Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion

The Council of Ministers on 06 February 2013 adopted the Национална стратегия за намаляване на бедността и насърчаване на социалното включване 2020 г [1]. (National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Promotion of Social Inclusion 2020), which is oriented towards building and implementing a unified, consistent and sustainable policy in the field of social inclusion, based on the integrated approach and cross-sectoral cooperation at national, regional, municipal level. It identifies the vision, priority directions and activities for the development of the policy on poverty and social exclusion in Bulgaria by 2020.

Scope and contents

The strategy is based on the National Goal of Reducing People at Risk of Poverty [2] (by 260 000 people till 2020) as mentioned on page 15 of the strategic document and its four sub-targets focused on children, including young people under the age of 29, the unemployed persons, working poor and the elderly people.

On the basis of the outlined challenges that Bulgaria is facing in the area of poverty and social exclusion and in fulfilling the commitments made to achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the key priorities of the Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Promotion of Social Inclusion by 2020 are:
1. Ensuring employment opportunities and increasing labor income through active labor market inclusion;

2. Ensuring equal access to quality pre-school and school education;

3. Ensuring equal and effective access to quality healthcare;

4. Eliminating the institutional model of care and developing cross-sectoral services for social inclusion;

5. Ensuring sustainability and adequacy of social benefits;

6. Improving capacity and interaction in the fields of education, healthcare, employment and social services in the implementation of common objectives for social inclusion;

7. Providing an accessible environment - physical, institutional and informational and accessible transport;

Social inclusion is also included in the Национална стратегия за младежта 2010-2020 (National Youth Strategy 2010-2020). It outlines nine key priorities for youth development. Social inclusion and measures are being developed under the fourth priority of the same strategy "Prevention of social exclusion of disadvantaged young people" as follows:

**Strategic objective:** Prevention of social exclusion of disadvantaged young people - young people in specialized institutions; young people with disabilities; young people leaving specialized institutions; young people suffering from different addictions; former prisoners and other groups at risk.

**Operational objectives:**

- Operational objective: Integrating Youth Policy with the measures to protect children.
- Operational objective: Providing social services to young people with fewer opportunities.
- Operational objective: Limiting the transmission of social exclusion between generations.

**Expected results:**

- Increasing the programs for targeted measures for social assistance and social services for young people aged 18 to 25 years of age in social risk under the Social Assistance Act.

- Developed community-based social services (including support, accompaniment, mentoring) suitable for young people aged 18-25 years of age at risk, especially for their integration with child protection measures.

- Orientation of social services for young people in specialized institutions towards preparation for their bringing out of institutions and integration into the community.

- Increasing the number of young people brought out from the specialized institutions and effectively integrated into the community.
The youth age group in Bulgaria is 15-29. The young people under 18 are under the scope of the Национална стратегия за детето (National Strategy for Children) Закон за защита на детето (Child Protection Act). The Strategy is adopted in implementation of Article 1, paragraph 3 of the Child Protection Act and is based on the basic principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations). The Strategy aims to provide conditions for the effective exercise of rights and improvement of the quality of life of children as a condition for their free and full personal development.

Revisions/Updates

The Ministry of Youth and Sports coordinates the development and implementation of the National Youth Strategy 2010-2020 and the corresponding Annual Action Plan; coordinates the preparation of the Annual Youth Report; develops draft legal acts related to youth policy; interacts with youth organizations in the implementation of National Youth Policy.