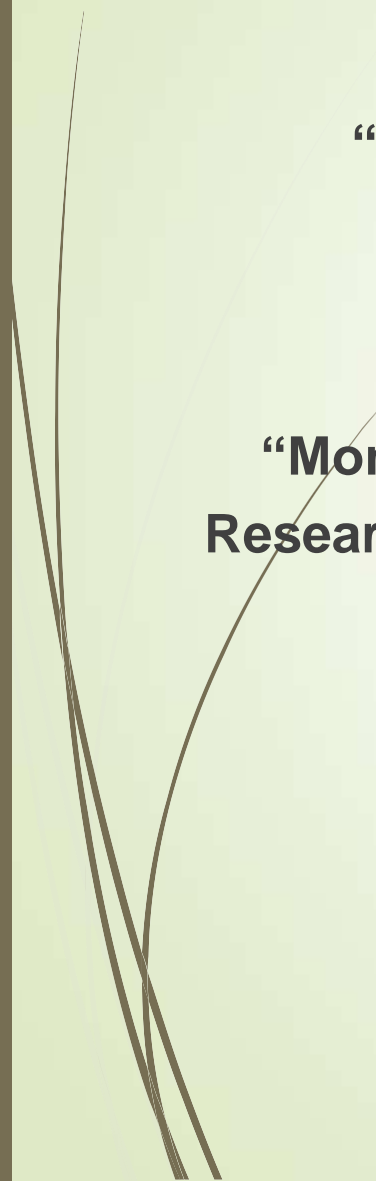


**Блог-публикация за проучването
“ Мониторинг на грижите за деца в риск”**

**Blog publication of the Study
“Monitoring of the care for children in risk - Vidin”
Research: DEP COM (Detectives of European projects)**



Policy toward orphans in Bulgaria

Raising kids in orphanages violates their rights, guaranteed by international conventions, which are signed by Bulgaria such as UN Convention on the rights of the child, UN Convention of the rights of people with disabilities and leads to violation of their access to quality care and services.

Thanks to long time pressure from non – government organizations and private donors towards the authorities in Bulgaria, the country finally began reform and closure of orphanages.

After becoming a member of EU in 2007, Bulgaria finally took actions for building new resident services for orphans, relocating children to smaller type family centers and closure of old- type of orphanages.

Main financial support is been provided by the European Union.

National policy of Bulgaria

With Protocol № 8 of the Council of Ministers from 24.02.2010 has approved a National strategy called „Vision for de-institutionalization of children in Bulgaria ”. This is the main document for the institutional reform in Bulgaria which is paving the road for de- institutionalization of orphanages and opening family centers close to family environment community centers. This process is not only aiming to take kids outside orphanages but also to achieve other objectives related with personal growth, earning skills for independent life and professional orientation.

In accordance with the Strategy, the leading understanding is that rising kids in specialized institutions without access to educational, health, social and other services is violating children rights, not only their right to live in family environment.

National goal of Bulgaria

General objective: „ Guaranteeing the rights of children to family environment and care depending on their individual needs“.

According to the strategy, most prioritized groups of children are:

- Children, living in orphanages (homes for children without parents, including those who are above 18 years of age/);
- Children, in medico- social homes for children;
- Children with disabilities, including those with constant demand from medical care;

Orphanages in Bulgaria 2001- 2017

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2009

- Medico - social homes for babies from 0-3 years of age
32 with 2 421 babies
- Homes for orphans from 3 to 18 years of age
80ty with 3 770 kids
- Homes for children with mental or physical disabilities
24 + 1 number with 1386 kids
- Total number of children living in institutions in Bulgaria was: 7 587
by 2017
- 6 300 children are been re- located to smaller family type institutions, placed in foster care or adopted from by 2017.
- 66 family centers are been built with European funds and 15 “Protected homes”.
- In relation to kids with disabilities 14 homes have been closed.

Orphanages in Bulgaria 2001- 2017

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In 2017

- Still exist 11 homes for children with disabilities with 400 orphans.
- 25 Homes for orphans provide roof and food to 499 kids from 7 to 18 years of age.
- 17 are the medico – social homes for kids from 0 to 7 years with 653 kids. Two thirds are homes for kids from 0 to 3 years.

