

# Hope & Homes for Children



**Our vision is a world in which children  
no longer suffer institutional care**

Honorary President  
**Princess Marina Sturdza**

Ambassadors  
**Amalia Enache**  
**Alexandru Tomescu**

Regional Director  
Central and Southern Europe  
**Stefan Darabus, Ph.D.**

National Director  
**Otto Sestak**

Spokesperson  
**Dragos Bucurenci**



Hope & Homes  
for Children

“For the past **18 years** we have been putting locks on the iron doors of mammoth-sized institutions from the child protection system in Romania, and we have been offering each child a family life. This year we are celebrating more than **18 years of reform**; we are celebrating the closing down of **52 old-type institutions**, **5,542 children** saved from institutionalisation, **23,570 children** who remained with their families due to our prevention programmes. And these numbers are growing as we speak.”

**Stefan Darabus, Ph.D.**

Regional Director, Central and Southern Europe,  
Hope and Homes for Children



## Hope and Homes for Children



- **We are a global organisation** active since 1994. Our head office is in the UK.
- **Our vision** is one of a world where no child should suffer the nightmare of institutionalisation.
- **Our mission** is to be the catalyst of global eradication of institutionalisation for children. And we are on the right track.
- **We believe** that all children have the right to grow up in a family environment.

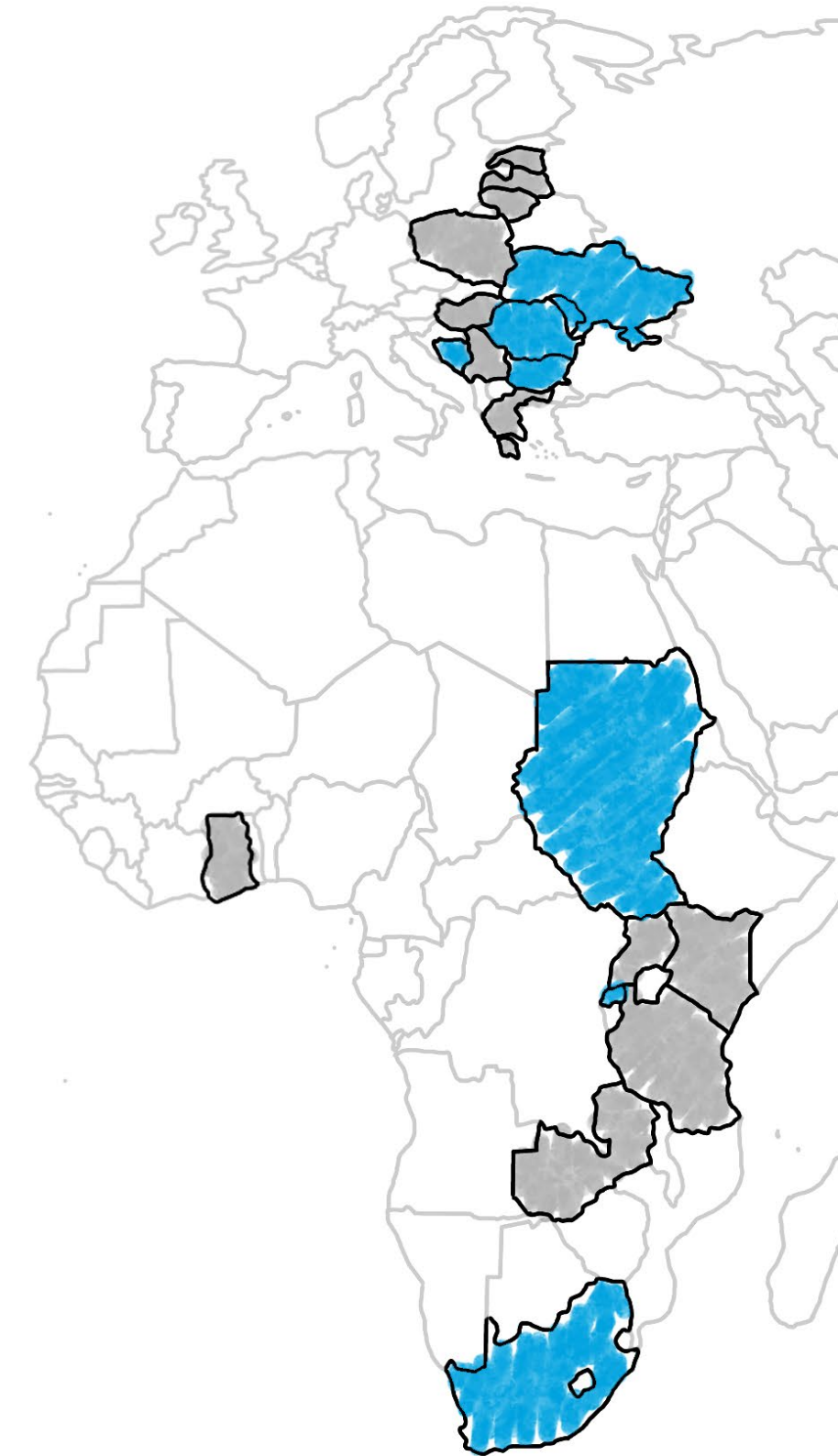
# Countries Where We Develop Projects

## Through HHC Organisations

- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Moldova
- Romania
- Rwanda
- South Africa
- Sudan
- Ukraine

## Through Partner Organisations

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|-------------|-------------|
| ● Argentina | ● Latvia    |
| ● Chile     | ● Lithuania |
| ● Cuba      | ● Mexico    |
| ● Ecuador   | ● Panama    |
| ● Estonia   | ● Paraguay  |
| ● Ghana     | ● Poland    |
| ● Greece    | ● Serbia    |
| ● Guatemala | ● Tanzania  |
| ● Haiti     | ● Uganda    |
| ● Hungary   | ● Uruguay   |
| ● Kenya     | ● Zambia    |





In 2000

There were more than 100,000 children in Romania who had been **abandoned in orphanages.** Hope and Homes for Children Romania has played a significant part in reducing this number.

