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Social Protection European Union Expertise
in Development Cooperation

Information Note

SOCIEUX supports vocational rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities in Moldova

Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, 17 February January 2015.- SOCIEUX, the Social Protection EU Expertise in Social Protection, is currently supporting the efforts of the Moldovan Ministry of Labour to set up a vocational rehabilitation services department for persons with disabilities. On this occasion SOCIEUX experts reviewed the current challenges and assessed its needs in setting this unit in order to deliver quality vocational rehabilitation services. The assessment took place from 2nd to 6th February.

The Moldovan Ministry of Labour is in the process of setting-up a rehabilitation services department within the Experimental Prosthetic, Orthopedics and Rehabilitation Centre (CREPOR) primarily for persons with severe disabilities. The action aims at improving the understanding on the type of services to be provided and on how to ensure the provision of high quality services under the current regulation. Together with the Ministry, SOCIEUX has developed a specific action plan to accompany the Ministry in this process, a first step of which entailed a study visit on vocational rehabilitation services to Ireland which took place in September.

The SOCIEUX assessment reviewed the current state of the vocational rehabilitation department, analysed the means to make it functional in the next months and provided with specific recommendations. The deployed experts were Ms. Edita Satiene, Director of the Lithuanian Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre, and Mr. Christy Lynch, Director of KARE Ireland, both of whom shared best practices from their respective countries.



Mr. Christy Lynch together with Ms. Danielle Keulen, Deputy head of Operation Sections, the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Moldova

The experts reported that some of the difficulties encountered in the department originate, on the one hand, in a very medical approach to disability and, on the

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other, that the focus is mainly on locomotor disabilities. This perspective neglects the true meaning of a vocational rehabilitation service: a process to enable persons with functional, psychological, developmental, cognitive and emotional impairments or health conditions to overcome barriers to accessing, maintaining or returning to employment. Therefore, a key recommendation would be to embrace a more comprehensive social and human rights model, which would include all types of disability and broaden the focus from vocational rehabilitation to include vocational training and employment supports.

The findings were based on discussions with key actors in the field of services for persons with disabilities, such as the Directorate of Social Protection for People with Disabilities of the Ministry of Labour, the National Employment Office, the CREPOR and civil society organisations.

Further recommendations to the Ministry of Labour include the development of a comprehensive national disability policy including an implementation strategy. and the strengthening of cooperation with the NGOs. "There is a big learning to be had from some of the projects being run by the NGOs. Demonstration projects on supported employment and appropriate training for job coaches could be provided by the civil society to the Ministry", says Christy Lynch.

Background information

Moldova's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities marked a significant change in the field of disability: the transition from social and health protection to the approach in the light of human rights, social inclusion, human value and equal opportunities. The 2010 Social Inclusion Strategy for Persons with Disabilities is the first step towards its implementation.

In this respect, the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family plays an important role and is strongly committed to develop an efficient mechanism for providing vocational guidance, training and professional rehabilitation of persons with disabilities amongst its main objectives,

According to the Ministry of Labour, in 2014 there were around 183,416 people with disabilities in Moldova (about 5% of the total population of the country) who often face discrimination, social exclusion, poverty, unemployment and low access to public services.

About SOCIEUX

The EuropeAid funded project "SOCIEUX - Social Protection EU Expertise in Development Cooperation", is a technical assistance facility to support the efforts of partner countries to better design and manage social protection systems by means of short-term peer-to-peer inputs to be delivered by experts drawn primarily from the European Union Member States' public administrations and mandated bodies. SOCIEUX contributes to implementing the



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Communication on Social Protection in EU Development Cooperation (August 2012) and its subsequent Council Conclusions.

For more information

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