

Children's rights in Albania

Albania considers the protection of children's rights a constitutional obligation, legal and moral. To achieve this protection Albanian government has taken serious initiatives in recent years to develop a comprehensive legal framework protector and guarantor of the rights of children and setting up institutions for monitoring the implementation of this legislation.

A year ago for the first time was approved the Law "On Protection of Rights of the Child", which defined the rights protected, the procedure of obtaining the right and the institution that guarantees this right.

Pursuant to the Law is established and operates the National Council for Protection of Child Rights, which consists of nine ministers, representatives of the Ombudsman, representatives of local government and civil society. Also, since six months it has been established and operates the State Agency for Protection of Child Rights, an institution under the Ministry of MLSA, which coordinates the work of children's rights issues with all relevant central and local civil society.

After the process of establishing institutional mechanisms for monitoring and implementing policies for children's rights at the central level, steps have been made for its expansion at the regional level. In cooperation with local government and donor support, units are set for the Protection of Child Rights in 28 municipalities and communes in 9 districts. These structures function as special units for the identification and referral of cases of violations and abuse of child rights in their respective unit.

The Government pays special attention to enhancing the role of local government units in the assessment of the needs of children, reducing poverty and providing social services for children in need.

Ministry of Labour has undertaken a reform of decentralization and de-institutionalization of services and establishment of community services, focusing on expanding the variety of community services for children, implementation of service standards and an increase accountability of local units identifying needs and setting up services in accordance with these needs.

The principle of providing a familiar environment for any child in need has become an alternative to expand services aimed at de-institutionalization of children and return them to the biological family. When this is not the case, children are provided with an adoptive family or foster worthy.

Special attention is paid to preventing child labor, this consists the main goal of the State Labour Inspectorate and structures for children's rights established in the local units.

Treating trafficking as one of the worst forms of child labor, government in collaboration with all stakeholders is working to implement measures for prevention, protection and psychosocial treatment of child victims of trafficking or at risk. This serves the purpose of completion in 2012

of the first national center with the highest standards for the reception and rehabilitation of children.

The Government poses special attention to children with disabilities. During the last years, 20 thousand children with disabilities have been treated with payments and 400 children have received rehabilitation services in public and private institutions of social care.

Currently we are in the process of completing National Children's Strategy 2011-2015, an ambitious document that aims the respect of children's right.

This year, Albania ratified two important conventions of the Council of Europe "on the exercise of children's rights" and "On legal status of children born outside marriage", these are in accordance with national legislation which puts first the best interest of the child.

The Albanian government is committed in continuing to consider children rights and their need as an important priority and will take all the necessary measures to ensure happy and fulfilled needs.