

## Supervision Provided to Members of Multidisciplinary Teams in Serbia



This project is funded by:





*"My supervisor supported me to recognize the strengths of one family with which I worked for a long time when it seemed that there were no more positive aspects. It was a question of whether the Canter for social work would separate children from the family. With the support of supervisors, new strengths came at the first place and the family remained together"*

Participant in the research



# Description of the sample

- Focus on professionals from the child protection system in Serbia
- Supervisors and supervisees from Centers for Social Work, Centers for Family Accommodation and Adoption, institutions for the accommodation of children, academics and representatives of CSOs involved in the provision of services to children.
- 3 document analysis
- 5 key informant interviews
- 5 Q method interviews
- 20 survey participants





## What does the analysis of documents tell us?



- The purpose of supervision is to provide quality services and harmonize the professional role with professional standards of supervisees.
- The focus of defined supervision is on the Centers for Social Work and supervision during case management approach.
- It is not defined how different service providers implement supervision or what the supervision is intended for.
- The focus is on the administrative function of supervision (supervision during all phases of the professional procedure) and less on the educational-developmental and supporting function.



# Different experiences of supervisors from different institutions

"In our institution, supervision is not related to the management or control of the work; it is focused on the development of knowledge, skills and competencies of supervisees so that they can provide better quality of support to children".  
“

*Supervisor of the Institution for Accommodation of Children and Youth*

„Supervision in Centers for social work is more focused on monitoring the process of working on the case and less on development and support of supervisees”-

*Supervisor from CSW*





## Current state of supervision in Serbia



- Supervision is provided, but not enough.
- In CSWs, Supervision has a predominantly administrative function and there is not enough space for a developmental and supportiv function.
- There is a great lack of human resources, especially in CSWs.
- The state does not invest enough in the field of social and child protection, which is reflected in the supervision and especially in the small number of supervisors.
- There is not enough education for supervisors.
- Supervision is not obligatory in Institutions for accommodation of children and youth and there is no established position of supervisor.
- Supervisors have double roles (supervisor at the same time case manager or counselor of foster family)



# Why supervision is important?

- Supervision in the field of child protection is important because children are the most vulnerable beneficiaries.
- It is an opportunity for learning and development.
- Supervision is important primarily in the context of supporting and recognizing one's own feelings and preventing vicarious trauma.
- It contributes to the prevention of burnout syndrome, especially in employees with a large number of children and families in their everyday work.
- It is important for achieving quality in work and maintaining authentic interest in children and families, their life challenges, difficulties and crises.
- It is important because it enables professional exchange, resolves ethical dilemmas, opens new possibilities and enriches interventions.







## Examples of good practice



- Conducting supervision at the Institution for Accommodation of Children and Youth in Belgrade;
- Started in 2002 with external supervision in crisis situations and from 2018. as continuous support.
- Despite numerous challenges, the lack of an established supervisor workplace, supervision is organized between different work units.
- All efforts to provide supervision are based on an understanding of the role of supervision.
- Supervision in this institution aims to develop skills, improve knowledge, strengthen, professionally support, resolve dilemmas, contribute to team development



# Recommendation of the research

- It is necessary to expand the regulatory framework of supervision and define it as a standard in the work of all institutions and service providers.
- The new regulatory framework should define minimal dynamics of supervision meetings.
- The new regulation should define that supervisor has just the role of supervisor, not the other roles as it is the situation now.
- It is necessary that the state invests in the employment of new professionals in the social protection system so that workload of current professionals can be reduced.
- For the improvement of quality of supervision, it is necessary to ensure more trainings for supervisors especially focused on child protection.
- It would be useful to provide more space for group supervision so that supervisees can learn from each other and exchange experiences.
- Additional research should be conducted to explore the effectiveness of supervision and its impact on professionals, children and families.





# Thank you for your attention

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