eligible for salary increase. This qualification is intended to match teachers’ qualifications with the new curricular framework.

In 2008, 400 teachers were trained on child centered methodologies, with particular emphasis on the education of children with learning difficulties. It is estimated that the new teaching methods will benefit 85,000 children. Jointly with the Institute of Curricula and Standards, a seminar has been organized with the participation of principals, deputy principals, and representatives of student governments to draft school development plans, in order to ensure a more efficient management at school level.

MoES in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Kosovë continues to train teachers who work with Albanian children in the Diaspora and is committed to designing curricula and text books for these children.

3.4 Assessment findings

Reform of the 9 year educational system involves curricula improvement, textbook liberalization, infrastructure improvement and teacher training. The respondents think that the new curricula is properly designed and provides opportunities for participation of children, teachers and community members in the design of the 10% portion, which gives an opportunity to the school to connect with the needs of the students and communities. However, since this is the first year of implementation of the new curricula, there is ample room for improvements in the coming years.
Interviewed children think positively of the reform, but at the same time express concern that they are over loaded and the curricula contains material which is difficult for them to understand.

Curricula changes should be supported by other changes at school level. According to the respondents, the new curricula may not find full implementation due to lack of infrastructural facilities. For example, some of the vocational modules can not be implemented due to lack of equipment and materials at school level. Therefore, the schools should make efforts to improve their labs, libraries, workshops and other facilities necessary to implement the new requirements.

According to MoES, the budget line for school infrastructure improvements has been increased in 2009. The newly built schools and the rehabilitated facilities are under the obligation to comply with the new construction standards adopted by MoES. Improvement of educational infrastructure impacts directly on the daily lives of children in school and it is one of the issues about which teachers and students think that further substantial and qualitative improvement are needed.

The improvement of hygiene conditions, installment of heating systems, creation of sports grounds and green spots are the main requests expressed by the respondents. They affirmed that these requests have been submitted to LGUs and central authorities.

Improved access to ICT is considered as an important achievement. Computer labs are established at a large number of schools, almost all over the country. However, children’s access to such facilities and use of ICT remains limited. Internet connection in the rural areas is sporadic and computer teachers do not possess the necessary qualifications to teach the subject.

The Altertext reform has aroused a lot of discussion in the public and the media, especially as regards the quality of the textbooks. The respondents think that there should be greater involvement of subject specialists in the process of textbook selection and it should not be left to school teachers alone.

In relation to the impact of educational reforms on the quality of teaching and learning over 2006–2009, the respondents answered that a positive impact has been made through teacher training efforts. The teachers’ qualifications have been brought in line with the teaching requirements, as a result of which the greatest number of teachers are qualified for the subject they teach.

The institutionalization of teacher training at local level started this year. Training costs have been provided for every individual teacher. The ICT and other relevant entities have drafted training programs and core modules for teacher training. However, teachers say that they need further training, in particular in relation to designing the modules for elective subjects, or to design school projects.
Students think that in addition to improving teachers’ knowledge on the subject matter, teaching methods also need to be improved in order for the students to be actively involved and not remain in the position of passive listeners.

Students are concerned about private tutoring by subject teachers. They worry that non-attendance of private lessons may result in teachers giving them lower grades.

Verbal and emotional violence is encountered often in schools, whereas physical violence is rare.

Psychological service at school level is a positive development, appreciated by both students and teachers. However, the number of such professionals is limited. There is one psychologist for three schools, which overloads the professional and does not provide an opportunity for all children to be treated. The psychologists are forced to select the most difficult cases, mostly referred by teachers, and this prevents children from approaching the psychologist on their own initiative. As a result, students may only have a spontaneous opportunity to receive counseling from the psychologist about their daily concerns. Under these circumstances, mutual trust between the student and the psychologist is difficult to establish and students miss the opportunity to benefit from the service.

To support neglected children and those who had previously dropped compulsory education, MoES has launched a new initiative called “Zero drop out at 9 year education”. In addition to NGO projects, MoES is also implementing the project “Second Chance”, which has been positively rated by beneficiary students. However, respondents complain that the project is not implemented all over the country and that children who are educated through this project are not matriculated and do not receive the relevant grade completion certificates. In addition, there are cases when the project employs teachers without the necessary qualifications.

To support Roma children’s participation in school, MoES has authorized school enrollment for this category even in the absence of birth certificates. In cooperation with some of the municipalities, MoES provides these children with textbooks and teaching materials.

To address cases of child abuse, or child negligence, the school works together with the municipality employee responsible for child protection (in those municipalities where there is such a structure). In certain cases, the municipality and the schools have worked together to hold awareness activities related to children’s rights. This is a remarkable positive experience of institutions working together at the local level to improve the implementation of these rights.

In general, the respondents think that educational reform is focused on the right directions and recommend that reformation efforts be increased.
Furthermore, respondents think that NCS objectives on the implementation of the right to quality education are fully in line with the educational reform, the main directions of which are curricular improvement, infrastructure upgrading, increased ICT access and teacher training. The respondents think that this is the right path towards improving educational quality and recommend that these four pillars be strengthened in the future.

3.5 Recommendations

The policy of involving children in the process of designing annual curricula should be enshrined in relevant by laws in order to make sure that they participate actively in the efforts to draft curricula and teaching plans.

Curricula and textbooks should be reviewed to bring education closer to children’s needs and interests.

Measures should be taken to improve teaching by upgrading teachers’ qualifications both with regard to subject matter and teaching methodologies, in particular with regard to the implementation of children’s rights.

Integration programs should be launched at school and community level in order to effectuate zero tolerance to the drop out phenomenon.

New policies under the educational reform should be accompanied with the necessary changes of the school infrastructure and with teacher training to respond to the new curricula requirements and to implement the new teaching methods.

There is a need to strengthen communication and transparency of LGU-s with children and interest groups with a stake in educational policies at regional level.

Cooperation between/among institutions at local level should be strengthened in order to better respond to children’s needs in general and to children in need, in particular, in order to ensure an inclusive education for all children. Support for Roma children and children in need, together with their families, should be strengthened and made effective.

Measures should be taken to improve school infrastructure in rural areas in order to make sure that teaching and learning are conducted with adequate standards. Secondary schools should be established in these areas in order to provide rural children with access to progressive education.

As part of the efforts to improve school infrastructure, sports grounds and indoor facilities should be created at every school in order to provide for appropriate conditions for children’s physical education. Measures should be taken to improve hygiene and sanitary conditions and to install heating systems. The implementation of construction standards should be strictly monitored in order to provide the necessary conditions for disabled children.
There is a need to increase the number of psychologist in the schools. The working load for these professionals should be reviewed in order to make it fully beneficial for students.

The process of reforming teachers’ career should continue as one of the key measures to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

CHAPTER IV: THE RIGHT TO SURVIVAL AND HEALTH CARE

The right to health care is one of the fundamental human rights. The Albanian government defines protection of this right as one of its priorities and has made it a central issue of its main relevant strategic documents: (i) the Strategy for Development and Integration (ii) National Children’s Strategy. The review of the Action Plan of NCS 2008-2010, provided the opportunity to establish monitorable indicators for the NCS in relation to the implementation of the right to survival and health care.

The right to health care is assessed through the implementation of the following objectives:
1. Reduce under five mortality rate to 10/1000 live births in 2015.
2. Educate 90% of the population on the principles of oral hygiene and provide 90% of the population 0-6 years with fluoride until the year 2015.
3. Ensure 100% vaccine coverage and 95% immunization rate for the entire population.

Assessment of progress towards attainment of objectives for 2008-2009 shows tangible improvement in relation to implementation of the right to health care. The improvement is evidenced by the reduction of infant mortality rate, and increased provision of mother and child care which are supported by increased allocations over 2008-2009. Over this period, monitoring and assessment units were established at the regional level. As part of primary health care, family planning protocols have been finalized.

Under the health system reform, health security contributions have been used to cover health care services received at hospital level. The compulsory health care security contributions also cover general pediatric services and the whole list of children’s specialties.

The Strategy on Health Care Promotion, which includes objectives and activities to promote mother and child care, has been approved and is currently being reviewed and updated. MoH policies and strategies aim to improve mother and child care and to upgrade the quality of their life towards the progressive reduction of their disease and mortality rate. Over this period, child care interventions have aimed at:
• improvement and integration of mother and child care services at all three levels of the system;
• improvement of quality of mother and child care services at all three levels, through the unification of protocols related to mother and child care;
• improvement of capacities of health care personnel involved with mother and child care;
• strengthening and completing legal framework related to mother and child care;
• building awareness and knowledge of the society and stakeholders on mother and child health care.

All these interventions have underlined the fact that mother and child care is one of the main priorities of government policies. MoH recommendations on postbirth child care are focused both on care for mothers and children with priority on breast feeding and family planning.

Despite strong emphasis on healthy nutrition, with priority on children, healthy eating for the entire population remains a critical issue.

