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## POVERTY AS THE MAIN MOTIVE FOR ABANDONMENT OF CHILDREN

**Abstract:** As for 2017 Bulgaria is the poorest country in European Union and there are many children separated from their parents. The main reason for that is poverty, followed by disease or injury of the children. The purpose of this article is to make an accent of current well-being of the population and to put the emphasis on negative trends among which the abandonment of children. The social policy in the country should focused on more comprehensive family-oriented measures and against poverty and child abandonment. Some of the conclusions in solving these problems are information campaigns, employment programs and education among the population.

**Keywords:** Poverty, abandonment, social assistance.

### Introduction

The number of Bulgarians who are living in poverty is growing, based on analysis of the National Statistical Institute for Indicators of Poverty and Social Inclusion in Bulgaria. According to the statistics of income and living conditions of the National Statistical Institute, the poverty's level in Bulgaria is 321 BGN per month, per household and below this threshold are many families with children. The poverty's level shows the minimum amount of money per month needed to meet the vital needs of people from food and non-food goods and services.

The children's poverty is a leading one, as children are part of single-parent families or large families. Poverty is also connected with the degree of parent's education and the availability of unemployment. More than half of the poor people live in villages and small towns. That is why the ongoing social policy is important for ensuring the security and well-being of its citizens.

In their own survey among respondents working at the Social Assistance Directorates, the main reason for child abandonment is poverty. In Bulgaria we see poverty as "people at risk of poverty" and "people living with material deprivation".

Persons at risk of poverty are those people who fall below a certain level of income or a "poverty line". People living with material deprivation reflect the condition of people against a set of constant criteria rather than other members of society and reflect the assessment of the people themselves, not just their income. The social assistance system sets out a number of programs, policies and instruments designed to support the most vulnerable sections of society. This is done through cash or non-cash transfers from the state to households based on a set of criteria.

The analyzes of the current situation in the country through up-to-date statistics of Directions for social help, the main reason for abandonment is poverty. In Bulgaria "poverty" means "people who are leaving in poverty" or "people who are leaving in material needs".

People who are leaving with a risk of poverty are these under the minimum level of a month's amount for normal and dignity life. There are constant criteria which show material statutory of people, not by other part of society, but by real person's condition. The system for social help tries to impact many different programs, politics and other services to assist the poorest part of people. Some of the ways are through money transfers or food help.

This article uses descriptive, comparative, functional and documentary analysis for better understanding of current situation of poverty and abandonment. The purpose is to recognize different programs and methods for decreasing the number of abandonment children.

Applied are methods of comparison, induction and deduction, synthesis, sociological and statistical methods for processing article information.

In 2017, according to the National Statistical Institute (NSI), the part of children living in material needs is 45.6% and for 4.3% of the children, no basic need can be satisfied for financial reasons. Unfortunately, most of these children are at risk of abandonment and are placed in foster families, institutions or other services.

### **Poverty and the risk of social exclusion**

In the market's economy conditions, pricing and sharing of wealth and resources lead to income and other inequalities. These processes create prerequisites for sustainable poverty and social exclusion of certain groups in society, and transferring these processes to the next generation. Creating ways for solving problems with poverty and social exclusion is a key for responsible policy. Along with economic and environmental norms, social conditions are becoming important for the sustainable development of each country.

The Europe 2020 Strategy sets out measures aimed at reducing poverty and social exclusion. In order to achieve social equality and cohesion, it is necessary "to support a democratic, socially inclusive, cohesive, healthy, secure and just society with respect for fundamental rights and cultural diversity that creates equal opportunities and combats discrimination in all its forms"<sup>1</sup>.

