

SUMMARY PROJECT FICHE

1. Basic Information

- 1.1 Désiré? Number: BG 0005.04
Twinning Code: BG/2000/IB/SO/01
1.2 Title: **CHILD WELFARE REFORM**
1.3 Sector: Social policy
1.4 Location: Bulgaria

2. Objectives

2.1 Wider Objective:

Improved protection of socially-marginalised children, as vulnerable groups of society.

2.2 Immediate Objectives:

Development and pilot implementation of child welfare standards, structures and strategies in line with the UN Convention on the Right of the Child and the EU Convention on Human Rights

2.3 Accession Partnership and NPAA priority

As mentioned in the previous Regular Report the protection of civil rights has improved, but there continue to be problems with the effective functioning of law enforcement bodies: With a view to child welfare, a State Agency for Child Protection is envisaged in Bulgaria which will have the task to coordinate and control the implementation of state policies on child protection. Moreover, it is mentioned in the Regular Report 1999 that the implementation policies of the integration of disabled people still needs to be improved: This project focuses on the institutional strengthening of the National Child Protection Agency (the policy implementation body in this field) as well as on other forms of support to children (and particularly disabled children) - which are one of the most vulnerable groups of society.

With a view to the NPAA, the necessary activities in the field of employment and social issues to be undertaken during the year 2000 include the following item:

- Application of measures for improvement of welfare for children located in social institutions through the adoption of relevant child protection legislation and structures to improve quality of welfare.

2.4. Contribution to the National Economic Development Plan 2000 – 2006

The project focuses on the following goals of social assistance covered by the NEDP 2000 – 2006:

a) The key priority in the field of social assistance relates to the development of social services. The reform in this direction aims at providing elderly people, children, women, disabled, ethnic minority groups, socially isolated and poor people with equal access to the resources of society.

Children will enjoy special attention, in particular orphans and abandoned children, children with physical and mental disabilities lodged in social and educational institutions, as well as homeless and street children.

The basis for assessment and improving their status shall be the international standards laid down in the UN Convention on Children's Rights, the obligations of the countries - members of the Council of Europe, as well as the criteria for accession to the European Union.

In the years to come an integrated information system for the (municipal) social assistance services will be set up with the support of the World Bank and significant increases in the level of qualification of social workers will be undertaken. The attention in social assistance activity should focus on social services – psychosocial support for families in need. For the implementation of these services the state will collaborate closely with the NGO sector with the aim of providing a “mixed economy” of care. The legal basis for this is incorporated into the Social Assistance Act (1998).

b) With respect to equal access to education of all social groups irrespective of gender, age and ethnic identification, the key priorities shall be the following:

- Overcoming social marginalisation through education and training by involving all interested stakeholders – trainees, parents, local administrations and social partners with the objective to ensure attractive education and training oriented to the needs of the labour market. Special attention will be paid to marginal social groups.
- Education and training of people with special needs.
- Both improvement of facilities and elaboration of special curricula are foreseen. In parallel, qualification and re-qualification of teachers employed in these types of school will be carried out. The goal is successful reintegration and re-socialization of disadvantaged people.
- Strengthening the infrastructure of institutions for training people with special needs.
- Increasing the quality of education through a system of standards at all levels.

c) With regard to the support of initiatives in the field of information provision the objectives are:

- Setting up an integrated information system on human resources, which should accumulate, process and select, in terms of quantity and quality, the outputs of the implementation of measures concerning human resources.
- Undertaking a series of comprehensive and wide- ranging research studies to ensure effectiveness of the implemented measures.

2.5. National Programme of the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria 1997 – 2001

This programme is related to the most important tasks identified in Chapter Eight “Young People of Bulgaria” of the National Programme of the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria 1997 – 2001, in particular:

- Updating of the draft Child Protection Bill and its adoption by the National Assembly;
- Bringing the Bulgarian legislation concerning children and youth into conformity with the UN Convention on Children’s rights;
- Development of a national programme for continuing training focused on socially disadvantaged groups;
- Drawing up individual programmes for vocational training targeting the socially disadvantaged groups.

3. Description

3.1 Background and justification:

At present five ministries administer policy with respect to children: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Interior. Each of these ministries implements its own policy through its regional and municipal structures. At present Bulgaria according to the UNICEF supported MONEE report has one of the highest rates of institutionalisation of children in Europe with a rising tendency.

The details of the different institutions for children are provided in annex. In summary **The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy** is responsible for 56 social institutions for children with in 1999 about 3 700 children resident with physical and mental disabilities. **The Ministry of Education and Science** administers methodologically and financially 229 specialized schools with about 27,000 children both with and without parents, both healthy and with light handicap. **The Ministry of Health** is responsible for 31 homes “Mother and child” for children aged 0 to 3 in 1998 housing 4 265 children. **The Ministry of Interior** is responsible for 250 children’s pedagogical centres. **The Ministry of Justice** administers 2 reformatory homes for children aged 14 to 18.

Unfortunately the policies of different ministries are incoherent and their activities are badly coordinated.

Furthermore the public care system does not comply with modern requirements. There are no standards for the services offered, nor control of care quality.

Conditions in the institutions vary ranging from the reasonably good to the very bad. There is no standardised national set of criteria for child welfare.

There is no unified and standardised data base on institutionalised children and there is no management information system which makes access to information and efficient interventions extremely difficult. Unfortunately there are conflicts of interest in the existing system that prevent it from being in the best interest of the child.

In addition it is well documented that children are damaged by long periods of care in institutions and are subsequently ill prepared for the challenges of the outside world. The result is often high levels of crime, prostitution, drugs and exploitation, underdevelopment, mental disability, unemployment, homelessness and suicide.

The over – reliance on institutionalisation constitutes not only a high social cost for the country but a financial one too. The costs per institutionalised child are much higher than the costs per child in a family. Figures demonstrate that the cost per child placed in an institution under the Ministry of Health is USD 1,356 annually (year 1998) and 1,046 USD per child placed in an institution under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (first six months of 1999). These costs are substantially higher than the cost per child in a family, which according to the Statistical Yearbook 1998 was USD 630.

In addition to the problems of over-institutionalisation in Bulgaria the phenomenon “Street children” or homeless children emerged as a serious problem at the beginning of the 1990’s. This was the logical outcome of the decline in living standards of a relatively large majority of the population and growth of unemployment as a result of restructuring of the economy.

In March 1999 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy adopted new Rules for the Constitution and Activity of the Shelter for Unattended Children. These Rules stipulate the procedures for opening, administration and financing of shelters, staff number and qualifications required, as well as some practical norms and procedures related to the children.

However to address both of these phenomena – over-institutionalisation and street children, at present Bulgaria has no developed system of preventive social services. There are few counseling and support services available for families encountering difficulties in the rearing of their children, including temporary support for problem-ridden families. There are no effective measures available to support families who are at risk of family breakdown. There is no “gate keeping” mechanism to regulate children’s entry into care. It is relatively easy for children to enter the system but there is no clear path out.

