

## DEINSTITUTIONALISATION OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN BULGARIA. PROJECT "CHILDHOOD FOR EVERYONE"

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**ABSTRACT:** THE CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ARE SUBJECT TO CORRECTION AND COMPENSATION OF PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL POINT OF VIEW. FROM A SOCIAL POINT OF VIEW, THEY ARE SERVED IN BULGARIAN SOCIETY FROM IX AND X TH CENTURY, THIS PROCESS IS MAINLY RELATED TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. AFTER THE LIBERATION OF BULGARIA FROM OTTOMAN RULE, THOSE ACTIVITIES ARE PICKED UP BY NEWLY FORMED CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS WHOSE WORK ACTIVELY TO STRENGTHEN IN 1944. SPECIAL HOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN BULGARIA - IN CASES OF ABANDONMENT BY PARENTS INTENSIVELY REVEALED AFTER 50 YEARS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. TODAY, IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY IS DEEPLY CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED TO CLOSE THESE INSTITUTIONS AND THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THEM IN THE COMMUNITY. IN THIS SENSE, IN BULGARIA CURRENTLY OPERATES PROJECT: "CHILDHOOD FOR ALL", WHICH AIMS TO COMPLETELY CHANGE THE IMAGE OF THE POLICY FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND IS DESCRIBED IN DETAIL IN THIS ARTICLE.

**KEY WORDS:** INTEGRATION, SOCIALIZATION, CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS CORRECTION, COMPENSATION, HOMES FOR MEDICAL AND SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, SOCIAL SERVICES, RESIDENTIAL CARE, SOCIAL SERVICES, TARGETED FUNDING, OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

**THE** children with special needs - these are children and adolescents who suffer from mental, sensory and physical disabilities. The purpose of working with children with special needs is their social rehabilitation and integration into society. Basic concepts in working with children with special needs correction and compensation.

**THE** correction is to improve or overcome the deviation of children with special needs. Adjustment shall be made on an individual way or in group sessions and tutorials.

**COMPENSATION** means replacing the function of damaged organs with preserved function of healthy analysts.

**DEPENDING** on the cause and place of disabled children with special needs are divided into several groups:

- ⇒ Children with disorders of the oral and written language. They are the object of speech therapy;
- ⇒ Children who suffer from mental deficiency or total underdevelopment of mental processes. They are subject to imbeciles pedagogy;
- ⇒ Low hearing and deaf children. They are subject to surdopedagogikata;
- ⇒ Blind and visually impaired children. They are subject to tiflopedagogikata;

- ⇒ Children who have bodily harm. They are subject to somatopediya;
- ⇒ Children with temporary restraints in mental development. They have no anatomical damage palmitate brain. In their mental development occurs in a slower pace. In adequate pedagogical conditions they can achieve normal;
- ⇒ Children who have not one, but more disabilities.

**THE** historical data show that organized care for children with disabilities in the country started at the end of the ninth and early tenth century. Church - as religious, social and largely Enlightenment institution in the Middle Ages is one that organizes the first care of children with disabilities in our country, putting these concerns to the attention of the public.

**BESIDES** the church a big role in treatment, upbringing and development of children with disabilities have the family and the family, especially during the Ottoman rule.

**AFTER** the liberation in 1878 and the restoration of the Bulgarian state care for disadvantaged children gradually move from the family to the state. Back in 1891 in the "Law on Public Education" provides education for children with physical or mental deficiencies. To the application of this decision is reached, however, much later and it is the result of efforts of individual enthusiasts - well-trained doctors and educators. Medical and pedagogical care for seven, then basic categories anomalous children are born at home in different years.

**FERDINAND** Urbih opened a private school for deaf children, which is also the director, and in 1906 it was reorganized into the "State Institute for the Deaf."

