

## DataCare project: Glossary of Terms for Mapping Data Systems on Children in Alternative Care<sup>1</sup>

Administrative data	Units and data derived from an administrative source. They are collected for the purposes of registration, transaction and record-keeping, usually during the delivery of a service by the administrative source. They are not collected primarily for research or statistical purposes. <sup>1</sup>
Adoption	The legal and permanent transfer of parental rights and responsibilities for a child. Adoption is the establishment of legal ties between two persons who may not be blood-related, one of them usually a child deprived of parental care. Through adoption, one or two persons become legal parents of a child, permanently acquiring all the corresponding rights and responsibilities. Usually, adoption has to be declared by a judicial body. <sup>2</sup>
Aggregated data	Data that are the result of combining individual datapoints. <sup>3</sup>
Alternative care	Relates to any arrangement, formal or informal, that aims to ensure the protection and well-being of children who are deprived of parental care or who are at risk of this. <sup>4</sup>
Assessment	In the context of alternative care: A process that is undertaken and recorded that identifies the physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of the child <sup>5</sup> and determines his or her best interests on entry into care and at reviews of placement.
Care plan	In the context of alternative care: A written document that outlines how, when and who will meet the child's needs. The child will have been involved in the development of this plan. Care plan is ideally prepared by the service providers or competent authorities after the referral of the child to care to decide among other things about the placement of the child based on the best interest principle. <sup>6</sup> In some countries the care plan is written after best interest assessment has been done and a decision on placement has been made.
Child	Every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. <sup>7</sup> The age group is indicated as 0-17 in this report, signifying all children, up to their eighteenth birthday.
Children in migration situations	Covers all third country national children who migrate from their country of origin to and within the territory of the EU in search of survival, security, improved standards of living, education, economic opportunities, protection from exploitation and abuse, family reunification or a combination of these factors. They may

<sup>1</sup> Suggested reference: Eurochild (2020). *The DataCare Project. Mapping Data Systems on Children in Alternative Care: The Glossary*. Eurochild, Brussels. For further information on the contents of this document, please contact Ciaran O'Donnell from the Eurochild Secretariat at [Ciaran.odonnell@eurochild.org](mailto:Ciaran.odonnell@eurochild.org).

	travel with their family or independently (unaccompanied child) or with an extended family or a non-family member (separated child). And they may be 'left behind children'. They may be seeking international protection, family members, dependents of labour migrants, victims of trafficking, and/or undocumented migrants. <sup>8</sup>
Chronic illness	One that lasts for a long period of time and typically cannot be cured. It is, however, sometimes treatable and manageable. <sup>9</sup>
Deinstitutionalisation	Deinstitutionalisation should not be understood as simply the closure institutions for children. It is the process of comprehensively transforming national structures for the protection of children. It includes the introduction of preventive and protective measures to ensure necessary and suitable alternative care solutions are in place for children unable to stay with their biological families. <sup>10</sup>
Disability	Disability is conceived as an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. It denotes the negative aspects of the interaction between a person's health condition(s) and that individual's contextual factors (environmental and personal factors). (ICF). <sup>11</sup>
Disaggregated data	Data that have been broken down by detailed sub-categories, for example by marginalised group, gender, region, or level of education. Disaggregated data can reveal deprivations and inequalities that may not be fully reflected in aggregated data. <sup>12</sup>
Ethnicity	Ethnic origins are mutable grounds, comprising nationality, colour, descent, religion, language, culture and traditions. <sup>13</sup>
Family-like care	'Family-like' care, as understood here, is included under residential care because, in contrast to 'family-based' care, it refers to the way that care is organised rather than to any pre-existing 'family' status of the care setting. Family-like care is provided in largely autonomous small-groups under conditions that resemble a family environment as much as possible. One or more surrogate parents serve as caregivers, although not in those persons' normal home environment. The family-like characteristics of a residential care setting is an important criterion when determining its general suitability. <sup>14</sup>
Family strengthening	A research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programmes, and communities in building five key protective factors: Parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and social and emotional competence of children. <sup>15</sup>
Formal alternative care	All care provided in a family environment which has been ordered by a competent administrative body or judicial authority, and all care provided in a residential environment, including in private facilities, whether or not as a result of administrative or judicial measures. <sup>16</sup>