The network of municipal social assistance offices under the responsibility of the MLSP does already provide financial assistance to families in need and constitutes a resource of personnel with knowledge of families in difficulty. What is more the Social Assistance Act of 1998 provides for the delivery of social services at municipal level and the creation of social work as a profession. A number of pilot projects supported by international NGOs have sought to re-train existing officers of municipal social assistance offices and the staff of NGOs in the profession of

social work. These pilot efforts need to be mainstreamed to have any sustainable impact.

The draft bill which is being debated at present and which is expected to be adopted soon, codifies the rights of children, regulates measures for child protection and proposes a State Agency for Child Protection as an independent body under the Council of Ministers. Of equal significance is the establishment of a national council of child protection in Sofia comprising representatives of all ministries charged with child protection and NGOs. At the local level municipal departments for child protection are to be established as an integral part of municipal social assistance services. Municipal committees are also envisaged as consultative bodies. The Bulgarian Government will ensure that the legislation finally adopted is in line with international standards to which Bulgaria is a party.

3.2 Linked activities

- Phare Emergency Social Assistance Programme No1 in 1997 provided 217,447 ECU for MSLP children's homes, 6635 for NGOs working with children, 1,243,880 ECUs (of which 35,806 for homes) for Ministry of Education and Science children and for Ministry of Health Mother and Child Homes 215,353 ECUs.
- Phare Emergency Social Assistance Programme No2 in 1998 provided 216,424 ECU for MSLP children's homes of which 11 643 for NGOs working with children, 1,293,005 ECUs for Ministry of Education and Science children and additionally for sanatoria 92,778, for Ministry of Health Mother and Child Homes 229,838 ECUs.
- These two programmes served to alleviate the humanitarian situation of children in institutions during the economic crisis of that time. The programmes did not tackle any institutional development issues relating to child protection.
- As early as June 1998 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy made a proposal for a two-phase project within the Phare Consensus Programme "Transition from residential care towards community based social services for elderly, disabled persons and children, with special references to children," amounting to EUR 250 000. Because of a lack of sufficient funds under the programme the EC approved only the first phase of the project amounting to EUR 110 000 which was implemented between June and December 1999.

3.3. Results:

There will be an initial technical assistance for the set up of the National Child Protection Agency. Already before the actual start of the programme, assistance to the set up of this Agency is envisaged through bilateral aid assistance. Furthermore, there will be two twinings, one on the national level (for sub projects one and five) and one for the local (municipal) level (for sub project two). Further technical assistance will mainly be provided for the development of family support (mainly through training and an awareness campaign in sub project 3) and the implementation of reform management in institutions (sub project 4).

Sub project 1: Through a twinning on a national level (covering sub-projects 1 and 5) and minor investment in equipment: Establishment and full institutional development of the National Child Protection Agency with full responsibility, power, capability to decide, monitor and coordinate throughout the system all issues regarding the protection of children's rights, standards for child care and the provision of child welfare services and capable of dealing effectively and in appropriate coordination with its local counterparts. Furthermore secondary legislation will be passed on the Child Protection Act since the State Agency for Child Protection will make proposals to the Council of Ministers and will participate in the relevant discussions on the draft legislation relating to child protection.

Sub project 2: Through a twinning on a local (decentralised) level and minor investment in equipment: enhanced decentralised management system for the implementation of child protection measures: Institution building, organisational and strategy development for and in 10 municipal child protection departments which are part of the municipal social assistance services (Dimitrovgrad (Haskovo), Vetovo and Two Mogili (Rousse), Berkovitsa, Lom and Borchinovtsi (Montana), Pomorie, Nesebar, Karnobat, Sredetz (Burgas) which have been selected on the basis of high unemployment rates, high number of institutionalized children, the presence of minorities (a significant proportion of institutionalised children are Roma) and close cooperation of NGO's with municipal social assistance services as well as a higher proportion of families with a large number of children .

Enhanced structures in the pilot municipalities for the delivery of new forms of social services aiming at a viable alternative to the inherited institutions and consolidation if these preventive, community based social services.

The 10 effective municipal strategies are to reflect local needs including special attention to minorities and the framework for redirecting funding from institutions to community based services.

Sub-project 3: Development of family support services through technical assistance: provision of training to foster families in the 10 pilot municipalities; preparation and implementation of an awareness campaign with a view to alternative services aiming at facilitating the reintegration of children from institutions into their families or at alternative, community based family like care in the 10 pilot municipalities

Sub-project 4: Restructuring of and reform management according to European Union and UN standards in a maximum of 20 institutions dealing with children with disabilities within these 10 pilot municipalities.

Subproject 5: Through a twinning on a national level (which covers sub project 1 and 5) Institutional development of the national social work training centre as a focal point for practical social work training and as a national standard giving body.

3.4. Activities:

Sub-project 1: Institutional Development National Child Protection Agency

The twinning (on a national level) will provide assistance to this body in setting standards and criteria in child welfare; managerial support from the twinner to effectively run this body :

(i) Preparation and implementation of a strategic plan for the work of the agency including:

- Monitoring the observance of children's rights at national level
- Research for alternatives to institutionalisation
- Development of a national action plan, national standards and effective implementation including methodological co-ordination of regional and municipal levels, monitoring, evaluation and supervision
- Identification of priorities and set framework for municipal short and long term programmes for children and families
- Assistance in preparation of secondary legislation to the Child Protection Act
- Preparation and implementation of effective co-ordination mechanisms for governmental ministries and NGOs
- Preparation and implementation of a national campaign/education strategy to raise public awareness of children's rights and issues, improvement in the media coverage of this issue including a cooperative approach with media, stimulation of monitoring and advocacy groups.

(ii) Preparation of organisational structure including organigramme, staffing plan, identification of posts, job descriptions, personnel specifications

(iii) Assistance in recruitment of staff

(iv) Training of staff

(v) Establishment of a national data - base on children through definition of contents of data base, collection and management of data

b) Investment in equipment (technical specification will be provided before the signing of the Financing Memorandum): PCs for the national data base, necessary equipment for getting the Agency fully operational, training materials etc.

Sub-project 2: Institutional development of municipal structures

Through twinning (on a decentralised level) from regional/county level social services in an EU Member State assistance will be provided for the institutional development and strengthening of municipal structures (child protection departments) in planning the development of social services

- (i) Creation of a general decentralised management plan whereby municipal child protection departments coordinated by their regional office/NCPA shall decide coordinate and finance activities on child welfare and protection at municipal level. Creation of systems for management and accountability of the respective financial resources and facilities of all child protection and welfare departments at municipal level. Institutional strengthening of the municipal child protection departments to redirect resources from institutions to community-based social services for children and their families.
 - (ii) Development of mechanisms for accreditation, contracting out of services to NGOs and private service providers
 - (iii) Development of 4 regional monitoring and enforcement strategies in Rousse, Montana, Bourgas and Haskovo to be coordinated either by regional authorities or directly by the NCPA.
 - (iv) Creation of an organisational structure and management systems for specialised departments for child protection and welfare at the municipal level in the 10 pilot municipalities
 - (v) Development of a strategic plan (including the incorporation of children's voices into planning and policy making) for child protection departments in each of the 10 municipalities covering methods for identifying families and children at risk, potential adoptive and foster families, emergency intervention, case information and documentation, service development, public awareness
- b) Provision of equipment (provision of mainly one computer and other equipment necessary for the organizational development of child protection departments in the pilot areas)

