

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES IN SLOVAKIA

MIMOVLÁDNE ORGANIZÁCIE V KONTEXTE POSKYTOVANIA SOCIÁLNYCH SLUŽIEB NA SLOVENSKU

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Abstract

The paper aims to clarify the activities of non-governmental organizations carrying out activities that prosper to increase the democratic character of the country. Third sector organizations of various kinds operate in our territory. Non-governmental organizations primarily provide social, health, humanitarian, environmental, legal, information and educational assistance.

The aim of our paper is to point out the importance and functioning of non-governmental organizations providing social services in Slovakia. NGOs play an important role for the individual and for the society as a whole. NGOs are a key pillar for people who find themselves in an unfavourable life situation, especially at a time when the state is unable to maintain social security and provision for its citizens. Then non-profit entities come to the fore. The number of people seeking help from non-governmental organizations is constantly growing worldwide.

Keywords: NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS. SOCIAL SERVICES. SOCIAL WORK. THIRD SECTOR.

Abstrakt

Príspevok si kladie za cieľ objasniť aktivity mimovládnych organizácií vykonávajúcich činnosti prosperujúce pre zvýšenie demokratického charakteru krajiny. Na našom území pôsobia organizácie tretieho sektora rôzneho druhu. Mimovládne organizácie poskytujú predovšetkým sociálnu, zdravotnú, humanitárnu, environmentálnu, právnu, informačnú a vzdelávaciu pomoc.

Cieľom nášho príspevku je poukázať na význam a fungovanie mimovládnych organizácií poskytujúcich sociálne služby na Slovensku. Mimovládne organizácie hrajú dôležitú úlohu pre jednotlivca a pre spoločnosť ako celok. Mimovládne organizácie sú kľúčovým pilierom pre ľudí, ktorí sa ocitli v nepriaznivej životnej situácii, najmä v čase, keď štát nie je schopný zabezpečiť sociálne zabezpečenie a zabezpečenie svojich občanov. Potom sa do popredia dostávajú neziskové subjekty. Počet ľudí hľadajúcich pomoc u mimovládnych organizácií na celom svete neustále rastie.

Kľúčové slová: MIMOVLÁDNE ORGANIZÁCIE. SOCIÁLNE SLUŽBY. SOCIÁLNA PRÁCA. TRETI SEKTOR.

INTRODUCTION

The non-profit sector is part of social care, forms the basic pillars of society and contributes to the stability of the social issue in the country. The functioning of the third sector brings ideas and innovations in the social society, which try to respond to the current

issues of people in the community. Compared to institutionalized public administrations, the third sector is characterized by more direct relations with the country's population. An important change in the field of non-profit organizations in Slovakia was brought about by the gentle revolution in November 1989, when the sectors in Slovakia were divided as follows.

The first sector is the state and public sector, which is managed by the government. The government sector is connected to the state budget and its structure is determined by law. The first sector consists of state organizations, budgetary organizations, contributory and public organizations. The state budget is redistributed to individual ministries.

The second sector consists of individuals or organizations, i.e. natural or legal persons. Organizations are not dependent on the state budget. The aim of the second sector is to produce a profit. The second sector includes the private, business, and for-profit sector.

The third sector is the non-governmental sector, which is also called the civic or non-profit sector. Its main goal is to provide services to citizens and solve problems that the state does not have to deal with.

The third sector includes foundations, environmental associations, trade unions and organizations that protect human rights (Mikulec, 2012).

At present, the third sector has a very special function in politics, economics or the church. It consists of large groupings of organizations, which include small circles, clubs, associations, organizations, foundations, collections and funds. All these institutions operate with the help of volunteers, enthusiasts, graduates. People with professional education also work in them. Third sector members work together to develop alternative concepts, plans and curricula to support public policy. Their main goal is to carry out social functions and assistance at a higher level than the state has implemented so far (Filadelfiová - Dluhá - Marček – Košičiarová, 2004).

SOCIAL WORK AND NON - GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Social work can be characterized as a professional discipline, which is composed of knowledge from the theory of economics, medicine, law, philosophy, psychology and pedagogy. Social work is influenced by morality, social customs, history and traditions. It follows from the above that the content and methods of social work are adapted to a particular country, its morals, values, history and the needs of social policy Schavel - Oláh (2010).