The new law, “On stomatological health care”, provides free stomatological care for children 0-18 years. Under this law the stomatological service has been equipped with new dental cabinets in all 12 regions of the country.

Albania is of the countries of the region with high vaccination rates. This has also been noted by WHO. For 2009, the polyvalent vaccine, a combination of 5 vaccines in one, was added to the compulsory vaccination scheme.

**4.1 Assessment of achievement in relation to the right to health care**

**Objective 1: Reduction of under 5 mortality to 10/1000 live births until 2015.**

Reduction of infant mortality rate is an indicator of wellbeing, quality services and awareness on the importance of mother and child care. Infant mortality rate is monitored by the MoH. In addition, the National Committee on Reproductive Health, established by Order of the Minister of Health, No.58, date 15.02.2008, is involved with the constant monitoring and assessment of the situation of reproductive health, in particular mother and child health, namely, maternal and infant disease and mortality rates. The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Health Minister and is made up of representatives of the main health institutions and line ministries involved with child affairs, such as the Ministry of Education and Science, MLSAEO, Ministry Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, and national and international organizations such as UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, USAID, UNFPA, etc.

Administrative data show that in comparison to 12 deaths per 1000 live births in 2007, the rate dropped to 11,1 deaths per 1000 live births in 2008. In the same year, maternal death rate was 20 per 100,000 live births.
According to the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) in Albania, neonatal, postnatal and infant mortality rates have dropped in the last 15 years. Infant mortality rate has been reduced by 50%, from 35 deaths per 1000 live births to 18 deaths per 1000 live births in the recent years. This figure is slightly higher than in some of the regional countries, but is lower than Armenia’s 26 per 1000 and Azerbaijan’s 50 per 1000\textsuperscript{15}.

MoH policies and strategies considered mother and child care to be an important issue and have made it corollary to reproductive health services in order to integrate reproductive health care services in all three levels of the health system with priority on the improvement of primary care services.

Over November-December 2008, the package of promotional services related to health education to be provided by health care centers in Albania was compiled. The package contains two programs:

- The program of training health personnel on education, counseling and information on mother and child care.
- Program on the topics that health care centers should promote with the parents, mothers, community members and children.

According to the package, mothers and children should receive information and prevention care on diseases mostly related to these categories.

The National Promotion Strategy was reviewed in 2008 in order to improve health care services, in particular mother and child care. The review or the strategy served as a basis for the drafting of the strategy to promote reproductive health, with particular emphasis on:

- Increased knowledge and competence of health care personnel on information, education, counseling and conservation, and/or improvement of mother and child health;
- Increased knowledge of mothers and children on the need to information, education and counseling to conserve, and/or improve their health;
- Inclusion in the school curricula of topics related to healthy behavior on the part of children;
- Training of teachers on issues of conservation and improvement of child health;
- Re-orientation of health services, in particular primary care services, towards patient information, education and counseling.

Promotional activities were carried out over June 2008-April 2009 by Promotional Department of the Institute of Public Health in the regions of Elbasan, Shkodër, Korçë and Tiranë in relation to mother and child care, family planning and other common issues. Leaflets on healthy pregnancies were also distributed to the relevant communities.

\textsuperscript{15} Albania Demographic and Health Survey 2008-2009.
DHS data show that care for pregnant women has improved. Of 81% of pregnant women who received medical examinations in 2002, the rate increased to 97% in 2008-2009, which is high in comparison with the regional countries.

The following table presents allocations to hospital care. Figures have grown from 2007 to 2008.

Table No. 4.1: Allocations to primary and hospital health care (2007 – 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 2007</th>
<th>Year 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Health Care</td>
<td>657,500</td>
<td>840,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Health Care</td>
<td>1,972,000</td>
<td>2,160,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,630,000</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MoH

An indicator of improvement is the increase of allocations to preventive care in relation to treatment care. The ratio between these services has been 46% for preventive care and 54% for treatment care. Over 2008-2009, the two systems received equal allocations. The budget for preventive services in 2008 was 28% higher than the budget for 2007.

As part of the continuing reform of the health system and coverage of hospital services under the health security scheme, DCM dated 29.12.2008 has been adopted on “The funding of hospital services by the compulsory health care security scheme”. This DCM includes general pediatric services offered by the public hospitals under the compulsory health care security scheme. Presently, MoH is designing the package of hospital services to be covered under the scheme. It is also reviewing hospital performance indicators, quality standards, determination of referral systems, definition of categories to be covered by the government budget (individuals without health insurance not to pay for hospital services such as children up to 18 years, pregnant women, retired people, etc.).

Over June 2008-April 2009, under the Program of the Integrated Management of Childhood Diseases, 40 family doctors and nurses were trained in the region of Tropoja and the program is currently being implemented in 15 villages and 5 communes of this region. In addition, volunteer teams have been established to work at family level on the education of mothers in relation to child health and upbringing.

In 2008, MoH jointly with the IPH with UNFPA support launched the Reproductive Health Magazine, which appears quarterly and features various articles on mother and child health and pregnancy issues, healthy eating, child development, puberty, adolescent problems, etc.
Another project of MoH for 2008-2010 is covered by the WHO and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and focuses on “Mother and Child Health Care Reform”. The project is designed to improve the health condition of women, babies and Albanian children through the strengthening of:

- Management capacities of MoH;
- Mother and child health care services at the primary and secondary levels;

To attain these objectives, interventions and activities will be carried out at national and regional level and will focus on:

- Reformation and restructuring of mother and child services;
- Improvement of the quality and sustainability of mother and child care;

At national level, interventions will focus on:

- Strengthening MoH capacities to monitor and manage mother and child health care;
- Reviewing and developing standards and instructions for mother and child care;
- Reviewing university and post-university curricula for child care;
- Strengthening continuous training and education for health personnel;
- Strengthening information systems on mother and child care as part of the national health care information systems.

At regional level, MoH has selected three regions to implement the pilots: Shkodër Region (Shkodër, Pukë, Malësi e Madhe,); Vlorë Region (Vlorë Sarandë, Delvinë); and Korçë Region (Korçë, Pogradec, Kolonjë, Devoll). The main activities to be implemented over the three years include:

- Assessment of quality of the services offered at hospital level for mother and child;
- Strengthening of family and community involvement in mother and child care issues;
- Assessment of the impact of social, economic and gender factors on mother and child well being;
- Strengthening of support services at school level;
- Upgrading capacities of health personnel; and
- Provision of technical assistance to improve referral systems from the primary to the hospital care services.

Indicators of healthy eating showed that children’s feeding has improved considerably. According to the DHS the number of underweight children declined from 14% in 2008 to 6% in 2009. Underweight children account for 33% of 6 month babies and 32% of 9-11 month babies. With reference to world standards of height/age, height/weight, weight/age, it is inferred that only 5% of children were underweight, which represents a considerably improvement of child feeding. However children’s feeding and healthy eating for the population remain important directions of awareness and education campaigns. In April 2009, recommendations for healthy eating were finalized, with priority given to children age groups.
The Institute of Public Health (IPH) has successfully piloted a project on dissemination of information and education on healthy eating with 6 and 7 grade children in five 9-year schools in the city of Tirana.

**Objective 2: 90% of the population educated on oral health care principles and 90% of 0-6 year old children treated with fluoride until the year 2015.**

The law “On Stomatological Health Care”, provides free of charge stomatological care for children 0-18. The purpose of the law is to prevent caries among children in this age cohort in accordance with WHO recommended rates. According to the MoH data, 90% of the schools are covered by public dental services and 10% of the schools in the rural areas are without this kind of service.

As part of the efforts to improve the infrastructure of stomatological service, 16 dental cabinets in 12 regions of the country have received new equipment. For 2008, the budget allocated to physical infrastructure is 65% higher than in 2007. The infrastructure of stomatological services has been considerably improved following privatization of the service. Stomatological infrastructure and quality at regional level is not up to the best standards of therapeutic treatment. However, it is well equipped to respond to diagnostic and promotional needs. In 2008-2009, MoH continued to purchase new equipment for regional services in order to provide them with at least 2-3 contemporary pieces of equipment for treatment of children up to 18 years.

The second phase of providing fluoride to children 7-9 years has been completed in Lushnjë and Kombinat in Tiranë. Over January-April 2009, the second phase was launched in all Tirana schools.

**Objective 3. Vaccine coverage and immunization with compulsory vaccines maintained at 100% and over 95% respectively.**

Albania is one of the countries with the highest vaccine coverage and immunization rates. This is reported not only by MoH, but also by WHO, and more recently, by the DHS.

Vaccine coverage has been 100% and vaccine immunization was maintained above 95% in 2008, too. The DHS revealed the same rates supported by greater awareness of the population, with a slight difference in the rural areas (93%), which is due to mothers’ low educational levels. The DHS figures are based on vaccination records and provide a 68% rate. It also takes into account oral information given by respondents during interviews and vaccination registers kept by the children’s health care centers.

