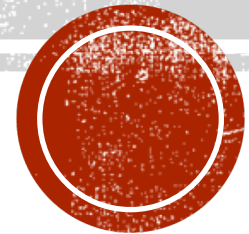


First Regional Week
Central European Social Policy Network (CESPASWON)
Skopje, 25-29.11.2019

TRENDS AND REFORM OF THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IN MACEDONIA

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SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM REFORM – BACKGROUND INFO

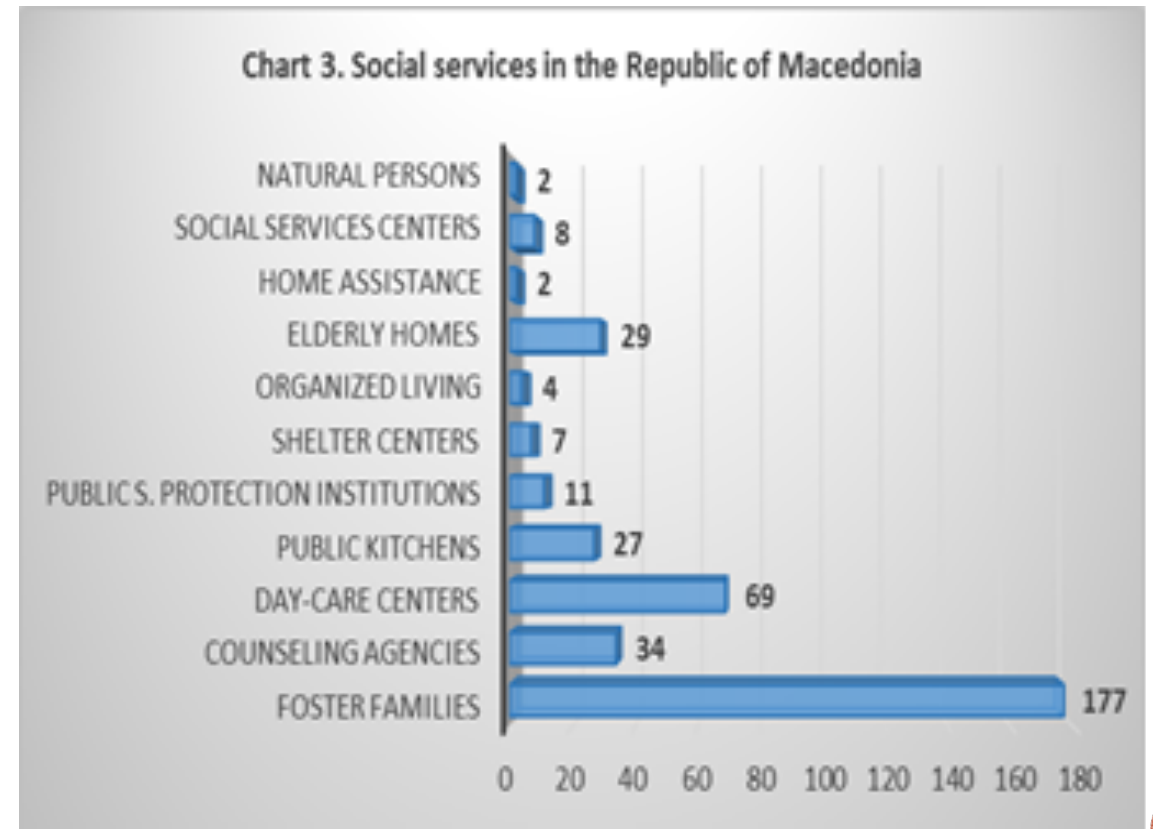
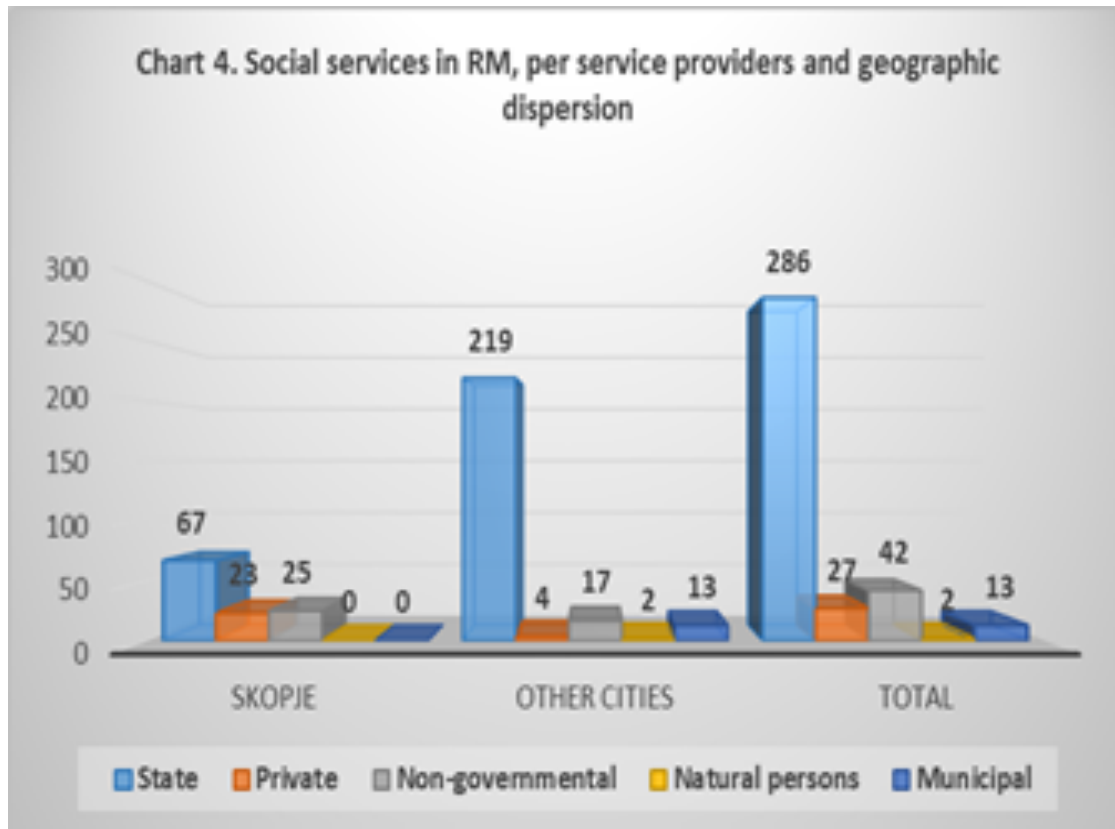
- 2017 MLSP initiated reform process, supported by World Bank
- Qualitative/quantitative research

Deliverables:

- Comparative reports
- National research reports
- 2018 February - Joint report with recommendations for reforms
- 2018 February to mid 2019 – Drafting of the LSP
- 2019 May - New Law on Social Protection entry into force

SOCIAL SERVICES - 2017

- 370 social service providers identified, 67 of them (18.1%) located in Skopje
- Most of them public
- Predominantly for: disabled, children without parents/parental care, older people, victims of violence



SOCIAL SERVICES – 2019 LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

- New classification of services
- New services introduced (respite care, kinship care, personal assistance, half-way houses, nursing homes, socio-medical services)
- Existing services extended and strengthened (social prevention, re-socialization, rehabilitation and integration, counseling)
- Introduction of case management
- Introduction of basic social protection principles as guidelines

LICENSING - 2017

- Key characteristics: 3 commissions within ISA; no specialized licenses; electronic exam taken every 5 years; ISA exclusive training provider

