

CONCLUSIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE SECOND FORUM OF SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Second Providers Forum for Persons with Disabilities gathered over 120 representatives of social service providers, and policy makers in this field, civil society organisations, the media and representatives EASPD- a. The participants agreed on the following conclusions regarding the development of community services for people with disabilities, the continuation of the process of de-institutionalization and prevention of institutionalization, aiming to accelerate the process of reforms in the field of social protection and inclusion of persons with disabilities:

- 1 It is necessary to develop stronger cooperation and coordinated action of all social actors involved in the process of deinstitutionalization; is therefore of particular importance proactive influence of decision makers' representatives, primarily the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, to develop and maintain cooperation with all actors involved in the process of deinstitutionalization in Serbia. Forum participants understood the absence of representatives of the Ministry at this Forum as an expression of the lack of concern of the Ministry for persons with disabilities, and have agreed that it is necessary once again send a strong message about the necessity of their participation in the following opportunities and of establishing deeper relations of cooperation and respect with other actors.
- 2 The user of the social service has to be in the centre of setting up the system of service provision. The focus needs to be placed on self-representation that provide empowerment of persons with disabilities to engage more actively in the decision-making process, which will ensure that their needs are heard;
- 3 Promoting an integrated approach in the use of available resources, mainly by promoting inter sectorial cooperation between social, health, education and employment systems, on the republic and local level;
- 4 It seems for many people that process of de-institutionalization is complicated and cannot achieve the expected results. However, it is necessary to continue the, especially to develop a program pf deinstitutionalization and plan for transformation of residential institutions;
- 5 To eliminate the stigma and recognize the needs of persons with disabilities by the community, because it will enable and facilitate access to the resources necessary to improve their position in society;
- 6 Improve the process of licensing social services by strengthening cooperation and encouraging mutual responsibilities of all actors involved in the licensing process, at republic and local level. Disability persons organizations that provide local services need support in this process, and it is necessary to provide them support in order to promptly take an active role in the process of achieving the required quality standards of the services provided, and then in collecting the necessary documentation confirming that they have fulfilled provided all conditions for obtaining the license for the service they provide;
- 7 Carry out appropriate amendments to laws and bylaws regulating social services, set standards and a framework for the process of deinstitutionalization and ensure their proper implementation;

- 8 Implement a systematic analysis of modes of financing services through funds from the budget, local governments, to project funding sources, with a view to establishing a stable and sustainable mode of financing services, including consideration of the effectiveness and efficiency of earmarked transfers and application of the principle “money follows the user”;
- 9 Establish cooperation between service providers and representatives of local government, with the objective to establish open communication in order to ensure adequately fulfilment of users needs;
- 10 Establish a network of service providers of supported housing in Serbia because of the increasing number of providers of this service, various and significant obstacles to the provision and the need for a common platform and harmonized action in the direction of representing the interests of users, as well as service providers; to advocate for adequate legal solution in terms of contracting, implementation and financing of social services, the provision of adequate minimum standards for the service, ensuring the minimum conditions of quality of service through the respect and implementation of the defined minimum service standards, the functional sustainability of the services and the exchange of experience and mutual learning on all relevant aspects of implementation services;
- 11 Providing conditions for uninterrupted monitoring of European standards and progress in the delivery of social services for persons with disabilities and ensure more active participation in European networks such as EASPD;
- 12 Continue on-going exchange of information between the various actors in the field of social services for people with disabilities involved in the process of deinstitutionalization, at national and international level.