According to MoH data, vaccine coverage is as follows:

1. Tuberculosis (BCG) 97.5%
2. Viral Hepatitis B (dose III) 98.6%
3. Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertus (dose III) 97.9%
4. Polio (dose III) 97.9%
5. Measles - Rubella (dose I) 97.3%

The IPH has conducted trainings with the participation of epidemiologists, vaccine administrators and heads of vaccine units in all the regions. All the child health care centers have been provided with electronic equipments to ensure the appropriate temperature levels in the cooling vaccine facilities.

In the second half of 2008, WHO experts presented the results of their survey in Albania. The figures of vaccination were high in comparison with other countries in the region. An advantage of vaccine administration is the use of packages containing both the vaccine and the injection syringes.

In 2008, the Multiyear Immunization Plan 2009-2013, was adopted. It includes the introduction of new vaccines. The pentavalent vaccine was introduced in the beginning of 2009. It contains 5 vaccines in 1 (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertus, Viral Hepatitis B, and Polio). The vaccine will be provided by GAVI for 5 years.

**HIV/AIDS infected children and young people**

According to the MoH, the overall number of people receiving antiretroviral treatment at the Pediatric Department of the University Hospital Center “Mother Theresa” is 108 of whom 12 are children. Based on these figures Albania continues to be a low prevalent country as regards HIV/AIDS infection, with <0.01%.

To prevent mother to child HIV/AIDS transmission, efforts are being made to pass a law to oblige mothers to undergo HIV tests. The reviewed HIV/AIDS Strategy assigns one of the maternities to act as a referral center for PMTCT.

Important elements in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS have been training and awareness campaigns. During 2008 and the first quarter of 2009, the Institute of Public Health carried out awareness campaigns for the entire population, including women and children. In the second half of 2008, the following HIV/AIDS training programs to place:

- Volunteer counselors
- Microbiological doctors, and lab workers: 20 people;
- Counselors (psychologist/social workers), 15 people;
- NGO representatives: three trainings for 20 people each.
To support promotional campaigns in 2008, 15,000 leaflets, 10,000 posters, and 1000 cards were produced and distributed. In four regions, Shkodër, Vlorë, Korçë, Tiranë, are established youth friendly services to provide information on HIV/AIDS.

4.2 Assessment findings

The quality of services has improved both in the rural and urban areas, as indicated by the following:

- Lack of incidences of epidemiological diseases such as rubella, diphtheria, rachitis, pertus, and other diseases as a result of both vaccination and improved living conditions;
- The high rate of population vaccination;
- Lack of diseases caused by poor quality of drinking water. Improved drinking water and food quality have contributed to reduced disease rates.

An important part of the reform strategies in the health sector, the improvement of quality for mother and child care will continue to be a priority into the future, too. A joint program between MoH, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, with the support of donors such as WHO, FAO and UNICEF, is designed to improve nutritional situation among children through institutional building of the health centers and provision of vitamin supplements in the problematic areas of Tropoja, Kukësi, Dibër and Pukë.

Quality of mother and child primary care is continuously overseen by the monitoring and evaluation structures newly established in the districts. For this purpose, seven control charts of mother and child care have been drafted in accordance with unified international recommendations, tailored to our health system. Control charts (based on several indicators of child health, such as vaccination, 0-5 deaths, newborn health, breastfeeding, etc.) contain the protocol of performance for medical staff involved with mother and child care based on such criteria as oversight of child development, vaccine administration, counseling given to mothers on child care, healthy pregnancies, etc.

Measures have been taken to train staff and certify knowledge on mother and child care. Additional steps have been taken to improve the monitoring system.

Protocols on domestic violence have been prepared and health personnel is being trained to deal with these cases. Measures have been taken to enforce regular medical examinations for pregnant women.

Mother and child care has been included in the basic health insurance package offered by the Institute of Health Insurance. This applies to cases receiving treatment at tertiary level.

The introduction of family doctors has greatly improved the quality of primary services for mothers, who can turn to the family doctor for any kind of ailment they experience. Care for pregnant women has also improved as evidenced by the fact that pregnancies are
detected in the first three months.

In February of 2009, protocols for family planning and primary health care services were completed. These protocols will first be tested in some family planning services in Tirana and will then be extended to all districts.

Under the Instruction of the Ministry of Health, compulsory medical examinations on child care and upbringing are carried out by preventive care services for childrenn, child counseling centers and the village health centers and ambulances. During the first year of life, the child is examined two times in the first month, followed by one visit per month. Monthly examinations continue in the second year of life, followed by one examination every six months over the age of 2-6 years. Starting 2008, child care services in all 12 regions of the country function with multidisciplinary teams which comprise psychologists and social workers. After the age of 6, children care is taken over by the school doctor. However, this service is not well regulated and does not cover all regions of the country. For the year 2009, under the national cooperation project with the Government of Spain, "On the reform of mother and child care system" action will be launched to restructure the service.

Health reforms have contributed significantly to improving the implementation of the right to health care. The objectives of the right to health care under the NCS have been incorporated in the Health Reform Strategy. The MoH authorities are aware of these objectives, albeit as part of their sector strategy rather than the National Children’s Strategy.

### 4.3 Recommendations

Efforts should continue to improve the quality of mother and child care, in particular, in the rural areas.

Stomatological services should be extended across Albania, with emphasis on the rural areas.

Stomatological services in schools should me improved and upgraded.

One of the maternity hospitals should be designated as soon as possible as a referral center for prevention of mother to child HIV/AIDS transmission.

Health education employees at Public Health Departments at regional level should work with the school authorities to strengthen multidisciplinary teams (social worker, psychologist, doctor, stomatologist, etc.).

Health experts should be involved in the design of curricula and educational materials on health related problems.

Efforts to introduce the HIV/AIDS test for the public should be accelerated.
Health care for children in foster care institutions should be strengthened.
CHAPTER V: THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATION

The children’s right to participation is a legitimate right, enshrined in documents such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the school regulations on student governments. Under the National Children’s Strategy, the implementation of this right is one of the main directions of efforts to improve the quality of life for children and encourage their activism and self initiative. A look at data and figures from the last four years shows that children’s participation at school and community life has improved considerably.

The positive changes began with the legalization of student governments in every school in Albania, which was followed by students’ mobilization to improve their school’s infrastructure, help students with unsatisfactory achievements, and become part of community action in cases of natural and man made disasters. Despite persisting problems, the dimension of children participation in Albania, is expanding and receiving increased importance. Worth mentioning is the fact that children’s awareness on their rights has increased and so has their understanding that their problems should be solved at school and community level.

5.1 Assessment of the objectives under the Action Plan of the National Children’s Strategy in relation to child participation

Objective 1: Increased children’s participation in decision making

Active participation of children in decision-making processes requires, firstly, guarantees to the right of children to freely express their opinion. This is the first step towards their active participation in decision making. In this context, over 2005-2009, increased levels of commitment by children to participate and express their opinions and concerns is observed. On the other hand, there is equal commitment by the schools and other bodies to respond to children’s concerns and issues, and to help increase their awareness of the rights they are entitled to, as well as to solve the problems they encounter at school and community level.

Increased participation of children is observed not only within the school, but also outside the school environment. There have been numerous collaboration instances with the local government, in particular under programs implemented by NGOs to draw children in efforts to improve their lives.

Measure 1.1 Increasing the number of schools with a student government and strengthening these structures in accordance with MoES provisions.

Chapter VIII of the ELP, Article 37, Paragraph 1, states that the "Student Government" is an independent organizational structure of students operating at school level. It represents the opinion of students on school issues, teaching and learning problems and concerns related to their education. The "Student Government" enables the active participation of
students in the democratic processes at school and community level. Based on the relevant regulation, student governments are established at every school in the country. They are constituted through electoral processes conducted in accordance with a system of secret ballot. The student government is set up at school level with the participation of the entire student body. It is a matter of free initiative and the whole process is designed and implemented in accordance with the specific conditions of each school.

Over 2004 - 2009, the number of schools with functional student governments has increased. This obviously has enhanced student participation in decision making. The number of programs designed to prepare children to participate in decision making has increased. In addition, the quality of programs related to children’s rights and their active participation has also improved. Almost every year, local government units have taken measures and released instructions highlighting educational problems related to awareness and implementation of children’s rights both at school and outside the school; enabling student participation in decision making through the strengthening of student governments and increasing extracurricular activities for children. These measures have been intended not just to teach, but also to implement these rights.  

In one of the schools in Shkodër, students were successful in initiating an investigation procedure about a teacher who did not do her duty appropriately.

In order to ensure greater independence and influence for the student governments, the ELP are being reviewed for the purpose of vesting student governments with power to set in motion the decision making structures at school level such as the school directorates, or the parents council.

In many of the country’s schools, the student governments are being supported by international and national NGO-s such as Save the Children, World Vision, Education for Life, etc., which mainly provide training and assistance to student governments to encourage their members’ participation and independent action.

Another organization structure for children at school level, is the School Board, which comprises the membership of parents delegated by the Parents Council, representatives of the teaching staff and 1-2 students.

