



THE AUTHORITIES FROM FĂLEȘTI, UNGHENI AND CĂLĂRAȘI - CONSULTED BY CHILDREN

The decisions adopted by the local public authorities from Fălești, Ungheni and Călărași are now closer to the interest of the child.

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Unemployment - profession for a lot of boarding school graduates

Boarding school graduates face a bigger risk of being unemployed. In comparison with the young people living in a family environment, the majority of the children from the boarding schools do not continue their studies in universities or colleges, but in vocational or trade schools. Among the causes of this situation we identify the weak training which offer the residential institutions, and also the lack of professional and elementary life skills orientation. The motives facing the majority of children that grew up in the residential institutions were discussed during a press club, with the participation of the representatives from the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family.

Valentin Crudu, Head of the Directorate for preschool, primary and secondary education inside the Ministry of Education, being present at the event declared that in the recent past years, in collaboration with the developmental partners, the Government of the Republic of Moldova launched important reforms regarding inclusive education, with the goal of creating equal opportunities for the children placed in residential institutions, including their graduates.

Meanwhile, in collaboration with the NGOs, the Ministry of Education undertakes within residential institutions a range of actions for professional orientation: the implementation of training courses for the CV elaboration, motivation letter, being convincing during an employment interview; organizing visits at vocational schools, colleges and enterprises; the motivation of opening their own tailor, carpentry, blacksmith shops within the auxiliary boarding schools etc.

According to Valentin Crudu, every second young person that graduated a boarding school in 2011 applied at a vocational or trade school. Meanwhile, just 8% of the graduates decided to study in a theoretical or vocational

lyceum and 7% of them entered a college. Every third graduate didn't have the wish or possibility to continue his studies.

The residential institutions graduates also benefit of an unique allowance of 5 thousands lei, being financially supported through scholarships, allowances for food expenses during their studies. At the graduation of the educational institutions- vocational schools, colleges or universities the states pays them an unique allowance of 10.000 lei.

In her turn, Rodica Moraru Chilimar, Head of the Department of Social Assi-

In the 2010-2011 school year, 300 out of those 1086 graduates of residential institutions went back to their birthplace and do not continue their studies, other 296 entered trade schools/classed, and 292 – vocational schools.

tence of the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family mentioned that the ministry responds to residential institutions graduates' problems creating social services. The local public authorities are those which evaluate the necessities of this youth category and identifies the necessary solutions to be undertaken. Thus, in Edineț rayon were developed assisted apartments, in other rayons of the republic activate a range of day centers addressed inclusive to the boarding schools graduates. Rodica Moraru Chilimar stated that in 2015 in all the rayonal centers should be open resource centers for children and teenagers, that would offer support in different domains.

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Just 95 graduates entered in lyceums; 71 – in colleges and 6 – in universities. Cca 50 graduates were employed, and other 6 are trained within Territorial Agencies for Employment in the Work Field.

The results of a study carried out with the support of UNICEF show that 40% from the graduates become unemployed, while the ratio of unemployment at the national level within the 15-24 age group framework is 15,4%. In comparison with the young persons that grow up in the family environment, the residential institutions graduates twice as often do vocational studies and eight times less do their undergraduate studies. However, the risk of being trafficked is ten times bigger in comparison with their peers that live in a family environment.

At the moment there are 50 residential institutions under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, were 4814 are placed.



A family for every child

The auxiliary school from Călărași was shut down at the end of last year by the decision of the rayonal council. By the time of the project launch in the residential institutions in Călărași rayon were institutionalized about 200 children. Other over 80 children from Călărași rayon were placed in residential institutions from Ungheni, Fălești and Drochia rayons.

The project supported by "Every-Child" started with a plenary evaluation of Călărași auxiliary school, of the children placed in the institution and their families. The evaluation results showed that the most frequent motives of the institutionalization are: pedagogical neglect, the poverty of the family, divorce or parents' health problems, but also the attitudes and discriminatory behaviour of the community pedagogues towards these children.

The reintegration of the children in the biological and extended family imposed a thoroughly evaluation of the family. Parents had to prove commitment and motivation to restore and develop their relationship with the child that lived for years in the residential institution. The evaluation included the child necessities, family history, the situation at the moment and the motives that led to institutionalization. The project team monitored every family placement, with the purpose of excluding the abuse and negligence cases, as well to encourage a proper parental care, that would offer the child a safe and protected environment for growing up and develop. According to the necessity, families received emotional, practical and financial support.

