



Child welfare 2020

COVID-19 epidemic not emphasised in 2020 child welfare statistics – impacts expected with some delay

MAIN FINDINGS

- 1.6 per cent of the population's 0–20-year-olds were placed outside the home.
- In 2020, the proportion of children in emergency placement was 0.4 per cent of the population aged 0–17.
- In 2020, 1.1 per cent of the population's 0–17-year-olds were in care.
- 4 per cent of the population's 0–20-year-olds were open care clients of child welfare services.
- A child welfare report had been filed for 8.1 per cent of the population's 0–17-year-olds.

It is still too early to assess the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on the need for child welfare measures in the light of child welfare statistics. In 2020, the key indicators used in child welfare statistics were mainly at the same level as the year before. However, it has been estimated in the studies conducted that difficulties in families and the need for support among child welfare clients have increased during the epidemic. (Eriksson et al. 2021; Tiili et al. 2020).

In 2020, a child welfare notification was filed for a total of 87,233 children. The number of child welfare notifications (162,130) increased by 4 per cent from the previous year. On average, 1.9 child welfare notifications were filed per child.

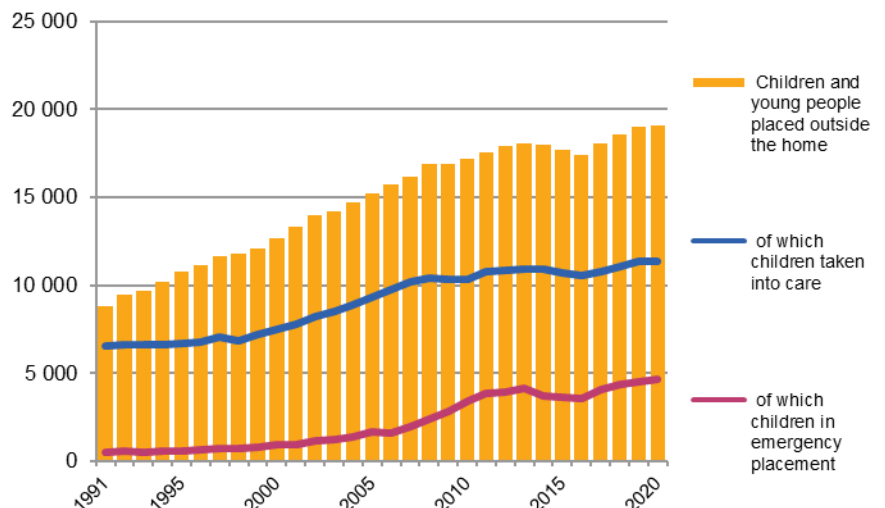
In 2020, 48,802 children and young people were child welfare clients in open care. This represents a year-on-year reduction of more than two thousand clients (-4%).

In 2020, 4,662 children were subject to emergency placements, an increase of 3 per cent from 2019. The number of children taken into care (11,386) remained at the same level as the previous year (+0.3%).

The number of new children taken into care during the year was 1,688, a reduction of 9 per cent from the previous year. There has been a decline especially in the number of decisions to take a child into care involuntarily, which are confirmed by the Administrative Court. The Administrative Courts have been congested because of the emergency conditions.

A legislative amendment strengthened the right to after-care and raised the age limit to young people aged under 25. The number of clients aged over 18 therefore increased slightly (5%) compared to the previous year.

Figure 1. The total of children and young people placed outside the home, and the included numbers of children taken into care and children in emergency placement, 1991–2020*.



* The same child may be included both under the cases with an emergency placement order and under children in care.

Martta Forsell
martta.forsell@thl.fi

Tuula Kuoppala
tuula.kuoppala@thl.fi

Salla Säkkinen
salla.sakkinen@thl.fi