The Class Council is an entity which deals with teaching, educational, medical, social, discipline and other issues with impact on classroom life.

The participation of 2-3 students delegated by the student government at the disciplinary council, an advisory body to the school principal to help him deal with and review violations of discipline by students, is another expression of the children’s rights to assembly.

Under efforts to strengthen support for student governments, attention has been paid to training coordinating teachers, school principals and representatives of the student government on the rights of the child. The Institute of Curricula and Training has carried out a number of training programs with the school principals to help them use the principal’s manual in their daily activity. An important place in this manual is taken up by the student government and the conditions to be created at school level to ensure its normal functioning.\(^{17}\)

As part of the school curricula, children have received knowledge on various issues of communication and right to assembly, but also on gender issues and related problems. The school principals, as a rule, consult with the student governments on issues of school policy, school uniform, and support for children in need and extra curricular activities.

In addition, MoES has issued a number of instructions for schools to appoint one of the teachers to monitor the student government and encourage them to report violence at school, to take part in curricula design, to fight corruption, etc. About 100 members of student governments have been trained on active forms of participation at school level.

The legal and administrative framework governing children’s participation at school level is adequate and ensures bottom-up representation, as an important element of democracy in school.

**Measure 1.2. Institutionalization and recognition of students governments by authorities at central and local level, providing them the opportunity to participate in decision making on education and issues of concern to the community.**

Children’s participation at community level continues to be challenging for both central and local authorities. Their participation in the design of local and national policies is particularly important when such policies directly, or indirectly, influence their lives. The powers of student governments are not always implemented and children do not always have the power to demand the implementation of their right to decision making.

Children’s participation in policy design at local level is limited, although children qualify for an important interest group. Children have the right to active participation not only at the family and school level, but also at the community where they belong. In the last five years children’s participation in issues affecting their lives has increased. Children’s groups and members of student governments have presented themselves at the offices of local authorities to express their concerns and submit their demands. Mention should be made of the fact that these children have been encouraged by NGO-s who operate in the field of children’s rights and have been received positively by local government authorities.

Measure 1.3. Children’s participation in boards/councils/committees at secondary school level, universities, municipalities, regions, etc.

Participation of children in decision making bodies is an important issue which finds little implementation in practical life. The National Youth Strategy 2007-2013\(^\text{18}\), contains principles which impact directly on children’s participation. It also provides the basis for legal regulations on the participations of young people in school boards and municipality and regional councils. The strategy sets participation of young people at 20%. In some school boards, the President of the Student Government gains automatic membership on the school board, although he/she may not have the right to vote. In many of the cases, children’s participation in these entities is the result of the initiative of the authorities who have the obligation to comply with the legal regulations. It rarely is the result of children’s/young people’s demand. In this context, mention should be made of the awareness of school administration, local and central authorities of the need to involve children in boards, or advisory bodies.

\(^{18}\) DCM No. 782, date 16 November 2006 “On approval of the National Youth Strategy 2007-2013”.

...
**Objective 2: Increasing children’s active participation in strategy monitoring and reporting**

The children group “Voice 16+” in 3 regions, Peshkopi, Durrës and Elbasan, drafted a monitoring report on the implementation of regional policies. In the region of Elbasan, children raised certain concerns with regard to budget formulation.

The same children participated in the drafting of the Alternative Report on the Implementation of the CRC.

**Measure 2.1 Children/young people should be recognized as actors in monitoring the implementation of youth strategies and policies at national and local level.**

In addition to involving children in policy design, recently there is increased awareness of the need to involve them in monitoring these strategies and policies. Children’s view, as direct beneficiaries, is very important and they should have a say in strategy and policy monitoring. The student government, the youth parliament and various children organizations have played an important part in involving children in monitoring activities. Recently, there is increased interest by children on budget expenditures related to children’s issues, although there are not many instances of them demanding transparency from the authorities.

The monitoring process takes place at school level, too. Students monitor school expenditures, including donations, which is evidence to increased awareness and interest levels on the part of children. In these activities children are generally supported by NGO-s involved with children’s rights.

Children have also participated in evaluations and assessments of interventions designed to benefit them. Children’s representatives were part of the efforts to prepare the children’s alternative report under the guidance of Children’s Alliance. Their participation gave a new dimension to the report, which was made more realistic due to children’s sincerity.

**Measure 2.2 Drafting budgets on education and youth at prefecture and central level.**

Budget formulation for education and young people is considered to be an important part of the implementation of policies for children and young people. Budget formulation over the recent years should be viewed in two angles: first, allocations for children and young people relative to education; secondly, the participation of children in the formulation of these budgets. Children’s budget involves 2-3 umbrella programs (such as education, health, and social issues), therefore, it is almost impossible to trace budgets allocated specifically to children. Children are included in large categories and are not considered to be a separate group under the total budget.
With regard to children’s participation in budget formulation, it is indirectly realized through NGO-s, or collection of needs from schools and communities. Although there are positive cases of children’s involvement, their participation in budgeting remains one of the future challenges.

5.2 Assessment findings

In many respects, interviewees have a positive perception on the progress of children’s participation in the school and community life.

Children’s participation at school level and in the decision making process is supported by an advanced and democratic legal framework.

Children’s awareness about their rights and manner of implementation of these rights has increased. Their participation has been successful in producing change, whenever used effectively. The various actions taken by children show that children are playing an active role in improving school life.

Structures designed to ensure children’s participation, are not very functional and do not represent bodies where children can place their trust and express their concerns.

Children’s complaints at school level are not seriously addressed by teaching staff and sometimes are even abused. This contributes to children’s increased distrust in measures such as the “Thought Box”, which is placed in every school in accordance with the relevant MoES decision.

Jointly with the schools, NGO-s play an important part in the strengthening of student governments and in children’s participation at school and community level.

Dialogue between children and local authorities is growing, in particular as regards children’s demands and concerns, but also in relation to monitoring municipal operations. In these endeavors children are supported by NGO-s.

School expenditures are also monitored as regards both budget allocations and donations. This is evidence to increased awareness and concern over the public interest.

Children have also participated in surveys and assessments of their rights’ implementation. In these exercises they have the opportunity to express their views and provide their input.
The NGO-s involved with children and schools have a greater understanding of the NCS and its Action Plan than the representatives of teaching bodies and children themselves. Children’s participation is sometimes reduced to the formal establishment of student governments. It is often considered to be a responsibility and obligation, rather than an important tool towards enabling children to become active citizens.

5.3 Recommendations

As lawful children’s organizations, student governments should function separately from school directorates. In this light, ELP should be reviewed to grant more independence to student governments.

The educational directorates at local level should employ someone responsible for student government operations and their relations with the authorities. This is to ensure an unbiased and democratic process.

Student governments should be increasingly involved with awareness activities on the rights of the child, not only at school level, but also at community level. These activities should be financially supported by local authorities.

Best practice and model experiences should be exchanged with regard to student governments and their participation in community life.

Government funds should be used to support activities by student governments. These funds should be used for establishing students’ newspapers, holding awareness activities and other events organized by student governments.

Local government entities should include in their membership children’s representatives in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Albanian legal framework on children, in order to create the necessary conditions for active participation by children.

Student governments should extend their activity at community level. In this way children’s concerns will be brought under the attention of community members. Children’s Senate should be established at local level and should delegate their representatives to the local government units. The children’s Senate should be a democratically elected structure and should function on the basis of student governments.

The National Children’s Strategy should be disseminated among children and teaching staff and it should be considered as a roadmap for students and by students.

Simplified versions of the NCS should be published in user friendly formats to facilitate understanding by children, parents, and teachers.
Effectiveness of student government operations at school level should be increased.

Children’s participation in policy and decision making processes that affect their lives should be increased, through the strengthening of children’s representative structures.
CHAPTER VI: THE RIGHT TO LEGAL PROTECTION

**Objective 1:** Improving the quality of services related to adoption procedures.

**Objective 2:** Drafting a framework law on the rights of the child.

** Objective 3:** Strengthening the fight against organized crime and terrorism.

**Objective 4:** Reducing crime rate and public threat actions.

**Objective 1: Improving the quality of services related to adoption procedures**

As the central authority for in-country and inter-country adoptions, the Albanian Adoption Committee is committed to the effective implementation of the adoption procedures. The goal of these procedures is to create opportunities for children to live with a family. Over June 2008 – May 2009, 16 inter-country adoptions were carried out. The adopted children were of relatively advanced age, with health problems and with genetically inherited diseases. The adopted children were first placed on the waiting lists for in-country adoption. The 6 months on the waiting list did not prove fruitful because of the children’s medical conditions. For children with health and psychic problems, adoption by foreign couples remains the best alternative because of the specialized care and treatment they may receive in foreign countries.

The relevant legal framework requires that in-country adoption receives priority in a relation to inter-country adoptions. This is considered to be in the best interest of the child. In accordance with this principle, the Albanian Adoption Committee proceeds with inter-country adoptions only when it has been impossible to find a family for the child and only following proof that inter-country adoption is in the best interest of the child and upon submission of evidence that the child’s rights will be respected.

