Innovative Practice 2019 on Independent Living and Political Participation

# Person centred assistance and accommodation in communal housing

# Serbia / Elementary and Boarding School “Milan Petrovic”

## Summary:

### Milan Petrovic, an inclusive elementary and secondary boarding school based in Novi Sad, Serbia, has initiated “Supported Living in the Community” – a programme that helps adults with intellectual disabilities to live in the community with tailored assistance. The aim is to move people out of institutions and prevent others from moving in by giving people a choice of who to live with and what support they want to receive – all in communally shared apartments. From 2008 to 2018, 39 adults moved into 12 apartments across the city and began receiving personalised support.

## Problems Targeted:

### Traditionally, there have been few alternatives to institutions in Serbia. Persons with intellectual disabilities may have little choice in their accommodation and care, leading to isolation and segregation from society.

## Solution, Innovation, and Impact:

### Supported Living in the Community places people with intellectual disabilities in shared apartments and provides them with individualized support. The programme uses rented apartments, apartments provided by the city of Novi Sad, or those owned by users or their families, and it allows people to choose with whom they want to live. Users of the service fully participate in the creation of their own individual support plans by informing of their personal preferences and wishes, and at a later stage giving evaluation. Services in the plan include health, formal education, vocational training, and assistance with finding employment, with the overall aim of improving their abilities and skills in daily activities.

### Following a pilot between 2005 and 2008, which supported a three-member family with disabilities to live together, the programme has since grown to a permanent project with 39 adults housed in 12 apartments across the city. Nine of the 39 had previously resided in institutions and now live with choice and freedom in the community.

## Funding, Outlook, and Transferability:

### The project is funded by the city of Novi Sad, although users also contribute, making up around 10 per cent of the overall project funding. Past support has also been provided by the Open Society Foundation, which supported the first eight people in moving from institutions.

### Milan Petrovic plans to establish two new households in 2018, accommodating an additional six users. Further, the organization has been taking part in public campaigns and news conferences; and it has been welcoming study visits in order to share its model in the hope that other organizations will replicate it, particularly in areas that have a similar history of institutionalization.

## About the Practice at a Glance:

### NAME OF INNOVATIVE PRACTICE: Supported Living in the Community

### ORGANIZATION: Elementary and secondary boarding school Milan Petrovic

### COUNTRY OF IMPLEMENTATION: Serbia

## Facts and Figures:

### Of the 39 people currently housed in 12 apartments, nine moved out of institutions.

### In 2018, Milan Petrovic plans to establish two new households for an additional six users.

## Contact:

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### [Milan Petrovic Website](http://smp.edu.rs/)

## Links and Further Reading:

### [OSF news article](https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/better-lives-fewer-institutions)

### [YouTube video National TV series about persons with disability – project from 21 min (Bosnian)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJItKkBdHB4)

### [YouTube link – Community Based living in Serbia](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qlIgpXqocfA&t=221s)

### [News article – First two homes (Bosnian)](http://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/rs/stanovanje-uz-podrsku-nase-kuce-novosadske/)

## Quote:

“Life in the institution is terrible. I would never return there. This is my home”

* A project beneficiary

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