Sub-project 3: Development of family support services

- a) Valorisation of existing pilot experiences and pilots planned in developing family support services
- b) Provision of technical assistance through adequate training to foster families in the 10 pilot municipalities; training of the local stakeholders with a view to the establishment and organisation of day care centers and family support centers; technical assistance through training in social integration of institutionalised children and technical assistance in preparation and implementation of an awareness campaign which brings the idea of foster families and alternative community based services closer to the wider Bulgarian public

The Bulgarian authorities undertake to provide financial stimulation to foster families and to provide appropriate equipment for pilot foster families (starting with the 10 pilot municipalities), which undertake the care of the children from at risk groups (the twinner on the municipal level might assist in the technical specification)

- (i) Development of a strategy for introducing pilots in each of the 10 municipalities (the actual provision of services - including provision of services through NGO's - and the financial stimulation will be undertaken and organised by the Bulgarian authorities as mentioned above).
- (ii) training of foster families, family counseling, parental education, life skills development.
- (iii) Development of mechanisms in each of the 10 municipalities for gate keeping to restrict placing children to social institutions - homes;
- (iv) Creation of a structure for information sharing and exchange of experience.
- (v) Development of a supervision mechanism for fostering and social work practice
- (vi) Implementation of an awareness campaign in the 10 pilot municipalities

Sub-project 4: Reform management in a maximum of 20 selected institutions in the 10 pilot municipalities

a) provision of technical assistance on home management and care specialists (e.g. psycho therapists) including technical assistance from NGO's active in this field :

- (i) Review results of previous initiatives
- (ii) Introduction of new methods/standards of care in cooperation with home directors
- (iii) Training/assistance in staff teamwork
- (iv) Elaboration and implementation of individual care plans for children covering physical, mental, emotional health and development
- (v) Implementation of working in small groups with children
- (vi) Open institutions to the community
- (vii) Systematic use of board of trustees for the institutions composed of people from the community as a form of community control and ownership
- (viii) Implementation of an awareness raising campaign aiming at making available to other institutions the results and experiences gained in the institutions in the pilot municipalities

b) Provision of equipment of special medical devices to the max. of 20 institutions

Sub-project 5: National training centre

Through twinning provision of assistance for the development of social work, social management and institutional care training programmes:

- (i) Enhanced structure of the existing centre under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy as a focal point on social work training—strategic plan, administrative staff
 - (ii) Work with and further develop current curricula for social work at the universities to promote practice orientation: assistance to universities in the development of specialised training curricula for paraprofessionals
 - (iii) Creation and implementation of national standards for social work training together with representatives of organisations of social workers
 - (iv) Assistance to universities and NGOs in developing training for new alternative care models: foster care, adoption, community based child welfare services.
 - (v) Provision of management training for directors of municipal child protection departments and regional authorities in pilot areas.
 - (vi) Provision of social work training for staff of municipal child welfare departments (at least two persons trained per pilot department)
 - (vii) Assistance in the development of public awareness and fund-raising campaigns
on a national level.
 - (viii) Implementation of training programs for the National Child Protection Agency
 - (ix) training courses for social workers (at least five per each pilot municipality) in the pilot municipal child welfare services
 - (x) elaboration of a program for training and retraining of staff working in social institutions including particularly staff of Roma origin
- b) Provision of training facilities for implementation of the training and necessary equipment for institutional strengthening of the training institution

4. Institutional Framework

The project coordinator/project leader (overseeing project implementation) is Deputy Minister Dr. Tatyana Vassileva (she is foreseen as being the Head of the Supervisory Board of the National Child Protection Agency), Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Tel: 00359 2 933 25 70; fax: 00359 2 980 4436; e mail: mlsp-iirc@internet-bg.net)

The project beneficiary will be the National Child Protection Agency. This organization – which will be a specialised body at the Council of Ministers – will take ownership of the project and will provide the requisite staff to project manage its activities. The NCPA will comprise approximately 30 staff and work throughout the country through the child protection departments of the MLSP. The NCPA will appoint project officers and a Strategic Advisor for the Implementation of Technical Assistance Projects. Additionally, the CFCU Sofia will work closely with the NCPA in order to ensure that all tenders are prepared in accordance to stated requirements and conform to Phare tendering procedure.

An additional beneficiary will be the ministry of Labour and Social Policy since reform management will be implemented in a selected number of institutions under its responsibility and since the national social work training center will receive assistance.

The major institutions at national level are:

- The planned National Child Protection Agency directly responsible to the Council of Ministers and the municipal departments for child protection
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and its structures, the NSAS and Municipal SAS. The latter will play a key role at local level;
- The Ministry of Education and Science and the Regional Inspectorates for Education;
- The Ministry of Health and its regional structures;
- The Ministry of the Interior
- The Ministry of Justice

The five ministries will participate in the Steering Committee (SC) chaired by the chairman of the National Child Protection Agency (NCPA). The Steering Committee will also include representatives of key donor organisations such as the EC and the World Bank. This steering committee will ensure that there is a coordinated child protection policy in Bulgaria ending the previous fragmentation. It will also ensure that donor assistance is coordinated. The SC will achieve this through regular meetings to discuss and agree policy issues related to the programme– implementation being the responsibility of the NCPA. The NCPA will implement child protection policies cutting across former ministerial responsibilities. The SC will monitor the implementation of the programme regularly checking progress according to the indicators of achievement indicated in the log frame matrix.

A Project Implementing Unit (PIU) will be established at national level within the National Child Protection Agency. The PIU will ensure effective implementation of the programme and coordination between the services of different ministries.

Currently following Bills are in the process of consideration and adoption before the Parliament

- Family Benefits Act;
- Family Code;
- Child Protection Act.

5. Detailed Budget

COMPONENT	Phare support in MEURO		Total Phare (=I+IB)	National Co-financing *	IFI	TOTAL
	Investment Support *	Institution Building *				
Contract 1 TA						
initial TA for the set up of the Agency (sub project 1)		0,1				
TA (sub project 3)		0,3				
TA (sub project 4)		0,25				
Contract 2 Twinning		1.8				
On a national level (sub project 1 and 5)						
On a local level (sub project 2)						
Contract 3 Equipment (sub project 1,2,4 and 5)	1,050			0,5		
TOTAL	1.05	2.45	3.5	0.5		4

* The national co-financing represents 12.5% of the total budget.

6. Implementation Arrangements

6.1 Implementing Agency

The CFCU in Sofia of the Ministry of Finance will be responsible for the implementation of this project, although it will work in close association with the beneficiary: National Child Protection Agency (NCPA), particularly the new NCPA Project Implementation Unit. The NCPA will elaborate the technical specifications and TORs for all the sub-projects as required for tenders but it is anticipated that initial TA will be required for the set up of the programme and more specifically for the elaboration of technical specifications. This initial TA should be provided through traditional channels. The NCPA will assist in tender evaluation boards and oversee implementation. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy will be the beneficiary for sub-project 4 and 5.