Formal family-based care	A short- or long-term care arrangement agreed with, or ordered by, a competent authority, whereby a child is placed in the domestic environment of a family whose head(s) have been selected and prepared to provide such care, and who are financially and non-financially supported in doing so. <sup>17</sup>
Formal kinship care	Provided by relatives or other caregivers close to the family and known to the child. While such arrangements have so far tended to be informal, some countries are now making increased use of formalised placements within the extended family (kinship foster care). <sup>18</sup>
Foster care	Foster care is provided by authorised couples or individuals in their own homes, within the framework of formal alternative care provision. <sup>19</sup>
Gatekeeping	In the context of alternative care: The prevention of inappropriate placement of a child in alternative care; placement should be preceded by some form of assessment of the child's physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs, and matched to whether the placement can meet these needs based on its functions and objectives, <sup>20</sup> a best interests assessment.
Gender	Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, attributes, and opportunities that any society considers appropriate for girls and boys, and women and men. Gender interacts with, but is different from, the binary categories of biological sex. A person's sex, as determined by his or her biology, does not always correspond with his or her gender. It is a concept that describes how societies determine and manage sex categories; the cultural meanings attached to men and women's roles; and how individuals understand their identities including, but not limited to, being a man, woman, transgender, intersex, gender queer and other gender positions. Gender involves social norms, attitudes, and activities that society deems more appropriate for one sex over another. Gender is also determined by what an individual feel and does. <sup>21</sup>
Homelessness	All living situations which amount to forms of homelessness across Europe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rooflessness (without a shelter of any kind, sleeping rough)</li> <li>• houselessness (with a place to sleep but temporary in institutions or shelter)</li> <li>• living in insecure housing (threatened with severe exclusion due to insecure tenancies, eviction, domestic violence)</li> <li>• living in inadequate housing (in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing, in extreme overcrowding)<sup>22</sup></li> </ul>
Indicator	A statistical indicator is the representation of statistical data for a specified time, place or any other relevant characteristic, corrected for at least one dimension (usually size) so as to allow for meaningful comparisons. It is a summary measure related to a key issue or phenomenon and derived from a series of observed facts. Indicators can be used to reveal relative positions or show positive or negative change. Indicators are usually a direct input into EU and

	global policies. In strategic policy fields, they are important for setting targets and monitoring their achievement. By themselves, indicators do not necessarily contain all aspects of development or change, but they hugely contribute to explaining them. They allow comparisons over time between, for instance, countries and regions, and in this way assist in gathering ‘evidence’ for decision making. <sup>23</sup>
Informal care	In the context of alternative care: Any private arrangement provided in a family environment, whereby the child is looked after on an ongoing or indefinite basis by relatives or friends (informal kinship care) or by others in their individual capacity, at the initiative of the child, his/her parents or other person without this arrangement having been ordered or being overseen by an administrative or judicial authority or a duly accredited body. <sup>24</sup>
Institutional care	In the context of alternative care: Residential care where residents are isolated from the broader community and/or compelled to live together; Residents do not have sufficient control over their lives and over decisions which affect them; and the requirements of the organisation itself tend to take precedence over the residents’ individualised needs. Size is an important factor when developing new services in the community: smaller and more personalised living arrangements are more likely to ensure opportunities for choice and self-determination of service users and to provide a needs-led service. <sup>25</sup>
Line Ministry	A ministry, autonomous organisation, or any other government agency that has full responsibility in any sector. <sup>26</sup>
Mental health	A state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. <sup>27</sup>
Necessity Principle	Preventing the need for and using as a last resort alternative care through family strengthening and prevention of family separation; moreover, inasmuch as possible a temporary solution until the child can return to his/her family. <sup>28</sup>
Neglect	When a parent or caregiver, who is responsible for caring for a child, fails to do so. It can be a result of carelessness, indifference, or unwillingness and abuse. Unintentional neglect is related to the lack of parenting, caring capacities, abilities, or the lack of resources. It may include the failure to provide sufficient supervision, nourishment, or medical care, or the failure to fulfill other needs for which the victim cannot provide themselves. <sup>29</sup>
Placement review	In the context of alternative care: A regular meeting of the child and those responsible for the child’s best interests during which the progress, current and future, of the care plan is discussed. <sup>30</sup>
Prevention	In the context of alternative care: it includes a wide range of approaches that support family life and prevent the need for the child to be placed in alternative care, in other words to be

