Galway School 2015

Child Rights in Practice and Research
Realising children’s rights through empowering parents and families

The Best interest of the child session
Feedback from Bulgaria
State Agency for Child Protection, Plovdiv University and National Network for Children (For Our Children Foundation)
Presented by Ivanka Shalapatova
Bulgaria feedback

The emphasis on enhancing family policies is absolutely shared in Bulgaria:

- Shift from institutional to family care
- Great focus on the preservation philosophy which expands the focus of the intervention from the child to the family as a whole
- Shift from the state taking care of children to families as core of a successful society
- Gatekeeping and preventative interventions rather than reactive interventions – this is supported by the focus on psychosocial risk factors for the family rather than risk factors for the child.
Bulgaria feedback

The evidence-based practices in support at-risk families are key.

- Our colleagues from Spain suggest the three levels of the model of change –
  o family dynamics approaches
  o psychosocial risk comprehension
  o intervention mechanisms.

- For Eastern European counties this approach could even substitute the approach “Western European countries models which (should) work in Bulgaria”. It is time for moving the social protection system to a different level – from internationally driven to nationally proven and sustained interventions;

- Guarantees for dissemination should be ensured – this is key for long-term reforms.
Bulgaria feedback

The success of the family support programmes depend on the empowering attitude and equality approach towards families called dialogic position.

• This is key shift in Bulgaria where the system of financial benefits which often create dependency should be substituted to integrated approaches which result in autonomous families.

• We welcome the focus on strengthening competencies rather than overcoming deficiencies
Bulgaria feedback

We strongly welcome the appeal for collaborative pathways – we think this is key for sustainable society’s development where researches, practitioners, policy makers, children, and Bulgaria would ADD: children, young people, families and the corporate sector should work in synergy!

- I guess you are all aware of good practices – this school is a good practice. Some countries have national observatories. The forms may be different!

- We think that maybe it is time for international development organisations and donors to invest in the creation and functioning of national and cross national forums and structures where academia meet practitioners and policy makers for collaborative pathways for sustainable development.