Bulgaria is at the forefront of the percentage of people who are poor and socially excluded in Europe. The definition of the European Union for poverty is that "poor people, families and groups whose resources (material, cultural and social) are so limited that they exclude them from the least acceptable way of life in the Member States of the European Union EU) in which they live."<sup>2</sup>

It is necessary to search for a balance between the social and economic functions of the public sector. The social transfers from the state budget and the social funds are a tool for the implementation of the policy for social protection and social inclusion, and a factor for poverty reduction and mitigation of income inequality, as Lilia Yotova talks about<sup>3</sup>. Indicative of their significance are the data on the relative share of the population at risk of poverty before and after social transfers. One of the ways for the redistribution are the goods and services which the public sector provides at totally or partially subsidized prices (health, education, social activities, etc.). Ensuring equal access to them is also a way of breaking the transmission of income inequality to other unwanted social inequalities.

Bulgaria has no progress in combating poverty. More than half of Bulgarian households spend on goods and services that meet basic needs (food, housing, water, electricity and fuels). This section of the analysis shows significant differences in the satisfaction of primary needs, but an even deeper split in meeting higher needs, which for the poorest remain in the background. Deepening profitable and other inequalities in society can have a reaction on political stability. We find a significant gap between well-defined goals, strategies and policies and the unsatisfactory results of their implementation. In connection with the objectives of the European Union, Bulgaria adopts the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Promoting Social Inclusion 2020, one of the main goals being "Reducing the number of children in the 0-18 age group living in poverty, with 78,000 (30% of the total national target and 25% of the number of poor children in 2008"<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy, European Council DOC 10917/06.

<sup>2</sup> EU Council, Decision 85/8 / EEC 1984.

<sup>3</sup> **Yotova**, Lilia and the team. Sustainable Development And Competitiveness Of Bulgarian Economy, Publishing Complex – UNWE, June 2012, 412–439.

<sup>4</sup> National Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Promote Social Inclusion 2020, file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD %D0%B0% D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D1%81%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%8F%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%20%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8F%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0 %BD% D0%B5%20%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%BD %D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82%D1%82%D0%B0%20%D0%B8%20%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%81%D1 %8A%D1%80%D1%87%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B5%20%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D1%81%D0%BE%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0% BD%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE%20%D0%B 2%D0%BA%D0%BB%D1%8E%D1%87%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B5%202020%20%D0%B3.pdf

More than one third of Bulgarian citizens live at risk of poverty or social exclusion. According to the National Statistical Institute, this figure is 38.9%<sup>5</sup> of the population in 2017, and the European Union average is 22.5% of the population, which is almost twice as small. In 2007, 44.8% of Bulgarians or slightly more than 3.4 million people came to this category. This means that Bulgaria has improved its position by 5.9 percentage points over the last nine years. One third of Bulgarians in the major cities of the country are at risk of poverty and social exclusion (31.1%), and more negative are data on rural areas in Bulgaria – 53.8% of the population, and 38.9% of those living in small towns.

**Table 1.** Percentage of the population living with material deprivation

Year of study	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Reference income year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total for the country	43	33,1	34,2	31,9	30
Persons from 0 to 5 years	45,9	39,5	33	33,3	33,3

Nearly half of children in Bulgaria are at risk of poverty and social exclusion. This means that children live in a household with at least one of the following three conditions: at risk of poverty due to low income, severe material deprivation and very low employment intensity. In Bulgaria, 43.7%<sup>6</sup> of children live at risk of poverty or social exclusion, and 45.6% of children live with material deprivation. In 2017<sup>7</sup>, the relative part of children with material deprivation is as follows: 16.5% of the Bulgarian ethnic group, 32.3% of the Turkish ethnic group, 71.6% of the Roma ethnic group and 34.4% of the other ethnic groups. There are significant differences between other members of European Union. The average of the past few years in the percentage of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the European Union has slightly decreased from 27.5% in 2010 to 26.4% 2016.

Achieved educational level and the profession of parents are an important factor for the future development of children. Higher education levels allow wider access to the labor market and, therefore, higher pay. In 2017, eight out of ten children (80.1%) whose parents are either primary or non-educated, live in poverty. Approximately 32 times less, or 2.5%, are children whose parents have higher education and live at risk from poverty. The risk of poverty in children in households with parents with secondary education is six times higher than that of children with higher education.