6.2 Twinning

The contact person for twinning is Ms Maria Veleva (chief expert International Programmes Department at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy since this Ministry is responsible for the child protection reform until the State Protection Agency is established); Tel: 00359 2 933 24 60; fax: 00359 2 980 44 36; e mail: consensus@mlsp.government.bg

There will be a considerable twinning component (sub projects one, two and five) using 1,8 MEURO. The twinning component should include expertise from a Member State National Child Protection Agency to assist in the institutional development of the proposed Bulgarian NCPA (sub project 1); expertise from decentralised child protection agencies (e.g. county level in the UK, Magistrat in Austria) to assist municipalities (sub-project 2) and expertise from central training bodies to assist in the development of the training centre (sub-project 5). For this purpose, two Pre Accession Advisors (preferably from the same Member State) are envisaged: one for the national level (for sub-project 1 and 5) and one for the municipal level (sub-project 2). The two PAA's should be supported by a number of short term experts as appropriate and are supposed to cooperate closely together. Concerning the twinning on a national level, the twinning partner will be providing assistance on international child welfare criteria and standards and the management of a child protection agency. The twinning partner will be a National Child Protection Agency of a member state with similar role and functions to those foreseen in the draft Bulgarian Child Protection Act. For the implementation of sub-project 5, the twinning partner will be expected to provide technical assistance on the development of national social work training standards and assistance in the general development of a national focal point on social work training.

For the twinning on the municipal level, expertise is required on decentralised management systems in general and organisational and strategy development at the county/municipal level. This twinner will also need to oversee the actual family support measures (provision of services and equipment to particularly foster families) which the Bulgarian authorities will undertake under their financial responsibility under sub-project 3 after the relevant management structures for effective family support measures exist.

The PAAs should also have the following profile:

Current experience in working with social assistance services and particularly in child care at national (respectively regional) level

At least 10 years of relevant experience: good practical knowledge of EU policies in child welfare

A good knowledge of EU best practices in child welfare

Substantial management experience (establishment of an entirely new organisation)

Ability to work with NGOs

Good communication skills

Sound knowledge on the current situation of social assistance in Bulgaria

Experience in training

Guaranteed results of the twinning are:

- Establishment of a fully operational Child Protection Agency: The PAA will work on this task for a maximum of two years. Through the assistance of the twinning partner, secondary legislation in line with international standards will be elaborated
- Institutional development of municipal structures. Institution building support in ten pilot municipal child protection departments to fulfill its child protection tasks with a particular view to develop mechanisms for the provision of “alternative”, community based services (creation of a viable alternative to institutions). PAA is foreseen for a maximum of two years
- Standards in social work and social management will be elaborated: the national training center will be further developed as a focal point on social work training. PAA is foreseen for a maximum of two years.

Since there is a need to specify the precise responsibilities (particularly concerning the decision making power) and working relations between the municipal departments for child protection and the municipal social assistance services on the one hand and between the municipal department for child protection and the State Agency for Child Protection on the other hand, a close cooperation between the two PAAs is indispensable. Given the challenging task of the establishment and effective coordination of the planned structures as well as the implementation of the rather new approach of alternative social assistance services, the relatively long duration of a maximum of two years of the permanently present PAAs is justified.

In the event that no suitable twinning proposal is forthcoming, this component of the project will instead be implemented through conventional technical assistance.

6.3 Non-standard aspects
The DIS will strictly be followed.

6.4 Contracts

Equipment and medical devices will be put out to tender. The ownership will be transferred to the National Child Protection Agency and the relevant municipal structures. There will also be investment in family particularly foster family support –this will be based on fulfilling specific criteria of need to be defined under the programme.

There will be 3 contracts:

Contract 1: TA - Technical assistance - covering 0,35 MEURO: TA will be required for the set up of the programme (0,1 MEURO). This classical TA will be tendered in due time prior to actual project implementation. One particular task of this TA will be the assistance in the technical specification. This initial TA will also need to be provided to the National Child Protection Agency to ensure that it is capable of running the programme. This will need to be provided by a company's expert in social sector programmes in accession countries. Technical assistance (0,3 MEURO) is also foreseen under sub project 3 through the provision of training to foster families, training on provision of family support services and guidance for preparing and implementing an awareness campaign. Further TA (0,25 MEURO) is foreseen for the implementation of reform management in institutions through contracting an international NGO expert in EU care standards in institutions, training for care staff in care plans and small group work, training in home management for institution directors and overseeing the delivery of special equipment to the institutions). The contracted NGO will work in close partnership with the municipal services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy responsible for institutions.

Contract 2: Twinning: 1,8 MEURO :this part of the programme will use the bulk of Phare funds (main parts of sub – projects 1,2 and 5; see also 6.2)

Contract 3: Equipment: in total 1,350 MEURO:

The equipment component will cover from sub-project 1 the provision to every municipal child protection department of one computer, material for the institutional development of the National Child Protection Agency, material for the organisational development of 10 municipal child protection departments under sub-project 2 and material and equipment for the national training centre under sub-project 5. This accounts in total for 0,5 MEURO.

To assist the TA for reform management in selected homes (sub project 4), the provision of medical devices and other medical needs is foreseen (0,55 MEURO) following a needs assessment of the international NGO mentioned under contract 1.

7. Implementation Schedule

Set up TA (part of the first contract) will be tendered in January 2001 so that the PIU in the National Child Protection Agency can be operational at programme start in March 2001. This TA will assist the NCPA in starting its operations. It will pave the way for the twinning component (starting from March 2001) assisting in the identification of what is required.

Twinning component: the contracting of the twinner is to be finalized by April 2001 and the actual start of the twinner will be in June 2001 at the latest. The twinning will last for a maximum of two years.

The tendering and contracting concerning the equipment will take place in the second quarter of 2001. The implementation and disbursement will start in June 2001 and ends in the first quarter of 2002.

7.1 Start of tendering
January 2001

7.2 Start of activity
May 2001

7.3 Project Completion
December 2002

8. Equal Opportunity

The project implementation will guarantee that equal opportunities will be given to men and women and ethnic groups.

9. Environment

All necessary environmental impact studies will be undertaken as required by the DIS manual and Bulgarian national legislation.

10. Rates of return

The project is a support to the national aid scheme. Rates of return can only be calculated for individual projects approved under this scheme.

11. Investment criteria

11.1 Catalytic effect:

The project will encourage NGOs' and donors' participation in further support in the social welfare of children – a key investment for the future of Bulgarian society.

11.2 Co-financing:

Co-financing with other donors is ongoing – there is a World Bank loan under preparation, a Japanese Grant for legislative assistance. Interest in complementary and further support has been announced by the governments of Switzerland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom (Know-How Fund), Japan etc.

11.3 Additionality:

The EC financing will be additional to that allocated to the national scheme through the Bulgarian national budget.

11.4 Project readiness and size:

The project exceeds the minimum of MEUR 2 required by Phare.

11.5 Sustainability:

The scheme will continue to be operated through the existing administration under the Bulgarian legislation with the addition of criteria to involve the regional partnership in the process.

