



Implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2012-2015 - national practices in member states

Educational Day Care for Labour Exploited Children - Focsani *General Department for Social Assistance and Child Care of Vrancea County,* *Romania*

Country(ies): Romania

Title of practice: Educational Day Care Centre for Labour Exploited Children – Focsani, Vrancea County, Romania

Main scope/theme: Child-friendly services and systems: education; sport, culture and other educational and youth activities

Managing organisation(s): General Department for Social Assistance and Child Care of Vrancea County, www.asistentasocialavn.ro, contact person: Daniela Nicolas, phone: +40 2 37 23 07 89, dgaspcvn@yahoo.com

Brief description: Currently, the Day Care Centre has 11 beneficiaries who receive educational support and supplementary alimentation so that they can attend all four primary classes and are not forced to work on the streets in order to provide for food. Because of the material scarcity and parental ignorance (parents who grew up in same promiscuous conditions that they offer to their children), the beneficiaries of the Day Care Centre are often abused, mistreated victims of parental violence. These children are disregarded, despised, they have lost their self-respect and trust in others, and they think that this way of life is absolutely normal. After spending time in the Day Care Centre, all 11 children return to their families. Unfortunately, their parents are unable to offer them the necessary hygienic conditions or adequate alimentation. Hence, the only meal these children get is from the Day Care Centre. In addition, the lack of legal address is one of the most significant issues for most of these families, since they are at permanent risk of being thrown on the street.

Timeframe: The Day Care Centre for Labour Exploited Children Focsani is subordinated to the General Department for Social Assistance and Child Care of Vrancea County, and it is situated in Focsani, 56 Cuza Voda Street. It was set up in December 2005 by "Save the Children", Bucharest, in partnership with the General Department for Social Assistance and Child Care of Vrancea County, to address the phenomenon of street children. Initially, 35 children from the streets of Focsani were identified and selected. These children either were begging or doing age inappropriate work in order to provide money for their parents or children from homes, and

parents also forced them to run different chores and look after their younger siblings. As the maximum capacity of the centre is only 17 beneficiaries, one had to select the most critical cases of labour exploited children. All of the selected children, aged 6 to 15 years, due to their parents' ignorance and lack of interest as well as their material deficiency and improper living conditions, never attended, left or are at risk of leaving school.

Type of activities: The following activities are implemented within the Day Care Centre:

- Classes in conformity with the primary school syllabus;
- Psychological assessment and counselling;
- Educational activities based on different themes: children's rights, health, academic counselling;
- Leisure and socialisation activities;
- Writing and organising the Rehabilitation and Social Reinsertion Plan and the Psycho-social Plan;
- Legal support;
- Nutritional support.

Results and outputs: To this day, the Day Care Centre was able to successfully integrate/reintegrate 40 children into schools. The effort put into overcoming the dire situation of these children is remarkable. It is also worth noting that, by being beneficiaries of the Day Care Centre, the children are involved in various beneficial activities, and they practice less begging, less straying, spend less time in the town dumps, and are less involved in performing labour-intensive tasks.

Target group(s): Children and adolescents

Success factor(s): The purpose of this centre was to remove 35 children (from rural or urban areas) from the worst forms of labour activities. In 9 years, this objective was not only achieved but also excelled, having over 40 beneficiaries. All of the children attended school and, with the professional help from the centre, they stayed with their families and were not abandoned. All these achievements were possible with the help of several partners, such as: "Save the Children", Vrancea County Council, School no 3 in Focsani, Vrancea County Library, Vrancea County Educational Inspectorate, Police Inspectorate, Vrancea County Red Cross and many others. Over 30 educational projects were developed on different occasions on: 1 March, 8 March, Easter, 5 June, which is the Fight against Child Violence Day, 12 June – the International Day against Child Labour, Christmas, etc. All of these events were organised to raise community awareness of child labour exploitation and to present the positive outcomes of the Day Care Centre's work.