Poverty and social exclusion are complex problems that require the mobilization of a wide range of policies to solve them. The strategic planning is leading. It is a comprehensive decision-making process for implementing the vision and strategic goals so as to achieve the most efficient use of the financial, material and human resources spoken by Georgi Nikolov<sup>8</sup>. Equally important is the employment policy, social protection, education, health status, family environment, social environment of the individual. That is why we need to look at poverty and depending on the type of family.

**Table 2.** Relative share of the poverty by type of households

Year of study	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Reference income year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Household type					
TOTAL	21,0	21,8	22,0	22,9	23,4
Households without children	19,0	16,7	21,7	19,1	22,0
A person in a household under the age of 65	22,9	19,2	23,9	28,8	25,7

<sup>5</sup> NSI. Indicators of Poverty and Social Inclusion in 2017, [http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pressreleases/SILC2017\\_89UE9ZC.pdf](http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pressreleases/SILC2017_89UE9ZC.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> NSI. Indicators of Poverty and Social Inclusion in 2017, [http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pressreleases/SILC2017\\_89UE9ZC.pdf](http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pressreleases/SILC2017_89UE9ZC.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> NSI. Indicators of Poverty and Social Inclusion in 2017, [http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pressreleases/SILC2017\\_89UE9ZC.pdf](http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/pressreleases/SILC2017_89UE9ZC.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Nikolov, G. State Policies and Strategies for Regional Development, Publishing Complex – UNWE, 2016.

A person in a household aged over 65 years	54,2	39,8	53,4	44,2	55,0
One person in the household – a woman	51,4	36,6	50,4	44,1	51,4
A person in the household – a man	26,8	22,8	25,8	28,9	31,2
Two adults under 65	13,8	13,2	15,1	16,0	12,6
Two adults, at least one of them aged 65 and over	21,0	16,3	21,8	12,7	20,0
Three or more adults	10,7	12,0	12,7	10,8	12,2
Households with dependent children	23,0	26,5	22,3	26,7	24,8
A parent with dependent children	31,6	42,9	35,2	47,4	35,7
Two adults with one dependent child	16,4	16,2	12,9	12,4	12,0
Two adults with two dependent children	19,2	24,1	14,5	22,7	21,7
Two adults with three or more dependent children	68,1	78,9	66,1	70,5	65,0
Three or more adults with dependent children	22,8	26,0	24,8	28,8	28,2

Source: *According to NSI data*

The highest rates of poverty are observed in families with two adults and three or more dependent children or the called “large families”. In the last 5 years there has been a decreasing in the relative share, but the poorest are the people of large families. Poverty is also significant through single parents raising a child, where the relative share is 35.7 points. In 90% of cases, the lonely parent is the mother, with a non-marital birth and separating with the partner. Researchers in this field prove that inequality influences to a lesser extent the development of social processes than on the status and differentiation of individual social groups<sup>9</sup>.

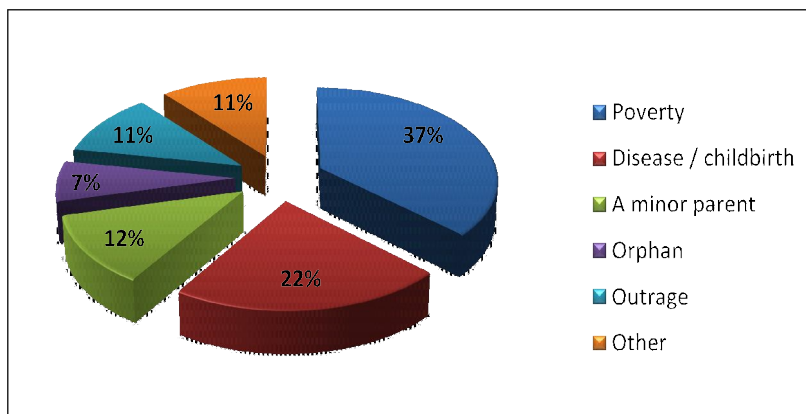
There is a need for an adequate social policy for independent households with dependent children. This is another risk group that requires special attention. The labor market and the social system have a leading role, because the lack of household transfers and the full dependence on single parent’s income can lead to family members falling into poverty. According to authors such as Nacho Radev, the modern economy does not eliminate inequalities in distribution and differences in welfare<sup>10</sup>. It is necessary to create aids program for children and their families which do not have a lucrative criterion and give stability and security for children. It is important to build a system of measures aimed at the most expeditious exit from the risk situation and stimulating the return to the labor market through trainings.