**EXPRESSION** of the increased interest in education and training of children with disabilities is doctor sum in Varna in 1907, which is lectured on "Caring for defective children." In 1921 at the initiative of Dr. Shumanov in Bulgaria is based "medical and educational company" chaired by Prof. Dimitar Katzarov. The main objective of the company was to be cared for mentally retarded children. In this regard, the capital found two utility classes, and soon began opening and others in the country - Kazanlak, Plovdiv, Rousse. In 1930 in Sofia pediatrician Prof. Dr. Stefan Vatev based first Children's advisory station mental defective children. Three years later he issued a special decree of organized care for these children. At the initiative of the company "Care for retarded children in Bulgaria" on 22.02.1937, at the Sofia district "Sugar factory" was opened first in Bulgaria Auxiliary boarding school, educational institute called "Development". "Typical of the development of imbeciles pedagogy is that the idea of introducing an auxiliary training of doctors belongs to the schools to which later joined educators"

**SPECIAL** homes for children with disabilities in Bulgaria - in cases of abandonment by parents intensively revealed after 50 years of the twentieth century. As a rule, they are created "out of sight of people" to not affect the emotional state of health. Similarly there is the question abandoned and healthy children in need of socialization and preparation for independent living. They have also been institutionalized in the social institutions.

**OVER** the last twenty years in Bulgaria is experiencing dynamic transition from a socialist society to an integrated European society. Change the appearance and the overall state policy. Bulgaria - already a member of the European Union - is working to create a more real conditions for the protection and enforcement of fundamental rights of the child enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. How successful state social policy of childcare, especially for what is placed at a disadvantage; Is it protected, what is still to be desired, expected and required? The answer to these questions can be found in and through the subject areas of different scientific disciplines, and through the analysis of social

policy in the field of childcare and activities for its implementation from different starting points. Here the answer will be sought through the sociological analysis of two trends: the institutionalization - a trend coming from the past and persisting in contemporary social policy and society, and deinstitutionalization - trend that became the current social problem in recent years, especially after the entry of Bulgaria into the EU. At the end of 2009, 1376 children and young people are housed in 24 homes for children with mental retardation and 1 home for children with physical disabilities. Specialized institutions have capacity average of 55 children. In some of them the number of children reached 100, which hinders the implementation of individual approach and quality care. Specialized institutions are mostly located in rural areas, which puts children at serious social isolation and limited access to adequate health, education and social services, and impede the provision of ongoing specialized care from competent professionals.

**AT** the end of 2009, 494 children over 3 years with permanent disabilities continue to grow in homes for medical and social care for children and they have not been found suitable alternative forms of care. As the only possibility for these children move into homes for children with disabilities, which dooms them to permanent institutionalization.

**CURRENTLY** in the community are not developed sufficient number of support services for children with disabilities. On the other hand, the existing services are not evenly distributed in accordance with the needs of the target groups. This hampers the prevention of abandonment and quality support for them and their families. The project "Childhood for all" address this problem by designing packages of services in the community, which in the long run will provide an alternative for children and families.

**THE** main objective of the project is to plan and implement concrete and effective measures for real deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities placed in specialized institutions for children. Reform begins with the preparation and removal of institutions for children with disabilities, because they are most vulnerable and in need of urgent measures to change their lives. That is why the first draft of the Action Plan is "Childhood for all" and aims to nearly 1,800 children over 3 years of age and youth with disabilities in 24 homes for children with mental retardation / HMRC / 31 home for medical and social care for children / orphanage /.

**THE** project started in June 2010 and is implemented by the State Agency for Child Protection in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Agency for Social Assistance and the Ministry of Health.

**THE** aim is to end in 2014 to close the current homes for children with disabilities. Will be built 149 new centers for family-type accommodation where you will live to 12 children and staff needed for them. Will be constructed and 37 day care centers for children with disabilities and 34 new centers for social rehabilitation and integration, where children can spend an active day, to communicate with people, to provide them with advanced health care and their training. And most importantly, they will be in large settlements with access to quality medical care and education. Not like now - children with disabilities are "hidden" in homes in small villages, away from people and professionals the tools they need. Funds for the project were provided by several European operational programs - about 80 mln. Levs infrastructure OP "Regional Development" and "Rural Development" and 23 mln. Levs maintenance services under the OP "Human Resources Development". Furthermore, 5 mln. Levs will invest in people - for training, supervision, preparation for relocation of staff.