Chart 13. Suitability of the electronic exam

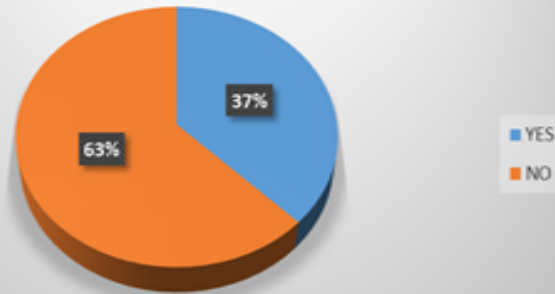


Chart 14. Need for different study materials per profiles

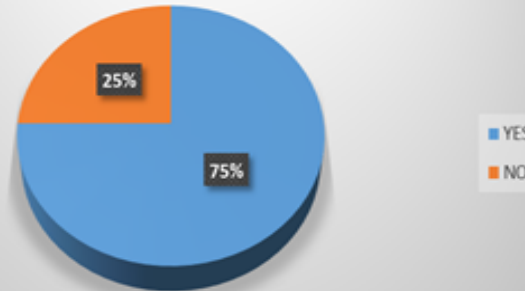


Chart 19. Need for additional training

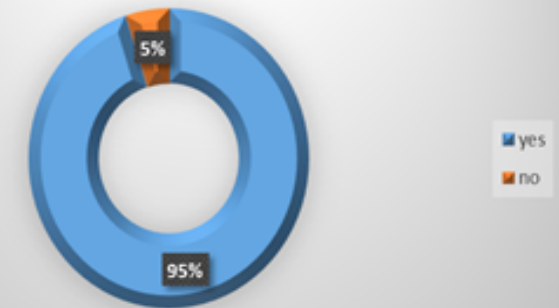


Chart 20. Need for specialization of professionals

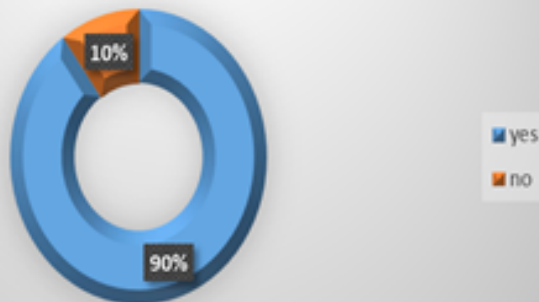
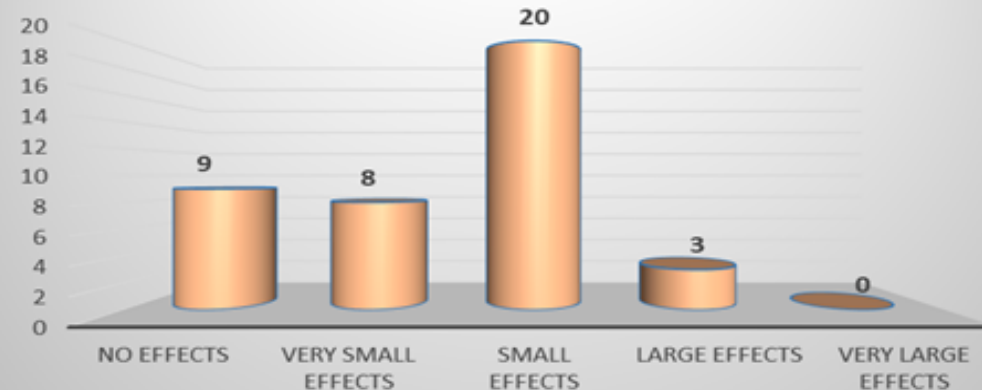


Chart 21. Effects of the licensing on professional development



LICENSING OF PROFESSIONALS – LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

- Licensing Commission (issuing, withdrawal, renewal of licenses)
- Commission for Accreditation of Training Programs (open call for programs once a year)

Licensing steps:

- Initial 40 hours of training carried out by the ISA (initial licensing)
- Successfully passed professional exam – theoretical and practical part
- Renewal of the license after 5 years (min 60points) based on participation in compulsory training (60points) and additional (20points) continuing professional education and upgrading (provided by external training providers, registry maintained by ISA)

Licensing types:

- general license (for social, legal, pedagogical and psychological work within CSW)
- general license (for work in centers for social services, foster-care support centers, out-of-home care and other community-based services)
- specific license (for case managers in CSW)
- specialized license (for foster-care educators, supervisors, counseling and therapeutic work)

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FROM THE SYSTEM PERSPECTIVE

- Welfare mix (private non and for-profit, private practice)
- Care continuum (home-based, community-based, out-of-home services)
- Focus on functional capacities rather than disabilities and illness (in eligibility, assessment and intervention)
- Shift in services purpose – restoring, strengthening or prevention of further deterioration of functional capacities, instead of basic care-giving
- Services integration (cost-effectiveness, rationalization of resources, specialization, higher service quality)
- Increased quality of services (licensing of professionals, standardization, code of ethics and ethical board)

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FROM THE USER PERSPECTIVE

- User equality (traditional vs marginalized groups)
- User involvement (boards)
- User tailoring (individualization)
- User participation (service plans/case conferences)
- User choice (service providers)
- User voice (heard)
- User protection (licensing/standards/oversight)

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS OF THE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM

- Issue of social reform was put highly on the agenda of the new established government in 2017.
- The experiences of other European countries with administrative reforms in this area served as a significant resource in developing normative solutions.
 - Lessons learned from the implemented reforms show that the key factor in the processes of transfer of knowledge and good practices is the adaptation to the local context.
 - Proposals for introducing new institutional solutions for restructuring of the social protection systems were based on the examples of reform activities implemented in a similar socio-political framework.
- Several important dimensions (taken into consideration in the institutional analysis):
 - broader social context in which reform will be implemented (history, tradition, strategic goals)
 - political regulation (political system, organization of the local self-government, level of decentralization)
 - different factors affecting the process of change: political establishment, election system, tradition for forming coalition government, strength of the opposition, right to veto, political frame of the economic relations.
 - legacy from the past
 - political guidance from the European union and other international organizations
 - demographic changes

CENTRAL ISSUES AND DILLEMMAS

NORMATIVE APPROACH:

- Adoption of systematic law that regulates all important social protection issues (principles, content, organization, financing, monitoring and supervision) or fragmented regulation, one law which regulates the social services (with special regulation of certain specific services), and one or more laws which regulate the social benefits.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIAL PROTECTION:

- Application of a principle of a so-called “small state”, according to which the ministry (the central authority) competent for the affairs in social protection has regulatory and supervisory function. Diversity appears in manner and scope of non-state providers inclusion in social services delivery.

LEVEL OF DECENTRALIZATION:

- Macedonia has single tiered local self-government with municipalities as single units of local self-government. Division of responsibilities between the central and the local authority is conditioned by the general rules, primarily regarding the functional and fiscal decentralization of the competences.

The quality of the public administration, its capacity to articulate the goals and implement the political solutions affects policy outcomes, especially in case of complex institutional reforms.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

DESK RESEARCH

- comparative analysis of trends and reforms of the social protection system in the European countries
- content analysis on the national legislation, relevant reports, statistical data, etc.

FIELD RESEARCH

➤ QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

- centers for social work through application of a circular semi-structured questionnaire

➤ QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

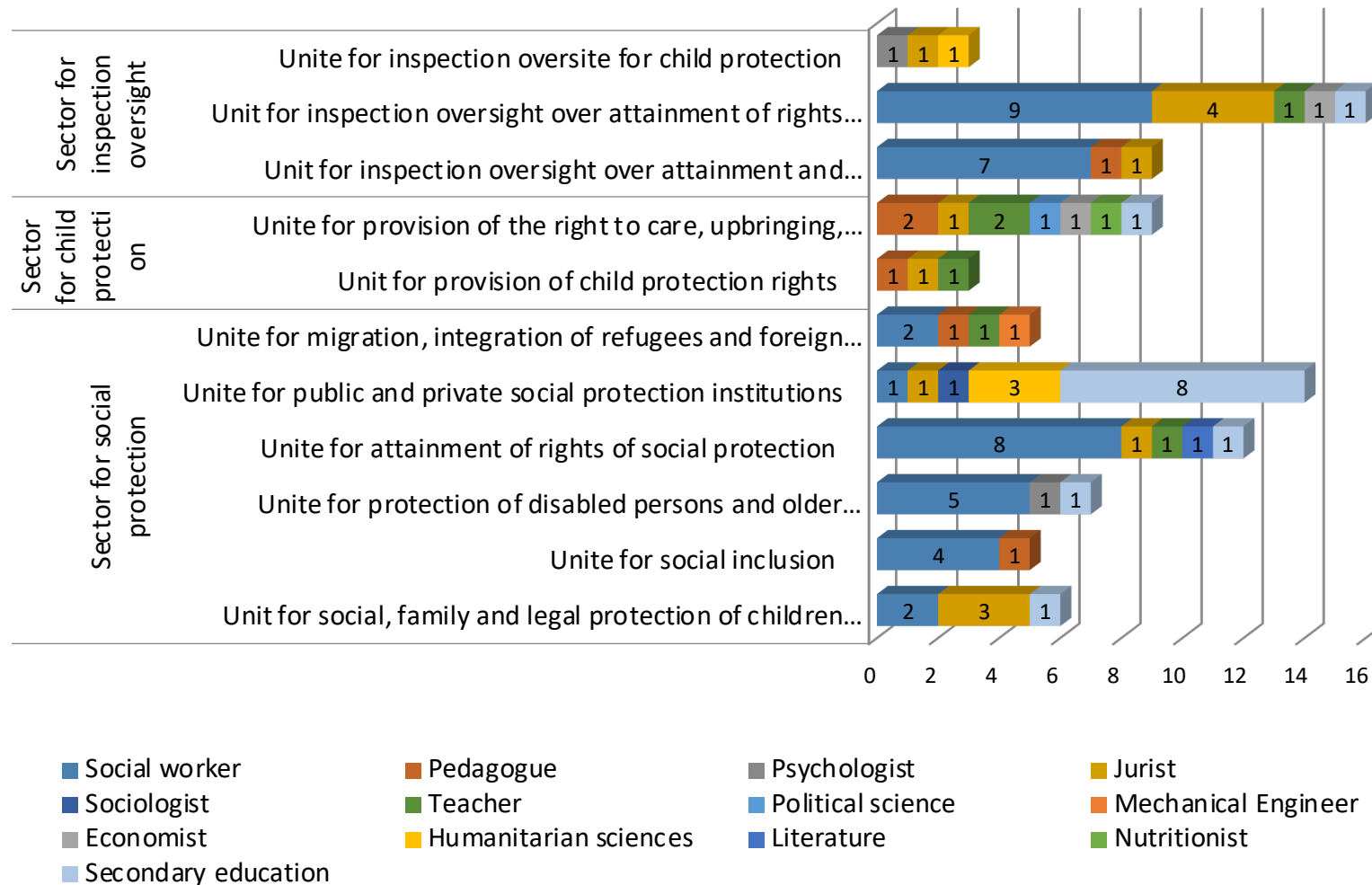
- expert interviews with representatives from the MLSP, ISA and ISP
- unstructured interviews with representatives from providers of non-institutional social services
- focus groups discussions with representatives of associations registered in MLSP as providers of social services
- individual and/or group interviews conducted with: (1) municipal officials and/or mayors; 2) Director and employees (heads) in the centers for social work

