

**Ms Vessela Banova** is a Bulgarian national. She holds a Diploma in psychology and French language obtained from the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Ms Banova's professional experience covers the functions of a Vice-President of the State Agency for the Protection of Children where she was in charge of action plans concerning the control over the implementation of national and regional child protection programmes as well as consulting as regards cases of unaccompanied minors abroad, child victims of trafficking and other forms of exploitation and violence. Ms Banova also worked in the area of child health and welfare where her main responsibilities included methodological guidance for institutions for children and juveniles. She is a specialist in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. She carries out training sessions for teams of professionals providing services to children and women who have suffered domestic violence, sexual abuse or sexual exploitation and trafficking.

At present Ms Banova is the Executive Director of an NGO "Bulgarian Initiatives for Child Development" and an adviser to the UNICEF project "Children First". She also works as a clinical psychologist with the "Child and Space" association.