The Albanian Adoption Committee, through its support services, takes all steps to carry out a social study on the child’s life, his/her psychological, social, spiritual, medical cultural, and personality condition, and whenever possible also of child’s family of origin. This kind of research by the Committee is aimed at finding the most suitable family for the child in accordance with his/her best interest.

Presently, the Albanian Adoption Committee, in cooperation with residential foster care institutions (public and private), with intermediary agencies (mainly foreign, since as of
presently there have been no requests for establishing local intermediary entities), and in cooperation with the courts at all judicial regions (family sections), implements in-country and inter-country adoption processes.

Table No. 6.1: Number of adoptions and progress rate over 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data from the Albanian Adoption Committee</th>
<th>Year 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-country adoption requests with consent</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-country adoption requests through the public and private foster care institutions caring for the abandoned child</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests for inter-country adoptions through foreign intermediary agencies</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children adopted with parent’s consent</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned children adopted by Albanian couples</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned children adopted by foreign couples</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of abandoned children on the Committee’s list</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Justice

**Increasing the quality and range of psycho-social services for children in conflict with the law**

Upon Order No. 3185, date 28.04.2008 of the Minister of Justice “On IEPS categorization”, the institutions serving to detain minors, have been categorized as institutions with a section for minors. These institutions are:

1. I.E.P.S Vaqarr,
2. I.E.P.S Fushë-Krujë,
3. I.E.P.S Tepelenë,
4. I.E.P.S Rrogozhinë,
5. I.E.P.S Lezhë,
6. I.E.P.S Korçë,
7. I.E.P.S “Jordan Misja”, Tiranë,
8. I.E.P.S Vlorë,

A new IEPS with a section for minors will soon be made operational in Kavajë. The project has been completed and will soon be taken over by the General Prisons Directorate. In addition, the Institute’s Organigram has been approved by Prime Minister’s Order No. 150 date 10.12.2008.

According to MoJ data, as of March 2009, 66 minors were in pre-detention and 7 minors were serving time in the country’s IEPS-s. The minors are detained mainly for theft. The majority of these minors have only completed several classes and some have completed compulsory education, even though there are some who are illiterate.
The General Prison Directorate, in cooperation with psycho-social entities established at all IEPS-s, is responsible for designing programs and holding activities for minors in pre-detention facilities. These activities are largely of a cultural, educational, or sports nature and are aimed at enlivening the minors’ life and helping minors manage stress both in pre-trial detention, or those serving time. To carry out such activities, the General Prison Directorate cooperates with NGO-s in the field of children’s rights.

Organizations/agencies working with IEPS-s to implement rehabilitation, counseling and economic aid programs for inmates are:

- **The Spanish Agency for International Cooperation in Development (AECID)** – Pilot program on VET courses in two IEPS-s (Fushë – Krujë and Vlorë). Individualized Training Program (ITP) and Individualized Intervention Model (IIM) will be implemented for the inmates in these IEPS-s;
- **Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC)** – Its work has mainly focused on providing training to civilian staff to improve treatment of pre-detained and detained children;
- **Legal Clinic for Minors** – Psychological support and legal aid for minors in conflict with the law at IEPS-s "Jordan Misja” and Vaqarr;
- **Center for Children’s Rights Protection (CRCA)** – This NGO is implementing the project “The sky belongs to all” at IEPS in Vaqarr.

Special care is paid to facilitating the minor’s contact with his/her family. They are provided with facilities to contact their families through meetings and telephone conversation as prescribed by the regulations. In cases when such contacts are disrupted, the social care staff, with institution managers’ support, mediate re-establishment of contacts between minors and their relatives.

IEPS “Jordan Misja” in cooperation with the Legal Clinic for Minors, for the first time ever, invited parents and close relatives to visit the inner environments for minor detention.

Each IEPS implements its own daily program according to the conditions and specificities of the institution. The new institutions built in accordance with European Standards are better equipped for a range of daily programs. These programs include:

- VET courses (IEPS, Vlorë),
- Informal courses for illiterate minors,
- Sports activities,
- Reading,
- Psycho-social assistance, and
- Discussions in groups on various social topics.

Daily programs are conceived to give priority to the rehabilitation of minors, although due to the complexity of causes and factors which pushed the minor into conflict with the law, rehabilitation is not something that can be complete at the moment the minor is released from the IEPS.
The IEPS staff have made substantial efforts to implement individual training programs in order to respond to the psychosocial needs of every detained child. The minors are provided with individualized treatment, group therapy and psychosocial counseling for about four hours a day.

The right to education of pre-detainees and sentenced individuals was the object of the Memorandum of Cooperation signed in December 2008 by the Minister of Education and Science and the Minister of Justice. The memorandum grants a second chance to all the incarcerated individuals to receive education in the IEPS.

Based on the memorandum, MoES will make teachers available, will provide the teaching materials and will prepare relevant programs to address individual needs.

MoJ will provide the classroom, transportation for teachers when the IEPS-s are a long distance from residential areas, psycho-social counseling to complement teaching and learning, and other facilities.

IEPS-s will adapt space for classroom teaching, either on a full time, or part time basis. Full time teaching will be provided for students of compulsory age education in the IEPS of Vaqarr, Tiranë. Part time teaching will take place in all other IEPS-s, based on the relevant regulations on part time teaching. Upon completion of the class, or school, the sentenced individual will receive a certificate, or diploma which will be of equal value with those awarded for the same level of education received in regular schooling. The document will not indicate the detainee status of the holder.

This new initiative is designed to contribute to the intellectual growth of the incarcerated child, his/her awareness on the consequences of his actions, rehabilitation and integration process and reduction of possibilities for recidivism.

With the approval of the two laws: Law No. 1023, date 27.11.2008 “On some additions and changes to Law No. 7895, date 27.1.1995 ‘Penal Code of the Republic of Albania’” and Law No. 1024, date 27.11.2008 ‘On some additions and changes to Law No. 8331, date 21.4.1998 ‘On execution of penal sentences’” enhanced opportunities are created to apply alternative punishment through the Probation Service which is established by these Laws. The changes to Law No. 8331, are not designed for children alone. However the relevant provisions and the alternative punishment to be overseen by this service take count primarily of the rights of the child in conflict with the law and his/her re-integration in society.

Regulation “On organization and operations of the Probation Service and the establishment of standards and procedures on oversight of execution of alternative punishment” is endorsed by DCM No. 302, date 25.3.2009. This document sets the rules for the tasks to be carried out by the Probation Service at every stage of the Penal procedures. It governs the organization and operations of this institution, sets the status of its employees, the standards and procedures for execution of alternative punishment, as well as the manner of implementation of the rights of sentenced persons. In addition, the
Regulation contains special procedures and standards to be followed with regard to minor convicts who are transferred under the jurisdiction of the Probation Service.

**Objective 2. Drafting a Framework Law on the Rights of the Child**

In May 2008, MLSAEO launched the initiative to draft a framework law on the rights of the child. This initiative is also supported by UNICEF.

The goals in drafting this law are:

- Harmonization and adaption of existing policies on children’s rights in order to bring them in line with EU standards, in accordance with SAA requirements.
- Establishment of an effective monitoring system in relation to children’s rights and wellbeing, both at the central and local level.

To draft this Law, two working groups have been established with representatives from the line ministries and the parliament. To ensure an inclusive and transparent process, the following steps have been taken:

- Representatives of governmental and civil society entities were brought together in 2 seminars to draw their opinion on the new draft law and the policies to be set by the law.
- Seminars with representatives of governmental and civil society entities put together to agree on the structure of the draft law.
- The first draft of the framework Law on the rights of the child was presented to governmental and civil society entities on 30 March 2009.

The draft is expected to be finalized in June of the same year and then passed to the government and parliament for review and approval.

**Objective 3. Strengthening the fight against organized crime and terrorism**

The main objective of fight against organized crime and terrorism, in respect of the rights of the child, is guided by the two strategies on the fight against trafficking in human beings and fight against trafficking in children.


The residencial centers offering services for trafficked persons, or those at risk of trafficking are currently implementing the standards for this type of service adopted by DCM No. 195, date 11.4.2007. Providers for these services are regularly inspected by Social Services Inspectoriate, which assists these providers with the correct implementation of the standards.
To protect and assist trafficked persons, or those at risk of trafficking, a draft order has been prepared to enforce the Transnational Referral Mechanism for Trafficked Persons and the Standard Operational Procedures for intervention in emergency cases and care for rehabilitation and re-integration of damaged individuals. The State Social Service dispatches social workers to assist with the initial interview of unaccompanied children showing up at 10 commonly used cross border points.

**Objective 4. Reduction of crime rate and behaviors threatening public interest**

Study of crime rate against children at national level as part of efforts to improve children’s protection.

