

Ensuring the Best Start in Life for Children:

The Power of Parenting

25-26 June 2024 / Hotel Hilton, Belgrade

YouTube channel UNICEF Serbia



Conference Agenda Day One, 25 June 2024

Conference Moderation: **Dr Jelena Zajeganović Jakovljević**
Miša Stojilković

- 9.00–10.00 Registration and Welcome Coffee
- 10.00–10.15 Voices of Parents and Children
Gordana Branković, Vukova Zvončica, Mother
Nataša Mrđa, Mother
Silvija Sinani Ibraimović, Mother
Children “Young Reporters” from Preschools – *The Power of Play* (recording)
- 10.15–10.30 Opening Remarks
H.E. Zlatibor Lončar, MD, Minister of Health of the Republic of Serbia
Tamara Vučić, First Lady of the Republic of Serbia
Regina De Dominicis, UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, UNICEF Representative to the UN and Special Coordinator for the Refugee and Migrant Response in Europe
Facilitation: **Deyana Kostadinova**, UNICEF Representative in Serbia
- 10.30–10.45 Keynote Speech
Policies, Practices and Partnerships for Ensuring the Best Start in Life for Children
Benjamin Perks, Head of Campaigns and Advocacy, UNICEF HQ, New York
- 10.45–11.00 Press Statements
Interactive Exchange with Participants
- 11.00–12.00 Session 1
Ensuring the Best Start in Life for Children in Serbia: Successes & Remaining Challenges
Dr Ivana Stašević Karličić, State Secretary, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia
H.E. Prof. Dr Slavica Đukić Dejanović, Minister of Education of the Republic of Serbia
Đorđe Todorov, State Secretary, Ministry for Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia
H.E. Milica Đurđević Stamenkovski, Minister for Family Care and Demography of the Republic of Serbia
H.E. Jelena Žarić Kovačević, Minister of Public Administration and Local-Self Government of the Republic of Serbia
Nikola Tarbuk, Secretary General, Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities
Nicola Pontara, The World Bank Country Manager for Serbia
Facilitation: **Deyana Kostadinova**, UNICEF Representative in Serbia



Ensuring the Best Start in Life for Children:

Day One – Continuation

The Power of Parenting

12.00–13.00 Session 2

Ensuring the Best Start in Life for Children in the Region: Successes & Remaining Challenges

Session Introduction

Ivelina Borisova, Early Childhood Development Advisor, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

Keynote Presentation (online)

Ireland: Introducing the First 5, a Whole-of-Government Strategy that Led to the National Parenting Model

Joanne McGarry, Parenting Support Policy Unit, Government Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), Ireland

Panel Discussion

Türkiye: Dilek Okkali Sanalmis, Strategy and Budget Expert, Child and Youth Sector Expert, Presidency of the Strategy and Budget Agency – *National Early Childhood Development Strategy with a Focus on Coordination*

Montenegro: Milica Marković, Advisor, Ministry of Health – *National Early Childhood Development Strategy with Parenting Components*

Romania: Valentin Sorin-Popescu, Head of Policy Unit, Ministry of Education – *National Parenting Strategy*

Ukraine: Olha Boyko, Lead of Social Service Technical Taskforce Group, National Coordination Centre for Family Upbringing and Child Development – *Better Care Reform: Ensuring the Right of Every Child in Ukraine to Grow Up in a Family Environment*

Ireland: Joanne McGarry, Parenting Support Policy Unit, Government Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), Ireland – *Parenting Support Policies in Early Years*

Facilitation: Ivelina Borisova, Early Childhood Development Advisor, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

13.00–14.00 Lunch

14.00–14.45 Session 3

The Power of Parenting in the Early Years

Keynote Presentation: *Parenting in Early Years* (online)

James Cairns, Senior Director, Strategic Engagements and Organizational Learning, Centre on the Developing Child, Harvard University

Keynote Presentation: *Regional Parenting Support Framework for the Early Years*

Ivelina Borisova, Early Childhood Development Advisor, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

Reflective Discussion and Facilitation: **Sanja Budisavljević**, Early Childhood Development Specialist, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia



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Day One – Continuation

14.45–15.45 Session 4

Effective Multisectoral Parenting Support at Scale

Keynote Presentation

Multisectoral Policy Integration for Parenting Support: Scaling-Up Effective Models Across the Region

Martino Serapioni, Research Coordinator at Confederation of Family Organizations in the European Union (COFACE)

Panel Discussion

Serbia: **Prof. Dr Milica Pejović Milovančević**, Director of the Mental Health Institute and Coordinator of the National Working Group for Early Childhood Development – *Multisectoral National Coordination for ECD and Parenting Support*