However, social work does not only respond to the social problems that have arisen; its role is to prevent the emergence of these social disagreements and people's problems. Through its activities, social work improves the quality of life of individuals in society, it also acts as a prevention and elimination of problems. Social work deals with the issue of an existing problem, seeks the cause of the situation and a solution to alleviate the problem and it also creates opportunities for prevention of non-compliance through methodological procedures.

The history of social work has developed gradually. It initially appeared in an unconscious form and later, due to the coming social problems, it was transformed into an organized form of help (Oláh et al., 2009).

We connect the beginnings of social work with Christianity, care for the sick, orphans or slaves. Gradually, religious associations were established in the society focused

primarily on the treatment and care of the disabled, rehabilitation, food and clothing for the poorer.

The last century was an important milestone for social work. It was not until the 20th century that the right of man to a dignified human life was recognized, which was a turning point in the history of the development of social work (Schavel et al., 2008). The obligation of social security for all citizens gradually passed to the state. The state took over charity homes, rest homes and children's homes. The only provider of social measures was the state. Social policy was governed by the state. The most significant social problems after the change in the social situation in Czechoslovakia were prostitution, the integration of released prisoners into life, the migration of refugees and homelessness. Later, unemployment, violence, child abuse, drug addiction and marginalized groups were added.

Social work in the 21st century was shaped by the events and historical developments from the past. In 1928, during the First Czechoslovakia, a new perspective on the concept of social work, social policy and social care began to take shape. Politicians at the time presented social policy as a state effort to achieve justice and reduce social inequality among the country's citizens (Matoušek, 2001).

Due to social and economic changes in the world, events in Czechoslovakia were constantly formed. The orientation, philosophy and social policy of the country changed. Constant changes brought new socio-pathological phenomena and society was constantly confronted with unemployment, drug addiction, poverty, homelessness and other problems of humanity. The formation of social work in history has a huge impact on its current functioning. History defines society, individuals, communities and families and their everyday problems and worries that they try to deal with.

An integral part of our society are non-governmental organizations that joined the democratic development of Slovakia after 1989. In the last years of the 20th century, the first non-governmental organizations and the provision of non-professional social services by volunteers were established. NGOs focused on social and health issues and alternative forms of social work. Among the most famous non-profit organizations in Slovakia we can include: Plamienok, n.o., Dobrý anjel, n. o., Liberta, n. o., Aid lamp, n. o., are OZ People against Racism, Association of St. Adalbert, Trnava, Association of Christian Communities, Joy, LUNA, Happy Children, n.f., OZ FRBUL, OZ Odysseus.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES

The current economic situation in Slovakia and in the world deals mainly with business entities that are focused on generating profit. Organizations that are non-governmental in nature are often forgotten. The main reason why less is said about the problems of non-profit organizations is the fact that they are less interesting for society. The activity of non-profit organizations is not to make a profit, they do not control supply, demand or the labour market. Their founders are private individuals or existing associations. The state can also help in the creation of non-governmental entities. However, the principle still applies that neither the state nor any of its representatives have the rights to influence the management of the organization. The designation 'Third Sector' is used for all non-profit entities in Slovakia. The mentioned sector includes: foundations, non-profit organizations, non-investment

funds, civic associations, clubs, interest groups of legal entities, political parties and movements, churches and religious societies, organizations with an international element. Most often, the subject of their activities is health care, social services, sports, education, youth development, environmental protection, protection of human rights and protection of public spaces and others.

The main role of the state is to issue laws to support the establishment and development of non-governmental organizations. Legislative standards should set aside higher funds to ensure their smooth operation and operation in the form of cash subsidies. As the name of the non-profit sector implies, these are institutions whose purpose is not to make a profit or to do business. The subject of the existence of non-profit entities is aid where, for various reasons, the state does not intervene sufficiently. The third sector may also be ancillary to the other two sectors. We include foundations, non-profit funds and collections among non-profit organizations. The legislative framework is precisely defined for each specific type of association.

In August 2018, the Government of the Slovak Republic established a legislative regulation on the register of non-governmental non-profit organizations. The main intention is to build a credible special list of non-governmental non-profit organizations. Current records on non-profit organizations have not yet been processed in a high-quality and clear manner, are out of date and are not linked to other registers.

