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## **Constitution and role of public social system and future of Diaconia as a part of welfare work on Visegrad platform**

The topic of my lecture is: **Constitution and role of public social system and future of Diaconia as a part of welfare work on Visegrad platform**

However, first I would like to make a few notes about social system in the Czech Republic. I have been working for Silesian Diaconia for 13 years. In other Visegrad countries, including these four – Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland, there is a similar situation.

Then

I would like to tell you something about the role of diaconal institutions in Visegrad countries and about their interesting kind of cooperation with one another within the limits of Eurodiaconia Visegrad platform.

In the period of the totalitarian political system in the Czech Republic, the state was the only provider of social services. The whole social system became dependant on the will of state, respectively the ruling political party. The state represented all positions including these being left by society to the family, town and non-state institutions. Citizens were given the role of passive receivers of social services. Non-profit organisations as well as Christian charity institutions activities were prohibited. There were no social work university studies. Social care was provided in big facilities without considering human dignity and individual attitude. Mostly seniors and handicapped people were target group. There was no term like poverty. After the revolution in 1989, non-profit organisations, which started to provide social services, began to be established here. Including diaconias of individual churches.

Diaconias of individual churches are non-profit organisations that work in the social field. However, the main providers of social services in the Czech Republic are regions and towns – 80%, 20% services are provided by non-profit organisations. Anyway non-profit organisations in the Czech Republic are very active, creative and they often become providers of new – residential, field, outpatient and often also interventionist services focused on work with seniors and people with disabilities.

In the National Action Plan of Social Inclusion for years 2004 – 2006, there is stated that there are 8% of people living in poverty. A group of people without a place to stay, children and the young coming from socially pathological background, abused, maltreated children, drug addicts, a great number of the unemployed, they were all added to the target group of the socially endangered after the Velvet Revolution in 1989. For example, the rate of unemployment in the Czech Republic was reported to be 8.8% , 31 March 2006. In the time of socialism, expressions like homelessness or unemployment did not simply exist. Immigrants belong to the new problem in the Czech Republic. Ethnic minorities belong to the sensitive groups, especially the Romany people.

Today the whole social system is going through big changes as for the legislative matters and the attitude towards clients.

New law about social services was approved in recent couple of months. This law should ensure equal attitude to financing, especially to all its providers, which means also to non-profit organisations. To ensure help for those who found themselves in unpleasant social situation and support through social services and state rules for its provision are the main goals of this legal norm.

The law determines individual kinds of social services and types of facilities, where services can be provided. Regions and towns will be the force executors of this law-to-be and will also keep an eye on its following. It will be obligatory for the social services providers to register.

Without any registration they will not be able to provide any services. Regional authorities and Ministry of Labour and Social Work will be the only two to carry out this registration. Inspection authorities will be in charge of checking provided social services quality. Evaluation of social services quality will be performed on the basis of Social services quality standards developed by Ministry of Labour and Social Work in 2002.

National standards of social services quality follow the European social model, that is based on the principle of people being socially integrated to the society and preventing their social exclusion. This attitude is described best in 10 key principles, which are recommended by the European Union to support the integration conception (Council of the European Union, 15223/01): subsidiarity, holistic attitude, transparency and responsibility, user-friendly services, effectivity, solidarity and partnership, dignity and human rights, strengthening and personal growth, continuous improvement and sustainability and users' participation in services. The main principles are – support of self-reliance and independence, individualization of services, focus on the service user's global situation, respecting and prevention of service users' rights and partnership attitude to service users.

The standards are divided to three main parts: procedure standards, personnel standards and maintenance standards.

Now I would like to turn briefly to the problem of Eurodiaconia Visegrad platform. To highlight Diaconic institutions in individual countries of Visegrad platform was the main goal. Secondary goals are development of human sources capacity, exchanging examples of good practice, support of long-life learning, preparation and realization of common EU projects and support of public relations. The Visegrad platform arises from the mission, vision and strategic goals of Eurodiaconia. Where the main mission is to connect Eurodiaconia members in their service for solidarity and fairness. Activity of the Visegrad platform was begun in November, 2004, in Třinec (Czech Republic).

The main platform activity is performed in working teams:

- Social economics and personnel management
- Social integration and social services quality

There have been held 6 working meetings of these groups in individual Visegrad 4 countries. The second conference took place in Javornik in Poland, November 2005. Evaluation and planning activities for other period were the goal of this conference.

In 2006 we are getting ready for another meeting of working teams in the Czech Republic.

These are the topics we are going to solve on our team – **Social economics and personnel management:**

- Organisation culture
- Evaluation of workers
- Personnel reserves in the organisation
- Organisational structures

Topics for the team: **Social integration and services quality are:**

- National standards of social services
- European quality models
- Problems with poverty in individual Visegrad 4 countries
- NAPS in individual countries

We obtained financial means for the activity of the whole platform in 2005 from the Visegrad fund and two weeks ago we found out, that there is another project for 2006 – 2007, which means our work will continue being financed by the Visegrad fund. Silesian Diaconia is the

coordinator of Eurodiaconia Visegrad platform. Silesian Diaconia was one of those to come up with this idea and is nowadays its main player.

As for my big wish for the future, I wish there was always the man and his need for our services first .

Let me finish my talk with Mother Theresa's words: "Faith expressed through a prayer, faith expressed through an act, a service – is still the same, same love, same sympathy."

Literature: Zákon č. 108/2006 o sociálních službách

Zdroj ke statistice: [www.czso.cz](http://www.czso.cz); [dodavatele.statnisprava.cz](http://dodavatele.statnisprava.cz);  
[www.cfn.cz/statistika.php](http://www.cfn.cz/statistika.php)

Národní standardy kvality sociálních služeb

Projekt „Podpora kvalifikovanosti v zemích Visegradu“