Region	Municipality and status of SWC	Municipal administration	Service providers in SWC
Southwest	Ohrid (big)	2	3
	Struga (medium)	1	3
Pelagonia	Bitola (big)	1	3
	Resen (medium)	3	3
Polog	Tetovo (big)	2	2
	Gostivar (medium)	2	3
East	Shtip (big)	1	2
	Kochani (medium)	5	2
Northeast	Kumanov (big)	1	2
	Kratovo (small)	2	2
Skopje's	City of Skopje (big)	1	2
	Gazi Baba	2	2
Southeast	Strumica (big)	2	2
	Valandovo (small)	3	2
Vardar's	Veles (big)	2	2
	Sveti Nikole (medium)	2	2
Total		32	37

Criteria for selection of municipalities : regional coverage, ethnic criteria, rural-urban structure and size of the Center.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL POLICY

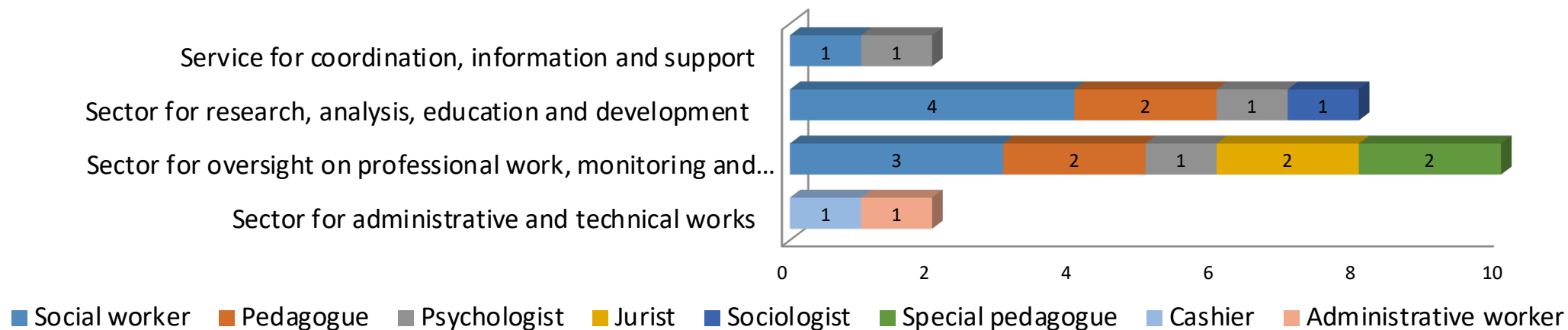
Number of employed persons in MLSP by sectors and profiles



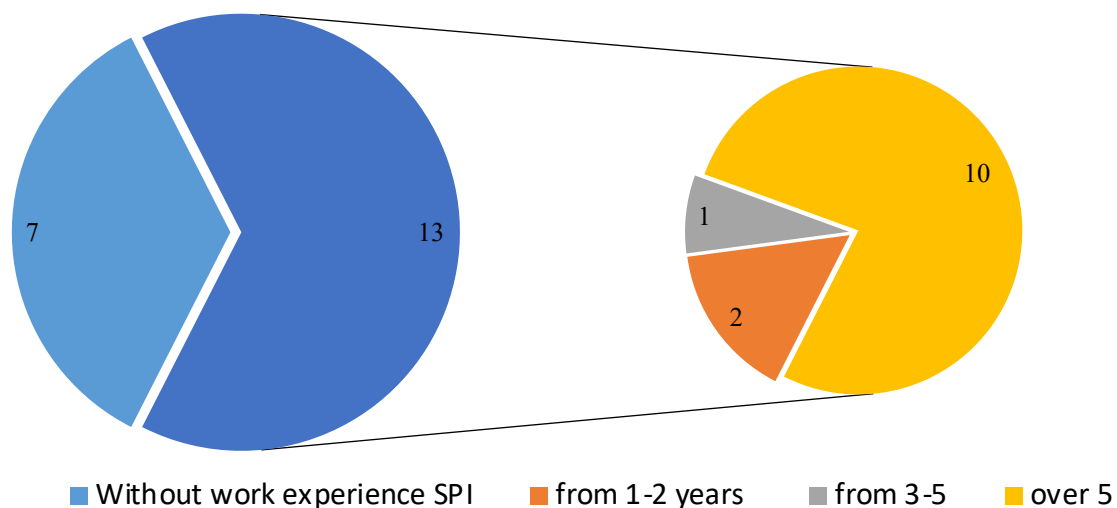
- 525 employees according to the Act on internal organization and systematization of working places;
- 316 employees in total of 16 sectors;
- 4 sectors directly related to social protection (89 employees);
- Number, structure, type and level of education of part of the employees does not correspond to the responsibilities of the sectors;
- Overmanning versus inadequate employment structure,
- Lack of capacity for drafting legislation and monitoring

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Number of employees in ISA per sector and profile



Number of employees according to work experience

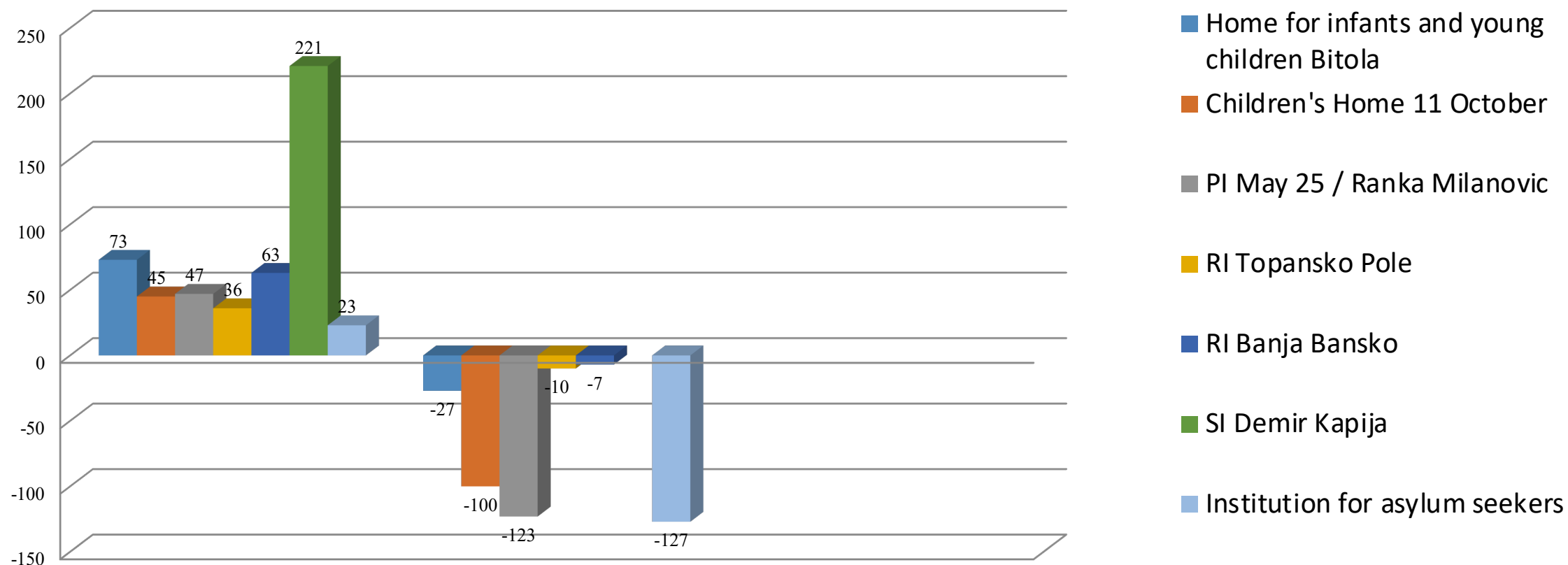


- total number of employees 22
- 20 professional workers, in 3 sectors
- significant disproportion between the responsibilities of the ISA in one hand and the small number of employees on the other
- almost 1/3 of the employees do not have previous work experience in social protection institutions
- only 1/2 of the employees had previously working experience in other social protection institutions longer than 5 years.