### **The opinion of social workers working with children**

Based on all these facts, the logical reason for abandoning children in Bulgaria is poverty. In a research conducted on the territory of the country in January 2018, poverty is the leading cause of child abandonment. There were 96 specialists working in the structures of the Agency for Social Assistance, took part in it. The opinion of people from different hierarchical levels, as well as from various territorial units, contributes to highlighting the problems and the territorial specificities of the issues under consideration.

<sup>9</sup> **Tzanov, V.** Social influences of the inequality in the incomes of the population in Bulgaria. // *Economic Studies Magazine*, N 2, pp. 24–51, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> **Radev, N.** Social Policy Against New Challenges. // *Socio-Economic Analyzes Magazine*, Vol. 1, Book 1 (2006).

**Figure 1.** Main reasons for abandoning a child from 0 to 3 years of age

Source: Based on data from an author's survey

The main reason is again poverty. Respondents report it in 37% of cases, and the next cause is a child's disability or illness (22%). Parents often feel disappointment, social exclusion, additional stress, anxiety and helplessness. This affects the well-being of the family, and hence the development of the child. Parents feel unprepared to deal with the child's needs and abandon it.

In the initial stage of life, the rates of physical and mental development are accelerated, making the situation critical if the child misses the chance to acquire knowledge and skills at that time, the possibilities to learn them at a later stage become even harder.

That is why infant departments that aim at preventing the abandonment of children with disabilities and psychological support for the family are of the utmost importance, as well as early integration as a social service in populated areas.

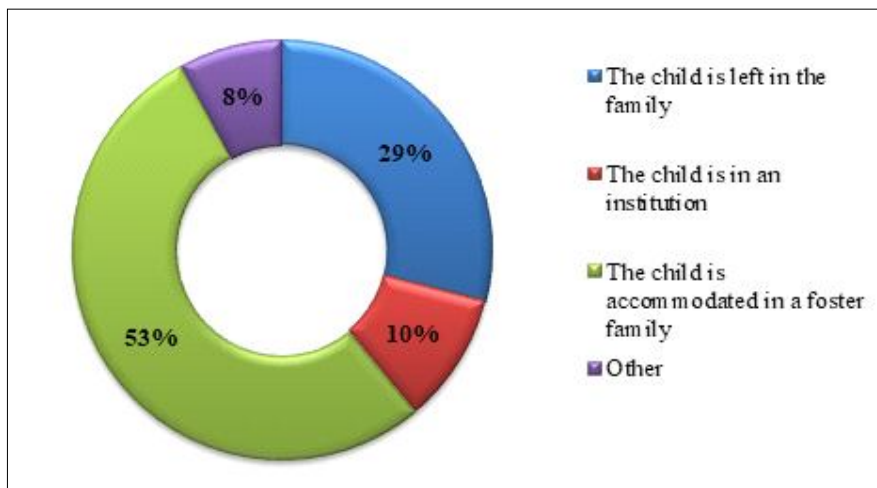
Less are the cases of abandoning from under-age parents- about 12% of the cases. Although legislative changes are under consideration, parents will be held criminally responsible if their children marry or live in marriage, but this is unlikely to have the desired effect because it is enshrined in the traditions of some ethnic groups. And the collection of fines is low. According to the Ministry of Social Affairs, under-mothers in the country are about 5 000 and 1 351 are girls under the age of 16. Amendments to the Children's Family Assistance Act of 2017 are aimed at limiting child abandonment because, in order to obtain support, the child must be grown in a family environment and go to nurseries, gardens or schools; otherwise the aid is subject to return.