11.6 Compliance with state aids provisions

12. Conditionally and sequencing

- Adoption of the law on Child Protection in conformity in 2000 with UN and EU standards
- Allocation of offices and appropriate funding for National Child Protection Agency
- Adequate staffing for NCPA (at least payment of salaries for 30 persons) and municipal child protection departments
- With a view to sub project 3, the Bulgarian authorities undertake to provide financial stimulation in the form of provision of appropriate equipment for pilot foster families (starting with the 10 pilot municipalities), which undertake the care of the children from at risk groups
- Signing of Memorandum of Understanding with the NCPA
- The full commitment and participation of the senior management of the NCPA. In addition to providing the twinning partner with adequate staff and other resources to operate effectively, the senior management must be whole-heartedly involved in the development and implementation of the policies and institutional change required to deliver the project results.
- Signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the MLSP, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education and Science, specifying their power for establishment of specific criteria and their role in the decision making process.

ANNEXES TO PROJECT FICHE

1. Logical framework matrix in standard format (compulsory)
2. Detailed implementation chart (compulsory)
3. Contracting and disbursement schedule by quarter for full duration of programme (including disbursement period) (compulsory)
4. Further background information
5. List of relevant Laws and Regulations (optional)
6. Reference to relevant Government Strategic plans and studies (may include Institution Development Plan, Business plans, Sector studies etc) (Details of institutions for children)

Annex 1 to Project Fiche				
LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX Support of the Government's Policy for Child Protection Reform			Contracting period expires: 30.12.2002	Disbursement period expires: 31.12.2003
<i>Project Number</i>			Total Budget: 4 MEURO	Phare contribution: 3.5 MEURO
Wider Objective(s)	Indicators of Achievement*	How, When and By Whom Indicators Will Be Measured		
Improved protection of children as being vulnerable group of society	Greater achievement of international criteria and standards for child welfare	Representative survey on children living in social institutions and families at risk by independent human rights group at end of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive economic and social development trend of the country • Favourable external conditions • Phare Financing Memorandum signed Bulgarian co-financing assured 	

Immediate Objective (Purpose)	Indicators of Achievement*	How, When and By Whom Indicators Will Be Measured	Assumptions and Risks
Development and pilot implementation of child welfare standards, structures and strategies in line with the UN Convention on the Right of the Child and the EU Convention on Human Rights	<p>Established and operational Agency for Child Protection with a nationally unitary approach to assuring child protection</p> <p>Decentralised management system in place including 4 regional monitoring and enforcement strategies in Russe, Montana, Burgas and Haskovo; 10 municipal child protection departments</p>	<p>Organisational Audit of National Child Protection Agency's operations and role by expert organisation such as UNICEF at end of programme</p> <p>Audit at regular intervals throughout the programme by National Child Protection Agency (NCPA)</p> <p>National Social Assistance Service (NSAS) and NCPA data base statistics on a 6 monthly basis, NGO register in 10 pilot municipalities</p>	<p>Parliament adopts proposed child protection legislation. Several candidates for twinning from member-states apply; Twinning covenant with a Member State signed; Memorandum of Understanding with the Implementing Agency signed; Memorandum of Understanding between MLSP, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education and Science signed; Consistent support of municipal mayors</p>

.	<p>developed institutionally 10 operational municipal strategies,</p> <p>An average of 20 fewer institutionalised children per municipality. Increased number of NGOs providing social services related to children. Decreased expenditures of National Social Assistance Service for social institutions for children</p> <p>Increased number of children satisfied with the living conditions in the social institutions for children and developing normally according to standard milestones</p> <p>Functioning national social work training centre with national standards, modern curricula and training programmes for NCPA and pilot municipalities</p>	<p>Survey by group of independent development psychologists annually</p> <p>National Child Protection Agency Review</p>	<p>Public acceptance, progress in attitudes to institutionalisation</p> <p>Commitment by home directors to long term change</p> <p>Existing centre can be adapted and expanded for the purposes of this programme</p>
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Results	Indicators of Achievement*	How, When and By Whom Indicators Will Be Measured	Assumptions and Risks
<p>1 Full institutional development of the National Child Protection Agency with full responsibility, power, capability to decide, monitor and coordinate throughout the system all issues regarding the protection of children's rights and the provision of child welfare services. Fragmentation of child services eliminated.</p> <p>2. 10 municipal child protection department structures organisationally developed. 10 effective municipal strategies reflecting local needs developed including special attention to minorities and redirecting funding from institutions to community based services.</p> <p>3. In the 10 pilot municipalities developed mechanisms for family support services and for gate keeping to restrict the sending of children to social institutions - homes; Bulgarian authorities trained on how to</p>	<p>1. Ordinance of the Council of Ministers (CoM) on the criteria and standards of child protection adopted. Methodology and regulations of the NCPA approved by Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP). Staff working for the NCPA in clear structure with clear tasks. Office equipment in NCPA to ensure good functioning</p> <p>2. Functioning decentralised system in regional authorities of Russe, Burgas, Haskovo and Montana Municipal structures strengthened with strategies in place in 10 pilot municipalities</p> <p>3. Gate keeping mechanism approved by NCPA/. Pilot projects approved and implemented with concrete assistance to children at risk. Reduction in the number of institutionalised children 20</p>	<p>1. State Gazette</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brochure with the NCPA programme published within 6 months of commencement of programme • Steering committee review of NCPA development at regular intervals • Final report of the twinning partner <p>2. Resolution of MLSP on the methodology, 6 monthly progress and final reports of the twinning partner</p> <p>3. Regular review on the ground reported by technical assistants and National Child Protection Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics of the NSAS /NCPA on institutionalisation and foster care • Final Reports of the NGOs involved • Monitored by steering committee 	<p>1. Agreement of ministries to give up power over children's issues to the National Child Protection Agency</p> <p>2. Effective cooperation of mayors and regional prefects.</p> <p>3. Enough motivated and capable social workers to deal with children are available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enough motivated and capable NGOs dealing with children are available • Families capable of fostering