LOCAL CAPACITY FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL - PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

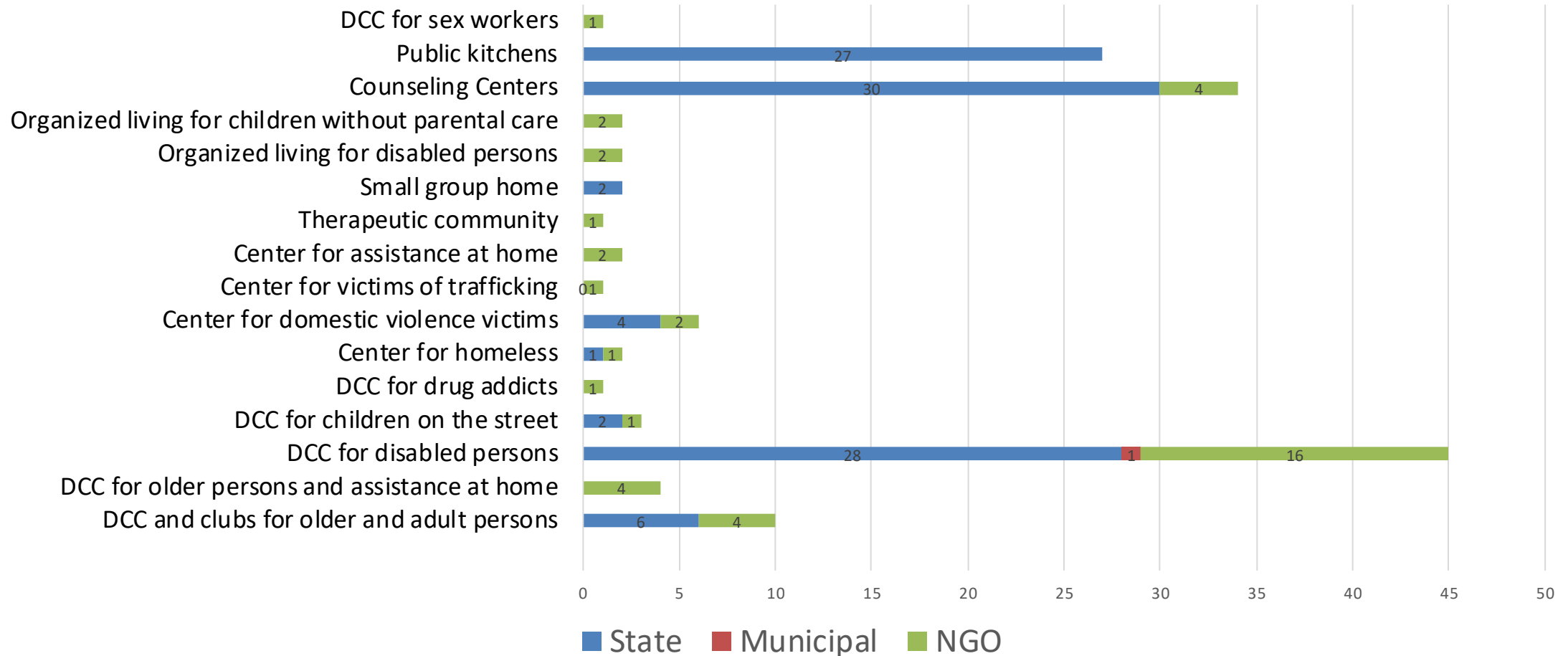
- No legal requirements for obligatory performance of social-protection activities
- Lack of professional staff and poor human resources capacity
- Small number of adopted strategic local documents
- Exclusion from the national processes of legislation drafting and lack of information regarding the key national documents;
- Insufficient participation of front-line workers in the processes of preparation of programs/documents;
- Lack of consultative process with relevant local actors in preparation of local documents (administrative structure relies on its own poor resources)
- Weak implementation of the adopted programs
- Relocation of funds for different sectors and activities
- Non-unified practices in the municipalities for granting financial assistance to inhabitants in a situation of social need
- Insufficient local network cooperation and lack of effective partnerships in social services delivery, resulting in loss of significant local resources.

Number and type of social protection institutions according to used capacities



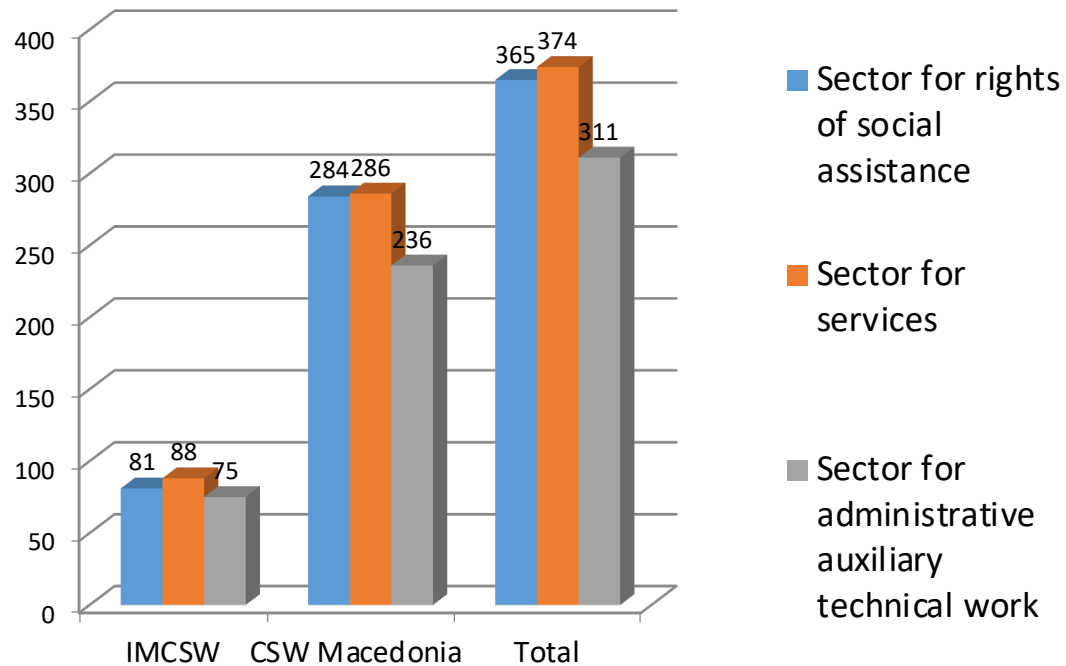
- Large number of employees (in some institutions the number of employees is larger than the number of users)
- Lack of professional staff due to inappropriate structure of employees
- Unused capacity of the facilities
- High costs for maintenance and staff
- Low quality of care and protection