Türkiye: **Esra Yaman**, Head of Family Education and Counselling Department, Ministry of Family and Social Services – *Scaling-Up Multisectoral National Parenting Program*

Bulgaria: **Natalia Efremova**, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy – *EU Child Guarantee for Strengthened ECD/Parenting Agenda*

Croatia: **Margareta Mađerić**, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy – *From Strategy to Practice: Parenting Support Programmes in the National Plan for the Implementation of the Council of the EU Recommendation on Establishing an European Child Guarantee and National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021-2026*

Martino Serapioni, Research Coordinator at Confederation of Family Organizations in the European Union (COFACE)

Reflection: **Ella Humphry**, Education Specialist, Global Early Childhood Development Team, World Bank

Facilitation: **Aleksandra Jović**, Early Childhood Development Specialist, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

15.45–16.15 Coffee Break

16.15–17.15 Session 5

Partnerships for Transformative Change in the Early Years

Session Introduction

Benjamin Perks, Head of Campaigns and Advocacy, UNICEF HQ, New York

Panel Discussion

Sabine Van Tuyll Van Serooskerken Rakotomalala, Senior Technical Advisor at World Health Organization HQ in Geneva

Katarina Ivanković-Knežević, Director for Social Rights and Inclusion, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission



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Session 5 – Continuation

Partnerships for Transformative Change in the Early Years

Liana Ghent, Executive Director of the International Step by Step Association (ISSA), Netherlands

Anja Aleksić, Comtrade Group Board Member, Member of UNICEF Business Advisory Board for Children, Serbia

Facilitation: **Benjamin Perks**, Head of Campaigns and Advocacy, UNICEF HQ, New York

17.15–17.30 **Closing of the Sessions**

17.30–19.00 **Regional Parenting Support Fair**

Countries Showcasing Good Practice for Parenting Support in Europe – Q&A Sessions

Conference Rooms 2 and 3, next to the Main Conference Room



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Conference Agenda Day Two, 26 June 2024

Conference Moderation: **dr Jelena Zajeganović Jakovljević**
Miša Stojiljković

- 8.30–9.00 Registration and Welcome Coffee
- 9.00–9.30 Keynote Speech
The importance of Play in the Early Years
Aaron Lee Morris, Senior Partnerships Specialist, LEGO Foundation
- 9.30–10.45 Session 6
Strengthening Routine Services to Support Parents: Focus on the Health Sector
 - Keynote Presentation
Serbia: Role of the Health Sector in Supporting Responsive Care and Child Development
Prof. Dr Ivana Mihaljčić, Associate Professor at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Serbia
 - Panel Discussion
 - Serbia: Ksenija Krstić*, National Researcher for FHI360 Agency, Institute of Psychology, University of Belgrade – *Implementation Research of Playful Parenting Integration in the Home Visiting Nurse Service*
 - Serbia: Kristina Nedeljković*, President of the Association of Home Visiting Nurses in Serbia – *Home Visiting Nurses Modelling Responsiveness and Play in Caregivers and Early Stimulation Through Play*
 - Bosnia and Hercegovina: Dr Pamela Kapetanović Goluža*, Pediatric Specialist, Head of the Pediatric Care of the Health Centre in Vitez – *Developmental Monitoring and Early Detection of Risks and Developmental Delays*
 - Serbia: Prof. Dr Aleksandra Stojadinović*, Institute for Health Care of Children and Youth of Vojvodina – *Family Counselling, Developmental Monitoring*
 - Croatia: Assoc. Prof. Anita Pavičić Bošnjak*, MD, Neonatologist, Department for Neonatology of the Gynecology and Obstetric Clinic of the Clinical Hospital "Sveti Duh", President of the Commission for Breastfeeding Protection and Promotion of the Ministry of Health – *Support for Breastfeeding as Support to Family-Oriented Care*
 - Facilitation: **Prof. Dr Ivana Mihaljčić**, Associate Professor at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Serbia
- 10.45–11.00 Coffee Break