The newly approved register records accurate data on associations, organizations, foundations and non-investment funds. The notes will be kept chronologically and are clearly arranged. The goal for the future is a vision that should provide benefits for the efficient use of public resources (Majdúchová - Bukovová - Hrušovská, 2018).

MISSION AND VALUES OF THIRD SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS IN SLOVAKIA

We consider the primary role of the organization to be a dynamic activity that is the subject of its establishment. For the successful functioning of the organization, it is necessary to set partial goals and one main goal that the non-profit organization wants to achieve in the future. The fulfilled preconditions will be beneficial not only for the organization but also for the company, future clients or potential donors and sponsors.

In the creation of any organization, whether we are talking about a non-profit organization or a business entity, an initial vision of functioning is needed. It is an initial start to thinking about how the created body will help the public. The main vision is the fulfillment of values, problem solving, the target group of aid recipients and the method of financing to ensure the smooth functioning of the organization. All the above facts must be elaborated in the strategic plan.

The main features of any vision should be a favourable outlook for the future, long-term character, brevity and comprehensibility. It should be the motto that the organization will follow. The primary idea of the vision is to help or momentarily change the unfavourable situation. Its role is to motivate clients or employees of the organization. It points out the fact that there is always the opportunity for a positive change in life. It is the answer to the question: "What should we do?" (Boukal, 2009)

The emergence of a non-governmental organization is conditioned by the awareness of the differences in the quality of life of people. In order to fulfill the mission of the

organization, it is necessary to ensure that employees have favorable access to their helping profession. Members should be motivated, they should take their work not only as a duty, but also fulfill them. The main common priority of all non-profit entities is the dissemination of assistance and the effective fulfillment of the organisation's mission. The success of a functioning third sector organization cannot be done without client orientation. It is necessary to identify the exact target group of people that the organization will focus on. It is important that employees perceive clients equally, even if the clients are on the fringes of society. Employees are governed by a code of ethics, which is a set of moral values, responsibilities and principles that all members must abide by. Empathy, humanity, expertise, professionalism and willingness to help are among the essential characteristics of every employee of a non-profit organization. Proof of the effective operation of the device is a satisfied client (Mydlíková, 2013).

Majdúchová– Bukovová– Hrušovská (2018), consider the fulfillment of the set goals as the most important factor that can make changes in unfavourable life situations of people. The first step in starting to build change is to reveal the reasons that cause clients to fail or disrupt the harmony of life. Subsequently, there is a process where we try to define the causes and gradually eliminate them. When working with the client, the employee must not forget about professionalism, encouragement and praise. Creating a relaxed, friendly relationship between the client and the employee helps to reduce stress and build trust between both parties. Motivation is important for both clients and employees of the facility. Employees need to see and feel that they are beneficial to the organization. It fulfills many when they see that their helping hand has had a positive effect on help. Other employees are motivated by praise from a superior or a special type of reward.

One of the main reasons for the creation of an organization that belongs to the non-profit sector is the fact that it wants to be beneficial and helpful to people. The name of non-profit organizations implies that facilities, associations or societies are not established for the purpose of generating a profit. The real mission of the mentioned organizations is to build better social conditions for people. We are talking about forms of assistance aimed at the elderly, young people, people with disabilities, drug addicts, abused women and the homeless. Organizations are also involved in the development of health care, science, culture, sports, youth and other subjects (Ružičková, 2004).

Openness is a sign that the organization has no side motives, hidden agenda or secret funds. Another sign of the professional activity of a non-profit organization is transparency. It points out that the organization does not carry out any questionable activities not arising from the subject of the activity. Non-governmental organizations have legislative relief from the state in the form of tax benefits, customs relief, grants or subsidies. Providing services must be characteristic for the purpose of the organization (Dobešová – Feniková, 2016).

The role of non-profit organizations is to set long-term goals that are challenging but achievable. Well-defined goals represent the future results achieved for the organization. The primary long-term goal should include sub-goals. The result of the achieved goal should be qualitative or quantitative measuring indicators (Krechovská– Hejduková– Hommerová, 2018).