Number and type of services for non-residential protection

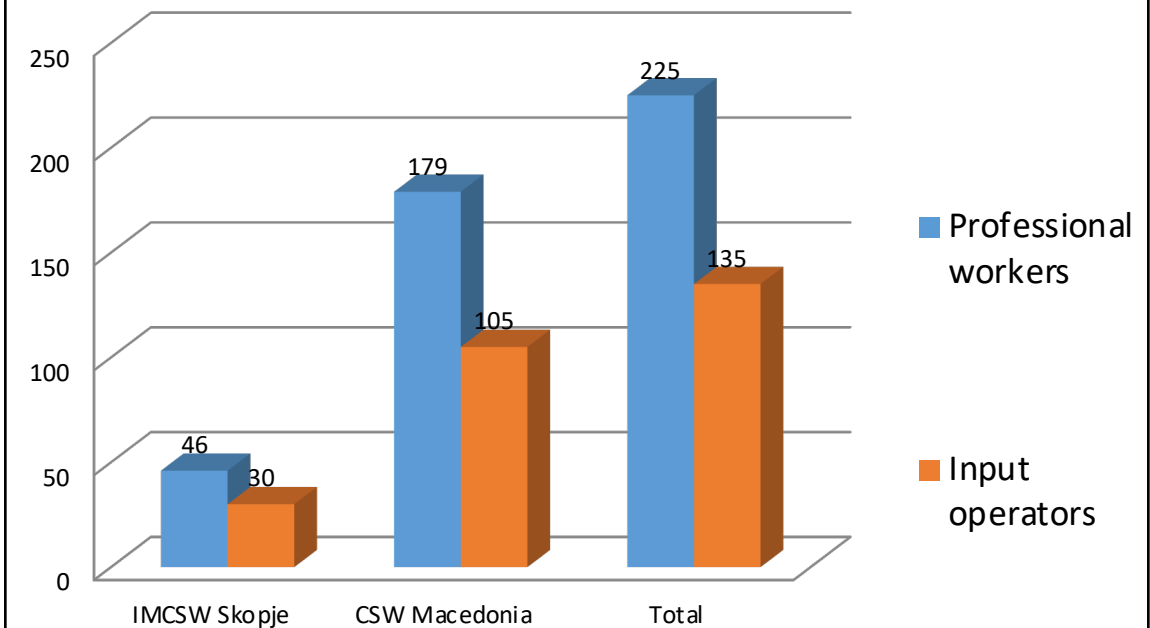


- lack of home-based and community-based services for different categories of persons
- most of the services are public daycare centers for persons with disabilities and older persons
- weaknesses: lack of professional staff, appropriate equipment for professional work, insufficient funds

Number of employees in the CSW by sectors in Skopje and Macedonia

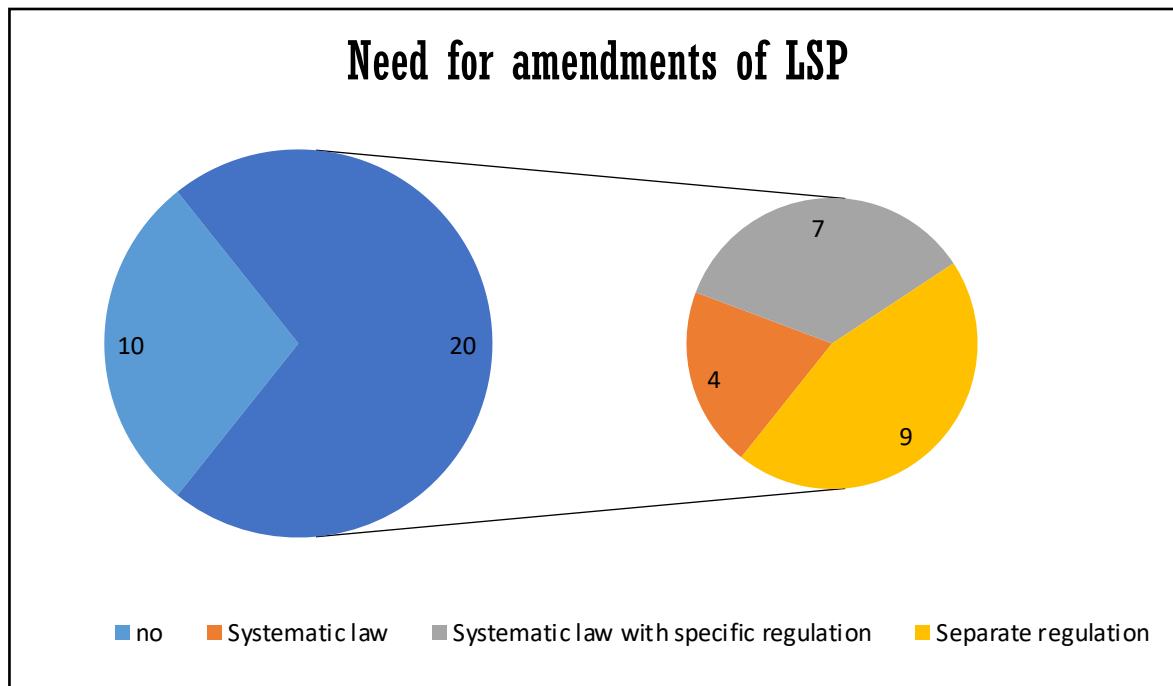
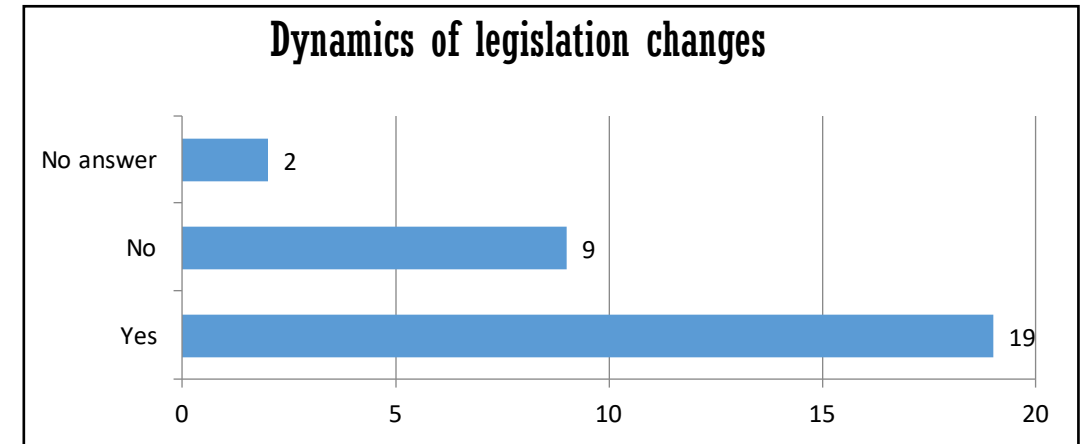
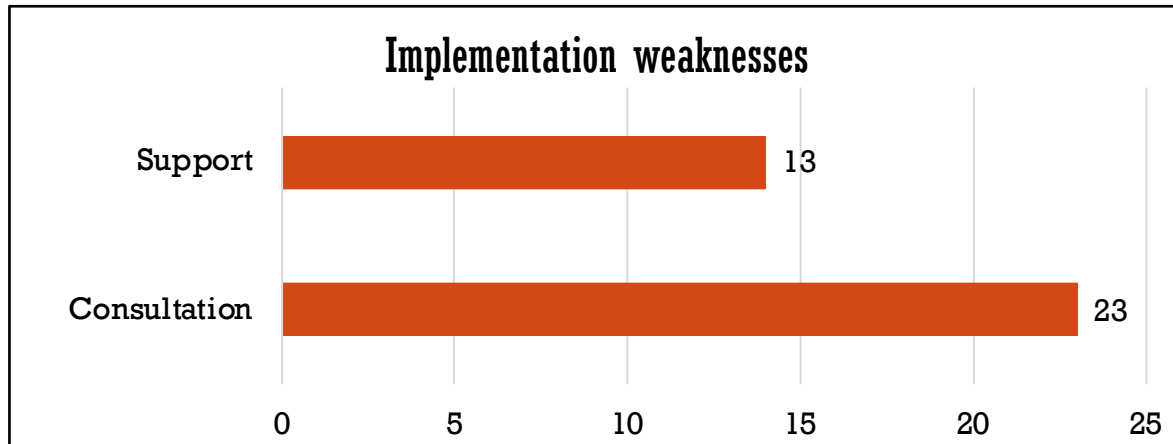