In accordance with the penal legislation and by Order of the Interior Minister, Police Structures maintain special records of the various crimes. On the basis of these records, State Police structures (Community Policing and Prevention, as well as Serious Crime Police Structures) prepare and administer crime statistics, also in relation to children inflicted by criminal activity and children involved in criminal activity. For 2008, these data are as follows:

**Table No. 6.2: Children inflicted by/involved in criminal offences under the purview of community policing and crime prevention structures, 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age-group</th>
<th>Victims</th>
<th>Age-group</th>
<th>Delinquent children/youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-18 years Total</td>
<td>246 246</td>
<td>Up to 14 years 14-18 years Total</td>
<td>82 520 602</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: State Police, Structure for Crime Prevention and Community Policing*

**Table No. 6.3: Inflicted by criminal offenses against the person, year 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age-groups</th>
<th>Sexual Crimes</th>
<th>Crimes against life</th>
<th>Crimes against health</th>
<th>Crimes against the freedom of the person</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 14 years</td>
<td>12 5 0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-18 years</td>
<td>17 37 42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29 42 42</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: State Police, Structure against Serious Crimes*
Table No. 6.4: Damaged by penal offenses against property, year 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors total</th>
<th>Other theft</th>
<th>Armed robbery and property destruction</th>
<th>Car robbery</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile authors total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Police Structure against Serious Crime

Table No. 6.5: Authors of penal offenses against property, year 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors total</th>
<th>Other theft</th>
<th>Armed robbery and property destruction</th>
<th>Car robbery</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 14 years</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-18 years</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile authors total</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>699</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Police Structure against Serious Crime

Table No. 6.6: Authors of penal offenses against the person, year 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors total</th>
<th>Sexual Crimes</th>
<th>Crime against life</th>
<th>Crime against health</th>
<th>Crime against freedom of the person</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 14 years</td>
<td>to14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-18 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile delinquents total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State Police Structure against Serious Crime

Based on the tables above, 76 minors have been inflicted by domestic violence and a total of 487 minors have been inflicted by criminal activity and domestic violence taken together. On the other side, 1410 minors have been involved in criminal activity. In comparison with previous years, the number of minors inflicted by, or involved in criminal activity has been increasing.

Research on this issue, shows that the increasing tendency is not only due to increased rates, but also due to the growth of police capacity to discover criminal activity and its authors. In order to increase institutional capacity of police members to implement and protect children’s rights during the procedures of accompanying, interviewing, detaining as well as overall child treatment in police facilities, the General Prison Directorate, in partnership with the Legal Clinic for Minors, in September 2008 held two training
sessions with police members of the Regions of Tiranë, Shkodër, Korçë, Fier, Vlorë, Gjirokastër, Lezhë, Elbasan, Dibër, Berat and Durrës.

**Recommendations**

- The possibility should be explored to establish a rehabilitation institute for minors under 14 who commit penal offenses.
- Daily programs and individual training programs should continue towards rehabilitating minors.
- Education of detained and pre-detained minors in the IEPS-s should continue in accordance with specially designed programs by MoES.
- In accordance with the regulation of the Probation Service, alternative punishments should be applied for minors.
- Since services provided by NGO-s for victims of domestic violence (women and children) are insufficient and do not cover the entire territory of the country, local governments units should establish specialized centers for such categories.
The National Children’s Strategy and Action Plan, approved by the Albanian Government in 2005, set forth relevant measures for the implementation of children’s rights over 2005-2010. In the process of implementation of this strategy, both the government’s and society’s perception of children's rights have changed in a profound way. The responsibilities of institutions, families and communities with regard to protecting children’s rights have increased. The present evaluation, whose findings are presented in this report, shows the gradual progress towards the realization of the rights of all children in Albania. In addition, the evaluation throws light on issues to be analyzed responsibly by those who draft policies with impact on the implementation of children's rights.

Most respondents (81%) support the view that there is little involvement by civil society in the design, implementation or even the monitoring of the strategy. Only 28% of respondents think that the strategy has been drafted with the participation of local governments and that the strategy reflects local needs. Although the strategy increases community awareness, respondents say the communities have either played a limited role, or have not been involved at all in the implementation of the strategy (72%). Consequently, the strategy is far from making concrete contributions to the resolution of all the issues that are critical to children’s wellbeing in Albania (91%).

Respondents think that cooperation and coordination of all stakeholders at the regional level are particularly important. However, almost all respondents point out that lack of financial resources and decentralization difficulties hamper local government’s capacities to launch and implement adequate initiatives. Participants also appreciate the role of the Region as a coordinating and monitoring structure and support enhancement and strengthening of its powers.

The question about the extent to which the strategy influences the implementation of individual rights, received different answers: all of the respondents (100%) think that the strategy has very little or no impact at all on the realization of the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion; only 5% think that the strategy contributes to children’s right to social protection; 26% think that the strategy contributes to the realization of the right to health care and improvement of health indicators; and 84% think that the strategy influences the implementation of the right to education.

Despite the limitations of the evaluation (only 5 of the 12 regions were subject to the evaluation), it raises several important issues for future policies related to the implementation of child rights. Preparations for the Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2016 should pay attention to the following:

1. Children’s poverty and their social exclusion should undergo a thorough analysis and be properly represented in both the successive strategy and its action plan.
2. Local government structures, the region in particular, should be involved in the drafting, implementation and monitoring process. Their responsibilities and manner of reporting should be detailed in the strategy.

3. Policies to implement children’s rights should be budgeted on a priority basis by both the central and local governments. The coordinating and monitoring role of the region should receive special attention in the upcoming strategy and action plan.

4. The civil society should partake actively in the drafting, but mainly in the implementation and monitoring process. In addition, children should also be involved in strategy preparation and implementation.

5. Structures at the regional level should be strengthened, in particular those responsible for the implementation of social policies. Also, the systems of collecting, processing, analyzing and reporting data should be strengthened, both at the regional and local level.

6. At the local level, policies in the education, health care and social protection sectors should be coordinated by the upgraded regional structures.
CONCLUSIONS

Social policies involving children’s rights, often address acute problems created by lack of opportunities in the law. Changes proposed by these policies are indispensable in order to complete the children’s legal framework, which should encompass national and international laws. It is desirable that these policies and legislative initiatives contain long term and sustainable provisions. It should be pointed out that addressing children in primary and secondary laws is an indicator of mainstreaming children’s rights in national legislation. The laws and social policies specifically addressing children are characterized by basic CRC principles, in particular the principle of the best interest of the child.

Positive developments are noted in the social policies, such as for example, the creation of the legal basis for alternative services and relevant documents. The Strategic Custody Document and the supplementing document: “National Strategy on the Fight against Child Trafficking and Protection of Children who Have Fallen Victim to Trafficking” are examples of the progressively forecasting character of these instruments. Social policies should be considered in the background of decentralization processes, whose impacts on social service delivery should be examined on a case by case basis.

The implementation of social policies for children necessitates the creation of relevant institutions and infrastructure. This is required both when separate institutions are needed, as well as when children’s rights are encompassed inside other institutions. In the latter case, these institutions should be sustainable and evolve in accordance with the needs of the children. These aspects should be the object of legal and financial arrangements, but also of coordination and interaction measures at the central, regional and local levels. Meanwhile, the formalization of the operations of child supporting structures such as the Child Rights Units and the Children’s Protection Units and their incorporation in a system which avoids fragmentation is an indicator of sustainability. Referral and protection mechanisms should be made part of the system implementing the policies. This would enable the standardization of their activity and would influence the unification of procedures and protocols in the field. In the future, the specification and delineation of responsibilities would be an important measure towards their implementation. In addition, lines of subordination and the matching of responsibilities with capacities should occupy central attention.

With regard to the National Children’s Strategy and Action Plan, important points are represented by the involvement of children in surveys and data collection. Poverty in general and its indicators should be examined in light of the following:

- In respect to the expanded health rights, diet needs, eating disorders and promotion of sexual education should receive increased focus;
- The strategy should provide for the enjoyment of the environmental right;
- With regard to education, differences in learning potential and learning disabilities should be given attention for both disabled children and children from vulnerable groups, such as Roma;
• A National Authority should be established to examine data related to child abuse; this authority should also be vested with policy making powers;
• It is of priority importance to avoid child victimization in the media;
• Children’s safety should be central: green lights and signs showing school facilities should be installed in all the relevant places;
• The Strategy should take a new perspective in relation to the re-admission of Albanian children;
• Overall, the strategy should be based on participatory processes; in particular, it should echo the voice of the children through ensuring their active participation in the drafting process.

Additional policies and a new national strategy for the protection of children’s rights are necessary to ensure their protection from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation.

National strategies on children’s wellbeing (social, health, educational, housing and other policies) should aim to promote and protect children’s rights. These policies should give priority to reduction of poverty, marginalization, and inequality. They should provide support to the families, foster tolerance and social cohesion, create an enabling environment for social inclusion and interaction of the various actors at all levels of government.