“Bulgaria is led country in de- institutionalization of orphanages. Nowadays almost 10 thousands kids less live in Homes for social or medical care”. Antony Lake, Ex.director of UNICEF (Dec. 2015)

Funding de-institutionalisation in Bulgaria

- The state has ambition all orphanages to be closed latest by 2020 and kids accommodated to smaller resident family centers.

Financing programs:

- European social fund OP „HRD“ - 650 mln levs;
- ERDF, OP « Regions in growth " - 49 mln leva.
- Rural development program; Measure 32I for social services to orphans.
- 15% co- financing from Republican budget.

Funding de- institutionalisation in Bulgaria 2007- 2017

Bulgaria has negotiated with European Union to receive funding for:

- Building 28 Transitional homes for children from 15 to 18 years;
- Building 17 Observed homes for youths from 18 to 21 r.;
- Building 20 Centers for specialized health and social care for kids with disabilities and demand from permanent care;
- Building 8 Centers for specialized health and social care for kids with high risks for behavior deviation and demand from social and health care.

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Total budget: 58 095 000,00 mln levs

ERDF: 49 mln lv; National co-financing: 8 714 251,10 mln levs

Funding de- institutionalisation in Bulgaria

Further services for kids and families with EU funding are envisaged:

- 23 Centers for public support/ Community centers for children and families with optional service for urgent accommodation;
- 27 Day centers for support of children with disabilities and their families;
- 16 Day centers for support of kids with deep retardations and their families.; ©
- 10 Family type centers for kids;

How de- institutionalization is working?

- ❖ EU through any of three EU programs provides funding for de-institutionalization up to 85% from total costs. The other 15% co- financing is provided by the Member state - Bulgaria.
- ❖ The Managing Authorities of each of three EU funded programs are 3 Bulgarian Ministries. The first is the Ministry of regional development and public works (MRDPW).
- ❖ Municipalities on which territories are orphanages, are in charge of applying for EU funding, launching calls for works and equipment, choosing contractors, managing and reporting back to the MRDPW.
- ❖ When physical infrastructure is built, the other European fund – the ESF, through OP “Human resources development” provides budget for salaries of personnel, during projects 'pilot phase and other costs for projects' duration.

How de- institutionalization is working?

- ❖ Managing Authority of EU funds for urban centers is the Ministry of labor and social policy, which assigns the management of different activities related to orphans to municipalities, after they accomplish construction works. For EU funds in rural areas the Managing authority is the Agricultural fund.
- ❖ The Ministry of health is the beneficiary of EU funds for building family type centers for babies from 0 to 7 years of age. The “ Home mother and child ” Vidin is been included in the list with beneficiaries of EU funds for construction of new “Protected home” and re- location of babies by end of 2018.
- ❖ The maximum number of kids in new resident homes can not exceed 12.
- ❖ When projects are finalized, the Bulgarian state takes charge for funding and control over care for orphans. Municipalities may assign management of NGOs., or deliver social services themselves in these new centers.
- ❖ When projects funded with EU funds are finalized, the Bulgarian state takes charge for funding and control over care for orphans. Municipalities may assign management of NGOs., or deliver social services themselves in these new centers. ©

Other foreseen measures by 2023

- Measures for social and integral services for yearly intervention and prevention in family environment
- Measures for care in family environment of kids in risk, who live with relatives.
- Step by step closure of all homes for medical and social care for orphans.
- Social services to children in Homes and those leaving them
- Measures for social, health and integrated services for yearly childhood development for children with disabilities
- Measures for enhancing the effectiveness of system for guaranteeing of children rights.
- Building the required infrastructure for services for kids.