Violence (11%) and cases of a child without parents (7%) are also arguments as a reason for abandonment. In the "Other" column, respondents point to the lack of family planning and sexual culture among certain social groups, resulting in unexpected and unwanted pregnancies, lack of support from the partner or extended family, and lack of opportunity, desire and environment for adequate care for the child.

Poverty is a key factor in institutionalization. It is often the reason for the child to be taken out of the family because it is related to insufficient care for him / her. The main reasons for the abandonment of children in the family are identified with a home in which there is no living and homeless conditions, with very serious economic problems, and the lack of education and sexual culture of parents. Statistics show that most of the children in the institutions are of Roma ethnicity. Developing a minimum social security system to tackle poverty can help to prevent the separation of children from their families.

For the social workers every case is important. They work individually with each child and try to help to stay in their biological family.

**Figure 2.** Main results in auditing cases with children from 0 to 3 years



Source: Based on data from an author's survey

Measures taken to protect children in 0 to 3-year-old cases most often end with the foster care measure (52.4%). Social workers make every effort to return the child to the family, with priority, if possible, being biological, which happens with nearly 30% of cases. The final measure is child to be placed in an institution after exhaustion of reintegration opportunities has occurred in 10.3% of the cases and 7.9% are children enrolled in the full adoption register.

Employees of Social Assistance Directorates make a determined effort to prevent child abandonment and reintegration, provide socio-psychological and financial support to parents and members of the family. Work on a case by multidisciplinary team is of utmost importance. Team's supervision and monitoring are essential to success in any case, as an author, like Ginka Mehandjiiska, points out<sup>11</sup>.

The monthly benefits for a child up to the end of secondary education, but not later than 20 years old, more commonly called child allowances, are the largest as well as the number of beneficiaries a social assistance program. They are part of the bigger program "Supporting Families with Children", which also includes:

- ❖ One-off childbirth support;
- ❖ One-off cash grant for twins up to 1 year of age;
- ❖ One-off child-raising allowance up to the age of one year from a parent who is a regular student;
- ❖ Monthly childcare allowances up to 1 year;
- ❖ One-time pregnancy assistance;
- ❖ One-off targeted help for first-graders;
- ❖ Monthly supplement for children with permanent disabilities;
- ❖ Targeted travel assistance to large-scale mothers with bus transport.

On the base of the conducted poll, the opinion of the workers in the field of social care is the introduction of wider support of the biological family. Increasing the value of real family support will reduce the risk of abandoning children based on poverty. It is necessary to align the value of the benefits received by the foster parents (wages and social benefits for raising a child) and that of the biological parents.

### Measures and programs to reduce the risk of abandonment of children

A good example is Hungary's "SureStart Program", which aims at preventing development delays, encouraging mutual learning and support, and integrating poor people, especially Roma, children and their parents, into society, and also providing opportunity for children from an early age (0-5) living in poverty and/or lacking access to quality services. It works closely with the local communities, strengthening and facilitating cooperation between local participants, especially the different service providers<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Mehandjiyska, G. "Monitoring in Social Work on Case". // Socio-Economic Analyzes Magazine, volume 8, vol. 2 (2016).

<sup>12</sup> De-institutionalizing and Transforming Children's services. // University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK, 2007.

This program aims to reduce health and social inequality, with cottages created for children and their families concentrated in micro-regions where poverty is highest to be as close as possible to their beneficiaries. The pursuit of early education, support and satisfaction of the complex needs of the child through play and discovery are key to the implementation of this program. Parents actively participate in the optimal development of their children, encouraged to play and interact with them and reflect their needs.

This is a wonderful example supported by European Union funding, which can be implemented in Bulgaria, not only in Roma regions but also in refugee concentration areas as well as in economically lagging areas with a higher risk of abandoning children. Childhood is also prevalent, with a large part being formed in single-parent families or in large families that often have a minority profile. The main issues here are the problems of the education system and, in particular, of school education, which fails to cover and provide adequate knowledge and skills to the most vulnerable groups.