	separated from his/her immediate or extended family or other carer. <sup>31</sup>
Reintegration in the family	The process of a separated child making what is anticipated to be a permanent transition back to his or her immediate or extended family and community (usually of origin), in order to receive protection and care and to find a sense of belonging and purpose in all spheres of life. <sup>32</sup>
Residential care	In the context of alternative care: A collective living arrangement where children are looked after by adults who are paid to undertake this function. Could include a variety of services including homes offering temporary shelter overnight inasmuch as parents do not stay with the child/children. All forms of residential care are included in the concept of alternative care. <sup>33</sup>
Small group home	One or more surrogate parents serve as caregivers, although not in those persons' normal home environment. <sup>34</sup> And a limited number of children live together in one unit.
Statelessness	Individuals who are not considered citizens or nationals under the operation of the laws of any country. A person's citizenship and nationality may be determined based on the laws of a country where an individual is born or where her/his parents were born. A person can also lose citizenship and nationality in a number of ways, including when a country ceases to exist or a country adopts nationality laws that discriminate against certain groups. <sup>35</sup>
Substance abuse	The harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs. Psychoactive substance use can lead to dependence syndrome - a cluster of behavioural, cognitive, and physiological phenomena that develop after repeated substance use and that typically include a strong desire to take the drug, difficulties in controlling its use, persisting in its use despite harmful consequences, a higher priority given to drug use than to other activities and obligations, increased tolerance, and sometimes a physical withdrawal state. <sup>36</sup>
Suitability Principle	Determining the most appropriate care form of alternative care placement for the child through a best interest assessment and care plan as well as monitoring the child's progress, revising care arrangements periodically; and in general providing bonding opportunities, support and services that ensure respecting his/her rights. <sup>37</sup>
Unaccompanied minor	A person considered to be an unaccompanied minor is a minor (aged less than 18) who arrives on the territory of the Member States unaccompanied by an adult responsible for him or her whether by law or by the practice of the Member State concerned, and for as long as he or she is not effectively taken into the care of such a person. It includes a minor who is left unaccompanied after he or she has entered the territory of the Member States. <sup>38</sup>
Variable	A characteristic of a unit being observed that may assume more than one of a set of values to which a numerical measure or a

	category from a classification can be assigned (e.g. income, age, weight, etc., and “occupation”, “industry”, “disease”, etc.). <sup>39</sup>
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<sup>1</sup> European Statistical System (2020) *Handbook for quality and metadata reports*. Accessible via this link: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/ks-gq-19-006> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Better Care Network (BCN) and UNICEF (2009) *Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care*, available via this link: <https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Manual%20for%20the%20Measurement%20of%20Indicators%20for%20Children%20in%20Formal%20Care.pdf> Last accessed July 2021; and the EU’s Fundamental Rights Agency FRA (see here: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/mapping-minimum-age-requirements/consent-to-adoption> - Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>3</sup> See the definition from Statista.com via this link: [https://www.statista.com/statistics-glossary/definition/304/aggregated\\_data/](https://www.statista.com/statistics-glossary/definition/304/aggregated_data/) (Last accessed July 2021).

<sup>4</sup> United Nations General Assembly, A/Res/64/142, *Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children of 2009*

<sup>5</sup> Better Care Network (BCN) and UNICEF (2009) *Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care*, available via this link: <https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Manual%20for%20the%20Measurement%20of%20Indicators%20for%20Children%20in%20Formal%20Care.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Better Care Network (BCN) and UNICEF (2009) *Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care*, available via this link: <https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Manual%20for%20the%20Measurement%20of%20Indicators%20for%20Children%20in%20Formal%20Care.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>7</sup> UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), available here: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>8</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> European Forum on the rights of the child (2016) *The Protection of Children in Migration*

<sup>9</sup> Definition from Healthline.com, available via this link: <https://www.healthline.com/health/chronically-ill> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>10</sup> Opening Doors for Europe’s Children (2017) *Deinstitutionalisation of Europe’s Children: Questions and Answers*, available via this link: <https://www.eurochild.org/uploads/2021/02/Opening-Doors-QA.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>11</sup> Eurostat definition, available via this link: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Disability> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>12</sup> Definition from Right-to-Education.org, available via this link: <https://www.right-to-education.org/monitoring/content/glossary-disaggregated-data> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Based on *The meaning of racial and ethnic origin in EU law: Between stereotypes and identities* by the European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination (2017), available via this link: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c1cf6b78-094c-11e7-8a35-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>14</sup> Cantwell et al. (2012), *Moving Forward: Implementing the ‘Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children’*, available with this link: [https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving\\_Forward\\_Eng\\_WEB\\_May\\_2019.pdf](https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving_Forward_Eng_WEB_May_2019.pdf) Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>15</sup> Centre for the Study of Social Policy (2014), *The Strengthening Families Approach and Protective Factors Framework*, accessible via this link: <https://cssp.org/our-work/project/strengthening-families/> Last accessed July 2021. The definition provided is not necessarily a globally accepted one, as no globally accepted definition currently exists.