Organizations set multiple goals that focus on different areas of operation. These can be financial goals for which the organization seeks to raise funds, donations, grants for development and smooth operation. There are also known marketing goals, which

represent plans for the implementation of activities in the field of marketing, advertising or promotion of the company to the public. Other goals are personnel. They are focused on motivating employees or volunteers, they should help increase the quality of services provided. Future progress and development plans of the organization are other goals. Finally, there are personal goals that are set by the staff of the facility in personal cooperation with clients.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH

The research method we decided to use is quantitative research carried out using a questionnaire. We can address a large number of respondents with questionnaires and collect a lot of useful data and information in a short period of time. A positive function of the questionnaire is its anonymity (Polónsky, 2000).

The primary goal of the research in the empirical part of our work is to address clients of non-profit organizations who are actively provided with social assistance. Recipients of social assistance are seniors from facilities for the elderly.

Clients of the facility are not afraid to answer questions, express their sincere opinion, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the provision of social services. Respondents have enough time to answer questions. For each question, the client has a choice of several options. If the persons do not agree with any of the offered answers, they can add their own answer to the reserved place. Also, all respondents can write their own observations or suggestions (Ondrejko, 2005).

The questionnaire is composed of 20 questions, but we present the processing of only selected questions that fulfilled our main goal. The main goal of the paper is to find out what social services are used by clients in non-profit organizations.

Using a questionnaire, we examined:

- basic demographic data (age, gender),
- what social services are used by respondents in non-profit institutions,
- how clients perceive the satisfaction of the provided social services.

Research file

The research file consists of units specified by us that have the same or common key features. Based on their identity, we can create relevant research. In our case, the research file is device clients. Their common denominator is the fact that they are all consumers of social services from non-profit organizations. (Hendl, 2015).

In our research, we ask for the cooperation of clients of non-profit organizations. The questionnaire will be filled in by a total of 120 respondents from facilities for seniors Pokoj, n. about. based in Voderady, from the Alzheimer's Center, n. about. in Piešťany, we will also address the clients of the Home for the Elderly Karolína, n. o., which is

located in the village of Cífer and last but not least we will visit the facility Pohoda seniorov, n. about. in Galanta.

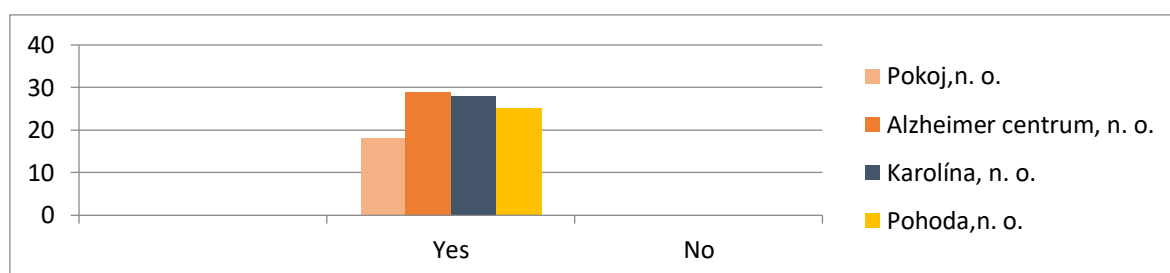
RESULTS

In this part of the article, we present the results of our survey, which we have clearly processed into graphs. We supplement the obtained results with evaluation, analysis and commentary.

Do you use social services provided in your facility?

In this question, we found out whether clients actively use the social services of the facilities or centers they visit. All respondents from the room Pokoj, n. about. 18 answered yes. Evaluation of the answers of another group of respondents from the Alzheimer's Center, n. about. it was also the same for all respondents, 29 indicated the possibility yes. Seniors from Karolína, n. about. also answered in the total number of 28 clients with the answer yes. Respondents from Pohoda, n. o. also use the social services of the facility. In the number of 25 respondents, all seniors indicated the possibility of yes (see Graph 1).

Graph 1 Do you use social services provided in your facility?

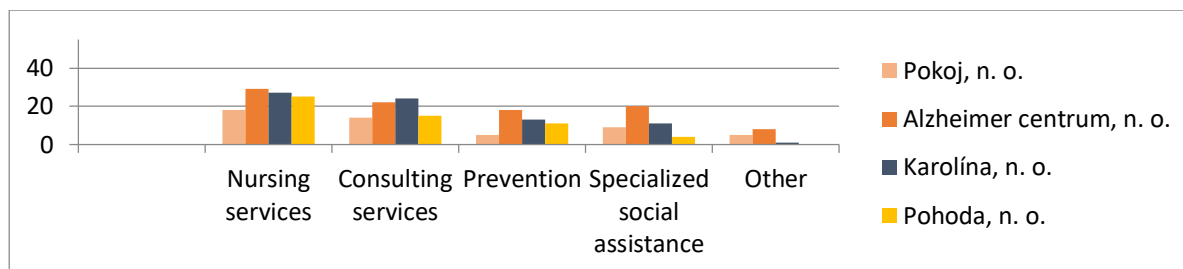


Source: Own processing, 2021

What social services do you use?