Number of professional workers and input operators in social assistance sector



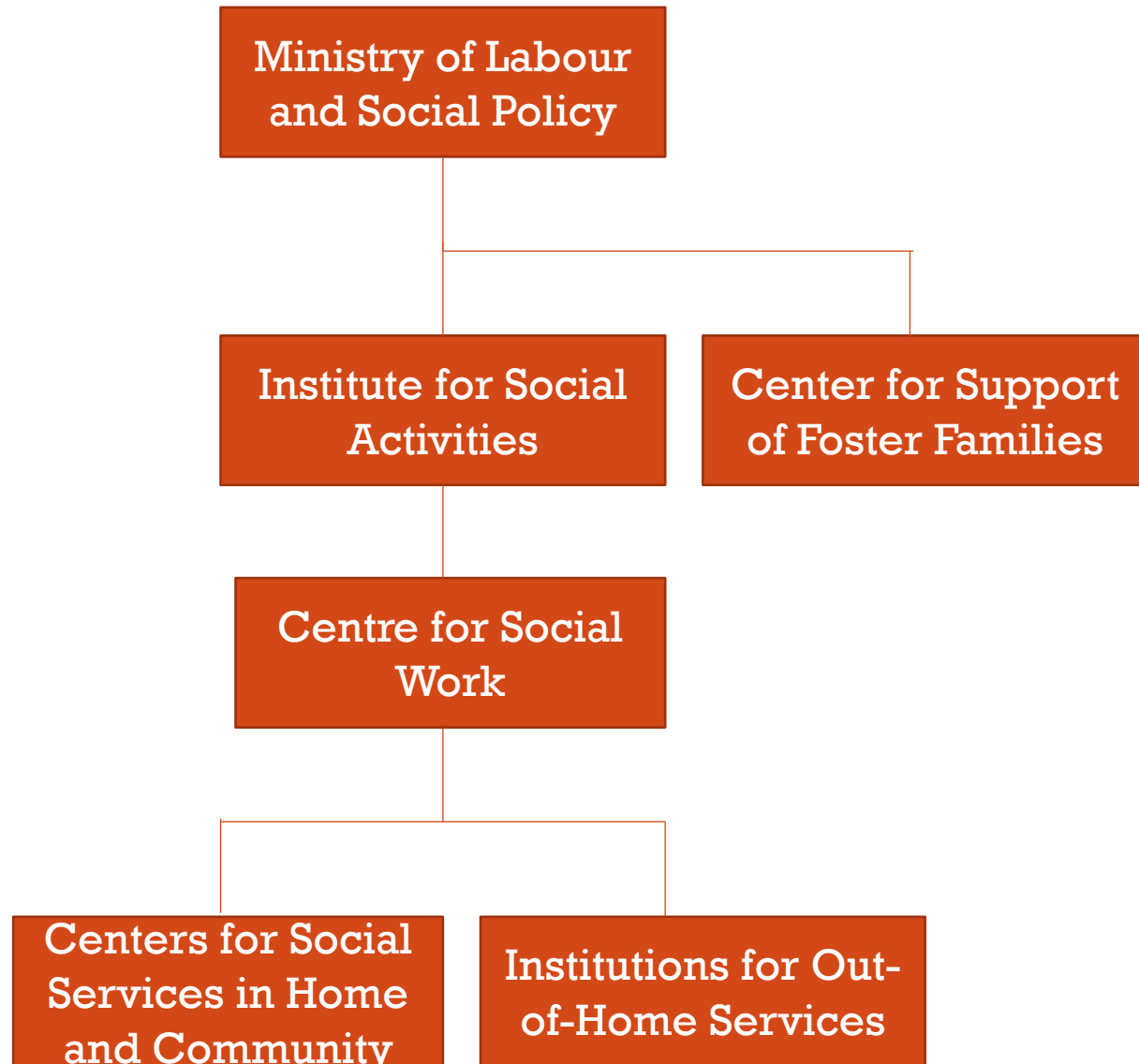
- 30 centers for social work
- 23 cover the territory of two or more municipalities
- Inadequate structure of employees according to number, level and type of education
- Inadequate repartition in sectors/units
- Fluctuation of the employees in different sectors/units
- Lack of specialization
- Administration of the financial benefits absorbs the capacity of the professionals most of the time.

SHORTCOMINGS IN LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES



- Lack of consultation with the practitioners in the process of drafting the legislation
- Lack of support for implementation of the newly adopted legal solutions
- Very frequent amendments to the LSP
- Changes are often made ad hoc, without proper analysis for the needs and consequences of the change, for the benefit of a certain group of interest or as a result of a daily political events
- Expressed need for adoption of a new text on the LSP (the old one is complex and extensive, difficult to be read and followed)

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK



- Harmonization with related material and administrative legal acts
- Clear division of the responsibilities between institutions on central and local level
- Reducing the role of the state in social services delivery and pluralization of delivery on local level (public, private, non-profit, mixed)
- Introduction of transparent mechanisms for financing social services delivery
- Establishment of a network of licensed and authorized social services providers
- Clear and simple rules for social contracting with non-state providers and price regulation
- Revision of the procedures for establishment, organization, steering and management of the ISP
- Revision of the provisions for the status, rights and obligations of the employees in the ISP
- Establishment of holistic system for legal monitoring and professional supervision

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

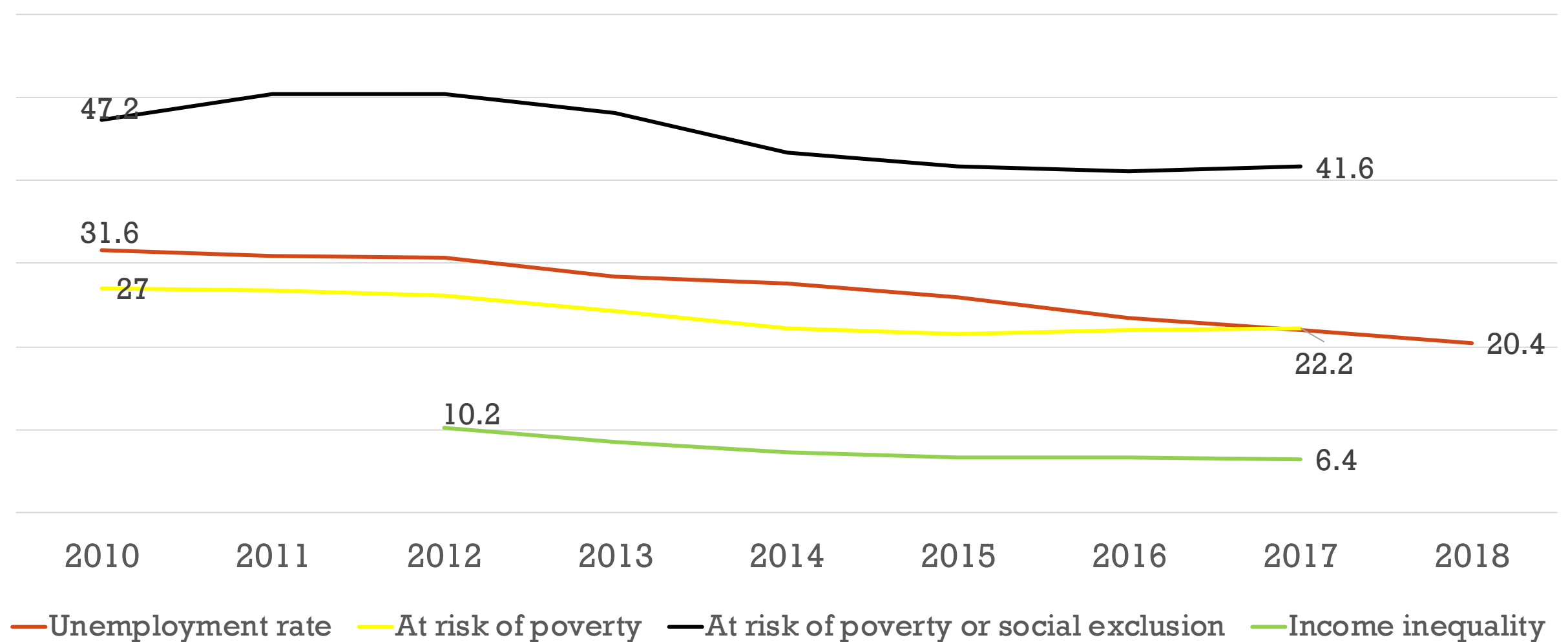
- Drafting secondary legislation (rulebooks) for delivery of different types of social services (home-based, community-based and out-of-home social services)
 - manner, scope and procedure for using social services
 - norms and technical standards as minimum requirements to be fulfilled by services providers
- Strengthening the human capacities of centers of social work and other social institutions by employment of professional workers, mostly social workers
- Introduction of integrated case management by CSW and ESA and implementation of training for professional workers
- Transformation of large government-run institutions into small group homes
- Changing public opinion and mobilizing community support
- Allocation of funds to the municipalities for provision of social services on local level

