

## The process of transition from institutional to community-based services in the system of social services in Slovakia

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The model of social inclusion prevails in modern social services. The recipient of the social service should not be a passive recipient, but a partner in the process of planning and providing the service.

**Theoretical background.** The start of deinstitutionalisation processes in Slovakia began after the adoption of the National Action Plan for the Transition from Institutional to Community-based services in the System of Social Services for the period 2012-2015. This process is about social service establishment that have been heavily influenced by institutional culture going through a process of deinstitutionalisation that will result in community care.

Deinstitutionalisation is a deep and long-term process of change (transformation) of the social services system, their form, structure, content, place and organization. It is a departure from the model of traditional care in institutions bound by institutional culture, i. e. from a passive model of protection to an active model of support in the natural inclusive environment of the local community (community-based care), to a model requiring a change of approach to clients, especially respect for them as individuals.

Deinstitutionalisation is the process of clients' transition from traditional social services establishments, where they are physically and mentally isolated from everyday life, to community-based services, which together form the conditions for society-appropriate life. The transition from institutional to community care will be based on the following recommendations:

- Respect for the rights of beneficiaries and their involvement in decision-making processes,
- Prevention of institutionalization,
- Creating community services,
- Closing of institutions,
- Restriction of investments in traditional institutions,
- Human resources development,
- Efficient use of resources,
- Quality control,
- Holistic (comprehensive) approach,
- Continuous awareness raising. (National Action Plan for the Transition from Institutional to Community Care in the Social Services System for 2012-2015, p. 6).

**Objective.** The primary goal of the research is to find out how changes related to the deinstitutionalisation of selected

social service providers are perceived by their employees. We also want to find out if the management of social services establishments is interested in increasing the knowledge of employees; how this process affects the recipients of social services and whether the investigated social services establishments are able to saturate the identified needs of the recipients of social services.

**Methods.** To obtain the necessary information, we used the available literature and a non-standardized questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 27 questions for 190 respondents. They were employees of social services establishments in the Prešov region. The Chi square test was used in the research to verify the hypotheses.

### Results

**Hypothesis no. 1:** Respondents state that in those social services establishments, due to the ongoing DI processes, the employer/manager is interested in increasing knowledge about the DI process.

We verified the hypothesis on the basis of the obtained research results concerning questions 8 and 10:

Is the whole process of deinstitutionalisation – the transformation of institutional services into community in your social services establishment clear and understandable to you?

In your opinion, does your employer / manager pay sufficient attention to increasing your knowledge of deinstitutionalisation processes?

The hypothesis was tested at a significance level of  $\alpha$  0.05 with the number of degrees of freedom 4. The tabular cut-off value of Pearson's Chi-square is 9.49. Acceptance or rejection of a hypothesis depends on the formulation of a null hypothesis (H0) and an alternative hypothesis (H1).

H0: In the interest of the employer to increase knowledge about the DI process in social services establishments, there is no significant difference.

H1: In the interest of the employer to increase knowledge about the DI process in social services establishments, there is a significant difference.

In this case, the values of the test criterion are lower than the set limit table value of 9.49. It follows that we can accept the null hypothesis, which says that employers in those social services establishments do not differ in the degree of interest in increasing employees' knowledge of the DI process.

**We reject our hypothesis.**

Table 1. Statistical testing of hypothesis no. 1 – Chi square

	Chi square (O-E) 2/E		
	*ZSS	*DSS	*CSS
<b>Question no. 8</b>			
Yes	0,065279	0,218797	0,018923
No	0,174948	0,586377	0,050713
I do not know	0	0	0
Test criterion value	<b>1,115037 &lt; 9,49</b>		
<b>Question no. 10</b>			
Yes	0,284877	1,276001	0,181806
No	1,035283	4,637175	0,660711
I do not know	0	0	0
Test criterion value	<b>8,075854 &lt; 9,49</b>		

Hereinafter: source: onw elaboration. \*ZSS,\* DSS, \*CSS – social services establishment.

**Hypothesis no. 2:** Respondents state that they see positive changes in the recipients of social services in the

mentioned social services establishments due to the ongoing processes of deinstitutionalisation.

In testing the hypothesis, we focused on research results related to questions no. 18, 19 and 20.

How do you perceive the relocation / planned relocation of some social service recipients to the community?

What is the attitude of the recipients of social services to the transformation of social services or to their possible transfer closer to the community?

In your opinion, are the recipients of social services from your social services establishment able to live in a community outside, or to move to a supported housing?

Hypothesis testing was performed at a significance level of  $\alpha$  0.05 with the number of degrees of freedom 6 and 4. The table limit value of Pearson's Chi-square for degree of freedom 4 is 9.49 and for degree of freedom 6 it is 12.59. We set a null and an alternative hypothesis.

H0: There is no significant difference in the perception of positive changes in the recipients of social services and ongoing DI processes in social services establishments.

H1: There is a significant difference in the perception of positive changes in the recipients of social services of ongoing DI processes in social services establishments.

