

# The effects of the PRIDE model of practice on the changing attitudes and approaches towards the care of children in CEE countries



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# Child welfare and protection systems in the CEE – transition – countries in 1989



- The developmental stage and forms, methods used in the child welfare and protection system in the transition countries has varied widely just like any other social services
- Legislation, policies, minimum standards, protocols, professional training, strategies, ideologies, research mostly missing or at very basic level
- High level of institutionalisation, state run systems, “individual failure” approach,

# Development and reforms



- Quickly changing political and economic situation,
- Impact on health, education and the social sector
- Growing decentralisation, self governance, elections at all levels – priority given to economic growth, political openness
- In many countries of the region dramatic decrease of the living conditions – unemployment, homelessness, growing poverty, mental health issues, unmet needs - growing inequalities, discrimination and segregation of some vulnerable groups of people – Roma, disabled children among them

# Child welfare and protection system changes



- Shocking recognition of the conditions of children separated from their children, horrifying conditions in many institutions (Romania, Bulgaria, Russia),
- Growing awareness about the rights and needs of children – ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in all countries in the region
- International co-operation, increasing role of NGOs, professional organisations – IFSW, IFCO etc.
- Introduction of social work training based on international – mainly UK, US and German, Nordic - curriculum and experiences

# Child welfare and protection changes



- Acknowledgement of the interrelation between the policies and need for more comprehensive and holistic approach – family support, local universal and targeted services, prevention, early intervention
- De-institutionalisation reforms – development of foster care services to place children from or instead of residential homes to foster families
- Countries with a diverse set of approach, policies and practices – mostly slow and limited changes despite of the international treaties, recommendations, financial and professional support, pressure
- Strong resistance both at political, professional and public levels in many countries,

# The impact of PRIDE model of practice



- Partnership based, professionally facilitated program – child protection workers and foster/adoptive parents together
- Strong group dynamic, interaction, using own life experience and value system
- Focus and priority on the rights and developmental needs, safety and well-being of children,
- Consideration of the biological and foster families' own needs as well
- Transparent, strength based decision making procedure – self selection, group and professional feedback

# The impact of PRIDE model of practice



- The impact of the program on those involved in the groups in their personal and professional life
- The impact of the program on policies and preparation, supervision of professionals and foster/adoptive families
- The impact of the approach, methodology, values and language on other areas of the child welfare and protection system



Thank you for your attention!

