

**5th Provider's Forum in Slovakia,
September 18-19, 2013
Report**



ORGANIZERS AND SUPPORTERS

EASPD Brussels, **SOCIA** – Social Reform Foundation and Independent Platform **SocioFórum** (member of EASPD) co-organized the 5th Provider's Forum in Bratislava, Slovakia. For the purpose of organising the Forum, the **WHO Country Office in Slovakia** provided conference room for free. Other costs were covered thanks to the support of **EASPD Brussels – Progress Programme, SCA Hygiene Products, Ltd.** and **by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the Program Active citizenship and inclusion**, which is implemented by the Ekopolis Foundation in cooperation with the Children of Slovakia Foundation and SOCIA – Social Reform Foundation. The Forum was under the auspices of the Mayor of Capital City of Slovakia Bratislava, Mr. Milan Ftáčnik.

CONTENT OF THE PROVIDERS FORUM

There were two main topics of the 5th Providers Forum in Slovakia:

- Slovak legislation influenced by EU legislation and financial instruments for fulfilment its strategies - in the context of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the process of de-institutionalisation (DI) and legal capacity of persons with disabilities
- Cooperation and networking between government, public and non-public institutions, municipalities, communities and client groups

Service providers for people with disabilities joined to assess the current situation in these areas. For Slovakia, as well as the whole of Europe, it is becoming a priority to comply with the UNCRPD. The Convention clearly defines the rights of citizens to live independently, decide independently, and have respect of the majority. The role of society is to create conditions that make this a reality.

The participants in the 5th Forum noticed that the requirements of the UNCRPD are partly reflected in the prepared amendment to the law on social services by strengthening in-field services at the expense of residential care, that have received strict regulatory rules. The Ministry of Social Affairs has established Main Contact Point for the implementation of the Convention this spring. With full understanding of the related responsibility, the participants supported the reform proposal of guardianship. The key point according to today law is deprivation of legal capacity to perform legal acts. NGO legal experts suggest to be made impossible for the court to deprive citizens from the all rights of legal actions. They suggest that alternative tools should be implemented, as much as possible, so to involve citizen in the decision-making process about themselves. While the Ministry of Justice shares the processed proposals for the future, there question of reinstatement eligibility for those 15,000 people who are now in social services institutions still remains. How to persuade judges to recognise their present too lax deciding on such serious harm to human life and proceed responsible for their review?

Alarming is the situation in the accessibility of public buildings and spaces for people with disabilities. The need for additional removal of existing barriers in public buildings is formally recognised, but in practice is not always applied and controlled. Not to mention that wheelchair access is not enough. Incomprehensible is that the accessibility requirements are a wasted chance to prepare really modern progressive law under Initiative Europe for all. After a few years we will eliminate barriers of

new buildings and spaces again. The essence of the changes in the law and decree is finally let disappeared "building, resp. buildings intended for use by persons with reduced mobility and orientation". We really want to empower persons with disabilities to live in the community, to use public services and public spaces like everyone else. The law should define "requirements for barrier-free use of building" and provide control mechanisms for their implementation.

Fulfilling the obligations of the UNCRPD should become one of the top priorities of the Partnership Agreement on the use of EU structural funds. In the discussion with representatives of the Central Coordination Authority and the Ministries Forum, the delegates pointed out the need for expert assessment of accessibility of buildings in all the projects that will require a contribution from the EU Funds. Without this condition after 7 years of implementing once again we would have not fulfilled this objective, as it is in the end of current programming period.

The 5th Provider Forum offered a space for the presentation of good practice at the local level, and information about the status of the partnership between organisations and representatives from various sectors. The highlight of the programme was the discussion with self-advocates from Bratislava, supported housing residents from Malacky, sheltered workshop employees in Jakubovo and residents of supported housing in Osadné who sovereignly declared their readiness for independent living.

PARTICIPANTS

This year's two-day Forum was attended by 98 participants from all Slovakia. Organizers invited people from different sectors and representatives of ministries, municipalities, public and non-public providers. Thanks to the representative of EASPD, the participants had the opportunity to learn more about networking on international level and positive the effort of several NGOs in Brussels to influence European legislative. This Forum was also the first one, when clients / people with disabilities took place in a panel discussion.