It is important to avoid the risk of abandoning young children by the introduction of compulsory sex education. The curriculum currently offers opportunities for sexual education and education, mainly through the forms of free choice in “Citizenship Education” and “Health”. In general Biology has a major role to play in the structure and functioning of the sexual system, sexual maturation and gender hygiene, but not how they should be responsible for their actions in sexual intercourse and possible physical, emotional and psychological traumas to which they may lead to. According to the World Health Organization, the appropriate age for sexual education is 12 years of age<sup>13</sup>. National Statistical Institute reports a 30% increase in juvenile marriages in 2016, compared to the previous year. According to the National Center for Public Health and Analysis, in 2018<sup>14</sup> women under the age of 15 had 120 abortions and there were 2046 abortions for women between 15 and 19 years old.

Most parents postpone the sexual theme as much as is possible, considering their children are still small. But the experts believe it is good to start to share this information with their child at an early age and over time to build on. Children are often worried about asking questions their parents, especially during puberty. Based on the research, children are also at risk for violence. Sexuality is one of them and the teacher can capture these moments and reveal such cases.

In Finland every pre-school child (under the age of 7) has an individual right to municipal day care regardless of the parents' income and labor market situation. This care is free for low-income families.

In the Netherlands sex education classes are regulated by law and start at primary school, although the first steps are being taken in the kindergarten at the four-year-olds<sup>15</sup>.

Sexual education helps students to realize how sexual contacts can affect their lives and what complications can be. Sexually transmitted diseases are particularly common in teenage age and sexual teachings can reduce the number of teenagers with dangerous sexual behavior.

The Dutch social system is an example of many good practices besides raising children and preventing unwanted pregnancies. Sex education classes are regulated by law and start at primary school, although the first steps are being taken in the kindergarten at the four-year-olds. Eight-year-olds in this country are well aware of gender differences in boys and girls, and eleven-year-olds discuss sexual orientation and contraceptive options. In the Netherlands there is an extremely low level of pregnancies among minors (in the USA it is five times higher). The same can be said for venereal diseases and AIDS. In addition to sex classes, there are other positive factors that influence these processes – contraceptives and free contraceptives for individuals under 21 years of age.

It is important what happens to children after they are put at risk and abandoned. The poverty line for 2018 is 321 BGN. Children continue to be abandoned. In spite of the adopted policy of our country not to institutionalize children, we have 713 children accommodated in Homes for Medical Social Care for Children. In 2017, Child Protection Departments in the country worked on 33361 received signals for children at risk. New cases of prevention of abandonment were carried out by employees of Social Assistance Directorates, as in 2017 there were 3186<sup>16</sup> in total, and successfully completed cases were 2185. Reintegration cases: the

<sup>13</sup><https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/who-sex-ed-guidelines-promote-masturbation-abortion-homosexuality-to-childr>

<sup>14</sup>[http://ncphp.government.bg/files/nczi/opinf/aborti\\_18.pdf](http://ncphp.government.bg/files/nczi/opinf/aborti_18.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> **Petkova, M.** Yay, children, what is “sex”? 2018, <https://news.bg/comments/ya-kazhete-detsa-kakvo-e-pol.html>

<sup>16</sup> **Report** on the Activities of the Social Assistance Agency for 2017, <http://www.asp.government.bg/web/guest/godisen-otcet>

new cases of reintegration are 1173 and successfully completed during 2017 are 644. In 2017 in the family of relatives or relatives were accommodated 838 children.

Actions taken by employees in Social assistance directorates should protect the interests of the child. The majority of cases of prevention and reintegration in the biological family are a successful process. Reasons of failure are complex: reduced parental capacity; a large family; lack of education; low social status; unwillingness to perform parental functions and responsibilities; lack of information for cooperation with the institutions and others. The activities of the non-profit sector are of the utmost importance and will contribute to the fight against poverty and social exclusion, which Denitsa Gorchilova<sup>17</sup> has been said.

