



***UNIC: Transferability workshops (WP4) – The Czech Republic
8th and 17th March 2022
Minutes***

The Association of Social Services Providers Czech Republic (APSS CR) organized in March 2022 1st and 2nd transferability workshops in the framework of the UNIC project. The common purpose of the transferability workshops is to discuss the project outputs, to raise awareness about personal budgets and open the discussion about user-centred funding models in long-term care and support in targeted countries.

First workshop - March 8th:

This workshop was held in the headquarters of the Union of Employers' Associations of the Czech Republic. In total, 17 guests attended the workshop, 14 outside the project partnership. The guest of honour who gave the introductory speech was the deputy minister of Labour and Social Affairs - Ms Olga Richterova. All other attendees were representatives of social service providers or umbrella organisations. The workshop was focused on 2 of 6 key mandatory elements stated by the UNIC project; “Awareness raising” and “Challenges in Long-Term Care and Support”.

The speakers from APSS CR presented attendees the UNIC project as a whole and then two documents: “Models of Good Practice Report on Person Budgets” and in outline also “European Roadmap for user-centred funding for long-term care and support”. Nevertheless, the crucial part of this workshop was to open discussion about implementing the models of personal budget (or some of its certain parts) in the Czech Republic. This part was opened by video “Harri’s story”. In the Czech Republic, there is so-called “care allowance”, which is provided monthly as a direct payment and allocated to each individual with the needs of support. This existing system will be a basis for implementation of parts of the personal budget concept. The speakers concluded that it is absolutely necessary to transform this system from the ground.

Observations/comments from the first workshop:

- It will be important to empower the role of municipalities for the implementation the personal budget concept.
- The current system in the Czech Republic is very tied and the labour law is very complicated.
- As one of only two countries in the EU, the Czech Republic has set up a cash care allowance without checking its use. A system of new rules needs to be put in place to make more efficient use of this money.
- According to data from 2007 to 2020, there is clearly seen the trend of a decrease in persons dependent on the other person's care at mild levels (from 70 % to 55 % of the total number) and, conversely, an increase in recipients with a higher degree of dependence (from 30 % to 45 % of the total number).
- There are actually 2 ways how to implement the personal budget:
 - to take the personal budget into consideration only as a contribution (so it does not cover 100% of the cost of care);



- insist that this will indeed be a budget that fully covers the needs of the person at risk of exclusion at the time.
- We could divide persons with the needs of support into 2 groups according to their age (but carefully to prevent ageism) - the reason for dividing is due to the difference of their needs - the needs of young persons with disabilities change over time more significantly than needs of older adults - that is a fact. These two groups could use different systems: person with disabilities - personal budget; older adults - care allowance.
- The municipalities will have to play the important role in the new system which will use personal budgets due to fact, that the municipalities will be so called Provider of Last Resort.

Second workshop - March 17th:

This second workshop was held in the framework of regular executive board meeting of APSS CR. This meeting was attended by 13 guests. It was a good opportunity, because there were managers from all types of social services and forms of ownership. The state of play in Czech was presented here, as well as the state of play in the European countries. After it, the comments and barriers identified during the first workshop took place. This workshop was focused on these 2 key mandatory elements stated by the UNIC project: “Networking & stage of development”, “Theory of change and social innovations”.

Observations/comments from the second workshop:

- In the current system, there are really huge differences between users receiving for example care allowance in the grade III (heavy dependence).
- The best way is the system of cooperation between formal and informal care.
- At the community level, there is an urgent need to link individual services (especially health and social services, which are often completely separate), coordinate the approach and individualize it to suit the person; now we are talking about case management.
- This is a big change, because the current system in the Czech Republic has a number of shortcomings and the idea of personal budgets is the right way to make a change.

APSS CR has already planed the third (final) workshop in cooperation with Czech National Disability Council for **29th June 2022**. This workshop will be focused on the remaining mandatory elements stated by the UNIC project: “Tools for implementation”, “Country transferability action plans”.

Written by Petra Cibulkova and Pavel Jirek, 05/04/2022