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Day 2 – Continuation

- 11.00–11.15 Keynote Presentation**
France: The '1000 Days' Centers: Towards Multisectoral Support and Positive Parenting Practices
Nathalie Casso-Vicarini, Founder and General Delegate of the French Association "Ensemble pour l'Education de la Petite Enfance - EPE"
- 11.15–12.30 Session 7**
Addressing Specific Needs of Parents Through Targeted Parenting Support
 - Session Introduction**
Introduction to the Targeted Parenting Support
Boniface Kakhobwe, Early Childhood Development Specialist, UNICEF HQ New York
Mila Vuković Jovanović, Early Childhood Development Officer, UNICEF Serbia
 - Panel Discussion – Development Context**
Bulgaria: **Ana Andreeva-Sapundzhieva**, Psychologist, Centre for Social Rehabilitation and Integration in Sofia, Bulgaria – *Adaptation and Pilot of Caregiver Skills Training Program in Bulgaria*
Serbia: **Biljana Stojanović**, Mother, Parents' Association "DAN" – *Caregivers Skills Training*
Montenegro: **Dijana Jović**, Preschool Psychologist – *Parenting for Lifelong Health*
Croatia: **Prof. Dr Ninoslava Pečnik**, President of the Centre for Parenting Support "Growing Up Together" – *"Growing Up Together" Initiative*
 - Panel Discussion – Humanitarian Context**
Ukraine: **Sydney Tacker**, "Hope Group" – *Parenting for Lifelong Health and Humanitarian Response*
Romania: **Prof. Dr Stefan Marian Cojocaru**, President of the "Holtis" Association, Professor at the University University A.I. Cuza, Iasi – *Parenting Support for Ukrainian Refugees*
Türkiye: **Sachly Duman**, Early Childhood Development Manager, UNICEF Türkiye – *Parenting Support in Emergencies (earthquake)*
Facilitation: **Boniface Kakhobwe**, Early Childhood Development Specialist, UNICEF HQ, New York
- 12.30–13.30 Lunch**
- 13.30–13.45 Voices of Parents (Early Childhood Intervention)**
Nikolina Radosavljević, Andra's Notes, Mother



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Day 2 – Continuation

13.45–15.00 Session 8

Towards Family-Centered Early Childhood Intervention Services

Keynote Presentation

Enabling Paradigm Shift: Integrated, Strengths-Based, Family-Centered Early Childhood Intervention

Dr Nenad Rudić, Child Psychiatrist, Member of Founder and Executive Board of the International Developmental Pediatrics Association

Panel Discussion: **Regional Context**

Moldova: **Daniela Bordeianu**, Director of the National Institute on Early Childhood Intervention Voinicel – *GMCD Instrument, Early Identification of Risks, Scaling-up Early Childhood Intervention*

Croatia: **Silvija Pucko**, Founder & Principal at MURID Centre for Early Intervention in Međimurje – *Early Childhood Intervention and Support to Roma Families*

Bulgaria: **Vania Kaneva**, Early Childhood Development Consultant, UNICEF Bulgaria – *The Importance of Assistive Technology*

Panel Discussion: **Serbian Context**

Serbia: **Jelena Petković**, Psychologist, Developmental Counselling Unit, Primary Health Centre Niš – *Early Childhood Intervention Model*

Serbia: **Suzana Simeunović**, Director of the Preschool Center “My Childhood” Čačak – *Preschool Education in Early Childhood Intervention Program*

Serbia: **Jelena Pešić Zarić**, Advisor, Republic Institute for Social Protection – *Social Welfare System in Early Childhood Intervention Program*

Facilitation: **Cristina Gaberi**, Early Childhood Development Officer, UNICEF Moldova

15.00–15.15 Break

15.15–16.15 Session 9

The Future of Parenting: Empowering All Parents

Session Introduction

Ivaylo Spasov, Social and Behavior Change Officer, UNICEF Bulgaria

Panel Discussion

Montenegro: **Ida Ferdinandi**, Early Childhood Development Officer, UNICEF Montenegro – *“Bebbo” application*

Serbia: **Danijela Kuljanin**, Counsellor, “Halo Beba” Phone Counselling Centre – *Platforms for Reaching Out / Empowering Parents and Caregivers*

Serbia: **Smiljana Grujić**, Psychologist, Psychotherapist, Program Coordinator, Novak Đoković Foundation – *Podcast “Parenting Talks”*



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Day 2 – Continuation



15.15–16.15 Session 9 – Continuation

The Future of Parenting: Empowering All Parents

North Macedonia: **Suzie Pappas**, Communication Officer, UNICEF North Macedonia – *UNICEF Community Engagement Campaign “Parenting Is Also Learned”*

Croatia: **Tamara Dimitrijević**, Relations Manager for IKEA South-East Europe – *Reaching and Empowering Parents in Working Environment*

Facilitation: **Ivaylo Spasov**, Social and Behavior Change Officer, UNICEF Bulgaria

16.15–16.30 Closing of the Conference: Key Reflections and Ways Forward

Deyana Kostadinova, UNICEF Representative in Serbia

Thank You For Participating!