In the data of research, the basic fact that children are placed in institutions or foster families is low parental capacity and poverty. The introduction of compulsory registration in the Welfare Directorates for WOMs will introduce new procedures where social workers will contact pregnant women, examine the conditions under which the new family member will be raised, assess the opportunities for parental skills and abilities, as will the necessary support for risk future parents.

Establishing a linking database between obstetrics and gynecology offices where the “Maternity Health” program is also a variant in which each newly registered woman should be visited at the address she has indicated as current from a social worker. In the period up to the term of the forthcoming birth, the social worker must visit and analyze the necessary physical and emotional-psychological conditions for the forthcoming parenthood.

Introducing higher sanctions for parents permitting marriage or family life between minors, as existing ones do not work. Mother-to-child cases are the primary need for support. This is mainly the case with families of Roma ethnicity and deprivation of support to such families would limit their number and, of course, the risk of lagging behind children. Introducing compulsory secondary education to help children will help reduce the number of uneducated and unemployed parents and the fact that they are minors.

Bulgaria is at the forefront of negative ratings in terms of child welfare and development. Mortality among children under the age of 1 is still very high – 7.6 per 1000, which is above the European Union average. Several Member States have launched innovative initiatives. These include preventive care such as regular checkups for children and free “Mother and child” clinics, as well as health counseling in schools with vaccinations, dental care, mental health counseling, information on substance dependence, sexual education and health and healthy eating. In Bulgaria this is envisaged in the Centers for Public Support and Center for Maternal and Child Health.

It is necessary to improve access to health care and public awareness of the social services provided through information campaigns to strengthen the health mediator among the risk groups of the population. Health mediators support the vulnerable and minority groups in the area of social care and health care, is an active social work with people at risk and health education that overcomes cultural differences and improves communication between vulnerable groups and institutions, and also decrease existing discrimination.

Promoting social diversity must be the base of the social policy pursued in order to prevent the creation of isolation areas. The challenges faced by municipalities and districts are a real assessment of the needs of certain types of social services, a real assessment of the needy target groups on the territory of the particular municipality. The lack of a clearly defined minimum package of guaranteed family and children support services leads to an uneven distribution of services. A wide range of services is needed to enable mobility.

## **Conclusion**

There is an indication of an increase in poverty among the society. The actions taken by the government did not produce the necessary result. It is important to be planned social support programs and wide information campaigns. It is necessary to improve health and sexual education among the risk groups.

In connection with family incomes there are their sizes, the age of its members, and the level of parents' education. Children in multiple families or in single parent families are at a higher risk of falling into poverty. In households where both parents work, the risk of poverty drops to 7% on average in the European Union.

From the data of researches, we can conclude that families with children are among the most vulnerable groups in poverty, and the main reason for abandoning children is poverty. Which proves the purpose of the

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<sup>17</sup> **Gorchilova, D.** Non-Profit Sector (Social and Institutional Characteristics), Publishing Complex – UNWE, 2010.



article that family well-being is the most important factor for it, that will lead to his completeness and protection for children. The family is the foundation of society. Education begins in the family. It is therefore necessary to focus efforts on helping children and families through preventive measures and services.

Legislative changes are required to bear the responsibility of parents who abandon their children, to change the social support of families at risk of abandoning their children, to ease the adoption procedure and to protect children from dissemination. Legislative changes are needed, limiting to the last resort and imposing strict conditions for placement in institutional care for children under the age of 3 years. Services that help overcome short-term parenting difficulties and refer to appropriate services.

It is necessary to unify financial support for biological parents and foster families as well as a detailed study of the needs and circumstances surrounding the child for reintegration before proceeding to the action itself in order to maximally protect its interests.

A comprehensive approach to social policy should be applied in the part relating to children. Families with children should be given access to labor market inclusion programs, affordable housing, social payments and childcare services. The ultimate goal is to provide programs and aids that need to be effective targeting for people and families with children most in need of them.

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