

Summary of Country Analytical Reports 2014: implications for data collection

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Background

- **TransMonEE**: annual qualitative data, and Country Analytical Reports on specific topics
- **2008**: CARs provide comprehensive data on children in alternative care
- **2009**: Guidelines for Children in Alternative Care
- **2014**: CARs again provide detailed information, focus on definitions and data

How can we adjust data collection to be in line with latest thinking, as expressed in Guidelines?



At home or in a home?

Formal care and adoption of children
in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

unite for
children

unicef 

What can we learn

Our questions:

- Are we counting the right children?
- Are national definitions and classification systems in line with the Guidelines?
- What are the main challenges and solutions ?
- What can we learn from countries that have taken steps to improve their definitions and data collection systems?

Problem
areas

Positive
examples



What we did

- **Methods:** 21 CARs received (responding to RO guidance), qualitative assessment + triangulation
- **Focus:** definitions (legal, working) and data systems
- **Caveats:** missing data, varying detail, translation issues
- **Implications:** Comparative analysis not possible yet – but country profiles coming.





Foster care

- **Definition:** When...”children are placed by a competent authority for the purpose of alternative care in the domestic environment of a family other than the children’s own family that has been selected, qualified and approved and supervised for providing such care”.
(Guidelines)
- **Findings:**
 - The essential features of legal definitions seem to be well-captured by the majority of countries.
 - Different forms of foster care: “standard”, “specialized”, “emergency”, “respite”
 - The legislation may not be comprehensive, e.g. exclude temporary/ respite foster care

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Serbia:

Strong legal definition + ensuring harmony through triangulation and validation.

Guardianship care

- **Definition:** No definition by Guidelines.
 - A guardian is an individual of full legal age, officially appointed as a legal representative of a child (UNICEF, general international understanding)
- **Findings:**
 - Many differences between country definitions and international definition
 - The legal considerations - including age limits, place of residence, parental rights, compensation etc. - vary from country to country and guardians may or may not be related to the child or given an allowance.
 - Similar terms: 'wardship', 'trusteeship' or 'custodianship'.



Patronat care

- **Definition:** No definition by Guidelines
 - “Family based placement concept by which children are placed in ‘patronat’ families while remaining under the guardianship of the director of their residential institution ‘of origin’ – through a tripartite agreement between institution, family and guardianship agencies.” (UNICEF 2014).
- **Findings:**
 - The majority of countries did not provide a legal definition of patronat care or stated that it was not practiced in their country
 - Sometimes referred to as “respite foster care” if provided by foster families

Informal kinship care

- **Definition:** “Any private arrangement provided in a family environment, whereby the child is looked after on an ongoing or indefinite basis by relatives or friends ... at the initiative of the child, his/her parents or other person without this arrangement having been ordered by an administrative or judicial authority or a duly accredited body” ... (Guidelines)
- **Findings:**
 - Informal care arrangements are a common practice and an essential for of alternative care (esp. migrant families)
 - Often, when this type of care is formalized, families may be given financial support and supervision (and may be referred to as foster families)
 - Little data available – raises questions about the role of MICS/ other surveys?



Residential care

- **Definition:** “All care provided in a non-family based group setting, such as places of safety for emergency care, transit centres in emergency situations, and all other short- and long-term residential facilities, including group homes.” (Guidelines)
- **Findings:**
 - Most countries described the various types of residential care facilities available
 - “Institution” and “residential facility” used interchangeably
 - Some mentioned role of non-publicsector, few mentioned role of health sector
 - Some emphasized temporary/emergency nature of residential care



Residential care

- **Family type homes:**

- “...personalised residential care, provided by one or more staff in a house that is not their own, looking after a group of children (typically 10-15) in a home-like environment” (UNICEF)
- Guidelines state that residential care “encompasses a wide range of settings, from emergency shelters and small group homes to the biggest residential facilities”
- Finding: often erroneously categorized as a form of family-based care

- **Institutions**

- No formal definition available, although frequently used to refer to the large classic or traditional style of residential care
- “Orphanage” also used

Residential care

- **Family type homes:**

Azerbaijan:

Headcount led to drop in statistics on residential care. Now MoE use electronic database for better overview.

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- **Inst** style of residential care
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National data systems

- **Findings:**

- Usually one agency responsible for the collection and quality control of data on children in alternative care
- But multiple sources - different agencies and ministries use different terminology or definitions
- Many countries establishing electronic and/or online data systems
- Little information on quality checks
- Few reports made any references to reliance on routine surveys, such as MICS or DHS surveys.
- Whilst statistical data is often published and freely available in their countries, it generally remains underused

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Montenegro:

The Child Protection Database and the Social Welfare Information System



Summary: under- and over-counting

Lack of uniform classification and miscounting

Examples:

- Children living in non-public residential care, or certain health and educational facilities, not classified all as in 'residential care'.
- Family-type homes often classified as a form of 'family-based care' rather than 'residential'
- No data on children in informal kinship care
- The definition of guardianship and the classification of children in guardianship care vary substantially between countries



Summary: emerging issues

1. 'Good data' appreciated by all
2. How to capture and promote 'successes'
3. How to support early warning
4. Addressing the data deserts
5. Digital enhancement
6. More disaggregation needed

Thank you!