<p>organise and provide alternative services</p> <p>4. Developed and under pilot implementation improved care for children in 20 institutions according to European Union standards. To involve the development and implementation of individual care plans for each child in re-structured social institutions for children with disabilities, with the active participation of the child and team work of appropriately qualified staff.</p> <p>5. Development of the national social work training centre as a focal point for practical social work training and as a national standard giving body. Successfully implemented training programmes for staff of National Child Protection Agency, management courses for MSAS and regional authority directors in the 10 pilot municipalities and 4 regions, training courses for social workers dealing with children in</p>	<p>per municipality, Foster care placements created. NGO delivery of social service programmes</p> <p>4. Programmes for institutionalised children in 20 institutions approved by MLSP according to EU standards, 20 social institutions for children closely integrated in the local community, 1000 children living in better conditions, 600 children from the Roma ethnic minority group better looked after. Methodology for drafting of individual plans for children approved by MLSP and implemented.</p> <p>5. National vocational standards exist. Course graduates effectively functioning in homes, preventive services and administration in pilot areas.</p>	<p>4 Regular Reports to MLSP by municipal child protection departments and institutions. Technical assistance reports</p> <p>5. Reviewed regularly by NCPA. Course evaluation sheets filled in as training courses completed. Positive reports on staff development in NCPA, municipal child protection departments and institutions annually. Checked by Steering Committee.</p>	<p>4. Municipalities in which social institutions for children exist are in good financial condition</p> <p>5. Sufficient social work trainers can be found in Bulgaria</p>
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<p>municipal child welfare services, programmes for training and re-training of staff (incl.of Roma origin) working in social institutions for children mainly of Roma origin, with particular emphasis on the Roma community due to the specificity of their problems; programmes at national and municipal level for social workers dealing with children with disabilities.</p>			
<p>Activities:</p>	<p>Indicators of Achievement</p>	<p>How,when and by whom indicators will be measured</p>	<p>Assumptions and Risks</p>
<p>1.Institutional Development National Child Protection Agency(NCPA)</p> <p>Through Technical Assistance from twinner:</p> <p>(i) Preparation and implementation of strategic plan for the work of the agency including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring at national level the observance of children's rights - Research into inter alia determinants for institutionalisation , alternatives to institutionalisation 	<p>(i).Effective Strategic plan approved by Council of Ministers then implemented by Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual report on children's rights - Situation and Response Analysis - National Action plan and national standards successfully 	<p>i).Project Steering Committee to supervise preparation within one year and then implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NCPA fully operational within one year; equipped with own staff, municipal departments and contracts to human rights NGOs -Review of research within one year by NCPA -measured by the NCPA within one year 	<p>(i) Twinning partner found</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of national action plan, national standards and effective implementation including methodological co-ordination of regional and municipal levels, monitoring, evaluation and supervision - Creation of a national data-base on children; - Identify priorities and set framework for municipal short and long term programmes for children and families - Legislative support for secondary legislation - Prepare and implement effective co-ordination mechanisms for governmental ministries and NGOs - Preparation and implementation of national campaign strategy to raise public awareness of children's issues to include public information campaigns, improved local/national child welfare system media relations, education of public on children's rights, stimulation of monitoring and advocacy groups. 	<p>implemented</p> <p>-National data base on children functional. A computer in each municipal child protection department used for this purpose.</p> <p>Family programmes exist</p> <p>Secondary legislation adopted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective coordination demonstrated by inter-alia regular meetings of coordination group - National campaign strategy exists and there is greater public awareness 	<p>-Annual situation of children report published NCPA within one year measured by the Steering committee within six months after start of the program</p> <p>Publication of secondary legislation</p> <p>Measured by Steering Committee (SC)</p> <p>Strategy approved by director of NCPA and public awareness assessed by annual public opinion survey by NCPA</p>	
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(ii) Preparation of organisational structure including organigramme, staffing plan, identification of posts, job descriptions, personnel specifications (iii) Assistance in recruitment of staff (iv) Training of staff (v) Specification and provision of equipment b) Investment in equipment - provision of a PC to each municipal social assistance service child protection department. 2. Institutional development of municipal structures Through Technical Assistance in form of twinning: (i) Draw up a general decentralised management plan whereby municipal child protection departments coordinated by their regional office/NCPA shall decide	ii) Organisational structure exists (iii) Appropriate staff recruited (iv) Training assessment forms (v) Appropriate equipment installed 2. (i) Plans approved by NCPA and Steering Committee exist. Funds available from closure of one institution per pilot municipality diverted to	(ii) Within 6 months, director of NCPA and steering committee iii) Staff contracts within 9 months by SC (iv) Files of agency by steering committee ongoing (v) Visit to agency by steering committee after one year 2. (i) Steering Committee within one year	 (iii) Suitably qualified staff exist 2. (i) Compatibility with administrative structure in Bulgaria. Cooperation of Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Regional Development.
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<p>coordinate and finance activities on child welfare and protection at municipal level. Create systems for management and accountability ; empowerment of the municipal child protection departments to redirect resources from institutions to community based social services for children and their families</p>	<p>financing preventive services.</p>		
<p>(ii) Development of mechanisms for accreditation, contracting out of services to NGOs and private service providers</p>	<p>(ii)Accreditation and contracting system exists approved by MLSP and Ministry of Finance/Administration and broad agreement of NGOs</p>	<p>(ii)Examples of successfully contracted out services at municipal level verified by NCPA</p>	<p>(ii) Compatibility with general contracting-out procedures of Bulgarian government</p>
<p>(iii) Develop 4 regional monitoring and enforcement strategies in Russe, Montana, Burgas and Haskovo to be coordinated either by regional authorities or directly by the NCPA.</p>	<p>(iii) 4 developed and effective strategies exist</p>	<p>(iii) Regional authorities regularly check developments</p>	
<p>(iv)Set up organisational structure and management systems for specialised departments for child protection and welfare at the municipal level in the 10 pilot municipalities</p>	<p>(iv) Management systems and organisational structure exist in the 10 municipalities. Finance from closing one institution in each municipality diverted to preventive services</p>	<p>(iv) Review after one year NCPA and SC</p>	