Special attention should be paid to protection of vulnerable children such as disabled children, abandoned children, children in foster care, minority children, working or street children, unaccompanied children, children living in poverty or in extreme poverty, children in conflict with the law, etc. The policies designed to support these groups, based on studies of the Albanian reality or the experiences of these children themselves, and should be effective in preventing, discovering and addressing the various forms of violence and exclusion to which children are exposed.

Policies for children cannot be separate from policies involving families. Policies for children and families should:
• Protect the child and the family from poverty and social exclusion;
• Support the family to exercise parental responsibility and care for children;
• Prevent to the maximum extent possible the separation of children from their families;
• Promote community based and alternative services (home-family, custody) over residential care for children;
• Promote positive, non-violent care for children and positive parenting.

Legal improvements should continue to give life to:
• Coordination of inter-sectoral policies designed to implement children’s rights;
• Creation of a governmental agency for the protection of the rights of the child;
• Establishment of a network of structures, or a national system, for the protection of children’s rights at central and local level;
• Regular statistical monitoring, on an established methodology of data collection from local government units, as well as central level institutions.
APPENDIX 1

Profile of the interviewees

I. Civil Society

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Region/Town</th>
<th>NGO/Job</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Tiranë</td>
<td>Foundation Terre des Hommes</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Elbasan</td>
<td>Teacher and coordinator of the group of children 16+</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Shkodër</td>
<td>Children’s Observatory</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Durrës</td>
<td>Youth Parliament</td>
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<td>Kukës</td>
<td>Kindergarten No. 1</td>
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<td>Children’s Observatory</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Shkodër</td>
<td>World Vision</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Elbasan</td>
<td>Family Doctor</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Elbasan</td>
<td>Student, member of “Voice 16+”</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Elbasan</td>
<td>Student, member of “Voice 16+”</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Durrës</td>
<td>Children’s Alliance</td>
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II. Public administration employee

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<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Region/Town</th>
<th>Institution/Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Elbasan</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Tiranë</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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Annex 2

Civil Society Questionnaire

Assessing the impact of the NCS and action plan on the implementation of children’s rights.

This questionnaire is designed to collect quality information to be used in analyzing the implementation of the NCS and action plan at national and regional level over 2006-2009. This analysis will be used to reflect on identified critical issues in order to design strategies and policies to improve the implementation of children’s rights in future.

General information:

Region/Town:

Date:

No. of participants

Quality information:

- What was your involvement in the implementation of the National Children’s Strategy and Action Plan at National and Regional level over 2006-2009?
- What kind of services did you implement under the NCS and its Action Plan?
- To what extent do the services you provide reflect the local needs?
- What is the extent and manner of community involvement in the activities and services that you provide?
- Do you think that the National Children’s Strategy and Action Plan cover all issues related to Children’s Rights?
- What is your relationship with local authorities, public institutions, decision makers and other actors involved with children’s rights?
- Did you participate in the drafting of legal amendments and laws which focus on the rights of children?
- Are there critical issues that you have identified in relation to the implementation of the action plan at regional level?

- Did you receive financial support by public institutions in relation to projects that you implemented under the NCS?

- What would be your suggestions on future strategic directions?

Thank you!
Questionnaire for local employees of the public administration

Assessing the impact of the NCS and action plan on the implementation of children’s rights.

This questionnaire is designed to collect quality information to be used in analyzing the implementation of the NCS and action plan at national and regional level over 2006-2009. This analysis will be used to reflect on identified critical issues in order to design strategies and policies to improve the implementation of children’s rights in future.

General Information:

Region/Town:
Date:
No. of participants:

Quality information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 1: Strategy impact on the implementation of the right to social protection</th>
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1.1 Establishing a sustainable network of community based services for children. |
- According to your opinion, to what extent, do services provided by local government units in the social protection field for 2006-2009, under the social service decentralization strategy, cover population needs for such services?
- What kind of community services in your region are supported by the World Bank funded Social Delivery Project? What is the sustainability and continuity of such services?
- What is the coverage of the “home family” model and to what extent is the country’s territory covered by this initiative?
- Has there been an assessment of the effectiveness of this model? What is the number of beneficiaries from this service and has there been an assessment of the total number of people in need for this kind of service?
- What are some of the barriers identified to the extension of this model in accordance with the population needs?
What are some of the day care services identified? Are there such services running, or in the plans for future establishment?

1.2 Children’s protection from poverty and social exclusion.

- Do you think that the existing social protection mechanism provides for the implementation of children’s rights for protection and care?
- Has there been an assessment of needs for custody care for children in your region?
- What is the level of commitment and preparedness by local governments with regard to the implementation of foster care for children?
- Is the project of foster care family being piloting in your region?
- If yes, what has been accomplished so far (in terms of capacity building for implementing entities, awareness building, selection of foster care families, assessment of children’s needs, etc.).
- How do you assess the strategy impact in relation to improvement of quality of community services for disabled children (as regards program design, needs assessment, improvement of infrastructure, implementation of decentralized powers, etc.)?
- What access do Roma children have to inclusive social services?
- What has been the role of “children’s protection units” established at local level, in relation to case identification and management, assessment of the situation of children at risk, coordination and referral of cases, etc.?
- What are some of problems identified by these units and what would you suggest for the future?
- Based on the lessons learned from the inspections, what are some of the obstacles to the implementation of standards for children’s services?
- Are there data in connection with children’s labor? How many reported cases do you have in your region? Have you defined at risk categories and what are these categories?
- How effective is the model of the “Monitoring system for child labor”? What are some of the issues identified in its operation? Provide concrete cases.
- What type of services are offered for protection of children inflicted by domestic violence?
Section 2: The right to health care

2.1 Reduction of under five mortality to 100,000 live births until 2015.

- Do you think 2006-2009 reform efforts will produce an impact on health indicators at national level, more specifically at your region?
- How would you rate the quality of child care in the rural and poor areas? What are some of the changes 2006-2009 you could mention?
- Can you say what the ratio should be between expenses for preventive care and expenses for treatment care?
- Is there anything special you may note with regard to the quality for health services for mothers at the primary level during 2006-2009?

2.2 90% of the population educated on the principles of oral care and 90% of the age group 0-6 covered with fluoride until 2015.

- To what extent reforms over 2006-2009 achieve the objective of educating children and the community with health care knowledge?
- What is your opinion with regard to reforms effecting free stomatological service for children up to 18 years and what do you think the impact is going to be?
- How would you rate the infrastructure of stomatological services in your region?

2.3 Vaccine coverage and immunization with compulsory vaccines respectively at 100% and over 95%.

- What is the vaccination rate in your region compared with the regional vaccine indicator?

2.4 HIV/AIDS infected children and young people

- Can you describe the type of services offered to address HIV/AIDS related issues in your region (awareness, preventive, medical treatment, etc.)?
- To what extent is local government in your region involved with HIV/AIDS?

Section 3: The right to quality education
3.1 Reformation and strengthening of education management capacities.

- What has been the impact of reforms 2006-2009 towards ensuring a quality and inclusive education?
- What is the impact of educational policy on the situation of excluded groups and/or those at risk of exclusion, in your region?

3.2 Improvement of quality of teaching and learning.

- What has been the impact of educational reform on the improvement of teaching and learning quality over 2006-2009?
- In your opinion, what has been the focus of these reforms (school infrastructure, curricula improvement, access to technology, teacher training) and what would you suggest for the future?

**Section 4: The right of children to participation**

4.1 Increasing children’s participation in decision making.

- Is there a sufficient body of legal provisions to allow students to make their impact on the school’s decision making structures?
- To what extent were students involved in local policy design in your region?
- Can you describe instances of children’s participation in the monitoring of the National Children Strategy?
- Can you provide concrete examples of students’ participation in the decision making processes at school level?
- What activities have been carried out towards increasing children’s participation in the region’s/country’s life?
- What do you think in relation to the improvement of school psychological services, as a tool to enhance student’s learning?

**Section 5: The right to legal protection**

5.1 Improving adoption procedures towards a most adequate service for children.
What is the role of regional structures in the provision of quality services in the adoption process? To what extent do these structures play a role in quality improvement?

5.2 Upgrading the quality and enhancing the range of psycho-social services for children in conflict with the law.

How would you rate psycho-social service delivery for children at regional level and what do think is the impact of such service?

5.3 Fight against organized crime and terrorism.

Are there local initiatives to increase public awareness on trafficking and its risks?

5.4 Reduction of the number of cases representing criminal behavior and threatening public interest.

In your region, are there services to support children inflicted by criminal activity or domestic violence?

How do you rate the role of local structures in service provision for the above mentioned categories?

Thank You!
3.1 International legal framework


Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, approved by Law no. 9833, dated 22.11.2007.


The agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of Greece on protection of and assistance to trafficked children victims, (ratified by Law no. 9544, dated 29/05/2006). This agreement aims at promoting cooperation to combat trafficking and all forms of child exploitation.


United Nations Convention against international organized crime and two additional protocols to it: the Palermo Protocol of 2000 to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the UN Convention as well as Law No. 8920 dated 11.07.2002 “Against international organized crime”.