**THE** project "Childhood for everyone" is unique in that for the first time in the history of European Funds a project is financed by several operational programs.

**THE** only alternative form of care for children with disabilities without leaving the family environment currently living centers built by the Ministry of Health to some homes for medical and social care, day care centers for children and youth with mental disabilities under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, special schools and kindergartens in the Ministry of Education and Science and subsistence and rehabilitation centers established by NGOs. Day care centers are necessary but insufficient step towards the social integration of children with disabilities.

**1500** children with disabilities should be derived from specialized institutions for care at home and living in sheltered housing and other conditions close to home places. This will be done in the implementation of the national strategy "Vision for deinstitutionalization of children in Bulgaria", the 2014-2025", became clear at the workshop of regional teams to work on the problem in the "Support" at the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) in Veliko Tarnovo. The children will be directed by nursing homes to the center 149 family-type, 36 sheltered homes, 8 centers for social rehabilitation and integration and a day care center for children with disabilities. Sites are located in 81 municipalities and are built on the project of SACP "Childhood for everyone".

**To** meet these ambitious objectives it is necessary, however, to realize the serious activities by state and local authorities, namely:

- ⇒ Assessing the state of specialized institutions for children with disabilities and the quality of care in them.
- ⇒ Restructuring of specialized institutions for children who have the capacity to provide quality services in the community; closure of institutions that do not meet the uniform state standards in terms of environment and quality of care - with the joint efforts of all departments. Develop programs for qualified personnel in institutions both in terms of restructuring itself, and in terms of their movement.
- ⇒ Construction of a restructuring plan to reduce the institutions where possible.
- ⇒ Construction of alternative care for children with disabilities, living, rehabilitation and resource centers, reception and daily host families and others to receive their legal basis, and the state institutions, municipalities and non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to develop them, preserving freedom and initiative to implement them according to specific needs in the community.
- ⇒ Expanding the range of social services based in specialized institutions - daily and hourly care, stay for some time in order to relieve the family on weekends or in everyday life.
- ⇒ Assessment of the situation of children in special schools and establishing measures for their integration into mainstream schools according to the degree of mental retardation.
- ⇒ Training of teaching staff from special schools to fulfill the functions of resource teachers in mainstream schools.
- ⇒ Creating conditions for the participation of children with disabilities in various cultural activities - art, music, theater, dance and other arts.
- ⇒ Creating conditions for the participation of children with disabilities in sports and recreational activities.
- ⇒ Creating a new system for assessing disability in terms of social integration and development.

In conclusion can be made explicit the following conclusions and generalizations:

1. **THE** project "Childhood for everyone" aims to implement a sustainable model for deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities placed in institutions prepare project plans and everyone parties in the process to the final output of disabled children over 3 years and young people from orphanage and HMRC.
2. **IT** aims to build a new social infrastructure for children with special needs. Under the grant program and Rural Development will provide targeted funding to provide social services in the community. The project aims at changing the philosophy of care for disabled children, the most vulnerable group of children in institutions, with emphasis on the prevention of risks to institutionalization, family support and the provision of family or close to family environment for any child placed in a specialized institution for children with disabilities.
3. **THE** target group of the project includes:
  - ⇒ Children with disabilities who are placed in specialized institutions and should be drawn and aimed at social service residential - small group homes as a result of the evaluation of the project "Childhood for everyone" the SACP;
  - ⇒ Children with disabilities from the community to which the parents can not make adequate care and need support, directed by SAD Sevlievo; Young people with disabilities who are in institutions and will be accommodated in the sheltered house;
  - ⇒ Young people with disabilities in the community who need service Animal health;
  - ⇒ Families and / or relatives of children and young people with disabilities.
4. **THROUGH** the implementation of the project will be possible for children to access a package of necessary services according to their individual needs. Will be possible for children to live in an environment close to the family and a new approach in caring for them.

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