Therewith, the local authorities permanently searched possibilities for the support of families with a high risk of child abandonment. The specialists intercede in cases when the poverty could be the cause leading to child separation from the family. Parents benefit from the need-



ded support to upring and educate their children at home.

According to Vasile Timofti, Vice-president of the Călărași rayon: "After the implementation of the project supported by EveryChild, where together with other two localities, Călărași is a pilot rayon, they have reached a point where the in a short time the auxiliary school was closed, and children went back to the community schools. 44 out of the total num-

"After the implementation of the project supported by EveryChild, where together with other two localities, Călărași is a pilot rayon, they have reached a point where the in a short time the auxiliary school was closed, and children went back to the community schools. 44 out of the total number of children were reintegrated in their biological families, 11- in extended families or in alternative protective forms. A small number of children receive services of a center for children in difficulty, going to the community school.

ber of children were reintegrated in their biological families, 11- in extended families or in alternative protective forms. A small number of children receive services of a center for children in difficulty, going to the community school. Children that

were institutionalized in other rayons also came back in their native communities. There was identified a solution for every child – some of them were intergrated in their biological families, others – in alternative protective forms as foster care, family-type homes."

He also mentioned that starting with January 1st 2012 the Reintegration Services, family support and foster care will be financed from the rayonal budget.

With the project support there is planned in the future to be organized inclusive schools in a few localities of the Sîmpoteni and Tuzara rayons for example.

Teachers and educators that previously activated in the auxiliary school from Călărași are engaged in other educational institutions in the rayon and provide different social services. Several of the former employees of the residential institution at the moment work

in the day center for children and young people from the locality.

The local authorities planned to open a kindergarden in the former building of the auxiliary school from Călărași, an institution with a big demand in the locality.

The reform of the residential system is carried out at once

Interview with Tatiana Potîng, Vice minister of Education



- A reformatory model of inclusive education of children with disabilities is now tested in several rayons of the Republic of Moldova. More children with special educational necessities came back at the community schools to study together with their peers. How did this model of inclusive education of children with disabilities appear and in how many schools in has been already implemented?

- Inclusive education is part of the Ministry of Education intention to adhere at the European documents provisions, including the UN Convention regarding the rights' respectation of the persons with disabilities. In this context, the Program for the inclusive education development was elaborated. This idea also is present in the context of the reform process of the residential child's care system. It is well known that in the Republic of Moldova there is a big number of children with different kind of disabilities living in residential child's care institutions. This is the reason why the residential system reform is carried out in parallel with the process of inclusive education of the children with disabilities. We are implementing this model of inclusive education together with our partners – UNICEF, LUMOS, "Every-Child" Moldova, KEYSTON, CCF and other NGOs. Eventually, our goal is that all the schools in the Republic to become inclusive, where every child could benefit from qualitative education.

There are cca 900 children with special needs at this stage, that are reintegrated in their community schools and that are part of the inclusive education program. We should mention that the number of children with disabilities is way bigger than 5.000, who are institutionalized in residential institutions. We are talking about children that were not placed in special institutions and whose parents preferred to keep them within the family. All these children have a disability degree established by medical commissions, however going to the general education schools and benefit from the same training along with children that did not have misfortune to have a disability.

Now we are working on the status of the support teachers, as it is essential to institutionalize the staff as units within the institution. A big part of them are doing it voluntary, they are not payed for their services.

- How were adapted the pilot institutions at the disabled children' needs? Were there designed access ramps or other adjustmenets were made?

- There are several institutions where access ramps were build. I personally went to a school in Ocnita rayon, were the construction took place in the previous school year. At this institution study more children with a locomotor deficiency.

Now we are working on the status of the support teachers, as it is essential to institutionalize the staff as units within the institution. A big part of them are doing it voluntary, they are not payed for their services. We are taking care of the documents, the support teachers will have a salary, will benefit of the entire social package, of assistance that benefit the whole teachers staff.