Table 2. Statistical testing of hypothesis no. 2 – Chi square

	Chi square (O-E) 2/E		
	ZSS	DSS	CSS
<b>Question no. 18</b>			
Benefit for PSS	4,394938	0,672538	3,653136
Fear	1,844629	0,495537	1,838822
Difficulty for the family	0,663158	0,742105	1,238301
I can not comment	0,884211	1,032027	0,007504
Test criterion value	<b>17,46691 &gt; 12,59</b>		
<b>Question no. 19</b>			
Looking forward to the move	1,47635756	1,651367	0,008664
Not looking forward to the move	1,00173013	1,857089	2,480731
Depending on the length of stay and the level of support	2,48482942	0,023694	1,2578
I can not comment	0,66315789	2,132176	0,2218
Test criterion value	<b>15,2594 &gt; 12,59</b>		
<b>Question no. 20</b>			
Yes	5,701784	0,010966	2,596135
No	2,505518	0,601302	2,401597
I do not know	1,105263	11,44961	2,657895
Test criterion value	<b>29,03007 &gt; 9,49</b>		

As can be seen from the table above, the value calculated by us is in all questions much higher than the table value (9.49 and 12.59, respectively), i.e. it lies to the right of the threshold table value in the area of rejection of the null hypothesis. **We accept an alternative hypothesis – there is a significant difference in the perception of positive changes in the recipients of social services ongoing DI processes in social services establishments.**

**Hypothesis no. 3:** Respondents state that in those social services establishments, due to ongoing deinstitutionalisation processes, the social services establishment is able to saturate the identified needs of social service recipients.

The hypothesis was tested by analyzing the answer from questions no. 23 and 25.

Do social service recipients have space in their social services establishment to express their requirements and needs?

Is your social services establishment in the process of deinstitutionalisation able to saturate the identified needs of social service recipients?

Hypothesis testing was performed at a significance level of  $\alpha 0.05$  at degree of freedom 4. The tabular cut-off value of Pearson's Chi-square for degree of freedom 4 is 9.49.

H0: There is no significant difference in the ability to saturate the identified needs of social service recipients and DI processes in social services establishments.

H1: There is a significant difference in the ability to saturate the identified needs of social service recipients and DI processes in social services establishments.

Table 3. Statistical testing of hypothesis no. 3 – Chi square

	Chi square (O-E) $\chi^2/E$		
	ZSS	DSS	CSS
<b>Question no. 23</b>			
Yes	0,029872	0,166838	0,02795
No	1,105263	6,173012	1,034132
I do not know	0	0	0
Test criterion value	<b>8,537068 &lt; 9,49</b>		
<b>Question no. 25</b>			
Yes	1,432645	0,243381	0,189499
No	2,873684	0,459652	2,420046
I do not know	4,2	3,934043	0,00099
Test criterion value	<b>15,75394 &gt; 9,49</b>		

We have come to the conclusion that in the question concerning the ability of the social services establishment in the DI process to saturate the needs of the recipients of social services, the value of the test criterion is higher than the set limit value. This tends to reject the null hypothesis. When asked about the space of recipients of social services to express their needs and requirements, we measured the value of the test criterion close to the set limit value. Since the unambiguous conclusion in the test criterion in question no. 25 we consider more relevant in the testing of the hypothesis in question, we accept an alternative hypothesis. We can state that in social services establishments, due to ongoing DI processes, the social services establishment is able to saturate the identified needs of recipients of social services. We accept the hypothesis.

The results of the research show that the management of social services establishments is interested in increasing the knowledge of deinstitutionalisation among employees. We found that there is a difference in the perception of positive changes in the recipients of social services in social services establishments. We also found that social services establishments are able to saturate the requirements and needs of social service recipients.

**Discussion.** Regarding education in the field of deinstitutionalisation in the answers of respondents, we recorded the completion of workshops and seminars in the workplace in all social services establishments as the predominant form of education and training. The form of self-study prevailed in almost a quarter of respondents from DSS. Based on the research, we can say that the individual approach to the recipients of social services tries to apply in practice the most employees of ZSS (58%). For respondents from CSS it was 49% and for respondents from DSS it was 41%. Regarding the method of identifying the requirements and needs of recipients of social services in the social services establishment, the interview with the staff of the social services establishment dominates. This method was indicated by 57% of respondents from CSS, but more than 70% of respondents from ZSS and DSS. To a lesser extent, questionnaires are also used to identify the needs and requirements of clients, which are adjusted according to the level of support of individual beneficiaries.

**Conclusions.** Through research on selected employees of social services establishments established by the Prešov Region, we found that the process of deinstitutionalisation has a positive impact on motivation, education, working atmosphere and communication of employees. Another aspect examined was the individual approach to the recipients of social services. Our research found that although most employees try to apply an individual approach to the recipients of social services in the social services establishment, there is still room for improvement in cooperation with the family and in designing an individual plan for the recipient of social services.

**Key words:** deinstitutionalisation, institutional culture, community, recipient of social service.

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