<p>(v) Draw up strategic plan for each of the 10 municipalities (MSAS child protection departments)</p> <p>Equipment investment</p> <p>3. Training to foster families; training to local authorities how to provide alternative services; Developing family support services: TA in family support and in social integration of institutionalised children and provision of necessary equipment for pilot foster families; implementation of awareness campaign</p> <p>(i) Valorisation of existing pilot experiences and pilots planned in Bulgaria in developing family support services</p> <p>(ii) Creation of a strategy for introducing pilots in each of the 10 municipalities.</p> <p>(iii) In each of the 10 municipalities develop services appropriate to needs, including</p>	<p>(v) Strategic plans exist and are implemented</p> <p>(i) Valorisation report</p> <p>(ii) Strategies including how to close one institution in each municipality</p> <p>(iii) Practically functioning services in areas such as foster care services, day care centers,</p>	<p>(v) On the spot verification ongoing by NCPA</p> <p>(i) National Child Protection Agency within 3 months of beginning of programme</p> <p>(ii) NCPA</p> <p>(iii) Independent expert review at regular intervals</p>	
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<p>adoption and foster care</p> <p>(iv) Develop mechanisms in each of the 10 municipalities for gate keeping to restrict the sending of children to social institutions – homes and mechanisms for reintegration of children into families and to family-like alternatives such as foster care</p> <p>(v) Set up structure for information sharing and exchange of experience</p> <p>vi) Develop supervision mechanism for social work practice and fostering</p> <p>(vii) preparation and implementation of an awareness campaign</p>	<p>family counseling</p> <p>(iv) Reduction in number of children in homes by 20 per pilot municipality. Reduction in referrals. Reintegration of 5 children per municipality into birth families Remaining children from closed institution into adoption/fostering</p> <p>(v) Structures involving NGOs with data base support</p> <p>(vi) Qualified supervisors active in all projects</p>	<p>(iv) MLSP /NCPA statistics at end of programme</p> <p>(v) NCPA regularly</p> <p>(vi) International team of social workers verify capability of supervisors at 6 monthly intervals</p> <p>NCPA surveys</p>	<p>(vi) Sufficiently qualified people available to act as supervisors.</p>
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<p>4. Improved care for institutionalised children</p> <p>Reform management and care for children in selected homes for disabled (maximum 20) in the 10 pilot municipalities through TA from NGO on home management, care specialists (e.g psychotherapists) as well as provision of necessary equipment including medical devices</p> <p>(i) Review results of previous initiatives.</p> <p>(ii) Draw up key lessons learnt and strategy for introducing change</p> <p>(iii) Work with selected home directors to introduce new methods of care including staff team work, working in small groups with children</p> <p>(iv) Preparation and implementation in pilot homes of individual care plans for children covering physical, mental, emotional health and</p>	<p>4.</p> <p>20 homes with child centred care using small groups and team work</p> <p>(i) Records of review meetings</p> <p>(ii) Strategy document</p> <p>(iii) 20 homes for disabled have EU care standards</p> <p>(iv) 1600 individual plans for children developed; 1600 children (among them 600 Roma) achieve milestones as per plans</p>	<p>4.</p> <p>International experts on institutional care implement evaluation at end of project</p> <p>(i) MLSP service for institutions and NCPA</p> <p>(ii) MLSP service for institutions after 3 months</p> <p>(iii) Regular unannounced checks to see reality of team and small group work on different days of week by independent team of experts on home care every three months</p> <p>(iv) Documentation in the local municipal child protection department; Team from NCPA verify every 6 months through sample visits.</p>	
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<p>development</p> <p>(v) Open institutions to the community</p> <p>vi) Systematic use of board of trustees for the institutions composed of people from the community as a form of community control and ownership</p> <p>(vii) Communication of project experience from institutions in programme to all other institutions through conferences and newsletter.</p> <p>5. National training centre</p> <p>Through provision of Technical assistance for development of social work, social management and institutional care training programmes and through provision of training facilities and equipment:</p> <p>(i) Development of the structure of the centre as a focal point on social work training– strategic plan, administrative staff</p>	<p>(v) Regular assistance to children by local people</p> <p>(vi) 20 institutions with board of local people</p> <p>(vii) All MSLP homes function according to European care standards</p> <p>5.</p> <p>(i) Strategic plan exists and approved by MLSP/NCPA</p>	<p>v) Municipal child protection departments regularly monitor</p> <p>(vi) Documentation MSAS</p> <p>(vii) The NCPA to verify this through independent team of experts one year after close of this programme</p> <p>5.</p> <p>(i) Steering Committee after 6 months from the commencement of the programme</p>	
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<p>(ii) Work with current curricula for social work at the universities to promote practice orientation</p> <p>(iii) Draw up and implement together with representatives of organisations of social workers national standards for social work training</p> <p>(iv) Assist universities in the development of specialised training curricula.</p> <p>(v) Assist universities and NGOs in developing training for new alternative care models</p> <p>(vi) Provision of management training for directors of municipal child protection departments and regional authorities in pilot areas</p> <p>(vii) Provision of social work training for staff of municipal child welfare departments and pilot family support services</p> <p>(viii) Assistance in the development of public awareness and fund-raising campaigns.</p>	<p>(ii) Practical social work curricula prepared for all university social work courses involving NGOs</p> <p>(iii) Standards exist with contribution of social worker organisations</p> <p>(iv) New courses</p> <p>(v) New courses</p> <p>(vi) Management training completed for 10 pilot MSAS and 4 regional authorities. Effective on the job improvement.</p> <p>(vii) At least 20 municipal staff (two persons per municipality) and 50 social workers trained (five per each municipality)</p> <p>(viii) Operational campaigns</p>	<p>(ii) International social work experts evaluate the curricula after one year and at end</p> <p>(iii) Evaluation international social work experts after one year and at end</p> <p>(iv) NCPA reviews on regular basis</p> <p>(v) NCPA reviews regularly</p> <p>(vi) Training evaluation sheets checked by NCPA after each course. Visits to MSAS to check on management skills on the spot.</p> <p>(vii) Training evaluations sheets – confirmation of effectiveness on ground</p> <p>(viii) NCPA regularly</p>	
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ANNEX 2: Detailed Implementation Time Chart

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	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Contract 1 (Set up TA)																																				
Contract 2 (Twinning)																																				
Contract 3 (Equipment)																																				

- Tendering, contracting
- Implementation and disbursement
- Final disbursement and completion

ANNEX 3: Contracting and Disbursement Schedule –EU Funds

[illegible]

Annex 6: Reference to Government Study - Details of institutions for children

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is responsible for 56 social institutions for children, as follows:

- 10 social-vocational training establishments for children and young people with mental and physical disabilities, aged 14 to 35 – with capacity for 1 627 children;
- 32 homes for children with mental underdevelopment, aged 3 to 18 – with capacity for 2 241 children with severe mental and physical disabilities, orphans, half(semi)-orphans, extramarital or abandoned by their parents;
- 1 home for children and teenagers with physical disabilities but with normal intellectual capacity, aged 3 to 18 – with capacity for 130 children;
- 13 day centers for children with mental and physical disabilities – full day or full week care, keeping contact with parents. This is a new practice of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. These homes are usually opened by the Municipal Social Assistance Services in the bigger cities. The total capacity is for 418 children.

In 1999 about 3 700 children with physical and mental disabilities lodged in the social institutions.

The Ministry of Education and Science administers methodologically and financially 229 specialized schools. Responsible for these schools are the Specialized Schools Sector and the Planning and Financing Service of the Ministry of Education and Science. 28 Inspectorates for Education located in the district centers are implementing the Ministry's policy. Today the municipal authorities have no financial and administrative powers in respect to these schools. The specialized schools under the Ministry of Education and Science are the following types:

- 34 homes for children of pre-school age of 3 to 7 years with 1 544 children for 1998;
- 87 homes for children aged 7 to 18 with total number of children 6 933 for 1998. These homes are subdivided further into three groups:
- homes for children and young people aged 7 to 14 – the children there are brought up and educated in a boarding house but attend public schools;
- homes for children and young people aged 14 to 18 – the children there are also brought up and educated in a boarding house but are attending public schools;
- homes for children and young people aged 7 to 18 – a school is attached to the home only for the children living there;
- 85 supporting schools with total 9 228 children aged 4 to 14 with learning difficulties or with light level of mental disabilities. These schools are subdivided in three types too:
- home – supporting school – The children live and are educated there throughout the calendar year. The children in these homes are with renouncement of parental rights and come from homes for pre-school age;
- supporting school – boarding house – The children stay in a boarding house and study in a school specially designed for them. During weekends and holidays they go back to their parents;
- supporting classes – for children with learning difficulties at the general education schools.
- 35 health(sanitary) schools with total number of 3 909 children – of boarding-house type for learning and educational and curative activities for children with chronic diseases;

- 3 hospital schools – they are established under the pediatric departments at the hospitals; for 1998 the number of children in these schools has been 508;
- 6 sanatorium schools with 477 children – these boarding schools have been opened in sanatorium resorts for children with chronic diseases. The children go back to their parents for the weekends and holidays;
- 2 boarding schools for children with disturbed eyesight. In 1998 these school accommodated 303 children;
- boarding schools for children with disturbed hearing – situated in the bigger cities. 767 children aged 7 to 18 stayed in these boarding schools in 1998;
- 5 logopaedic schools for children with disturbed speech, three of them being boarding schools. 262 children stayed there in 1998;
- 2 family homes for 7 children. This is a new form, where the effectiveness of breeding up and education is subject to discussion;
- 9 educational boarding schools for children aged 7 to 18 with anti-social behavior. The longest duration of stay in such school is up to 3 years. 782 children have been placed in such schools in 1998. As a rule these boarding schools are situated in small towns and this impedes the access of the parents (which is usually allowed);
- 25 social and pedagogical boarding houses for children aged 7 to 14 who have committed minor anti-social deeds or are inclined to such deeds as a result of criminal family environment. These specialized schools are situated in the villages and are attended by local children too. The children go back to their families for the weekend and holidays. 2 428 children have been placed in these houses in 1998.