- How are the teachers selected for this not at all easy mission, as beyond the regular training there is need of a special training of communication with the children and, if you wish, the harmonization of the relationships between the children in the group?



with the development of the inclusive

- We consider that every teacher should be specially trained in this domain, so he/she could work with disabled children, irrespective of the type of their disabilities. This is the reason why we chose the idea of the modification of the initial format of training the staff; at the pedagogical universities being introduced a module that implies the curriculum for inclusive education and training of the teachers staff in this domain. Within the seminars and trainings that we carry out in the model of a child-friendly school we also have the goal to train the pedagogues that are already part of the system, but that lack the initial training. At the time when the schools are pilot the child-friendly model, all the teachers from that particular school have been through formation trainings in order to have a proper approach in their relationship with a child with special needs. Moreover, when the institution was identified, there were discussions carried out regarding the child integration in the school class and the pupil-pupil relationship. As the amiability degree of the class is very important in the process of accommodation of a child with special needs, we acted so the children were ready to accept and to support the newcomer. Luckily, we can state of experience that our pupils are very open and largely the accommodation of the children with special needs is made due to their colleagues. I believe that through the inclusion of the children with special needs in the general education schools we offer the possibility to the children that did not have the misfortune to have a disability to see things differently. There is the possibility to teach them what does being tolerant mean, self - development, what does love for your peers mean, even if they are different from you.

- *What kind of support is offered to the disabled children that come from the community schools?*

- We've adopted a different curriculum depending on the needs of children with special needs, also available for



children that are trained at home. This curriculum allows the child to develop, to to grow according to his personal capacities and not according the developmental degree of the whole class. It is very important that all the teachers staff understand that a natural progress, usual for a pupil is very hard to achieve for a child with special needs. It is important that the evaluation of these children to be undertaken not according to the general curriculum, to the average class academic performance, but according to the child's level at the beginning of the studying process and his/her progress during the process. As soon as these children are integrated in a community school the chances of him/her integrate better in the society and be citizens with full potential and equal opportunities in the adult life are much bigger. If they are

marginalized during the school period they do not longer have the chance to keep developing.

- *When will take place the national implementation of the inclusive education program?*

- The inclusive education program is provided for the 2011-2020 period of time. Gradually, from year to year, the number of schools with inclusive practices will be extended. We have the goal to implement the program at the national level starting with 2017. However we acknowledge how full of responsibility is to plan in this way on a field that is extremely sensitive. Our action will depend on the outcomes that we obtain during every stage of the process.

- *Thank you very much for the interview.*

The authorities from Fălești, Ungheni and Călărași – consulted by children

The decisions adopted by the local public authorities from Fălești, Ungheni and Călărași are now closer to the interest of the child.



This was made possible due to the formation of the Consultative Child Councils (CCC) in all these rayons. The Councils created with the support of “EveryChild” Moldova, have the purpose to offer children and young people the opportunity to express their opinions and to be heard by the adults.

According to Nataliei Semeniuc, “EveryChild” consultant in the participation of children, these councils are a form of partnership of children and young people that allows that to express their opinions and carry out projects that fulfill their necessities and specific interests of their community. The Councils actives as a partner of the Rayonal Department of Social Assistance and Family Protection in the developmental, evaluation and monitoring process of the politics and local programs regarding children and youth.

Once with the approbation of the activity regulation of the CCC, they will be placed among the share structures from the pilot rayons, obtaining the status of an initiative group, with decision and implication power.

In less than a year from the councils formation, children and teenagers managed to participate at a range of trainings and also at a lot of meeting at the rayonal level, place where they received detailed and first source information regarding the social protection measures for children.

CCC members were trained in the identification of children with problems domain. They studied the specific distinctive of a few social services for children in order to see at the scene place how a service like that is provided, in-

cluding foster care, placement center for disabled children, family-type home ect. They had the chance to meet specialists that implement these services, to see live what kind of support they offer and to discuss with their beneficiaries.

In the framework of the meeting they had with the rayon’s governance, educational directorates and social assistance departments, the children discussed real cases that take place in their communities or in the classes where they study. The children referred especially to the family problems with a lot of children, single parent families, families with the use of violence and abuse, families with malnutrition of the children and where children have nothing to wear to go to school.

In their turn, the local authorities representatives mentioned that all the cases highlighted by children will be discussed during the meeting of the rayonal council and child rights protection council, and further will be identified solutions for every single situation.

Each of the three councils has around 20 members, including children that have parents abroad, gypsy children, children with experience in care in a residential institution etc.





The informational system that will contain components on family and child protection

The Ministry of Social Protection and Family will develop an automated informational system “Social Assistance”, that will include components regarding family and child protection.

One of the basis principles in the development and implementation of the nominated system is the unification of the general instruments of data collection and also the assurance of their flexibility in order to cover all the necessities of the potential beneficiaries of social assistance.