Today

There are still 7,790 children in institutions in Romania, living behind closed walls.



# Major Programmes



- 1** Closing down institutions: moving children into families.

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- 2** Reforming the child protection system: transforming the legislation in Romania and the service infrastructure.

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- 3** Preventing the separation of children from their families.

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- 4** Reintegrating children back with their families.

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- 5** Auditing the child protection system: research analysis and reform.

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- 6** Integrating young people leaving the child protection system: support for independent life.

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- 7** Training and technical assistance: training the staff in the child protection system.

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## Type of Programme

## Results

Institutions for children closed down

**52** institutions

Social services developed (Small Group Homes, Mother and Baby Units, Day Centres, Emergency Reception Centres, Counselling Centres)

**112** services

Children supported to leave institutions

**5,542** children

Children whose institutionalisation was prevented

**23,570** children

Children from institutions reintegrated with their families

**714** children

Young people supported to begin independent life

**774** young people

Children who benefited from the social services developed

**2,815** children

Families who received counselling in the services developed

**776** families

Members of staff from the child protection system trained by HHC

**7,164** staff members

**TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES**

**35,074** children



## Family Reintegration

Up to the age of 10, they are watching the door. They tell stories about their mothers; some are true, others are imagined.

Up to the age of 15, they want to **hurt their parents with their indifference**, but the parents are always absent.

Around the age of 18, and then for the rest of their lives, they want to return home.

The happiest projects are those whereby children from institutions return to their real families.



**714 children** returned home, to their real families

**774 young people** were supported to begin independent life



“Nothing is more important for the children than to know that their families want them back. And, in many cases, they would take them back **if they knew the children still existed**. Once abandoned, the children are lost in the old system. The first thing we do is look for their real parents.”

**Camelia Arba**

Social Worker, has been with Hope and Homes for Children Romania for 12 years

# Preventing Abandonment

**Every nine hours a child is abandoned in the hospital.**

Sounds frightening, doesn't it?

It's better than ten years ago, when a baby was abandoned every two hours.

We make huge efforts to tackle the causes first, and then the effects.

Through our programmes to prevent child abandonment, we try to plug the hole through which these children enter the system.



We have supported **2,795 families** to overcome crisis situations

We opened **2 Mother and Baby Units** and **7 Day Centres**

**23,570 children** remained with their families

“In maternity wards, with dozens of abandoned children, there is a **gut-wrenching silence**. And not because the beds are empty; the babies never cry, they never call for anyone, because **no one ever goes to them.**”

**Florina Cretar**

Social Worker, has been with Hope and Homes for Children Romania for 10 years



## Small Group Homes

**In a Small Group Home live a maximum of 10-12 children.**

The homes are always on an ordinary street, perfectly integrated into the community. The children have friends on their street and they go to school together. The homes have a yard and the children are involved in household activities, just like in a family.



We opened  
**99 Small Group  
Homes**

**1,188 children**  
live today like in a family  
with many siblings





“I met Mircea in an institution for children with special needs. He was crouched in a corner and he was playing with his hands. **He would never look me in the eyes** or talk to me. We were going to move him into a small group home. Honestly, I didn’t think the change would have a major impact on him. However, a year after having been moved into the home, **Mircea was a different person.** He talks to me, he looks me in the eyes, he takes my hand and shows me his room and his bed. In a piggy bank, he is saving the money to buy his dream red car.”

**Stefan Darabus**

Regional Director, Central and Southern Europe,  
Hope and Homes for Children

# Training Programmes

The training programmes started in 2002, when Hope and Homes for Children Romania began to **train the staff in the institutions that were being closed**, which was a unique situation in Romania at that point.

Since 2002, Hope and Homes for Children Romania has become a provider of such services, and now it offers programmes both for direct care staff and for service managers.



**7,164 professionals**  
participated in training  
programmes

**8,023 children**  
benefited from  
better services

“We become better through learning. This is most obvious when working with children.

The aim of our training programmes is this: to help adults be there for the children in their care.”

**Otto Sestak**

National Director,  
Hope and Homes for Children Romania



# Objectives



**1** To develop a National Plan to prevent the separation of children from their families.

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**2** To initiate a national programme for training managers in the child protection system and members of staff directly involved in caring for the children.

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**3** To continue the process of influencing the development of policies in the field of child protection and the legislation, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly.

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**4** To implement reform programmes and to organise national conferences and seminars to accelerate the reform process.

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## Estimated Impact 2016-2022

**7,790** children will leave target institutions

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**20,700** children will be prevented from institutionalisation

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**240** managers will complete the training programme

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**2,300** staff members will receive training

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**21,387** children from already existing alternative services will receive better quality services

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## Our Objective

**To eradicate all old-type institutions for children in Romania by 2022.**



**Hope & Homes**  
for Children



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Hope and Homes for Children Romania is the Romanian branch of Hope and Homes for Children.