Convention No. 138, on the minimum age for admission to employment of the International Labor Organization, Law no. 8006, dated 03.13.1996.

Convention No. 111, on discrimination in employment and occupation of the International Labor Organization, Law no. 8006, dated 03.13.1996.

Convention No. 105, on the elimination of forced labor of the International Labor Organization, Law no. 8006, dated 03.13.1996.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the Government in February 1992, which sets the obligations of the Albanian state in respect of the rights of the child.

Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 1948, which provides for civil, political, social and economic rights.


3.2 Albanian legal framework

Constitution of Albania, approved by Law no. 8417, dated 10.21.1998 and promulgated by Decree No. 2260, dated 11.28.1998. Article 54 of the Constitution sanctions the right of the child to be free from violence, abuse, exploitation and labor. It also sets the minimum age for children’s admission to work which may harm his/her health, moral, and/or may endanger life or the child’s normal development.

Decree of the President of the Republic, No. 6218 dated 07.07.2009 "On establishment of juvenile criminal sections at first instance courts."

Law No. 9928, dated 09.06.2008, "On dental health services" (published in the Official Gazette no. 102, pp. 4494).

Law No. 9749 dated 04.06.2007 "On State Police" provides that if the threat of public order and safety has come as a consequence of the actions of a minor person under 14 years old, police employee notifies the parent or guardian of the minor under 14 years to take steps to put an end to the unlawful conduct of the minor.

Law No. 9695, dated 19.03.2007 "On adoption procedures and the Albanian Adoption Committee”, sets the obligation to create appropriate conditions to implement the right of children to be raised in a family environment.
Law No. 9669, dated 12.18.2006 "On measures against domestic violence", provides for the creation of a mechanism or network to coordinate institutions responsible for protection, support, prevention and rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence.

Law No. 9636, dated 06.11.2006 "On protection of health from tobacco products" provides for banning of sale, or supply with a purpose of sale, of tobacco products to persons under the age of 18.

Law No. 9631, date 30.10.2006 "On scenic arts", provides for the establishment of the National Cultural Center for Children.

Law no. 9518, dated 18.04.2006 "On Protection of minors from alcohol use" stipulates the prohibition of selling or offering free alcoholic drinks to minors, and/or minor’s consumption of alcohol in public places. This law provides for prohibition of alcohol in schools and school facilities.


Law No. 9355, dated 10.03.2005 "On social assistance and social services (as amended), provides for equal treatment of citizens, including children, eligible for such treatments.

Law No. 9205, dated 15.03.2004 "On Protection of witnesses and collaborators of justice" protects children who testify against the perpetrators of criminal acts.

Law No. 9106 dated 07.17.2003 "On hospital services in the Republic of Albania,"
Article 35 sets the hospital services to be provided at municipality level, including pediatric services, (letter “ç”.

Law No. 9098, dated 07.03.2003, "On integration and family reunion or persons who have received asylum in the Republic of Albania," establishes the procedures for gaining the right to education, employment, health and social care, housing and family reunion by persons who have been granted asylum in the Republic of Albania.

Family Code, Law no. 9062, dated 08/05/2003, pays particular attention to treatment and care for juveniles and parental duty, the exercise of parental responsibility with regard to administration of assets derived from minor work, admission of minors to employment, and care for working minors. The code also defines the state’s obligations towards children without parental care, and prescribes the manner of implementation of these obligations. The Labor Code contains a separate chapter on the protection of minors, specifying the minimum age for admission to employment, defining light and hard labor, night work and enforcing routine medical examinations for working children.

Law No. 8876, dated 04.04.2002 "On reproductive health," Article 22, stipulates that reproductive health services include: a) care before, during and after birth; b) care for the upbringing and development of children 0-6 years; and c) health care for adolescents.
Law No. 8872, dated 03.29.2002, "On education and vocational training in the Republic of Albania," provides students up to 18 years with the right to education and vocational training.

Law on civil registration, fully regulates the right to be registered at the time of birth. From this right derive all other rights, such as the right to education, health care, etc.

Law No. 8528, dated 09.23.1999, "On the promotion and protection of breastfeeding", aims to protect the child's right to breastfeeding.

Law No. 8517, dated 07.22.1999 “On protection of personal data”.

Law No. 8503, dated 06.30.1999, “On the right to access to information in official documents”.

Law No. 8492, dated 27.05.1999 “On Foreigners”.

Law No. 8410, dated 09.30.1998, "On public and private radio and television in the Republic of Albania", which provides for the unbiased protection of the right to information, political and religious convictions, personality, dignity, privacy of the person and the rights and freedoms of the individual, including in particular the rights, and interests of the minors and the manner of implementation of such rights.

Law No. 8153, dated 31/10/1996, "On the status of the orphaned person" (as amended), defines the rights of children without parental care and the obligations of the state and society to ensure the realization of these rights.

Law No. 8096, dated 29.04.1996 “On the cinematography”, provides for differential film broadcasting, according to age groups, and establishes the schedule for such broadcasting.

Law No. 8045, dated 12.07.1995 "On pregnancy termination" guarantees respect for every human being, since the beginning of life.

Law No.7986, dated 09.13.1995 "On State Inspectorate of Labor" (as amended), establishes the right of the inspectorate to inspect children’s work and to take effective measures to protect working children.

Law No. 7952, dated 21.06.1995, "On pre-university education system" (as amended).

Law No. 3766, dated 12.17.1993, “On health insurance” (as amended), Article 8, paragraph 2, provides the obligation of the state to insure persons who are not active in employment, such as children, pupils and full-time students, disabled people (mental and physical) and women on maternity leave.
Law No.7703, dated 05.11.1993 “On Social Security in the Republic of Albania”, on the basis of which, when admitted to employment, children benefit from compulsory insurance, in cases of temporary inability to work due to illness, disability, loss of a parent, accident and/or occupational illness or lay offs.

Decisions of the Council of Ministers


Council of Ministers Decision, No. 195, dated 04.11.2007, “Standards of social care services in residential centers for trafficked persons or persons at risk of trafficking”.


Council of Ministers Decision, No. 368, dated 05.31.2005 "On approval of the National Children’s Strategy".

Council of Ministers Decision, No. 538, dated 08/12/2004, the "National Strategy of Development of Pre-University Education 2004-2015”.

Council of Ministers Decision, No. 383, dated 06/19/2004, “On approval of procedures, fees and covered portion of payments for unique screening services provided at the tertiary level, under the health insurance schemes”.

Council of Ministers Decision no. 633, dated 09/18/2003, National Strategy for improving the living conditions of Roma.

Council of Ministers Decision, No. 419, dated 06.19.2003, “On provision of health services and medications for orphaned persons”.

Council of Ministers Decision, No. 540, dated 31.10.2002 "On subsistence payments in student canteens, government grants and payments of student families, children admitted to foster homes, the Institute of Deaf Children, the Institute of Blind Children and Children with light mental retardation.

Decision of the Council of Ministers, No. 325, dated 23.06.2000, ”On the establishment of the National Center for Child Welfare, Development and Rehabilitation”, as a separate budget line.

Council of Ministers Decision, No. 248, dated 05/28/1999, which provides for non-public educational institutions filing a declaration to respect the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
Council of Ministers Decision, No. 502, dated 05.08.1996, "For an edition to the DCM No. 396, dated 08.22.1994 "On mother tongue education of Minority Persons in the 8-year education system”, designed to establish units for mother tongue education at 8 year schools on the basis of request and subject to relevant criteria.

Council of Ministers Decision, No. 384, dated 05.20.1996 “On protection of minors at work”.

Decision of the Council of Ministers, No.396, dated 22.08.1994 "On the 8-year education in the mother tongue of Minority Persons. This decision aims to document the state policy in the educational field to create the conditions necessary for the expression, preservation and development of linguistic and cultural identity of persons belonging to minorities and the need for their integration into the Albanian society.

Order of the Minister of Justice, No. 4763, dated 06.08.2009 “On approval of the Inner Regulations of the Albanian Adoption Committee”.


MLSAEO Instruction No. 830, dated 04.14.2008 “On implementation of the standards of social care for children in public and non public foster institutions”.


Prime Minister Order No. 139, dated 06.19.2006 "On establishment of Regional Committees against Trafficking in Human Beings", stipulates that these committees will contribute to the identification of cases, prevention and reduction of trafficking.

Minister of Health Order no. 115, dated 03/29/2006, "Charter of rights of hospitalized children”.

Prime Minister Order No. 203, dated 12.19.2005 “On the establishment of the National Anti-traffic Unit, with the Nation Anti-trafficking Coordinator”, determines that the Anti-traffic Unit is responsible for designing concrete guidelines and measures to effect and develop the fight against trafficking.

Code of Medical Ethics and Deontology, approved by the National Council of Ethics and Deontology, by decision of the Council of the Doctors’ Order of Albania, dated 03.29.2002.