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE STEPS

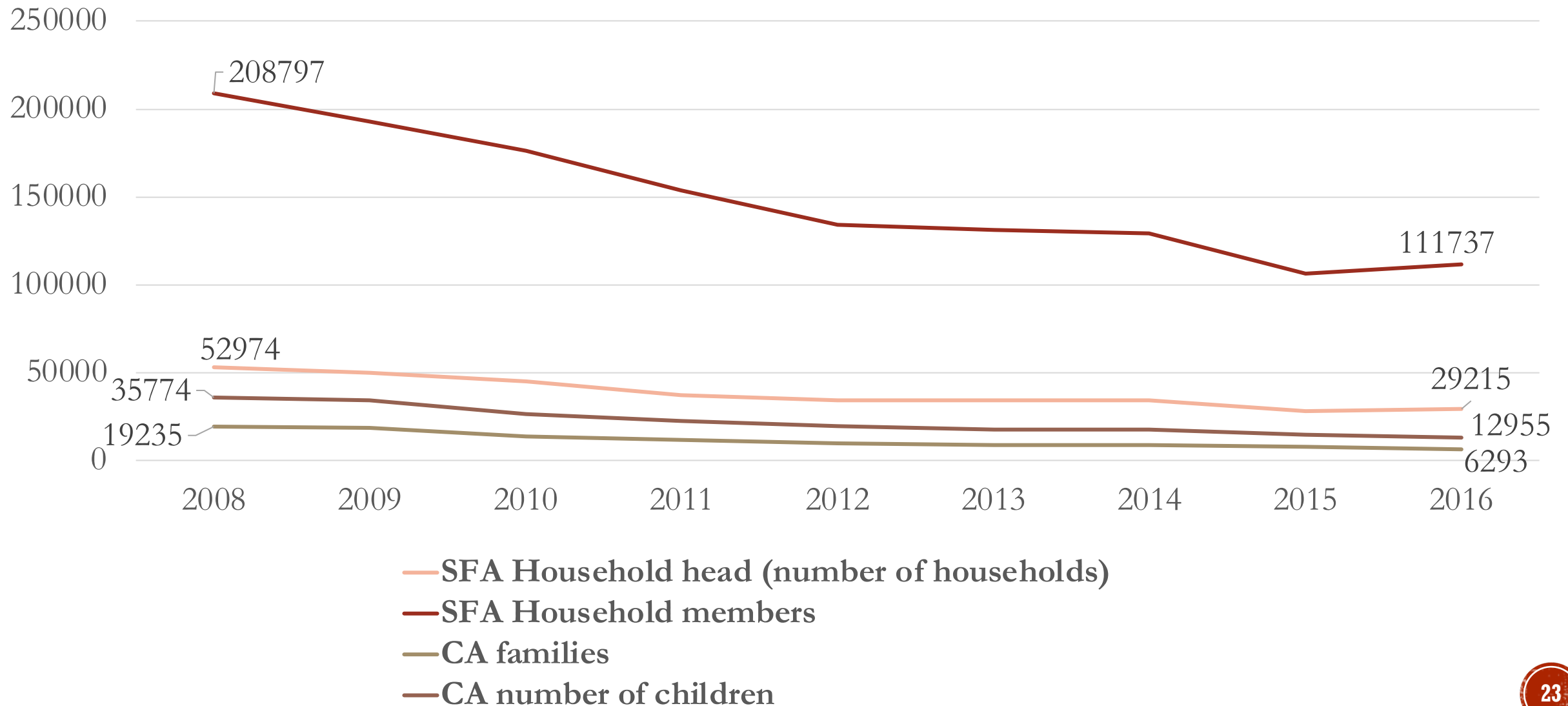
- Functional and fiscal decentralization of home-based and community-based social services delivery
- Social contracting with private and non-profit services providers
- Multi-sectoral and inter-agency cooperation on strategic and operative level
- Stable system for legal oversight and development of instrument for evaluation and monitoring of social services delivery

RIGHTS TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE SOCIAL AND CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS

SOCIAL TRENDS IN MACEDONIA, 2010-2017

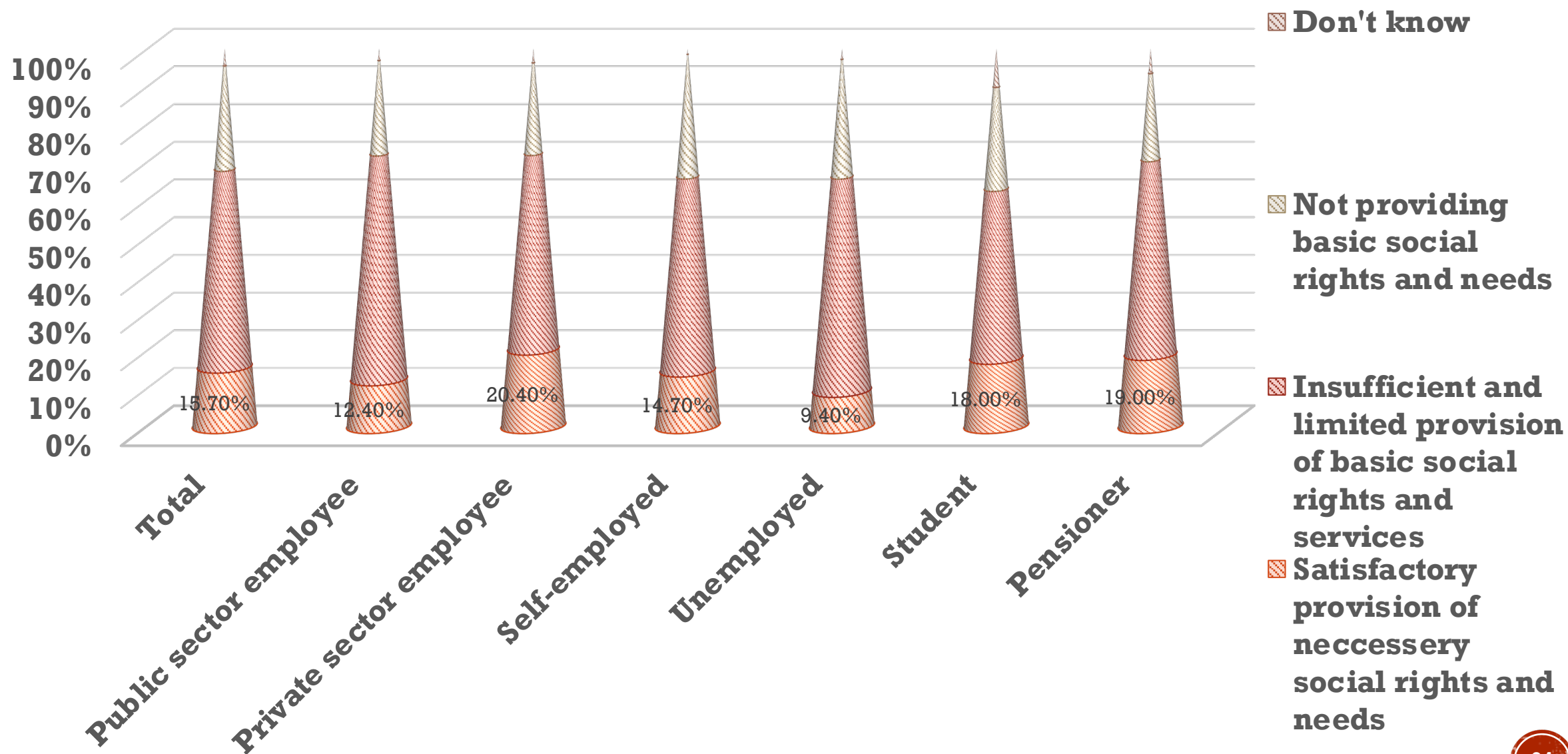


NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES OF SOCIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND CHILD ALLOWANCE, 2008-2016



Source: State Statistical Office, 2009-2017

CITIZENS PERCEPTIONS ABOUT WELFARE STATE IN MACEDONIA, 2017



Source: Gerovska Mitev, M., 2018

RIGHTS TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM SOCIAL AND CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS BEFORE THE REFORM (PRE 2019)

General means-tested benefits

Social Financial Assistance (SFA)

One-off Financial Assistance

Separate programs for conditional top-up benefits

Conditional Cash Transfers

Energy Poverty Programme

Semi-categorical means tested benefits

Permanent financial assistance

Financial compensation for assistance and care for another person

Categorical means-tested benefits

Financial assistance for person that by the age of 18 had the status of a child without parents and parental care

Right to financial assistance for social housing

Salary allowance for part-time working due to taking care of child with physical or mental disabilities

Allowance for deafness

Allowance for blindness and mobility

Financial assistance for single parent that has a child with disabilities

Right to financial assistance for fosterer

Financial assistance to a mother that gave birth to a fourth child

Child Protection benefits

Child Allowance

Special Child Allowance

One-off assistance for new born

Parental allowance for third child

Participation

Different equivalence scales

Non-integrated rights with the child protection system
Low amount and ineffective financial transfers (14.29 %)

Low activation of social assistance beneficiaries

Arbitrary amount of financial transfers

RIGHTS TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM SOCIAL PROTECTION AFTER THE REFORM (SINCE MAY/JUNE 2019)

General means-tested benefits

Guaranteed Minimum Assistance

One-off Financial Assistance

Semi-categorical (means) tested benefits

Disability allowance (non-means-tested)

Financial compensation for assistance and care for another person

Permanent compensation (non-means tested)

Categorical means tested benefits

Salary allowance for part-time working due to taking care of child with physical or mental disabilities

