

# WORKSHOPS: DISCUSSIONS AND PAPERS

## Workshop 1. *QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF SOCIAL SERVICES*

(Moderators: L. Žalimien and A. Vareikyt )

### **Presentation of discussion**

Laimut Žalimien and Audron Vareikyt  
(Vilnius University)

Work group participants included MSSL specialists, employees of municipal social support divisions, children's rights' services, governmental and municipal social care institutions for people belonging to various social groups. Mr Henry Braakenburg, an expert from Holland, took part in the work of the group.

At the beginning work group participants gave their opinions about the need of quality social work and social work standards as well as about their importance in the area of organisation and provision of social services. They stated the problems encountered in social work practice and established the range of problems for discussion.

The issues for discussion covered the range of problems relating to the purpose and contents of standards, the mechanism of their introduction and the control of their implementation.

The following objectives of the work group were defined:

1. To find out what areas of social service organisation and provision are to be regulated by standards.
2. To determine the contents of the said standards on the national and the local level. To what extent should the standards regulate service provision?
3. What is the purpose of the standards: are they to define the final result? or the provision of services as a process?
4. What particular standards should regulate the issues of social workers' professional level and the quality of their work?

The work group discussed issues relating to the distribution of functions and co-operation among municipal social support divisions and children's rights' protections services; to the

norms applicable to the personnel of social care institutions; to the regulation of necessary services provided by social care institutions of various types; and to quality requirements in case municipality buys services from non-governmental sector. Opinions on social workers' specialisation and qualification at social care institutions of various types were given.

### **The following conclusions were made after the discussions**

1. Social services, very diverse in terms of standard, are currently provided in Lithuania by care institutions of the same type, however of different subordination. So, we need to define the necessary services provided by care institutions of separate types.
2. Standards of social services are necessary to secure high quality of provided services and service market development, that is when services are bought by municipalities from other providers of services.
3. Standards ought to be of several kinds: national (general) standards and special standards that specify the former ones.
4. In the course of discussions, opinions of work group participants on the minuteness of standards separated: some participants thought that standards were to be very detailed and definite, for example: they were to define the volume of food and drug costs at institutional care institutions. Other participants thought otherwise: standards were to have a general character, leaving municipalities the right to specify them at their own discretion. However in doing it municipalities were to be

guided by the general standards and consider the existing situation of a local community or municipality.

5. Currently the following issue is the most urgent: it is necessary to establish definite requirements to be observed by municipalities buying services from various non-governmental service providers. Before signing a contract for service rendering it is necessary to discuss and make clear what services are required from service providers. It is only then that the municipality may prepare its requirements for the supply and quality of purchased
6. Preparation and introduction of standards means a long-term process. It must be participated by all interested parties, such as the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, districts, municipalities, NGOs and private service providers. **Service receivers** are to be involved in the process of standards' preparation and introduction by all means. The client knows his or her mind!

## **Workshop 2. *SOLIDARITY IN SOCIAL WORK***

(Moderators: Angelė Epnaitė and R. Laiconienė)

### **Social cohesion: A need of modern community in the creation of social Europe**

Angelė Epnaitė  
(Vilnius Municipality)

A social work system consists of values, theory and experience. All these components prosper in a certain cultural soil nourished by national traditions. However it is social work subjects who give it its power to live. They represent another system consisting of state and municipal institutions, and NGOs. National traditions determine the contents of this model. We know a Soviet model from our recent past. It was dominated by a centralised state institutions' system isolating a person from community. There are countries where municipal or NGO services prevail.

What model are we to choose in Lithuania if we wish to introduce an effective service system not only based on humanitarian values of solidarity, justice and freedom but also able to satisfy the contemporary requirements of globalisation and human development?

As is indicated by the modern development of social work, social work system is a system of community-based social services. Within it, service-providing subjects function. Social cohesion is one of their distinctive characteristics.

Social work practice proves that the cohesion of social subjects is a panacea for the improve-

ment of social situation in the world. It is helpful in coping with a multitude of social problems, such as poverty reduction, and provision of effective and high-quality social services. Social cohesion helps to secure each person's rights provided by the Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention of Human Rights and other declarations. It is possible to state that effective social services are the services enacted by means of social cohesion.

By encouraging social cohesion we create the Europe fit for the community to live in as in this way the implementation of fundamental human rights will be secured.

The partners of social cohesion may contribute substantially to the growth of well-being by the introduction of decentralised management and joint responsibility of management institution on the central, regional and local level with the application of subsidiary principle.

Social justice, the need to raise economic effectiveness and the quality of life demands that as many as possible partners – politicians, government and NGO representatives, and experts – join this process. Social cohesion is the basic