PROGRAM

Wednesday, September 18

12.00 – 12.30 registrations

12.30 – 13.00 **Welcome and introduction**

- SocioFórum – **Vladislav Matej**
- WHO – **Darina Sedláková**
- Bratislava Self-Government Region – **Michaela Šopová**
- EASPD – **Franz Wolfmayr**

13.00 – 14.30 **Impact of European legislation on the sector in Slovakia**

moderator: **Anna Šmehilová**

- Projection of EU legislation to amendment law č.448/2008 – **Lýdia Brichtová**, Ministry of social affairs
- Main Contact Point for UNCRPD - **Ján Gabura**, Ministry of social affairs
- What kind of legislative changes Slovakia needs? – **Zuzana Stavrovská**, advocate, (Association for Helping people with intellectual disabilities)

14.30 – 15.30

Cooperation and networking organizations – their offers

Moderator: **Iveta Mišová**

- Networking of social providers – **Franz Wolfmayr**, EASPD
- SocioFórum – **Martina Petijová**
- Asociácia poskytovateľov sociálnych služieb (association of social providers in SVK) – **Milada Dobrotková**
- Platforma za komunitné služby – Z Domova domov (*Platform for Community based services – Home From Institution*) – **Mária Machajdíková**

Thursday, September 19

8.30– 10.30

Towards community-based settings (de-institutionalisation) – cooperation is the must

Moderator: **Vladislav Matej**

- National project of DI. Expectations of involved provider - CSS Zátišie Osadné – **Ján Šrenkel**, director, CSS Zátišie Osadné
- Supporting integration of DI clients to local communities - example from Banská Bystrica region - **Olga Reptová, Martin Valentovič**, M.E.S.A.10
- Community plan of social services of Malacky city – **Alena Kmecová**, Klientské centrum, MsÚ Malacky
- Living in community – **Martina Ambušová**, Vstúpte, n.o., Malacky
- Persons with complex needs – **Franz Wolfmayr**, EASPD

10.30 – 11.00

coffe break

11.00 – 12.30

EU budget lines for Slovakia in new period 2014 - 2020

Moderator: **Helena Woleková**

- Partnership agreement 2014-2020 – **Igor Jašurek**, Centrálny koordinačný úrad, Slovak Government Office
- Ministry of social affairs priorities for new period 2014-2020 – **Kristián Kovács**, Ministry of social affairs
- Integrated regional operational programme – **Miloš Beňov**, Ministry of agriculture and rural development

12.30 – 13.30

lunch

13.30 – 15.00

User, family and community involvement

Moderator: **Stefi Nováková**

- How to develop work with community, family and client - **Marián Horanič**, ÚNSS (Blind and Partially Sighted Union of Slovakia)

- Inclusion. Experiences of NGO provider of sheltered housing – **Lucia Takáčová**, ZPMP v SR (Association for Helping people with intellectual disabilities)
- **Panel discussion with people with disabilities and their families** - about their personal experiences with independent living and employment

15.00 – 15.30

Final conclusions – Vladislav Matej

VISIT IN RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL CENTER – DSS OKOČ

In the morning of the 18th September – before the Forum – we provided a visit for EASPD representatives in social care centre – DSS Okoč (www.dssokoc.sk). DSS Okoč is a public residential social care centre for young and adults – capacity 66 clients. Provider of this facility is Self-government region Trnava and it is near 70 km southeast from Bratislava. DSS Okoč is preparing for transformation – they are involved in the National project Support of DI. DSS Okoč is a typical “post-communistic” institution placed in an old manor house at the end of a small village. The main impetus for them to change radically was a fire 6 years ago and the cooperation with SocioForum.

Photogallery: http://socia.sk/?page=media&sub=gallery&gallery_id=37

Outcomes: <http://www.socioforum.sk/index.php/aktuality/35-aktuality/153-5easpd>

<http://socia.sk/?page=projekty&sub=medzinarodna>

<http://www.zdomovadomov.sk/pozvanka-na-5-forum-easpd/>

<http://www.apssvsr.sk/>

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Bratislava, November 2013