Problems in 2017

- Continuing abandonment of new born babies in hospital;
- Pre mature births;
- High number of kids with disabilities abandoned by parents;
- High percent of children abandoned in homes caused by poverty;
- Risk from school drops ;
- Undeveloped individual potential;
- Difficult labor adaption;
- Difficulties in handling independent life;
- Difficult procedures for adoption of children from Bulgaria;

Institutions for orphans in Vidin district

Still functioning orphanages old type:

- Home “Mother and child” Vidin– 8 kids from 0 to 3 years of age mostly with disabilities. From 2012 to 2014, fifty five (55) new born babies are been abandoned in the hospital. In 2014 are left 29 babies. Most of babies are been accommodated in foster care families.

Two/ thirds of orphans are enrolled after birth; all babies are registered for adoption after expiry of 6th month period from their enrolment. Most of babies are abandoned because of poverty or lack of family capacity – unemployment, homelessness, large size family according to the regional report on social services for 2015. For physical reasons 10% from kids. kids with one parent 15%; 90% from kids are enrolled after crisis. For the rest the enrolment is been planned. It is foreseen by 2020, three (3) family centers to be opened with EU funds and babies from home to be re- located.

- Two family type centers for 29 orphans with disabilities were built in Vidin. Another is envisaged for kids with disabilities. Orphans are relocated from the Gomotartsy, Kula and Home “Mother and child” in Vidin. The projects are funded by OP “Regional development” with total value 1 752 412 levs; 300 000 levs are provided from OP “HRD”

Institutions for orphans in Vidin district

Still functioning orphanages in Vidin district:

- Home “ Nadejda” Belogradchik is the only institution from old type still functioning in Vidin district; It is foreseen to be closed at latest by 2020. Children will be relocated to one of new family centers. Total number of kids - 27 from 18 boys and 9 girls from 7 to 18 years of age, with 18 people staff.
- By 2020 are foreseen for opening following resident services: 5 family centers for orphans – per 2 in Belogradchik and Dimovo municipalities and one in Makresh.
- In Belogradchik also will be built one monitored home for orphanages above 18 years.

Institutions for orphans in Vidin district

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Closed orphanages by 2017:

- Novo selo village Home “Hr. Botev”; Children re-located to two family centers in same village in two apartments. Since 1.09.2013, the home has been officially closed.
- Home for mentally retarded children, Gomotartsy village, since 1.12. 2015 closed. **Three new homes built CNST and Protected Homes: Zora, Daga, Viara, Nadejda I ljubov**
- Home for mentally retarded, Kula, closed since October 2015.

Resident services for orphans in Vidin district

- Three Family type centers (ЦНСТ) for children with disabilities in Belogradchik 1 and 2 in Vidin;
- Three family type centers in Novo selo for 12 children and 1 in Belogradchik; Youths in Novo selo- 32.
- Two Transitional homes (ПЖ) – in Belogradchik (for 8 teens) and in Novo selo for 12 teens

Non resident services for orphans in Vidin

- Foster care in Vidin district: in 2012 - 19 kids; in 2013 – 60 ty kids and in 2014- 75 kids; Including babies from 0 to 7 years. 8 kids have been adopted.
- Adoptions and re- integration back into biological family are two sustainable solutions for orphans.

From 2012 to 2014 were adopted 82 children, incl. 27 from international families and 55 from Bulgaria. In the district is measured an increased number of international adoptions.

Other negative trends in Vidin district:

The number of children with disabilities in Vidin increased from 221 in 2012, to 311 in 2014 г.

The number of school drop offs is increasing:

2013 г. – 125 students; 2014 г. – 145 students; 2014/2015 г. – 168 students;

SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Research: DEP COM (Detectives of European projects) “Monitoring of care of children in risk- Vidin”

Inception phase: meeting, getting acquainted with task, distribution of roles.

Implementation phase: Selection the European project, Opening social media for communication in Facebook, Instagram, Google.

Organizing on side visits and meetings with respective concerned parties.

The current Study within the Project DEP COM will conduct monitoring over the de-institulised care of children with disabilities from the Home for mentally retarded kids of Gomotartsy Village and the Vidin Day Care Home that consecutively were closed.

From February to May 2020 the students will update the statistics about the closed Homes in Vidin and shall organize and hold meetings with the staff, with relatives of kids if any and institutions responsible for their control over the quality of care.

Closure: Elaborating recommendations for improvement



Thank you for your attention