Housing allowance

Child protection benefits

Child Allowance

Special Child Allowance

One-off assistance for new born

Parental allowance for third child

Educational allowance

Participation

Same equivalence scales between different rights

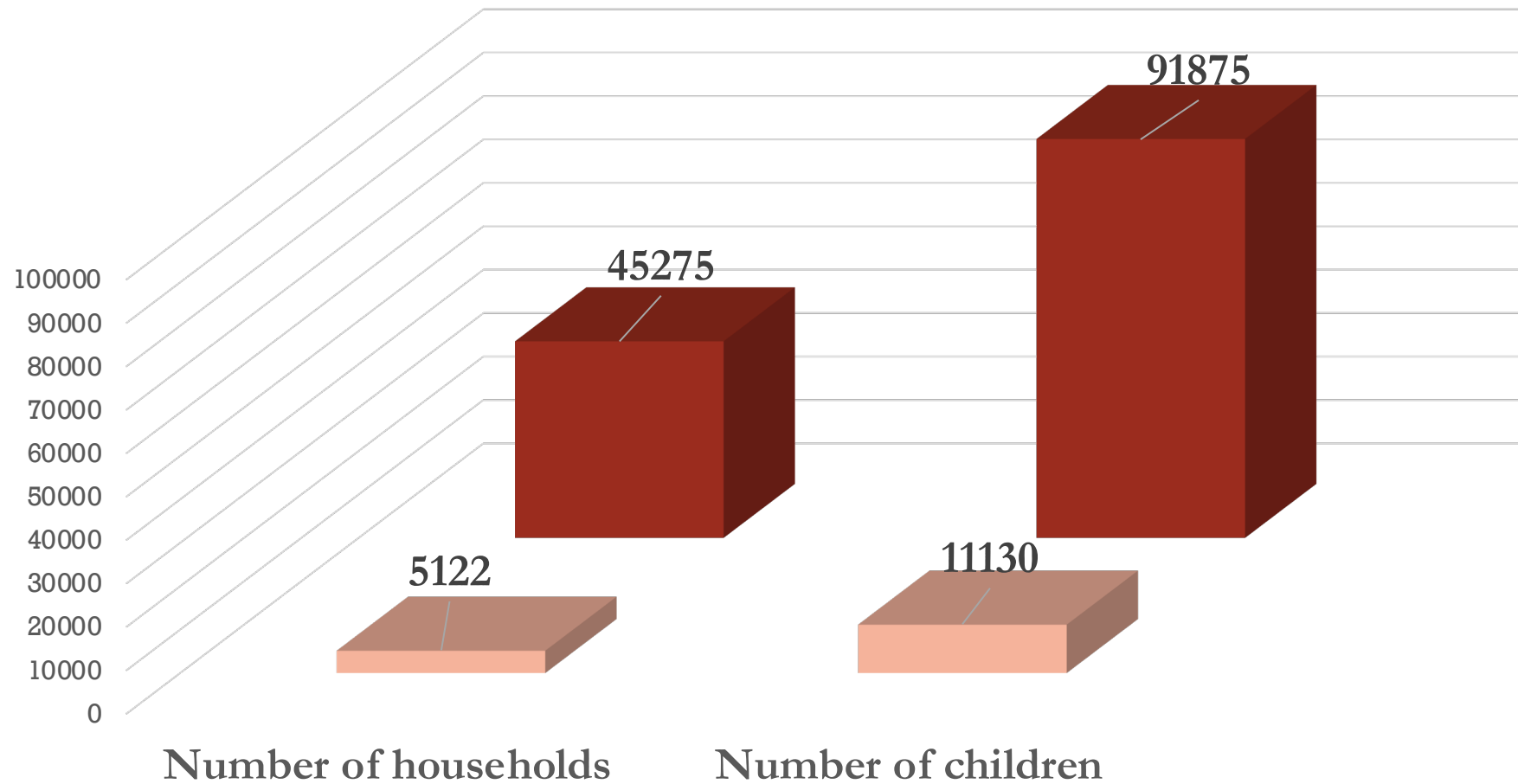
Integrated rights between social and child protection system

Higher amount of benefits, higher thresholds and increased accessibility

Improved activation through tailor-made and targeted support for GMA beneficiaries

REMOVING BARRIERS TO CHILD PROTECTION

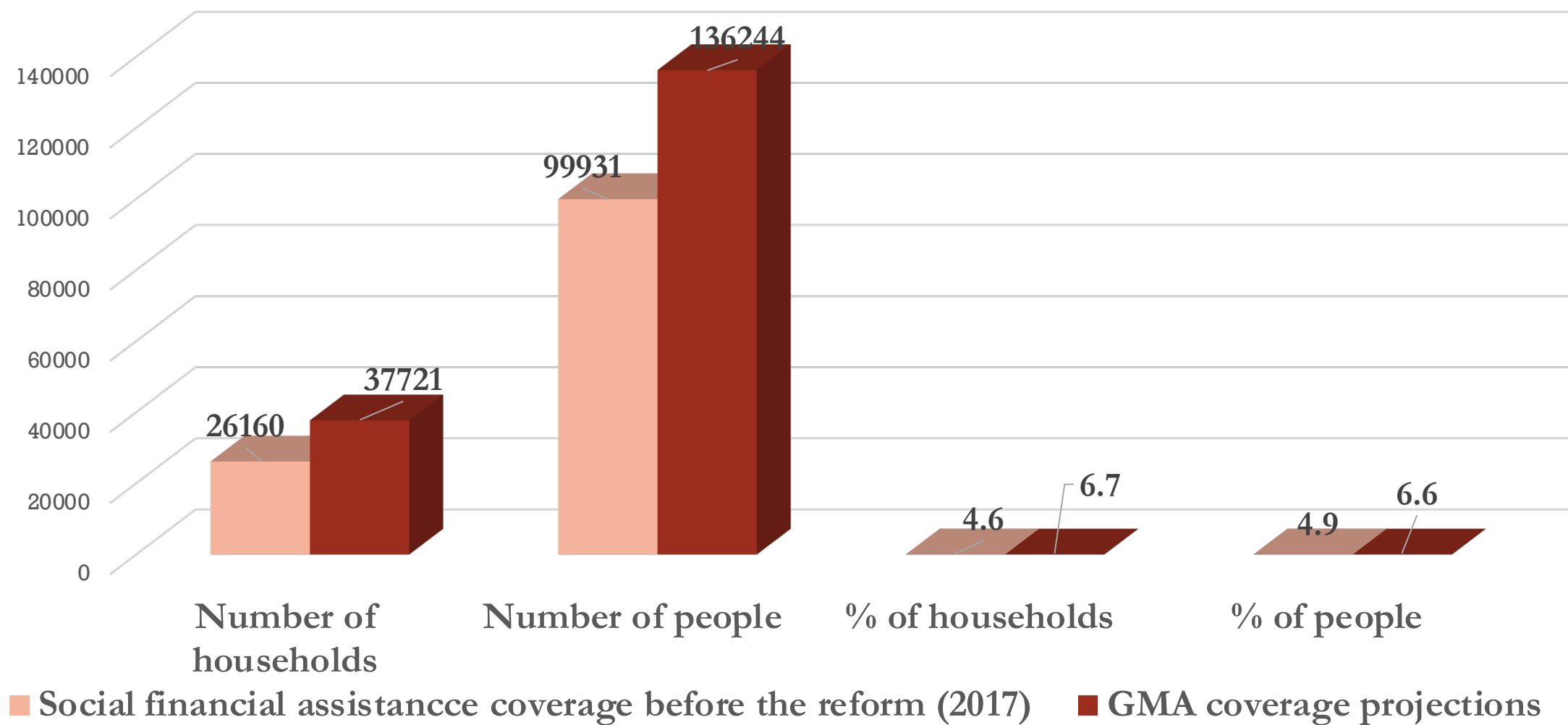
- IMPROVED ACCESS AND COVERAGE -



■ Child allowance before the reform (2017)

■ CA coverage projections

REMOVING BARIERS TO SOCIAL PROTECTION - IMPROVED ACCESS AND COVERAGE -



LESSONS LEARNED AND WAY FORWARD

- Crucial importance of alliance between Minister of Finance and Minister of Social Policy
- Institutional 'prejudices' regarding 'deserving' and 'undeserving' beneficiaries
- Arbitrary thresholds difficult to change
- Social workers indicate challenges, but less eager to implement changes/change practices

WAY FORWARD (WHAT WAS NOT CHANGED)

- Unified assessment and further integration of disability benefits
- Introduction of reference budgets as threshold for GMA (i.e. minim wage)
- Improved inter-institutional cooperation (between Employment and Social Work Centres)
- Further 'universalisation' and decentralisation of child allowances (towards non-means tested child allowances)

RISKS AND THREATS FOR FURTHER REFORM IN THE SOCIAL AND CHILD PROTECTION

- Informal economy
- Remittances as a "universal basic income"
- Lack of solidarity between different income/generational/family type households
- Lack of (political) continuity of the undertaken reforms