In the next question, we asked the respondents what social services they use in non-profit organizations. In this question, respondents could indicate more options. The nursing service in the facility for the elderly is actively used by 100 (100.0%) respondents. 75 (75.0%) of the interviewed seniors use counseling services in non-profit organizations. Prevention as a social service is used by 47 (47.0%) clients. 44 (44.0%) respondents use specialized social assistance in the facility. A total of 14 (14.0%) interviewed clients use another service. Among other services, seniors mentioned the service of a psychologist, the service of a hairdresser, the service of a pedicurist, the spiritual services of a priest (see Graph 2).

Graph 2 What social services do you use?

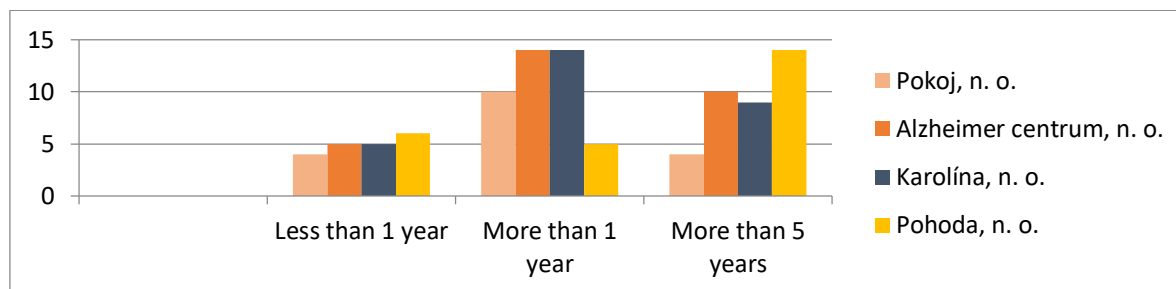


Source: Own processing, 2021

How long have you been using the social assistance of a non-profit organization?

With this question, we tried to find out in our quantitative research how long clients use the social service of a non-profit organization. The possibility of using the services for less than 1 year was indicated by 20 (20.0%) respondents. The second option, more than 1 year, was mentioned by 43 (43.0%) respondents. The remaining 37 (37.0%) seniors gave the last answer that they have been using social assistance from non-profit organizations for more than 5 years (see Graph 3).

Graph 3 How long have you been using the social assistance of a non-profit organization?

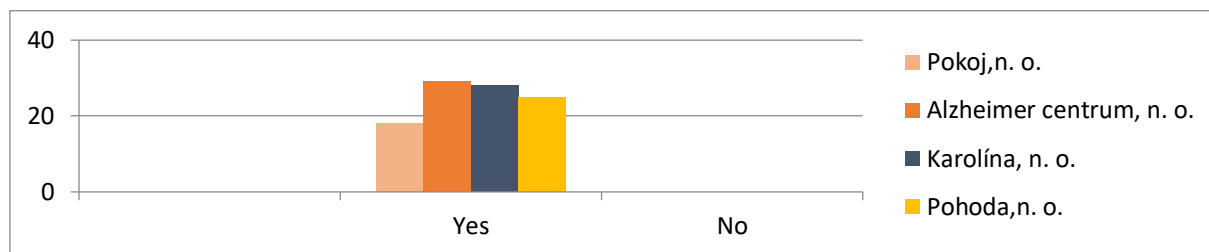


Source: Own processing, 2021

Has there been a positive change in your life after you started using social services facilities?

In this question, we focused on whether there was a positive change in the lives of clients after they began to use the social services of selected non-profit facilities. In the number of 100 (100.0%) respondents, they clearly agreed with the yes option. Clients do not feel lonely, they have constant care and caring for professionals (see Graph 4).

Graph 4 Has there been a positive change in your life after you started using the social services of the facility?