The Ministry of Health through its Regional Health Centers provides methodological guidance to 31 homes “Mother and child” for children aged 0 to 3. The local authorities finance them through the municipal budget. The homes are situated predominantly in the district centers of the country. In 1998 4 265 children have been brought up there. Nowadays these homes are undergoing structural reform by attracting social workers. The care of disabled children is also being developed.

The Ministry of Interior provides methodological guidance to the children’s pedagogical centers. The number of these centers is 250 with 234 payroll policemen. Guidance is also provided to 5 homes situated in the bigger cities of the country, for temporary accommodation of children. The stay of the children in these homes is not more than 15 days. The maintenance of the homes is taken over by the Regional Directorates of Internal Affairs. 5000 children passed through these homes in 1998.

The Ministry of Justice administers 2 reformatory homes for children aged 14 to 18 – in Boichinovtsi for boys and in Sliven for girls. 141 boys and 4 girls have been placed in these homes in 1998. The Ministry of Justice directly finances the homes.

Annex 7: Further background information:

Present Legislation:

Currently the following legislation is in force:

- Social Assistance Act;
- Implementing regulations of the Social Assistance Act;
- Birth Promotion Ordinance;
- Family Code
- Juvenile Delinquency Act

Children's welfare is ensured by all ministries predominantly at present through institutions for children.. The police and judiciary provide another type of governmental care.

To a large extent the practices of institutionalisation are due to certain public perceptions, inherited from the past. They are also a consequence of the lack of options other than institutionalisation, the wide impoverishment of the population and the breakdown of the traditional family pattern. The alternatives to institutional care are very limited –foster family care has not yet become popular and it needs still to be regulated by law. Furthermore the public is not aware or insufficiently informed about the possible forms of child protection that are different from institutional care.

At the end of 1998 five bills concerning Children were under discussion in the National Assembly. One final version has now been consolidated from these different bills, which has been widely discussed and analyzed by local and foreign specialists. In November 1999 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy presented its detailed comments and recommendations with regard to this final version. This draft was considered by the Human Rights Committee of the National Assembly and the bill is now still under discussion at its second reading.

Three major groups of homeless children can be identified in Bulgaria:

- Children living in the street – who have no home, no family, no support, more than 80 per cent of them are of Roma origin;
- Children working in the street – who have some links with their families and usually go home for the night; often the parents are the ones sending them out to the streets to get money, often this being the only income for the family – more than 80 per cent of them are of Roma origin too;
- Children in danger of ending up on the street – who are still living with their families or are placed in a social institution, but who do not receive the respective care or have problems with their families. Approximately 45 000 children in total stop going to school every year; about 52 per cent of the school-aged Roma children do not attend school either.

The particular position of minorities will also need to be addressed. Minorities and Roma in particular are greatly affected by the large-scale impoverishment of the population. A significant proportion of the disadvantaged, institutionalised and vulnerable children come from the Roma ethnic minority.

The implementation methodology chosen will involve two components of institution building at the national level that of the Child Protection Agency and the national social work training centre. 10 municipalities have been selected for the pilot activities constituting the remainder of the programme – organisational and strategy development for municipal departments, the delivery of new social services and the improvement of care in institutions of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. These 10 municipalities in the four regions of Haskovo, Rousse, Montana and Bourgas - Dimitrovgrad (Haskovo), Vetovo and Twomogili (Rousse), Berkovitsa, Lom and Borchinovtsi (Montana), Pomorie, Nesebar, Karnobat, Sredetz (Bourgas) - have been selected on the basis of high unemployment rate, large number of institutions for children, close cooperation of NGOs with municipal social assistance services, higher proportion of families with large number of children, presence of ethnic minorities.

The Phare CONSENSUS project “Transition from residential care towards community based services for elderly, disabled persons and children, with special references to children” had four immediate objectives:

- Reviewing and gaining a clear picture of the present design, operation and management of social assistance in Bulgaria and identifying the opportunities for reform created by the new legislative framework
- Making recommendations to the responsible central authorities through the Project Steering Committee for the development of realistic, sustainable, nation-wide structures which should ensure the provision of community-based services as an alternative to institutional forms of care for children, elderly and disabled people based on models which have been tried and tested in other countries and applicable in Bulgaria
- Organising and conducting a seminar designed to raise awareness of the need for reform to services for these vulnerable groups and to contribute to a direct practical outcome in the form of Action Plans to inform and shape future services for the vulnerable groups concerned.
- Adopting National Action Plans dedicated to the practical reform of social assistance in Bulgaria and designing a practice-led demonstration pilot projects to provide a community-based direct service to vulnerable children in the District of Mladost in Sofia and in a rural municipality, replicable elsewhere in Bulgaria

The objectives of this CONSENSUS project were achieved. As a result of the project, Bulgaria has undertaken a thorough going review of her social assistance system for vulnerable children, elderly and disabled persons, made realistic recommendations for reform, has in place National Action Plans for the three client groups and well-formulated pilot projects ready to be implemented.

- In December 1998 a mission was carried out jointly by the World Bank, UNICEF and UNDP concerning the situation of institutionalized children and street children. As a result of the mission’s recommendations the Japanese government provided the World Bank with a grant amounting to USD 400 000 for assisting the preparation of a

project concerning children's welfare in Bulgaria. Under this grant technical assistance is provided to the Bulgarian government on legislation and strategy. The final project of the World Bank to be financed by a loan beginning in 2001 will complement and work in partnership with the assistance of other donors.

- The activity of the British Know How Fund – a programme of the British government, is aimed at supporting initiatives and projects in the social field, often related to children with disadvantaged status. The Fund has financed training projects organized by British organizations such as “Save the Children” and “European Children's Trust”. The experience of these training projects will be valorised during the initial stages of this programme. The Fund has also financed the project “Bulgarian-British legal initiative for children” focusing on the elaboration of child protection legislation and training of lawyers in this field. A policy and practice initiative implemented by Save the Children complements the work of the Consensus project on the transition from institutional care to community based alternatives.
- The Swiss government has invested in a project for reform of institutionalized care for children in Bulgaria. Under this project in the period 1994 – 1998 an inter-ministerial group has been formed, with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Health. The project involves also two children's establishments under the administration of each ministry. Since the beginning of 2000 the Swiss government is discussing a new programme aimed at training new teams of specialists and pilot projects with duration of 5 years for de-institutionalization of children. Coordination will be instituted so that the training under this project is complementary to that under objective 4 of this programme.

Along with the support of the multilateral and bilateral governmental donors in Bulgaria, numerous international and Bulgarian NGOs and foundations are taking part in a series of projects and programmes related to children including ECHO funded projects to improve the medical condition of MLSP and Ministry of Health children's homes.