During the current year the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family (MLSPF) also will carry out a census of the children without parental care. The census will cover all the localities in the republic.

The Head of Directorate for Family Protection and Child’s Rights Protection within the MLSPF, Viorica Dumbrăveanu stated that *„At the level of each community an unique questionnaire will be applied by the social assistants. In order to identify the children without parental care people will go from house to house.”*

The study will involve orphans, abandoned children and whose parents lost their parental rights, but also children that temporarily lost their parental care after their parents migration.

Viorica Dumbrăveanu mentioned that *„The questionnaire highlights the children’s profile, in whose care they are, how much and well their rights are respected, if they are in the authorities’ sight, if they received lately assistance and which was it”.*

All the collected data will be processed in a database at the rayonal level and further at the national one.

Fundraising – taught within some seminars

The civil society representatives and people responsible of the child and family in difficulty protection from Făleşti and Călărași participated at seminars on fundraising principles.

The seminars organized by EveryChild Moldova had the purpose of informing their participants about the local fundraising methods.

The EveryChild Moldova Fundraising Manager, Daniela Leahu mentioned that *„ Through these actions we have the purpose to strengthen the capacity of the local NGOs to maintain their independence and financial mobility. Thus, the territorial organizations have the possibility to keep undertaking different activities without depending on external financial sources”.*

According to Daniela Leahu, the participants at the seminars learned that there is need of an initial budget in order to develop fundraising campaigns at the local level, as well people responsible for the organization of the fundraising activities.

Vasile Gilcă, one of the participants at the seminars, specialists on the child rights protection at the Directorate of Social Assistance and Family protection from Călărași mentioned that *„All the communities and NGOs will only benefit if they will take into consideration the recommendations of the seminars organizers. It is also very important the society to know how much money was collected, who benefits from this money and how it was spent.”*



He came back in his family and community

Iulian is 14 years old, but behaves as a real man. The teenager can manage all the chores around the house and is his father's right hand. The big household that they have requires a lot of work and skills, and the boy is very happy that there is time he had a place in the family and can be useful. During the past few years he spent at the auxiliary school, Iulian felt more as a guest in his parental house. During those two days he was spending with his family he could not learn a lot of things or to socialize with his family.

His father is a single parent with three children, the oldest one being 16, and the youngest one – 12 years old. The milk they get from their several goats and a cow, the honey they get from a apiary next to the house provide a different menu for the children every single day.

Iulian who is now in the 8th grade is very happy that he was transferred to study in the community school. He knows that if he had kept studying at the auxiliary school he would have obtained a graduation certificate. Even if he is ambitious enough to continue his studies after the graduation of the community school, Iulian states that he would have felt humbled for the rest of his life if he would have graduated from a "school for fools" as he calls it.

The teenagers enjoys studying at the community school. Even if his grades are far from being the best, he doesn't mind and knows that the following time will have to work better.

He explains that "I could not have the same grades as all my colleagues as just this year I started to study the foreign language, chimics, physics and biology. Even my younger brother knows more than I know".

His father considers that the grades do not count as much as the fact that Iulian is not anymore sperated from his family.

Iulian went to the boarding school right after the first grade. As he did not go to the kindergarden before that, by

him in order to correct the bad marks".

Iulian remembers the day he left home. "The Director came at our house and made me come with her. I cried a lot. At the beginning it used to be very bad, didn't know anyone in there, everyone were strangers to me. After a time I got used to it, but still was missing my home... I wanted to be together with my family."

The strict schedule in the institution made the days to seem twins, and the



„ ... At the beginning it used to be very bad, didn't know anyone in there, everyone were strangers to me. After a time I got used to it, but still was missing my home ... ”

the time he was enrolled at the school he didn't know the numbers and letter. His parents being busy with everyday worries were convinced that at the auxiliary school Iulian will be able to recover fast the material at which he had arrears.

The head of the family states that "Back then I was thinking that it is in the best interest of the child. But if I could go back in time I would have not let him leave and I would have studied together with

week – with no end. The same patio, the same faces and activities every single day. The most lucky pupils sometimes were going outside the institution, but not to go on a trip, but to work whole days in the educators and teachers' households. For a labour day a child received between 20 and 30 ei. He states with regret that he'd never worked for anyone.

His father states that several times he thought of bringing the boy back home, but he was afraid that the child will not be able to reintegrate. Now, that Iulian has a support teacher staff and school teachers were trained how to facilitate his integration, the father is happy to have his child back home.