<sup>16</sup> UN General Assembly (2010) *Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children*

<sup>17</sup> Adaptation of definition given in the European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care (2012), *Common European Guidelines on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care*, available via this link: <https://deinstitutionalisationdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/guidelines-final-english.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.

- <sup>18</sup> Cantwell et al. (2012), *Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'*, available with this link: [https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving\\_Forward\\_Eng\\_WEB\\_May\\_2019.pdf](https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving_Forward_Eng_WEB_May_2019.pdf) Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>19</sup> Cantwell et al. (2012), *Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'*, available with this link: [https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving\\_Forward\\_Eng\\_WEB\\_May\\_2019.pdf](https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving_Forward_Eng_WEB_May_2019.pdf) Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>20</sup> Better Care Network (BCN) and UNICEF (2009) Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care, available via this link: <https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Manual%20for%20the%20Measurement%20of%20Indicators%20for%20Children%20in%20Formal%20Care.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>21</sup> Definition from the World Health Organisation, available here: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/gender> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>22</sup> Definition from FEANTSA, accessible via this link: <https://www.feantsa.org/en/toolkit/2005/04/01/ethos-typology-on-homelessness-and-housing-exclusion?bcParent=27> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>23</sup> Definition taken from Eurostat, via this link: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Statistical\\_indicator](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Statistical_indicator) Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>24</sup> UN General Assembly (2010) *Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children*.
- <sup>25</sup> Adaptation of definition given in the European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care (2012), *Common European Guidelines on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care*, available via this link: <https://deinstitutionalisationdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/guidelines-final-english.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>26</sup> Taken from Law Insider's dictionary, available here: <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/line-ministry> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>27</sup> WHO (2018), available via this link: [https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/who\\_urges\\_investment/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/who_urges_investment/en/) Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>28</sup> Cantwell et al. (2012), *Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'*, available with this link: [https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving\\_Forward\\_Eng\\_WEB\\_May\\_2019.pdf](https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving_Forward_Eng_WEB_May_2019.pdf) Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>29</sup> Definition taken from NSPCC, available via their website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/neglect/> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>30</sup> Better Care Network (BCN) and UNICEF (2009) Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care, available via this link: <https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Manual%20for%20the%20Measurement%20of%20Indicators%20for%20Children%20in%20Formal%20Care.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>31</sup> Adaptation of definition given in the European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care (2012), *Common European Guidelines on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care*, available via this link: <https://deinstitutionalisationdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2017/07/guidelines-final-english.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>32</sup> BCN et al. (2013) *Reaching for home: Global learning on family reintegration in low and lower-middle income countries*, available via this link: <https://bettercarenetwork.org/library/principles-of-good-care-practices/leaving-alternative-care-and-reintegration/reaching-for-home-global-learning-on-family-reintegration-in-low-and-lower-middle-income-countries> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>33</sup> Better Care Network (BCN) and UNICEF (2009) Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care, available via this link: <https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Manual%20for%20the%20Measurement%20of%20Indicators%20for%20Children%20in%20Formal%20Care.pdf> Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>34</sup> Cantwell et al. (2012), *Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'*, available with this link: [https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving\\_Forward\\_Eng\\_WEB\\_May\\_2019.pdf](https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving_Forward_Eng_WEB_May_2019.pdf) Last accessed July 2021.
- <sup>35</sup> See UN Conventions on Statelessness, available via UNHCR's website at this link: <https://www.unhcr.org/un-conventions-on-statelessness.html> Last accessed July 2021.

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<sup>36</sup> Read the definition from WHO via this link: <https://www.who.int/teams/mental-health-and-substance-use/alcohol-drugs-and-addictive-behaviours> Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>37</sup> Cantwell et al. (2012), *Moving Forward: Implementing the 'Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children'*, available with this link: [https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving\\_Forward\\_Eng\\_WEB\\_May\\_2019.pdf](https://www.celcis.org/files/8815/5903/5440/Moving_Forward_Eng_WEB_May_2019.pdf) Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>38</sup> Taken from the European Commission's definition, available via this link: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Unaccompanied\\_minor](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Unaccompanied_minor) Last accessed July 2021.

<sup>39</sup> Definitions available from the OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms via this link: <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/> Last accessed July 2021.