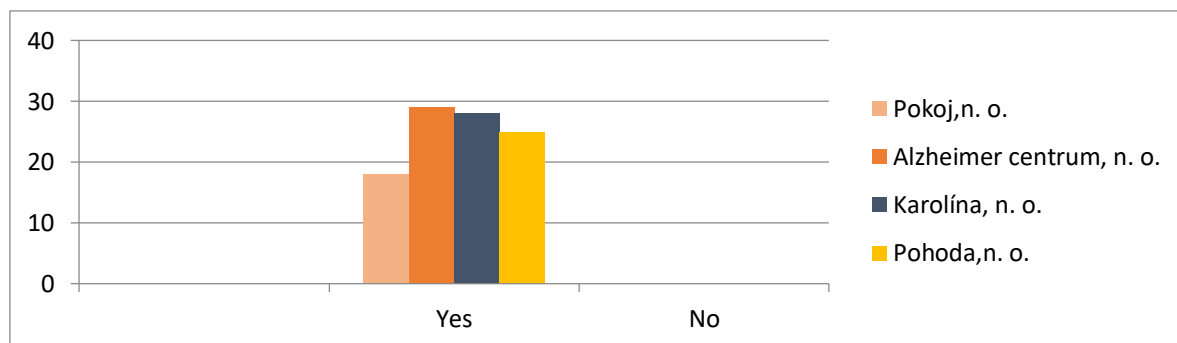


Source: Own processing, 2021

Do you consider the activities of non-profit organizations in Slovakia to be important?

In this question, we sought the opinion of respondents as to whether they consider the activities of non-profit organizations in Slovakia to be important. All clients of the Room, n. about. expressed consent, 18 (18.0%) respondents marked the answer yes. Seniors with facilities Alzheimer's Center, n. about. 29 (29.0%) respondents answered yes to the question. The activities of non-profit organizations that provide social services to the elderly are also considered important by the clients of the Karolína, n. about. in the number of 28 (28.0%) respondents. The remaining 25 (25.0%) respondents from the facility Pohoda seniorov, n. o., thus confirming that they consider the activities, activities and functioning of non-profit organizations to be necessary and desirable (see Graph 5).

Graph 5 Do you consider the activities of non-profit organizations in Slovakia to be important?



Source: Own processing, 2021

All clients of non-profit institutions clearly agreed in full that the activities of non-profit organizations focused on social assistance are necessary for society. The importance and need for social services of non-governmental organizations in Slovakia is essential for every individual. Social assistance is provided to people who have found themselves in an unfavorable life situation and who cannot help themselves or their family cannot help them.

CONCLUSION

Over the decades, non-governmental organizations have been formed and developed, built a base and, through their functioning, have brought about reform in society, which consisted in solving social, health and environmental problems. Non-governmental organizations reflect the problems and needs of the people of Slovakia in various regions. Through non-governmental organizations, individuals as well as groups of people are able to participate in social life. The basic services provided by NGOs are social, humanitarian, educational, information and legal aid.

Institutionalization is essential for the successful functioning of the third sector. The main role of the state is to issue laws to support the establishment and development of non-governmental organizations. Legislative standards should set aside higher funds to ensure their smooth operation and operation in the form of cash subsidies. As the name of the non-profit sector implies, these are institutions whose purpose is not to make a profit or to do business. The subject of the existence of non-profit entities is aid where, for various reasons, the state does not intervene sufficiently. The third sector may also be ancillary to the other two sectors.

Based on the collected and evaluated information that we obtained from the clients in the facilities for the elderly in the Trnava region, we can assess that the activities of non-profit organizations in Slovakia are necessary and sought after. Our research sample were seniors who, with their answers to the questions, showed us that after they were provided with social care and care, there was a positive change in their lives. The giving of a helping hand to a person who finds himself in a difficult life situation should be automatic and should be granted to everyone. In addition to the elderly, socially vulnerable groups also include people with disabilities, homeless people, people addicted to alcohol or drugs, abused women, abandoned mothers with children, orphans and others. In life, it often happens that the family is not able to take care of such people and give them quality services as provided by social facilities. In such cases, it is necessary for the third sector to intervene. We never know when any of us may find ourselves in a difficult life situation that gets us to the margins of society. Therefore, we should not forget empathy and selfless help.

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